

Minutes of the SFUFA Executive Meeting

Held February 9, 2023

In Halpern 114 & via zoom

9.30 – noon

In attendance:

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

Regrets:

David Broun (Physics)

The meeting was called to order at 9.41 am.

1. **Approval of Agenda**

Approved with the following additions: Donations – additional donation to Memorial University, Newfoundland Faculty Association and there are two sets of minutes to approve today, January 12th and 19, 2023.

Moved: Lyn Bartram/Bertille Antoine

Carried.

2. **Approval of Minutes of January 12 & 19, 2023**

Approved with one amendment to item #7a - January 12th minutes.

Moved: Rochelle Tucker/Dan Laitsch

Carried.

3. **Business arising**

a) Asbestos exposure in Bennett Library: In November, debris collected from the 2 – 5th floors of the Bennett Library showed the presence of asbestos and the Library was closed for some time, so it could be inspected for safety impacts. It has been reported that Librarians and others who were affected by the exposure, especially those on the 5th floor have been unable to discuss this transparently for a variety of reasons, and have run into roadblocks trying to seek more information about the exposure. SFUFA will be raising this issue at the next Employee Council meeting with the other labour groups and at the consult with senior administration and will be including an update on this in the next member bulletin. SFUFA will also be reaching out to individuals in the Library and will be investigating why the Central Health and Safety Committee appears to be reluctant to discuss the concerns of faculty, staff and students.

b) Research Ethics Board update: A petition signed by 267 people was brought to Senate on February 6th. It was reported that there was considerable discussion at Senate and that Senators are concerned about the violation of process, the VPRI interference of the composition of the REB, the disruption of current ethics approval projects, and the proposed changes put forward by the VPRI. A motion was put forward

at Senate to reinstate previous members of the REB but the motion was withdrawn and the issue was referred to the Senate Committee on Agenda and Rules (SCAR), which meets next Tuesday, February 14th.

4. New business

a) Strike fund donations

Motion:

That SFUFA donate a \$1000 each to the strike fund of the following Faculty Associations: Memorial University of Newfoundland and Cape Breton University of Nova Scotia.

Moved: Janice Regan/Dave Hannah

Carried.

b) Classlist procedures – discussion postponed.

5. Presidents Report – Kumari Beck

- Thanks to Dan Laitsch and SFUFA staff for their work on the REB issue.
- Kumari gave an update on her meetings with the following: Provost, President, Senior Advisor to the provost, and the consultant who worked on the expansion of the provost model for SFU and CUFA BC.
- Thanks to the Equity Committee, Ljiljana, Dave Hannah and Rochelle Tucker for working on providing feedback to the executive committee on the Special Program Submission for Black tenured faculty. It was noted that feedback was also sought from Academic Women and SFU's Black Caucus. It was further noted that the initiative to hire indigenous faculty is going in at the same time as the above, at the end of February.
- At the CUFA BC meeting, it was reported that UBC and UNBC FA's are dealing with an increase in the number of grievances; Many faculty associations are reporting about an overall trend in the erosion of collegial governance at BC universities.
- Brian, Bertille and Kumari attended a Black History Month event on February 1st, hosted by the SFU students of SOCA.

6. Executive Director report

- SFU has undertaken an Aboriginal hiring initiative, with the creation of at least two faculty positions reserved for Aboriginal scholars. SFUFA is starting to work with indigenous faculty to ensure their voices are being heard, and to be more proactive in addressing some of the challenges related to indigenization, for example, inadequate support, high service workloads and lack of infrastructure. As a first step, SFUFA has met with some members of the Indigenous Education and Reconciliation Council (IERC) who noted they were not aware of SFU's "cluster hire" initiative. SFUFA has created a mail list for indigenous faculty and will be pushing for education on this topic for TPC's and Deans.
- The Vice Provost, Learning and Teaching, Elizabeth Elle, is not being renewed for another term.
- Bargaining update: In David's absence, Brian gave an update on bargaining and noted that good conversations are being had, but bargaining is progressing slowly.

7. Committee Reports

- Equity: It was reported that unlike in previous years, there was no meeting of the Parking Committee in September. Faculty members who teach at multiple campuses are requesting that they pay for parking only at their home location and Kumari noted she would follow up with the Director of Parking Services.
- Equity Committee: Elections were held in summer and 4 new people were elected: Bidisha Ray, Krishna Pendakur, Mohsen Javdani and Leanna Jantzi. The committee will be appointing Gordon Coleman and Suzanne Norman to the team at their first meeting on September 21st. Kumari Beck continues as an ex officio member and Ljiljana noted she would send us a list of new committee members following the first meeting.
- Community Relations: The contract workers justice committee met over the summer and is arranging a Town Hall meeting in the fall. In July, SFU announced that it will take steps to become a Living Wage Employer, in its commitment to improve equity and inclusion for working members of the SFU community.
- Health and Safety committee: There were many complaints over the summer from faculty who were teaching in classrooms which had no functioning HVAC systems. In addition to this, many faculty were teaching in non airconditioned classrooms, while air-conditioned classrooms remained empty. Janice Regan will be following up on these issues with the committee. Rochelle Tucker noted she is no longer able to be a faculty delegate on this committee.

8. Items for Consultation – September 15th at 10:30 (Halpern 114)

- i. VP, People, Equity and Inclusion: Now that the VP, PEI has been with SFU for a few months, we would like to hear from Yabome about her experience thus far, her priorities for the coming year, and how faculty members can engage with her office and its work
- ii. CAL Advisory Board: There was a commitment some time ago to establish an advisory board for the Centre for Accessible Learning, but it appears to still not be in place. We would like an update as to when it will be struck and how its members will be selected.
- iii. Exam Scheduling: We continue to hear concerns about exam scheduling; not announcing the exam schedule in advance is causing a lot of planning issues and concerns, not only for faculty members who often have conferences etc. but for students as well.

9. Other business

- A reminder that the executive committee will be meeting at Kumari's place on Wednesday, September 14th for a planning session. Brian noted he would circulate the agenda shortly.

10. Adjournment: There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned at 11.35 am.