

Minutes of the SFUFA Executive Meeting

Held May 9, 2024

Halpern 126

9.30 – 12 noon

In attendance:

Ronda Arab (English)
Kumari Beck (Education) Chair
Adena Brons (Library)
David Broun (Physics)
Tim Beischlag (Health Sciences)
Janice Regan (Computing Science)
Ljiljana Trajkovic (Engineering Science)
Rochelle Tucker (Health Sciences)
Brian Green (Executive Director)
Melanie Lam (Minutes)
Jennifer Scott (Member Services)

Regrets:

Bertille Antoine (Economics)

The meeting was called to order at 9.37 am.

1. **Approval of Agenda**

Approved with one addition - AGM debrief.

Moved: Tim Beischlag/Adena Brons

Carried.

2. **Approval of April 18 meeting minutes**

Approved as circulated.

Moved: Ljiljana Trajkovic/Ronda Arab

Carried.

3. **Business arising**

- The 2024 AGM was held on zoom yesterday and almost 200 members attended. It was a full agenda and members wrote to thank SFUFA for managing the discussions well and keeping everyone on track. The vote for the two special motions on Israel/Palestine will be held electronically and will start on Monday.

4. **Presidents Report**

- CUFA BC meeting and Distinguished Academic Awards event: Kumari attended with SFUFA staff. It was also attended by the new Minister of Advanced Education and SFU's VPA. Dr. Amy Parent from SFU Education won the Ehor Boyanski academic of the year award. Some other topics discussed at the CUFA meeting: Associations are reporting a rise in member investigations; UBC is drafting an academic freedom policy; UVIC has cut its operating budget by \$13M due to a decrease in international student enrolment; Various violations of the collective agreements have been reported at UBC & UNBC; UVIC & UNBC are pushing to enforce their respectful workplace policy.

5. Executive Director report

- SFUFAs bargaining team will meet with CEE members on Monday to begin discussions re a new collective agreement for the group. Bargaining with the university will start in June/July.
- CAUT Council April 25th: Faculty Associations have expressed solidarity with the Association of McGill Professors of Law (AMPL) who have been picketing since April 24th; Delegates at CAUT voted to join the call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, and the motion called on Canadian universities to support Palestinian Students and Scholars at Risk programs; Recent studies have indicated a large increase in the percentage of students seeking accommodations and its impact on academic staff.
- Advocacy: Brian noted that this year so far, Membership Services has handled 120 investigations.

6. Member Services report – Jennifer Scott

- Jennifer gave an update on her advocacy cases.

7. a) Faculty of Grad studies proposal

- The proposal to establish the Office of Grad Studies (GS) as a Faculty of Grad Studies (FGS) is attached with the meeting package for all to review, it was noted that SFUFA is being asked to provide feedback on the document. There was much discussion about the proposal at the executive table and SFUFA's concerns were noted. Exec members are being asked to send their feedback to Kumari by next week.

b) Academic Freedom Survey

- The Academic Freedom Group has asked for an opportunity to review SFUFA's survey before its circulated to the membership, and the executive recommended scheduling a meeting to broadly review the survey.

8. Committee Reports

Equity & Human Rights: Ljiljana is getting ready to hand over Chair duties to the newly elected Chair, Claudia Wong, from Linguistics. The committee Terms of Reference needs to be tweaked and sent to Brian for review. Ljiljana noted that attendance at committee meetings is low.

Parking Committee: The next meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday May15th. It has been reported that speed bumps are being installed in the North Parking Lot.

Community Engagement: It was noted that the issues re: unclean washrooms, sanitation concerns and maintenance that SFUFA previously raised at the consult meetings are being brought to the Central University Health and Safety Committee (CUSHC) for discussion. The MSO noted that the issues related to the contract cleaning staff which were raised at the last month's consult, have been documented in an email and sent to the AVP Facilities & Campus Planning and to the VP Finance. Janice gave an update on the Med School discussion @ Senate.

9. Items for Consultation – May 16th @ 10:30 am

- i. **Business Arising:** we would like to hear follow-up to our issue last month related to housing-crisis impacts

at SFU.

ii. **Transparency motion from AGM:** At our AGM, members unanimously passed the following motion regarding budgetary transparency:

1. Whereas over the last six years SFU revenue has increased: tuition by \$40 million and provincial government grant by \$130 million (see Tables 1 and 2), thus ensuring that we can deliver on the academic mission of the university;
2. Whereas SFUFA has several times over the last decade warned the administration about the dangers of excessive spending on administration (APSA managerial positions and APSA excluded positions in central units, external consultants, legal fees);
3. Whereas SFU finds itself in a dire budget situation due to said excessive spending, not due to lack of revenue;

BE IT RESOLVED that SFUFA calls on the SFU administration to learn from past mistakes and avoid repeating them in the future, by:

1. acknowledging and accepting responsibility for past administrative spending;
2. presenting a plan for controlling and constraining future spending on administrative units, with transparent effective mechanisms for ensuring compliance by all units.

Appendix: Revenue increase1

Table 1. Tuition revenue, credit and non-credit courses, in thousands, for fiscal year end

2025 (budget)	2024 (forecast)	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
326,446	317,802	315,772	313,133	305,905	292,879	276,841

Table 2. Government grant, Province of British Columbia, in thousands, for fiscal year end

2025 (budget)	2024 (forecast)	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
371,159	374,666	296,025	301,484	277,499	259,953	244,188

iii) **Budget cuts update:** We would like to have an update on the budget cuts management, including information on what may be happening with buy-outs and/ or layoffs, and which areas are likely affected.

iv) **New online Quali system:** SFU's new system for signature sheets related to grants is creating a number of problems for faculty members, and we would like to discuss some of the challenges.

v) **DAC:** We are interested in hearing an update on the status of the DAC. It has been an important space for faculty gathering, and we would like to hear if and when it may be available again.

10. Other Business:

- Ljiljana and Adena won't be present at the May 16th consult.
- Kumari invited the executive committee to meet for lunch at Biercraft following the last consult on June 20th.

11. Adjournment. There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned at 11.19 am.