

Stamford Faculty Council Meeting
October 9, 2023, 7:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Minutes by Jonathan Gilbert

SFC Attendees: Jonathan Gilbert, Claudia Kraemer, Felice Lesser, Bill Schwendner, Kevin McEvoy, Sharon Lattig, Christina McElroy, Phil Dwire, Marie Ruiz Martinez, Katie Nagrotsky, Beth Ginsberg,

Guest Attendees: Hasan Baig, Jolande Kalinowski, Carol Anne, Na Zhang,

Guest Speaker: Jennifer Orlikoff

Discussion Points:

- I. UCONN Strategic plan
 - a. The structure is aligned with the regionals.
 - i. The initial feedback across surveys is there needs to be more focus on regionals, including Stamford as a destination campus.
 1. This was confirmed by Merrick as an attractive location for international students and others that want to be close to the NYC area.
 - a. Students' needs have to be addressed for the expanding campus and regional workforce needs.
 - b. As of Wednesday, the board of trustees altered Jennifer's title.
 - i. Campus Dean and Chief Administrative Officer
 - c. Working on a one-stop-shop for customer service for students to allow students access to all services in one area.
 - i. Storrs has began the implementation and Stamford will follow shortly.
 1. Admissions, burser, and orientation are implemented, and we can decide if these suit our needs or if other staff departments should be included.
 - d. Phil Bradford (computer science and engineering) was awarded a 40k, Connecticut Higher Education Tech talent Accelerator grant, for the campus
 - i. Granted by the governor
 - e. Active threat training has been scheduled for the fall (tues oct 10 11-12& nov 9 2-3)
 - i. If more training is needed, then they are happy to comply.
 1. This was in large part due to faculty concerns.
 2. Building and grounds crew (B&G crew)
 3. They have a 'front desk' to assist with needs.
 - a. They are available to escort from campus to the parking lot for those that request to
 - f. Town hall tomorrow (1-2pm)

- i. Time changes to allow conflicts with a grant acceptance in DC
 - 1. 4.5 mil grant for Waterbury, Storrs, and Stamford.
- ii. Next town hall for Nov 15.
 - 1. Time change to 11-12 to allow ODI personal from Storrs to attend.
- g. Working on increasing matriculation

II. Questions

- a. Someone asks about the ‘one-stop-shop’ for students.
 - i. Jennifer explains that the shop will be in one location and personal will be cross trained across disciplines.
- b. Someone discussed the ODI workshop on Friday (in Hartford) and how Hartford has an academic achievement center. Why don’t we have one?
 - i. Director of student success and inclusivity is a position that runs the program. Instead, we have the Q center and tutoring.
 - 1. Dr. Scott has been petitioning for us to get an academic achievement center, in addition to a Director of student success in addition to a success coach – that’s part of the Synchrony grant, and a peer mentoring program.
- c. Kevin asks about campus expansion. Is there progress?
 - i. As the plans are developing, there is a need for student housing with the possibility for academic spaces.
 - 1. This is still in the planning phase and there are no plans yet. The board has to support the decisions.
 - ii. Bill asks if there is a target for ‘24, ‘25 enrollment numbers.
 - 1. While yes, the increase will be nominal and dependent on housing.
- d. Beth asks if financial aid will be included in the one-stop shop as it is needed.
 - i. Yes, financial aid is included in the one-stop-shop
- e. Beth thanks Jennifer for feeling safer on campus with the added personnel and the support for listening to the faculty.
- f. Jennifer asks Beth to discuss her plan for her class to New Hampshire.
 - i. The provost’s office awarded a grant to support Beth’s students to go to New Hampshire for 1 week.
 - 1. There are many events including a documentary, interviews, and media.
- g. Bill addresses a concern about the caliber of students this semester. They lack fundamentals, especially reading skills. Because this is a STEM requirement, it is scary to see. Is there something the admissions can do?
 - i. Jennifer says that this is on a national scale.
 - 1. Jolaade concurs and agrees asks how to encourage attendance & engagement.
 - a. Jennifer says we are re-building the community as we are all in-person. This process will take a while.
 - 2. Carol Anne agrees and has struggled with her students and has come up with creative new teaching methods.

