

Minutes of the SFUFA Executive Meeting
Held Thursday June 8, 2023 @9:30 -11:30
In SH3103 (in person & via zoom) followed by the consult to 1 pm

In attendance:

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

Regrets:

Rochelle Tucker (Health Sciences)
David Broun (Physics)

The meeting was called to order at 9.43 am.

1. Approval of Agenda

Approved with some additions 1) REB. 2) Update from Dan Laitsch.

Moved: Janice Regan/Bertille Antoine

Carried.

2. Approval of the May 11 minutes

Approved as circulated.

Moved: Dave Hannah/Dan Laitsch

Carried.

3. Business arising

a) REB: Changes to the governance and procedures of the Research Ethics Board are in the works and have been reviewed by the ORE, REB and university counsel. They will be brought to SFUFA via the Joint Committee in the next few weeks. SFUFA will provide an official response once the changes have been reviewed.

b) Dan Laitsch noted he is being considered for the Dean position in the Faculty of Education and if ratified, this would be his last SFUFA meeting. The executive committee thanked Dan for all his hard work especially for his leadership on Senate and Policy matters. SFUFA will need to appoint a new Treasurer in September.

4. Presidents Report – Kumari Beck

- Kumari was invited to a conference by FPSE as a keynote speaker to talk about SFUFA's role in Equity. She also attended the Congress of the Humanities conference at York University.
- SFUFA welcomes Dr. Dilson Etcheverry Rassier, who has been hired as the new Provost

and V.P Academic and will take over from Wade Parkhouse.

5. Executive Director report

- Jennifer and Brian are meeting with Faculty Associations in the Toronto area this week to get information on the assessment of teaching, the process for peer teaching assessment, specifically issues surrounding the proposed med school and province-wide benefit plans.
- TSSU might be giving official strike notice soon – SFUFA is keeping an eye on this and will communicate with members when necessary.
- Brian gave an update on SFUFA’s two recent arbitration cases noting that a settlement was reached for one of them.
- Legal discussions about Teaching Faculty holding Chair positions are ongoing.
- Issues with staff at the REB are putting the research of faculty members in jeopardy and SFUFA has launched an official complaint with the university.
- SFUFA office staffing: SFUFA will be taking a look at hiring a new staff member in the Fall. A significant increase in revenues is expected if the pay increases associated with the collective agreement are ratified.
- It has been reported that the SFU Alumni Association voted to disband in February and be replaced by an Alumni Council, which is chaired by the SFU President and whose members are also appointed by the President. This may give the university the privilege of handpicking BOG members and alumni members that it wants and may be a threat to collegial governance at SFU. SFUFA will be following up on this.
- Faculty members sitting on search committees have recently come forward to the Association to complain about the lack of transparency in the process.

6. Member Services report.

- An update was given on the recent advocacy cases including an intellectual property case and the upcoming arbitration re: teaching faculty being able to hold a Departmental Chair position.
- The number of new advocacy cases has slowed down somewhat.
- There has been an increase in the number of bullying and harassment cases recently.
- SFUFA has recently received complaints from members about Research Accounting and about faculty members’ grants being frozen etc..... Exec members are being asked to keep their eyes and ears open and to report issues to Jennifer.

7. CEE Post Docs

- A group of post-docs have petitioned to join SFUFA as a separate bargaining unit and a copy of the letter was attached to the meeting package.

The following was noted: There are about 160 post docs and their average salary is \$53,000; They are seeking better medical benefits at least on par with grad students; They intend to negotiate a supplementary insurance package in which benefits are paid for by the university rather than their supervisors grant.

- After much discussion the executive committee recommended not moving forward with this proposal, due to the fiscal impact it would have on the Association. Also, although the work done by post docs is integral to SFU's research mission, their work is not similar to faculty members. SFUFA noted it would support and advocate post docs in their quest to receive better health benefits and pay, and would provide them with a RoadMap on how to unionize.

8. Committee Reports

- David Broun gave an update on bargaining and noted that monetary proposals have been exchanged.
- Equity: The committee met on June 1st and is seeking one new member and elections will be held over the summer. The committee will continue to meet in July and August. The new TOR will be uploaded to the SFUFA website. The committee is planning on working on a membership survey and it was recommended that they seek guidelines/best practices on workload surveys developed by the Department of Economics.
- Parking: Small changes are coming to Surrey and Burnaby; The cost of parking passes will increase by about 2%; More EV charging stations are being added in the West Mall Parkade.
- Senate: SFU is testing the new blended course designation, which is a combination of in-person sessions and asynchronous online learning.
- BOG: The new VPA was introduced to the BOG; The Chair of CUHSC has resigned and Janice would like to submit her name for the position; It was noted that the Employee Council is also following up on this.

9. Consult Items for June 15th @10:30

- I. Transition to the new VPA - SFUFA would like to hear about plans, priorities, and what we might expect as we prepare for the arrival of new VPA and would also be interested to have an update on the status of the provost model in relation to the transition.

10. Other business

a) Academic Freedom committee: SFUFA is considering moving forward with forming the committee and will look at it more closely in the Fall. Developing Terms of Reference will be very important.

b) SFUFA bulletins: When there are differences in opinion of the executive committee, there doesn't appear to be a mechanism to work through the process. For example, re SFUFA bulletins, all exec committee members should have clear expectations of what is being communicated to members and this appears to not always be the case. Kumari and Brian reported they are currently looking at current policies and procedures of the Association and recommended developing a "Guidebook" for the Association, which will include details on Communications, process for engaging with the membership and who has the authority to send communiques etc.

11. Adjournment: There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned at 12:24 pm.