

Stamford Faculty Council Meeting
October 14, 2024, 7:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Minutes by Jonathan Gilbert

SFC Attendees: Claudia Kraemer, Bill Schwendner, Sharon Lattig, Katie Nagrotsky, Felice Lesser, Beth Ginsberg, Christina McElroy, Ellie Sherafat, Evan Rawely, Marie Ruiz-Martinez

Guest Attendees: Vida Samuel, Oskar Harmon, Joel Blatt

GUEST SPEAKER – Michael Bailey, Executive Director UCONN AAUP

- I. Member meeting 10/23 with luncheon 11:30-12:30 (at Storrs)
 - A. Virtual meeting at 7pm
 - B. The agenda will be out soon

- II. Finalizing proposals for contract negotiations
 - A. Still working internally
 - I. Plans on meeting with administration late November, early December
 - B. Not sure if it's the same negotiation team but hope to make improvements
 - C. A survey went out last spring, and subcommittees for individual surveys
 - I. Currently digesting information
 - II. Costs, enrollment, and workload are high priority topics
 - A. Wants to address topics and put cap (or something) on workload
 - III. The sire faculty (clinical in-resident) & extension faculty (Article 13) seem to take brunt of workload
 - A. In 2011/2012 the administration made a commitment to offer multi-year contract. Only terminated for 'just cause'
 - B. Hoping to make improvements to this group as course enrollment increase.
 - IV. The AAUP went to the labor board to discuss relief from course enrollment.
 - A. The University can determine the number of students in the class
 - I. The AAUP can alleviate the impact with additional benefits of extra compensation, time off, etc.
 - I. It needs to be addressed but it is unclear how & what will happen.

- III. Provost Plan review
 - A. Look for low enrolled courses and fill out a form to justify the funding of future classes.
 - I. This is generated by the Higher Education Financial Sustainability advisory group

- A. They have asked for data including faculty, salaries, and the courses (and enrollments) they teach.
- B. The committee was developed in the last legislative session
 - I. The governor's office is involved and driving the initiative
 - II. Michael believes this is to serve and advise the University given the \$33 mil deficit.
 - I. 33 mil this year, more next year.
 - II. There are limitations from the governor on University spending
- II. Courses need to be reviewed to accommodate budget. As of now, Languages, cultures, and literatures (LCL).
 - A. They will ask departments if they could reduce majors to concentration.
 - I. Meeting on Wednesday will have to vote to agree with the plan.
 - II. Other universities across the country have reduced LCL programs.
 - B. Ultimately it is up to the governor to roll back the 'roadblocks' and make the money available.
- B. The plan was put into place in May of last year.
 - I. Admins did not put out this information until the last month/weeks.
- C. The next AAUP meeting (Wednesday) will be primarily covering the provost plan.
 - I. Will hopefully have more information to share.
 - II. A goal is to develop a plan of action and discuss the hasty response by the admins with the provost.
- D. A member asks Michael what recourse faculty will have with the plan
 - I. Michael states that the contract is clear. Some faculty within a program planned for closure, are only given a time for non-renewal.
 - A. Faculty can be let go if course is being closed.
- E. Another member states that all but 1 attending are in-residence & adjunct faculty. They mention that the pay disparity is insulting and humiliating.
 - I. New faculty have been brought in with pay equal to those that have been faculty for 15 years.
 - II. The pay raises are also very low & have applied provost funds.
 - III. This member asks for pay parity and to look at pay increases.
 - IV. Michael says it is hard to compare salaries between positions & titles. He now has data from other university studies that can be examined at a more granular level.
 - A. He says despite the provost fund, there needs to be more transparency & guardrails for the allocation.
 - B. Any salary negotiations will come in the spring (April/may)

