



Policy Board Meeting Minutes

September 4, 2024 at 3:30 pm

Zoom: <https://usffa-net.zoom.us/j/81764954683?pwd=VUPLwOaC1RblULbX2EfHUB7SeftlfJ.1>

Reps Present:

Brandi Lawless, President	X	Robert Boller, Arts	X	Gina Solares, Gleeson	X
Sarah Burgess, VP of Member Advocacy	X	Steve Roddy, Arts	X	Amy Gilgan, Library	X
J Garrett-Walker, VP of Shared Governance	X			Ursula Aldana, SOE	X
Ben Levy, VP of Member Engagement	X	David Guy Brizan Sciences	X	Danfeng Koon, SOE	X
Leigh Meredith, VP of Communications	X	Sarah Camhi, Sciences		Monika Hudson, SOM	X
Anthony Patino, VP of Finance	X	James Wilson, Sciences	X	Jerome Stewart, SOM	X
Lilian Dube, Arts		Scott Nunes, Sciences	X	Xiaohua Yang, SOM	X
Phillip Choong, Arts	X			Alice Fiddian Green, SONHP	X
				Janice Mark, SONHP	X

Non PB members present: Chinyere Oparah

3:30-3:35 Call to Order

President Lawless welcomed members to the meeting and explained a change in policy re meeting openers; the Union Blessing will no longer be read at every meeting in the interest of time, and the Land Acknowledgement is currently being revised

- Approval of Minutes:
 - May 2, 2024: https://docs.google.com/document/d/13RGEgSNkw_H4ljgVor6SkEsmxQMejHgrxTwjQyF6sec/edit?usp=sharing

Motion to approve the minutes passed



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3:35-4:00 Agenda Item 1: New Policy Board Representative Onboarding

Purpose: To orient new policy board members to the operations and function of the union

Slides:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1acvshtD8Q0Sjvo9gS7TjnAJOalB32l3_-F6QgZUI3Y8/edit?usp=sharing

Information	<p>Re-introduction to Policy Board, including the following topics (see the slides for more details)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New Executive Board Officers and “Vice President” positions were explained in terms of how they align with previous positions (treasurer/secretary, etc) - Policy Board structures and members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 26 members - Variety of committees (division councils, USFFA committees, Joint USFFA/Admin committees, Reps to the Board of Trustees) - USFFA Committees: Communication, Solidarity, Engagement, Finance, Grievance - Policy Board Overview and Responsibilities - Vacant Seats in CAS (4) - PB Meetings in 24-25: all meetings will be on zoom except for the last meeting of the semester (Dec 4th), which will be in person for socializing and celebration - Governance Structures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Division Councils (Arts/COSEC/Gleeson, etc) - these are all part of the USFFA and should be regularly reporting to the USFFA - Joint USFFA/Admin Committees (Core Advisory, University Curriculum Committee, etc) - Most of the positions on these committees are filled - Faculty Reps to BOT Committees (all positions are full) - PB Meeting Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings are open to all USFFA members; Non PB members can speak, but limited to one set of remarks per motion; send PB agenda items to Leigh (VP of Communications)
Discussion	
Decision	

4:00-4:10 Agenda Item 2: Committee Sign-up

Purpose: For new policy board members to sign up for union committees

Information	<p>Committee Sign-Ups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All PB members must participate in one committee - Grievance committee requests support, particularly for members to empathize with other members and act as
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	<p>“intake” to help gather initial information to report to the VP of Member Advocacy (Sarah Burgess)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Committee on Committees: This committee ensures that all committees are filled, and reviews sabbatical merit and support funds - Communications Committee: Provides support for various USFFA communication modalities (website, Weekly Update, social media), brainstorming new/better ways to communicate - Membership Engagement: Encourages member engagement and requests brainstorming for more ways we can get members engaged with the union (regional meet-ups, etc) - Finance Committee: Provides assistance with following guidelines (tax, etc) and abiding by AFT/CFT standards
Discussion	
Decision	<p>Committee Signup: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fhec7TMWGe7nogbM2aogJloCVeIXqZGDpYOIVPx6ZB4/edit?gid=0#gid=0</p>

4:10-4:30 Agenda Item 3: Changes to service/tracking

Purpose: To discuss how service is allocated and tracked amongst faculty, particularly across divisions

Information	<p>The way that service is counted and allocated has changed from past practice; course release has decreased.</p> <p>We want to track these changes and assess the need for action or further research.</p>
Discussion	<p>Members discussed/commented on this issue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is impacting SONHP, including the elimination/lessening of much of NTA. Workload that previously merited NTA is now being considered as part of the contractually obligated “service.” - Difficult to say “no” to assignments (unclear if there are repercussions). The workload is not diminishing. <p>Pres. Lawless noted that the response to this issue from the union lawyer was that we need to track our service appointments and also say “no.” We can pursue this issue as a “grievance” if members refuse an assignment and experience repercussions.</p>
Decision	

