

Minutes of the SFUFA Executive Meeting
Held April 13, 2023
Via zoom video conference
9.30 – 12 noon

In attendance:

Bertille Antoine (Economics)
Lyn Bartram (SIAT)
Kumari Beck (Education)Chair
David Broun (Physics)
Dave Hannah (Business)via zoom
Janice Regan (Computing Science)
Ljiljana Trajkovic (Engineering Science) via zoom)
Rochelle Tucker (Health Science)
Baharak Yousefi (Library) via zoom
Brian Green (Executive Director) via zoom
Melanie Lam (Minutes)
Jennifer Scott (Member Services) via zoom

Regrets:

Dan Laitsch (Education)

The meeting was called to order at 9.36 am.

1. Approval of Agenda

Approved with one edit – move CEE discussion to 8d.

Moved: Lyn Bartram/Bertille Antoine

Carried.

2. Approval of the meeting minutes of March 16th

Approved as circulated.

Moved: Rochelle Tucker/Ljiljana Trajkovic

Carried.

3. Business arising – none to report.

4. Presidents Report

- Kumari attended the CUFA BC meeting last week. The national conference on university governance is confirmed and will take place in January, 2024 in Vancouver. SFUFA exec members are encouraged to attend.
- Special Program hire Indigenous faculty: SFUFA is not ready to show support for this initiative until SFU has demonstrated that a robust consultation process has taken place, and that adequate supports and resources have been put in place for the new hires. Up to the time that SFUFA had met with Indigenous faculty members in February and March, it was noted that they had not been informed by SFU about the Special Program hires.

5. Executive Director report

- Pension trustee elections: There are four faculty member trustees on the board of SFU's academic pension plan and two of those members terms will be expiring in June of this year. The two members have noted they are willing to continue to serve on the committee. Last year, SFUFA was moving to the BCCP and for the sake of ease and continuity, the SFUFA executive opted to re-appoint the trustees, rather than call an election. After some discussion the executive voted on the following motion:

Motion:

That the SFUFA executive re-appoint Suzanne Norman and Kendra Strauss as pension trustees to the academic pension plan for another term effective June, 2023.

Moved: David Broun/Janice Regan

Carried unanimously.

- The TSSU are in a legal position to strike, mediation with SFU was unsuccessful and SFUFA members were informed about this in the last bulletin.
- After a short leave, Catherine Stoddard will be returning to her role as Executive Director, in the VPA's office and SFUFA staff welcome this announcement.

6. Member Services report – Jennifer Scott

- Jennifer gave an update on her advocacy cases and noted that she and Brian are busy with quite a few upcoming mediations and arbitrations.

7. Approval of the financial statements for the term ending September 30, 2022.

The executive committee reviewed the financial statements and voted to approve.

Motion

That the audited financial statements for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022 be approved for circulation.

Moved: Rochelle Tucker/David Broun

Carried.

8. New Business

a) Faculty group on academic freedom: A group of faculty members who had written to SFUFA about forming a committee on academic freedom met with reps from SFUFA on April 3rd. The following points were noted.

- The committee would monitor information put out by the SFU administration. It would have no legal mandate but rather, would act as an information gathering group. Committee members would be elected from the membership.
- The group used the formation of the ad hoc Equity Committee as a model.
- SFUFA reviewed its mandate and clarified the definition of academic freedom.

- The academic freedom language is strong in SFUFA's collective agreement.
- The group would like SFUFA to publish results from last year's bargaining survey. It was noted that typically SFUFA does not publish results, but bargaining priorities identified from the survey are published. The SFUFA executive is recommending that a new survey on academic freedom be created and that those results be published to members.
- Sometimes academic freedom is confused with freedom of speech. SFUFA needs to do more education on this. Use the guiding principles laid out in the Chicago Principles.
- The SFUFA executive needs more information before they make a decision about the creation of a new committee and will continue to meet with the group.
- Dave Hannah and Bertille Antoine will draft a summary of discussion points from the meeting and circulate to the executive.

b) Strike donation: University of PEI, Faculty Association

Motion:

That SFUFA make a \$1000 donation to the strike fund of the Faculty Association of UPEI.

Moved: Rochelle Tucker/Janice Regan

Carried.

c) SFUFA Donations Policy & two other requests:

- SFUFA has a donations policy but with the number of Faculty Associations going on strike recently and with the increased number of requests from other groups, it was recommended that the policy be updated.
- Heterodox Canada panel discussion on EDI & academic freedom, which is being hosted at SFU, and SFU 350 (student club on climate action) have both requested donations for upcoming events. The SFUFA executive is reluctant to support individual member initiatives and events that are not directly related to SFUFA, or that doesn't benefit the whole SFUFA community. After some discussion, the executive noted they would not be moving forward with these two donation requests.

d) CEE staff & motion

- A small group of staff at CEE have indicated that they want to sign cards to join SFUFA. They currently belong to APSA.
- They are working in the areas of educational research and curriculum development and there is an overlap with SFUFA members. Some are teaching and doing research.
- They mostly have PhD's and work in teaching & scholarship of teaching and learning. Many of them have been SFUFA members previously and were given new jobs in APSA.
- Mike Sjoerdsma has been working with them and they are now ready to proceed with the application to the Labour Relations Board.

- Some of their job titles are Associate Director, Educational Development; Associate Director, Inclusive Teaching; Associate Director, Indigenous Initiatives; Educational Developers; Instructional Designers; Educational Research Designers.
- SFUFA's legal team have reviewed their Job Descriptions and have deemed them not be "Managers".

Motion:

That the Faculty Association initiate a certification campaign to bring the following CEE employees into the Association, subject to successful card-signing and a successful application to the Labour Relations Board:

Associate Director, Educational Development
Associate Director, Inclusive Teaching
Associate Director, Indigenous Initiatives
Educational Developers
EAL Consultants
Instructional Designers
Educational Research Designers

Moved: Kumari Beck/Rochelle Tucker
deletion of the Director positions.

Motion amended with the

Amended Motion:

That the Faculty Association initiate a certification campaign to bring the following CEE employees into the Association, subject to successful card-signing and a successful application to the Labour Relations Board:

Educational Developers
EAL Consultants
Instructional Designers
Educational Research Designers

Moved: Lyn Bartram/Kumari Beck
(5 abstentions & 2 opposed)

Not carried.

- The executive committee recommended that Mike Sjoerdsma be invited to an exec committee meeting to provide more information and review the likely job descriptions for this group.

9. Committee reports - postponed to next meeting (May 11th)

Review of Equity Committee TOR

10. Items for Consultation – Thursday, April 20th @ 10:30

1. SFUFA would like to know if GWI's are passed directly to faculty budgets. How are they allocated?
2. We appreciated hearing about the President's plan for greater transparency and communication regarding sharing notes from the Board of Governors and Senate meetings. We would like to hear more about the transparency and consultation processes leading up to Senate and BOG meetings.
3. Faculty Smackdown debate: This was a fun fund-raising event for faculty members (fundraiser for the United Way) and an opportunity for faculty from various disciplines to come together. Why was it cancelled? There doesn't appear to be any communication to the SFU community about the cancellation of this event.
4. Under business arising:
Following up from the last consult, we would like to know if there are updates on the following items:
 - a) Medical School
 - b) Communications strategy improvements (central vs individual academic units)
 - c) Web support
 - d) 2024 calendar

11. Other business: Exec committee members are being asked to review the Equity Committees TOR before the May meeting.

12. Adjournment. There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned at 12:26 pm.