- F. Another member asks about the promotion structure and the difficulties getting a title and pay promotion.
 - I. Michael refers back to the data and reiterates that comparable title and salaries need to be considered.
- G. The member asks about the program closures and asks if a faculty member whose program is closing could be reassigned to a different program if they have the expertise to teach the course.
 - I. They also mention that their classes have shifted from electives to introductory courses. This poses a problem of wellbeing as the electives give variation and the job more enjoyable.
- H. Michael says they are aware of the program closures being an issue but brings up the point of closing LCL
 - I. He asks if majors are being reduced but concentrations are still available, how much does this save the university?
 - II. He mentioned this was brought forward in May with a Nov.1 deadline.
 - A. This seems like a short timeframe and does not believe there is enough data to support a decision
 - III. At face value, this seems like UCONN is shifting from an R1 institution to a teaching institution.
 - A. Given this is the flagship university for the state, a shift seems ill advised.
- I. Another member asks when data is being compiled from other universities if cost of living factors is considered.
 - I. Michael says that they have tried during the last negotiations, and will definitely be considered on the next round of negotiations

OPEN COUNCIL DISCUSSION

- IV. Approve Minutes
 - A. 9/9 minutes
 - I. Not enough members (quorum) to vote.
- V. Introductions – not present, but will be members.
 - A. Evan Rawley –Business
 - B. Ellie Sherafat – Engineering/CS&E
 - C. General SFC status
 - I. There are now 11 Stamford members
 - A. FT – 9 (82%), PT 2 (18%)
 - B. The quorum is at 7
- VI. Follow up status

- A. Faculty Concourse Office Hours
 - I. All in the air. No follow up as Aris & Laura have not written back.
- B. Financial aid
 - I. Marie can't find information for scholarships as all information is passed through Storrs.
 - A. Maybe someone in the career center can assist.
 - B. Another member mentions that a representative from Storrs is present during orientation.
 - C. Marie will try the admissions office & the career center.
 - D. Another member asks why leaving this at Storrs is a problem
 - I. Yes, this is an issue as students do not have one-on-one, in person, to assist students.
 - C. Stamford Graduates / graduation ceremony
 - I. No status or update
 - D. Student awards
 - I. Pushing conversation until Spring.

- VII. Town Hall
 - A. 11/14 12:00-2:00pm Auditorium 1

- VIII. Fall Faculty Colloquia
 - A. 11/6, 2pm, Dr. Wein Chen, Room 105

- IX. Upcoming guests for SFC meetings
 - A. Polled faculty for future guest speakers.
 - I. No responses.
 - II. Bill will send another broadcast
 - B. Joel would like to request someone that can teach CPR/AED
 - I. He has asked Aris to send reminders where the AED
 - II. Claudia mentions that last year the Bio club offered training in the spring.
 - III. Beth suggests a collaboration with the nursing program
 - IV. Bill & Claudia will follow up with CPR certifications & AED locations

- X. Congratulations Beth
 - A. 2024 Honor's Faculty of the Year, UCONN/Stamford

- XI. Reminders
 - A. HR benefit fair, 11/22, 10am, rm 253
 - I. A member asks why it is on a Friday
 - II. Claudia and Bill suggest writing back to Jennifer & Laura asking for a date change with the possibility of multiple days

- XII. SFC meetings 7:15 pm
 - A. 11/11
 - B. 12/2 - last for the Fall semester

- XIII. Oskar adds additional information regarding the equity adjustment.
 - A. Equity adjustment. We now have data from the administration on fund distribution. 2018-2024.
 - I. Hoping to characterize & understand why some were given and others were not.
 - II. A member asks about adjuncts being included
 - A. Oskar said he this is important & will look into the data
 - B. Regional price index.
 - I. Hoping to bring in more data to the campus
 - C. CRE faculty
 - I. There is no IPEX data, however there are 5 schools that do have data. The goal is to work with the schools and get detailed information.
 - D. He clarifies a member comment during Michael's talk, that the perception is the higher-level courses are being dropped and intro classes increasing.
 - I. Many members agree that 1000 level classes dominate the schedule
 - II. Another member mentions that some faculty were approached in the summer, out of contract, to change schedules and shift to lower-level courses.
 - A. Other members agree that the lack of upper division work will not assist students and hinder their ability to graduate, especially from Stamford.
 - III. Another member expresses concerns of the class minimums. They were told they had to enlist 25
 - A. Oskar said this is not on the radar and will pass this along to Michael
 - E. A member volunteered information that faculty pay at NCC and a parallel position in Hartford already exists and could be used in an argument for differential (cost of living) adjustments.
 - I. Oskar will share and probably get back.
- XIV. Joel will be holding a lecture on the election this Thursday, 12:15 – 2:00 pm