



FACULTY SENATE

Faculty Senate Resolution Number F-2023-05

To: Dwayne Smith, Ph.D., Interim President, Southern Connecticut State University

From: Natalie Starling, Ph.D., President, Faculty Senate

The attached Resolution of the Faculty Senate is entitled:

RESOLUTION Regarding Support for Presidential Search Concerns at Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU) and Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) Senate Response to ECSU

This Resolution was approved by Faculty Senate on: 12/06/2023

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, Ph.D.
President, SCSU Faculty Senate

DocuSigned by:

Signature 19EA4433...

12/8/2023
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 (Attach statement)

Resolution for Information:

Resolution NOTED (applies to Informational Resolutions only)

Dwayne Smith, Ph.D.
President, SCSU

DocuSigned by:

Signature 02411672DC8741E...

12/10/2023
Date

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Resolution For Information:

Support for Presidential Search Concerns at Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU) and Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) Senate Response to ECSU

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

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

Whereas, The Faculty Senate recognizes its role within the Connecticut State University (CSU) system in representing SCSU faculty as one of four members that constitute the CSUs (CCSU, ECSU, SCSU, and Western Connecticut State University (WCSU));

Whereas, The Faculty Senate recognizes such a role includes a shared responsibility to strive toward collective awareness of and support for the efforts of the other CSUs to further academic excellence and engage in shared governance;

Whereas, The Faculty Senate has historically expressed support for other institutions within the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities system ([Resolution F-2017-05](#); [Resolution S-2017-10](#); [Resolution F-2022-04](#));

Whereas, The ECSU and CCSU Senates recently passed Resolutions regarding changes to the presidential search process, which include forgoing public campus visits and public forums for presidential candidates (attached); and

Whereas, The [AAUP Statement on Presidential Searches](#) (attached) specifies that “AAUP policy statements make clear that such decisions to forgo public campus visits and public forums by finalists violate longstanding principles of shared governance. Shared governance helps ensure that universities and colleges serve the public interest... Faculty members should demand that their institutions observe established norms of shared governance by involving faculty representatives in all stages of the search process and by providing the entire faculty and other members of the campus community the opportunity to meet with search finalists in public on campus.”; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the SCSU Faculty Senate supports the Resolutions from ECSU and CCSU.

**Eastern Connecticut State University Senate Resolution SR 23/24 – 04
Senate Resolution on Campus Visits for Presidential Searches**

WHEREAS Chancellor Cheng notified the ECSU Community on 9/12/23 that he was launching the presidential search process;

WHEREAS the ECSU Community was notified in the CSCU System Office document “Process for the Appointment of a CSCU University President” that no presidential candidate would visit the ECSU campus;

WHEREAS past CSCU policy regarding presidential searches has required finalists to visit CSU campuses to meet faculty, staff, and students **prior** to being offered the position;

WHEREAS this past CSCU policy regarding presidential searches and campus visits has only helped, and not hindered, the search process;

WHEREAS some candidates might be wary of accepting an offer from an institution that they never have visited;

WHEREAS appointing a campus president that the majority of faculty, staff, and students have never met undermines confidence in that candidate, as well as the system office and board which approved such a process;

WHEREAS this new structure of CSCU presidential searches lacks transparency and ECSU is a public institution that requires transparency;

BE IT RESOLVED that all finalists in the ECSU Presidential Search should visit the ECSU campus to meet faculty, staff and students **prior** to being offered the position.



William Lugo, Senate President October 31, 2023

RESOLUTION ON PRESIDENTIAL SEARCHES

WHEREAS, each of the colleges and universities that comprise CSCU is headed by a president;

WHEREAS, it is crucial for the future of each university that it be headed by a highly qualified, competent, and experienced academic;

WHEREAS, the decisions made by the president of each university have an impact on the lives and careers of hundreds of dedicated teaching and administrative faculty members, and thousands of students;

WHEREAS, it is essential for a successful president to foster positive relationships with the teaching faculty, administrative faculty, and students of the institution;

WHEREAS, teaching and administrative faculty members who have dedicated decades of their lives to the education of our students are in the best position to assess the qualifications of applicants to the position of a university president;

WHEREAS, a presidential candidate who does not visit the university campus as part of the hiring process will have extremely limited opportunities to interact with teaching faculty, administrative faculty, and students as part of that process;