4:30-4:55 Agenda Item 4: Shared Governance conversation in CAS

Purpose: To discuss the process by which CAS is merging or changing department structures



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Information	<p>Last semester there were sudden announcements about department closures and mergers in CAS, which were then walked back. Admin admitted that communication was not effective, and so the union was asked to be involved in this process. In discussing this with our lawyer, the lawyer has confirmed that this (changing department structures) is within the admin's jurisdiction. So how do we move forward as part of this conversation?</p> <p>One suggestion was a series of summits with case studies. We need parameters and a sense of objectives (what goal do we need to reach so we can help determine what best to cut or how best to (re)allocate resources). The timeline is accelerated and some of these decisions need to happen this year.</p>
Discussion	<p>Members discussed and commented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This has been a key conversation in SOM, and SOM faculty need to be part of this conversation in CAS
Decision	

4:55-5:00 Agenda Item 4: Approve budget update (Motion)

Purpose: To approve a motion to update the budget to include a summer stipend for the VP of Member Advocacy

Information	<p>There's a new position that's been created: VP of Member Advocacy. Sarah Burgess. Sarah did a lot of work over the summer to address issues that the former EC (Karen Sawislak) previously addressed/ (i.e., over 22 grievances/contract issues)</p> <p>Motion put forward to request approval for a budget modification to add a summer stipend for the VP of Member Advocacy, retroactively applied for last summer (\$1,782), and to be a standing stipend for the position going forward. We do have the funds for this because we aren't currently paying an EC/ED.</p>
Discussion	
Decision	Motion approved

5:00 - 5:15 Agenda Item 5: Reports

This section of the meeting consists of reports from USFFA Officers, USFFA Committee Chairs, etc. There may or may not be motions during this section of the meeting.

- President's Report

Pres. Lawless thanked the faculty who collected their free lunch in the first week of the Faculty/Staff Dining Room, and reminded members to use the space if we want to keep it open. She reiterated the importance of the space for cross-division conversations



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- September 17: Pres. Fitz and Provost Fung will be joining us for an informal lunch in the Dining Room. Many of the faculty have commented that Pres. Fitzgerald has not been present or available recently, and he heard this and is joining us for both this lunch and an upcoming PB/GMM meeting. Prov. Fung will also be joining us on a separate GMM/PB.
- Class Action Lawsuit. All we know is that if the letter says you qualify then you should be able to cash those checks.
- Term Task Force Group: Pres. Lawless is meeting with David Philpott on the 9th to assess progress
- BOT Meeting Report: As we know, USF didn't make our enrollment goals. However, our discount rate was less than what was budgeted. This does make up for some of the gap. But while we have more than our budgeted amount of Pell-eligible students, we missed the mark for "middle class" students (those just slightly above Pell eligibility).
 - Over 100 courses were eliminated; but other programs and initiatives are being created to help close the budget gap and foster fruitful and creative relationships (e.g., visiting student and internship programs).
 - The word from the admin is that it's time to "modernize" our pedagogy
 - Trying to push 4+1 programs more for increased yield
 - Increased difficulty in recruiting athletes
 - Currently, we are at the peak of college-age students, but next year we hit the first point of shrinkage. We are competing for fewer students, but UCs expect to be accepting more; religious-affiliation is declining; half of the Jesuit institutions missed enrollment targets (but half did not)
 - Lawless brought up the point to BOT that we should be recruiting students for the Spring semester who took a FAFSA-related "gap year"

Questions and Discussion:

- What about the "Horizons Collective"?
 - Provost Fung said that the proposals are being developed - they are "curating a pathway" for 1,2, 3, 4 years. "Gateway" classes will have a template that anyone can adapt. There will also be a "Solutions" template - leaning into SF-based problems that will be addressed in the "Solutions" lab.
 - Some things will be modeled after the Honors College and lessons-learned from that experience
- What exactly is the process? Is this just another way to shrink programs? There was a comment about "fewer people" on campus to adapt to the fewer number of students
 - Provost does keep talking about "right sizing" the university, and that some programs will close. But it's not "fit in the Horizons collective or lose your job." If you have a strong major, that will likely stand. If not, adapt to the Horizons, or teach in the Core.



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- How are the enrollment targets calculated and does anyone from the union look over this?
 - We have reps on UBAC and for the Finance Committee for the BOT. This is how we get info about how enrollment targets are calculated. Jonathan Cromwell is our BOT rep, but we need a UBAC rep. Please nominate yourself or a colleague!
- **VP of Member Engagement Report:**
 - Someone stopped by from the janitorial union at the Solidarity Tabling Event this week; the university is attempting to lay off a large percentage of the janitorial staff without a reason or rational other than budget constraints.
 - The janitorial union is moving forward with a ULP (unfair labor practice strike) because of this.
 - Pres. Lawless will be reaching out to our lawyer but will likely be putting out information on strikes and supporting picket lines to our members
- **VP of Shared Governance:** Still need Division Council reps for Arts and SONHP.

Meeting adjourned: 4:50 pm
