

Stamford Faculty Council Meeting
October 10, 2022, 5:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Minutes by Jonathan Gilbert

SFC Attendees: Jonathan Gilbert, Bill Schwendner, Claudia Kraemer, John White, Johanna Ortner

Guest Attendees: Kate Liebman, Pamela brown, Elena levy, Chris carney, Rhea Hirschman

GUEST SPEAKER: Jennifer Orlikoff

I. Building Safety

- a. Bill opens with general questions regarding campus safety in the building.
 - i. Jennifer says that there are currently 5 full-time officers, and there are plans to introduce 5 security officers.
- b. Jennifer reminds the group that campus police will offer to escort any student or faculty to the parking lot.
- c. Rhea asks why a sign is posted requesting people to ‘check in’ if it is not enforced.
 - i. Jennifer said these were COVID policies and will follow up whether it should be enforced or removed.
- d. Bill asks if the ‘info center’ can be moved to the entrances.
- e. Jennifer agrees there should be better signage around the building, especially around entrances. Claudia suggests following up with the 2nd and 3rd floor signs as well.
- f. Pamela asks about active threats and would like to see a workshop in identifying and responding to various threats. Pamela points out that Stamford is an urban campus that remains open to the public. Because of our setting we have different needs than other UCONN campuses. The digital thread is not as active as NYU’s and asks what is being done to address these concerns. Pamela stresses the fact that UCONN is not prepared and there is little to no information available.
 - i. Jennifer says that an active shooter training will be available in the near future, but any faculty can access a training module available in the interim. Jennifer offers the module to the attendees and Pamela asks that Jennifer address the entire faculty and offers the module in an email.

II. Mental Health

- a. The group inquires about mental health and what can be done for students as well as faculty.
 - i. The Wellness coordinator, Joleene Nevers, is our representative contact and can address student concerns. There is a possibility of acquiring a healthcare professional on campus. Jennifer says

President Maric will be available to discuss options for the Stamford campus. Several topics need to be discussed.

1. The first order will be to develop a job description. Their position should include offering mindfulness and other wellness support for both faculty and students.
- ii. There are programs for faculty. The current programs are offered through HR and information can be found on their website.
 1. EAP employee assistance program offers mental health for faculty and information can be found on their website.
 2. HR Work/Life – Health & Wellness offers additional resources.
- iii. David Anderson offers wellness through meditation and/or prayer.
 1. Jennifer asks that someone should reach out to Marta to find a space and appropriate time. Bill offers follow up.

III. Building Spaces

- a. Prayer room/meditation room.
 - i. Jennifer agrees that a large, open space is needed for meditation, prayer, or general wellness. Options of classrooms may be too small and moving desks could pose problems. Other facilities may be desired/required, like access to bathrooms and sinks.
- b. What is to become of the available space on 1st floor?
 - i. Jennifer knows of the space and will confer with others to determine the campus needs. The decision is multifactorial but expects an announcement on or before Nov. 8th. Pamela indicates that the space is small and may be limited in its use.
- c. Claudia asks about the 3rd floor lab space now that Charlie has retired.
 - i. Jennifer asks what the need is and has not heard of any plans. She assumes the space would be converted into teaching labs. Jennifer asks for a meeting with chem and bio to discuss options.
- d. Cafeteria. Currently Non exists. Is there a need? Is there a plan?
 - i. Jennifer says they have improved the offerings, but Len Oser and Pam Williams said they were going to further increase the offerings in the future.
 - ii. For students, they want to offer a meal plan. Soon, for a set price, they will offer a well-rounded meal. They will be able to purchase meals in advance from partnered local eateries. A few community members are lined up and UCONN is hoping to get more. All food options would be outside the res halls or campus and would have to go to the restaurant/cafeteria. -Including the government center (which has a full cafeteria).
 - iii. Pamela points out that all other regional campuses have preferred, cooked food options and Stamford has the worst. Including pre-packaged, preserved, stale options. Rhea seconds Pamela's sentiment as students must leave campus to get decent food. The transition of hot meals on campus happened 10-15 years ago, when Stamford was not a residential campus. One issue is that rent was

high, and it was difficult to fill the space. Barns and Noble eventually came in.

1. Jennifer said there was discussion of maybe Winfield's occupying the space.

e. Faculty lounge.

- i. Better equipment, to support a more attractive and welcoming environment. We want to be an attractive place for faculty to congregate. Claudia suggests including a designated individual to clean the area as some faculty cannot follow rules and cleaning is needed. Claudia has taken charge of the plants but needs more assistance as it is a communal space.

1. Jennifer reiterates that faculty needs to be responsible for cleaning up after themselves. Jennifer will find out what else can be done to improve the area.

IV. Student & Faculty Support

a. Incoming student skills.

- i. Elena levy asks about wellness and suggests that students have lost study skills. She asks for resources to help build necessary skills.

1. Jennifer tells the group Tadarrayl Starke acknowledges there is a need and promises that more information is coming soon.

- ii. Bill points out that Math skills are deficient for prerequisites math courses. He is aware that there is the Q center to assist, but more is needed. Rhea points out that even note taking is deficient. What can be done? Pamela has adjusted teaching methods to re-train and adjust for deficiencies. Pamela says that more q hours are possible. Elena suggests depression is an issue. Group agrees more student services are needed.

- iii. Kate Liebman suggests more focused support for large classrooms, like Ta's in the classrooms. Elena recalls peer tutor program that had passed the course and could offer support to other students.

1. While the program closed, Jennifer agrees that we bring the program back. She mentions that the provost agrees that this should be done. UCONN can offer credits as a 'practicum'. Claudia asks about the possibility of an independent study (1 credit).

b. COVID

- i. Elena asks about COVID as rates are increasing. She attributes the decline of students' skills, mental health, and attendance to COVID.

- ii. Bill follows with an anecdote of 5 students from 1 class caught COVID at the same time. He asks what can & should be done given privacy concerns.

1. Jennifer points out that there is the self-reporting, but it is not required. Students are encouraged to reach out to student services.

RESUME COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

- I. Approve 9/28 Minutes: No Quorum.
- II. Welcome Phil Dwire:
 - a. Phil was not in attendance. Hope to welcome at 10/26 meeting.
- III. Guest Speaker lineup:
 - a. Emily has agreed to attend 10/26 meeting.
 - b. Erica will attend 11/30 meeting.
 - c. Phara from the Library.
 - i. Beth has been in contact with Phara, but no date has been secured.
 - d. Joleen Nevers (Mental Health).
 - i. Bill will reach out to Joleen.
- IV. Member Attendance:
 - a. 5 SFC members attended tonight's meeting. Claudia asks if an email should go out reminding the other members of the importance of attendance, especially with the campus director as a guest speaker. Bill emphatically agrees and will send an email to the group.