WHEREAS, a qualified presidential candidate who does not have the opportunity to visit campus as part of the search process might be reluctant to accept the position;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the CCSU Faculty Senate demands that all presidential searches in CSCU must be national searches conducted consistently with principles of equity and inclusion;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the CCSU Faculty Senate demands that such presidential searches should be conducted by a single search committee, who reviews the credentials and interviews candidates, and makes hiring recommendations to the CSCU Chancellor, with more than half of the search committee being members of the teaching and administrative faculty of the institution whose president is being hired, elected by their peers or by faculty representative bodies;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED; that the CCSU Faculty Senate asserts that presidential search committees must establish criteria for the selection of the president, and that such criteria must include that applicants must hold an earned terminal degree in their field, and have many years of higher education experience, including at least some years as a high-ranking administrator in an institution of higher education;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the CCSU Faculty Senate demands that searches for university presidents be conducted according to [principles espoused in the AAUP Statement on Presidential Searches](#), and in particular, that presidential searches must include a campus visit for every finalist.



November 3, 2015

Statement on Presidential Searches

In recent months at a number of colleges and universities across the country controversy has emerged over decisions by governing boards to conduct searches for new presidents or chancellors in secret, abandoning the previously standard practice of inviting a select group of finalists to visit the campus and meet publicly with faculty and other members of the campus community. The rationale for such secrecy is that open meetings discourage applications from highly qualified candidates, although no evidence has ever been offered to suggest that this is in fact the case.

AAUP policy statements make clear that such decisions to forgo public campus visits and public forums by finalists violate longstanding principles of shared governance. Shared governance helps ensure that universities and colleges serve the public interest. Serving this interest is why we have public universities and colleges and why we grant special tax status to nonprofit private universities and colleges.

As the Academic Senate at Sonoma State University has declared, "Forgoing announcing finalists' names publicly and scheduling official campus visits for them would be behavior more characteristic of a private corporation than a public university. Doing so would also mean a less transparent search process and less confidence in the outcome on the part of the university community and public. . . . Such visits give the university and public insight into finalists' knowledge of the campus and their ability to unify and lead the students, faculty, staff and administration. They also give finalists insight into the university community they aspire to lead."

Although governing boards have the legal responsibility for selection of a president, the process of selection is fundamental in determining which candidate has the most appropriate academic leadership and administrative skills needed to lead the institution. The 1966 [Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities](#), formulated jointly by the AAUP, the American Council on Education, and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges states:

Joint effort of a most critical kind must be taken when an institution chooses a new president. The selection of a chief administrative officer should follow upon a cooperative search by the governing board and the faculty, taking into consideration the opinions of others who are appropriately interested. The president should be equally qualified to serve both as the executive officer of the governing board and as the chief academic officer of the institution and the faculty. The president's dual role requires an ability to interpret to board and faculty the educational views and concepts of institutional government of the other. The president should have the confidence of

the board and the faculty.

A 2013 report from the AAUP's Committee on College and University Governance entitled [Confidentiality and Faculty Representation in Academic Governance](#) declares:

Unless mandated to be open by state law, many such searches [for higher administrative officers] have an initial, confidential screening stage conducted by a search committee that includes faculty members. The next stage is normally one in which finalists are interviewed. At this point in the process, the names of finalists should be made public to the campus community so that the community at large, faculty committees, or at least selected faculty members have an opportunity to interview the finalists and forward their views to the search committee or to a consulting firm employed by the college or university.

The conclusion of the same document recommends:

Searches for presidents and other chief academic officers should have an open phase that allows individual faculty members as well as faculty bodies to review the credentials of finalists, ask questions, and share opinions before a final decision is made.

Finally, the AAUP website provides a [Presidential Search Committee Checklist](#) to guide institutions in the application of these policies. This emphasizes that

open visits are crucial in the success of the search process because they permit members of the campus community to participate in providing impressions, as well as to contribute to the candidate's understanding of the culture of the institution. In this final phase of the selection process, open visits present vitally important opportunities for both the campus community and the candidate to determine each other's suitability. This final step is extraordinarily useful to the search committee in making its final recommendation to the board.

The AAUP thus calls upon colleges and universities to resist calls for closed, secretive searches and reaffirm their commitment to transparency and active faculty engagement in the hiring of higher administrative officers. Faculty members should demand that their institutions observe established norms of shared governance by involving faculty representatives in all stages of the search process and by providing the entire faculty and other members of the campus community the opportunity to meet with search finalists in public on campus.

Rudy Fichtenbaum, AAUP President

Henry Reichman, Chair, Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure Michael

DeCesare, Chair, Committee on College and University Governance