



FACULTY SENATE

Faculty Senate Resolution Number F-2023-01

To: Dwayne Smith, Ph.D., Interim President, Southern Connecticut State University
From: Natalie Starling, Ph.D., President, SCSU Faculty Senate

The attached Resolution of the Faculty Senate is entitled:

RESOLUTION Regarding Resolution Regarding the CSCU Budget Crisis and Proposed Academic Program Planning Process

This Resolution was approved by Faculty Senate on: 09/13/2023

- This Resolution is presented for APPROVAL
- This Resolution is presented for INFORMATION

In accordance with the CSU-AAUP Contract (Article 5.10), "When the Senate makes a written recommendation to the President, the President shall acknowledge and respond to the recommendation in writing within fifteen (15) school days of receiving the Senate's recommendation."

After considering this resolution, please indicate your action on this form and return it to the President of the Faculty Senate.

Natalie Starling Digitally signed by Natalie Starling
Date: 2023.09.14 16:28:24 -04'00' 09/14/2023
Natalie Starling, Ph.D., President, Faculty Senate Date

cc: Robert S. Prezant, Ph.D., Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

ACTION OF THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

Resolution for Approval:

- Resolution APPROVED
- Resolution DISAPPROVED (Provide comments below or attach statement)

I have noted that I have recieved the Resoultion, without a approval nor disapproval.

Resolution for Information:

- Resolution NOTED (applies to Informational Resolutions only)

[Signature area]

Dwayne Smith, Ph.D., Interim President, SCSU 10/4/23
Date

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Resolution Regarding the CSCU Budget Crisis and Proposed Academic Program Planning Process

Whereas, Southern Connecticut State University exists for the primary purpose of furthering academic excellence;

Whereas, The Faculty Senate is the official governing body for shared governance;

Whereas, CSCU and SCSU are facing monumental and escalating projected budget deficits over the next several years;

Whereas, The CSCU Board of Regents resolution dated June 28, 2023, and titled "RESOLUTION Concerning THE CONNECTICUT STATE COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES SPENDING PLANS FOR FY 2024 AND ADDITIONAL ACTIONS TO RESOLVE CURRENT AND FUTURE BUDGET SHORTFALLS" calls upon each CSCU institution to devise, by November 1, 2023, a ... (see RESOLUTION dated 6_28_23);

Whereas, The faculty of SCSU have been tasked by the university administration, pursuant to the BOR's charge related to the projected multi-million dollar budget deficits across the CSU institutions, with undertaking an urgent comprehensive academic program review for purposes of identifying potential cost savings;

Whereas, An approach to academic program review focused only or primarily upon budgetary concerns places those concerns ahead of the academic and educational values, and thus endangers the academic integrity of the institution;

Whereas, Such an approach to the current budget crisis implies that the purpose of academic program planning is to generate decisions about the elimination of departments and programs and the termination of faculty positions;

Whereas, Neither the CSCU system office nor the SCSU administration has provided the faculty with crucial requested information defining the mechanisms and metrics by which information about academic programs and departments will be employed to reach such decisions;

Whereas, The pursuit of the current Academic Program Planning is redundant with several well-established and comprehensive ongoing mechanisms for said review, including annual department reports, STAR reviews, and reviews by numerous external accrediting agencies for the university, its schools and colleges, and its departments and programs;

Whereas, The Collective Bargaining Agreement between CSU faculty and CSCU already includes well-defined processes for the proposal, consideration, and implementation of program and department revision, reorganization, and/or elimination and for the termination of faculty, and it is not the role of faculty bodies to make any determination about changes to, or elimination of, programs outside of that process;

Whereas, Increasing the university's revenue and funding from the state government is the most viable pathway to fiscal solvency;

Whereas, The most practicable pathway to sustainable fiscal viability for the university, to the extent that it involves reducing the university's budget, is a gradual, predictable, and carefully planned diminishment of funding, rather than the abrupt and large-scale cuts proposed by Connecticut's governor and approved by the legislature; and

Whereas, The high-quality public education reflected in the programs at SCSU represent significant economic value for our state and provide an engine of social mobility for our citizenry; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the faculty calls upon CSCU administration to amend their austerity-focused approach to academic program planning and the impending fiscal crisis to include and place greater emphasis on revenue-side solutions; and

Resolved, That the faculty calls on the CSCU System Office to fulfill its pledge and make its intentions and process transparent around academic planning, so it can be reviewed, discussed, and debated by all stakeholders- including students, faculty, and staff- in a democratic process and so each program review is aligned with the missions of each institution; and

Resolved, That in the interest of shared governance, all currently collected data and reports (completed or in progress) regarding the academic planning process be given to the university senates so faculty can participate and properly evaluate the validity of the proposed metrics and results; and

Resolved, That in the interest of shared governance, the currently proposed timeline by the CSCU System Office be removed and redesigned in consultation with the university senates; and

Resolved, That the faculty calls upon CSCU administration to collaborate with us in creating and implementing a sustained campaign of public information and legislative and gubernatorial advocacy for the educational value of the university and the need for adequate, stable, and predictable state funding for public higher education.