



# Policy Board Meeting Minutes

**October 2, 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     | X | Monika Hudson, SOM         | X |
| Anthony Patino, VP of Finance             | X | James Wilson, Sciences    | X | Jerome Stewart, SOM        | X |
| Lilian Dube, Arts                         | X | Scott Nunes, Sciences     | X | Xiaohua Yang, SOM          | X |
| Phillip Choong, Arts                      | X |                           |   | Alice Fiddian Green, SONHP |   |
|                                           |   |                           |   | Janice Mark, SONHP         | X |

**Other members: Bernadette Barker-Plum, Jonathan Hunt**

## 3:30-3:35 Call to Order

- Approval of Policy Board Minutes for [September 19, 2024](#)
- Minutes approved

## 3:35-3:45 Agenda Item 1: President's Report

*Purpose: Pres. Lawless will provide updates on recent events*

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| Information | <p>Pres. Fitzgerald is still president despite some ambiguity in the resignation letter; the timeline for his stepping down is currently indefinite.</p> <p>BOT has reached out to HR to start the search process immediately; the goal is to have a new president by Fall 25. Faculty will be involved in the search; the USFFA has requested an Eboard member to be involved.</p> |
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|            | <p>Pres. Lawless asked the Provost questions about the transition that she will attempt to answer during her visit today. The provost did clarify that some of the leadership changes are lateral moves, not “promotions.”</p> <p>David Philpott officially confirmed that the enrollment metrics were not met to re-open the contract, so negotiations will not take place this SY.</p> <p>Public Safety is opening extra parking spaces. See the map for opened spaces: <a href="https://myusf.usfca.edu/sites/default/files/documents/OMC/USF_Campus_Transportation_map.pdf">https://myusf.usfca.edu/sites/default/files/documents/OMC/USF_Campus_Transportation_map.pdf</a>. And you can just use your one card to get into those parking lots</p> <p>Pres. Lawless reached out to the deans of all divisions to encourage and invite them to engage in similar shared governance conversations to the upcoming CAS summits, but there has so far been no uptake of this model. Questions for Provost Fung will involve questions around how she encourages Deans to engage in shared governance.</p> |
| Discussion | Discussion of shared governance models in other divisions, such as SOE. SOE reps reported that the division is restarting measures for incorporating faculty voices (measures which have somewhat atrophied in recent years).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Decision   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

## 3:45-3:55 Agenda Item 2: Debriefing Leadership Transition

*Purpose: Discuss impacts and next steps in the wake of Pres. Fitzgerald’s announcement of his departure and generate additional questions for Provost Fung’s visit*

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| Information | Pres. Lawless asked for input on questions or concerns to raise with the Provost.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Discussion  | <p>Members thanked Pres. Lawless for info about Pres. Fitzgerald’s timeline, committee composition. Also, members raised concerns about Provost Fung not being mentioned in the original email, as well as concerns around all the promotions being from Student Life (as opposed to Academic Affairs).</p> <p>Admin shared with Eboard that there are a number of other Jesuit Universities also looking for new presidents.</p> <p>Q. Is there more info about Donna Davis’s promotion?<br/> A. Provost Fung said told Pres. Lawless that she’s not able to answer this because this decision was made by Pres. Fitzgerald and his advisors, and that she’s not sure if this is a compensated position</p> <p>Members also discussed whether Pres. Fitzgerald should join PB in November, since he is the person that can answer questions about Donna Davis. Members suggested that Donna Davis, Julie Orio, and Shannon should also be invited to join.</p> <p>Eboard also shared that they were told that Charlie Cross is looking to retire</p> |



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| Decision | Members suggested that Donna Davis, Julie Orio, and Shannon should also be invited to join the next GMM (instead or in addition to Pres. Fitzgerald). |

## 3:55-4:25 Agenda Item 3: Increasing Member Engagement

*Purpose: Brainstorm ways to engage members in shared governance*

### 2.1. Overview of issues

### 2.2. Break-Out Rooms for brainstorming strategies:

- What do you see as the major faculty issues you are facing today?
- What's one issue you'd like to see policy board address?
- How do you see yourself participating best on policy board?

### 2.3 [Department assignments](#) (determining which PB reps are responsible for communicating with which departments)

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| Information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you see as the major faculty issues you are facing today?</li> <li>• What's one issue you'd like to see policy board address?</li> <li>• How do you see yourself participating best on policy board?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Discussion  | <p>Members discussed safety and transparency - members are worried about where to bring concerns about their colleagues, but not sure where to safely have conversations. Is the union this space?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Eboard clarified that our provenance is the contract/CBA/labor conditions. We've been pushing back on Deans wanting us to mediate issues between faculty that really should be HR issues, or issues for the bias response team. We have to make sure that we aren't taking on a management role, because that has legal ramifications.</li> </ul> <p>Members suggested that we (re)create an "ombudsman" role, which other universities have, and which we may have had in the past. Eboard noted that they've brought this up in the past and it's definitely something to raise again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Members noted that when they raise concerns about admin, particularly in SOM but not limited to it, there's a feeling that it's been disrespectfully responded to. There are issues around communication and faculty voices being ignored. Former union Pres. Webber met with SOM faculty, and wrote a long list of concerns about SOM management and shared this with the Provost - yet it seems like it wasn't acted upon. Faculty are worried about repercussions/retaliation around raising issues formally - faculty without tenure are in particularly risky positions. How can the union help provide safety?</li> <li>- Eboard response was that it's really important to share concerns in</li> </ul> |