3. Claudia agrees that the situation is dramatic, but it is her job to assist and does.
 - a. Additionally, there is a concern that there are a serious number of students that cannot speak English.
 - i. Internal students must take the TOFEL.
 1. Many of the students are not 'international' and still have problems.
 - a. Jennifer will look into it.
4. Kevin agrees that COVID has imparted issues on the incoming class, but these issues existed prior to COVID. He says that there is a problem with the mentality of the incoming students, and they are not prepared.
 - a. There is a mentality that the Stamford campus has a different student type than Storrs.
 - i. Culturally, there are differences, and the hope is that the new administration will encourage a higher quality education.
 - ii. Jennifer acknowledges that the campuses are different but there is a shift in mentality. -The governor wants to invest in regionals.
5. Marie is happy to hear that the academic center is developing as she has seen a decline in the preparedness of students.
 - a. Would it be possible to increase the quality of tutors (possibly professional) or ones that have experience with disabilities.
 - b. Other colleges have programs that assist the preparedness.
 - i. Jennifer says there is a con-cap program that enrolls students finishing high school and entering college.
 1. This year there were 45 students, and they are hoping to grow it to 60-75. Funding is needed to grow the program.
6. Hasan asks about attendance. He wants to understand the logic behind not enforcing attendance and assessing skills with the student using AI programs.
 - a. Jennifer says that the culture needs to change.
 - i. Another option is to require assignments to be done in class and worth points.
 - b. Jennifer asks if the attendance policy is new.
 - i. No. It has always been this this way.
 - c. A member points out that about 50% of the class physically attends classes but they are encouraged by their department to get 80% of their students participating with evaluations.

7. Carol Ann points out that the in-class assignments can be worked around by students texting the questions to others, not in class.

OPEN COUNCIL DISCUSSION

- I. Approve Minutes
 - A. 9/11 – Bill motions to approve, Marie seconds, Beth Abstains.
- II. Follow up status.
 - A. Faculty Office Assignment Process
 - I. Claudia spoke to Aris about the policies in place. There is no current policy, but a new strategy will take place.
 - A. As a senior member leaves, a message will be sent to the faculty and the department (and head or coordinator) then give the senior most member the options.
 - I. Operations may change this rule as they have the right to override it.
 - B. Claudia asks Aris about a lock on the fridge to prevent some from stealing food.
 - I. Locks are expensive and discourages a positive campus culture.
 - II. Is a camera an option?
 - A. No. The new sign reads that the area is monitored.
 - C. Library (research and instruction) replacement. Need support of SFC for FT replacement.
 - I. Bill has not heard back and is still waiting to hear what resources are needed.
- III. Faculty Colloquia
 - A. Sept 28 - Felice Lesser
 - B. Oct 25 – Kriti Bhargava
 - C. Nov 30 - Matt Worwood
 - D. Nothing queued for December or the spring semester.
- IV. Town Halls
 - A. Oct 10 (1-2), Nov 15 (3-4), Dec 5 (11-12)
 - I. October the time has been changed to 11-12
- V. Coffee Hours w/Director (9/19, 10/26, 11/29) 1:30 – 2:30
 - A. Claudia will attend in October and November.
 - B. All other members are encouraged to attend.
- VI. New Items
 - A. Faculty involvement (direct or through Union) in class cancellation process
 - I. Claudia spoke to Michael Bailey (Union rep) and that cancelling any classes with less than 6 is normal, but there is no distinct rule.
 - A. The goal is to serve the students.
 - II. Essentially the Union does not cover this topic.

- III. Due to the complexity of planning, there are multiple factors that may need to be considered. Laura's talk helps to elucidate the complexity.
 - B. All Fall syllabi to be sent to StamfordSyllabi@uconn.edu (per Laura's 8/22 memo)
 - I. This is a new endeavor that all faculty should send their syllabi.
- VII. Guest Speaker
 - A. Next (11/13): Laurie McCarty (CETL / executive director faculty development)
 - B. 12/4: Erica Conklin (Stamford CSD lead)
- VIII. SFC website
 - A. Needs a bio for Phill.
 - I. Will send a copy to Jon's email.
- IX. SFC schedule, nov 13, dec 4th