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|          | <p>collective forums like this, to see that it's not isolated to one division. Also, we need concrete examples (for example, of retaliation), because this is data that our lawyer can use.</p> <p>Members commented that the way that administration recruits from PB and Eboard creates suspicions and seems problematic in terms of trust/safety to be transparent. This is why the combination of "shared governance" and the union seems problematic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Eboard responded that this is a useful concern to share, but we can't create a policy that members can't take promotions.</li> </ul> <p>Members also noted the importance of having a shared mode of communication that is not USF emails, so that we don't get tracked.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Eboard noted that all Eboard members have emails that are NOT USF emails, so can't be tracked. We are also currently gathering personal emails through the member survey exactly for this purpose.</li> </ul> <p>Members noted that term faculty feel a lot of worry about job security, given the upcoming budget cuts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Eboard noted that we are very close to resolving the Term Faculty Task Force, which also involves rolling contracts and due process for termination or non-renewal of contracts.</li> </ul> |
| Decision | <p>Eboard needs PB reps to sign up to represent/communicate/liaison with specific departments. For CAS Arts, please sign up to 4-5 departments, for all other reps, please sign up for 3-4. <a href="#">Department assignments</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

*At this point the Policy Board meeting transitioned to a General Membership meeting.*

52 members joined the General Membership Meeting

- Approval of General Membership Minutes for [March 7, 2024](#)
- Minutes Approved

Pres. Law encouraged all CAS members to join the upcoming CAS summits (first on Friday)

## **4:30-5:25 Agenda Item 4: Discussion with Provost Fung**

*Purpose: Discuss impacts and next steps in the wake of Pres. Fitzgerald's departure; Division issues and restructuring*

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| Information | <p>Questions for Provost Fung:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What does shared governance mean to you, and how do you model and encourage that in your Deans?</li> </ol> |
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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Room for co-design, including all (FT and PT Faculty, librarians, and staff)</li> <li>- All deans approach this separately. CAS deans are collaborating with USFFA with the Summits - this will provide a cross-department conversation to change curriculum, be more efficient in delivering education. This is really effective for a school like CAS, which is so diverse and varied.</li> <li>- All the deans want feedback, despite challenges. For professional schools, it's more program specific, with different demands for accreditation. They are using their current shared governance committees - like Curriculum Committees - but also own venues for working with programs. Their goal is not to create new committee work for faculty but leverage what they have.</li> <li>- Eboard response: Some of these structures may not be functioning effectively; we'd like to see big, visible conversations.</li> </ul> <p>2. How are you evaluating the Deans, and how do you include faculty input</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I value faculty feedback for evaluating Deans and have various mechanisms. Formal feedback involves HR, but I also bring feedback from faculty to Deans in a less formal way.</li> <li>- Eboard: Will you commit to doing formal 360 evaluations of deans?</li> <li>- I collaborate with HR, but i will involve feedback from all sides</li> </ul> <p>3. We know that December is when Deans are bringing ideas for cuts to you. How soon will these cuts be made and how much? What do we need to do to stabilize?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As we think about "right-sizing," I asked the Deans to review programs and use the data. Right now, there are no new resources, so how can we re-allocate resources to restructure or redesign or deactivate?</li> <li>- The shortfall this year is 16 million. We don't know yet how to close the shortfall. We also need to address the 20 million from last year that we didn't close</li> <li>- Eboard; Why can't we sell assets to cover this?</li> <li>- Moving capital to cash assets is only one time, but doesn't change the bottom line. We would also make the asset/debt ratio less favorable. We really need to think of the ongoing revenue we need to run our business.</li> </ul> <p>4. Questions about leadership transition. Is Father Fitz still president, for how long, and what will the search and transition look like?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pres. Fitzgerald is still the president. He's been working with the board to create a full transition timeline. We're looking for an expedited process that still includes feedback from the community.</li> <li>- Eboard: As legal counsel, what will Donna Davis do? There are questions about her position</li> <li>- She will facilitate projects during the transition (it's a temporary position). These are initiatives with enrollment or facility issues.</li> <li>- Eboard: Is there a reason we're not doing an interim position?</li> <li>- We may be doing an interim position. These decisions are based on discussions with the board.</li> </ul> <p>5. What are the compensation packages looking like for these promotions, and where is this money coming from?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not everyone is getting additional compensation, but this money is not coming from academic units.</li> </ul> |
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| Discussion | <p>Members voiced concerns about committee work and recommendations that are not taken up. Is this wasted work? It feels like we're doing the same things over and over.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provost Fung pointed out that it's difficult to change, but we are at a pivotal moment. We aren't going back to our former size -and even if we could, it's not the right business model for us. We need to find a structure with a price point that students and families can and will pay.</li> </ul> <p>Members expressed that the Provost's goals have long included revision of the Core. How do you see the Core process, given these crises?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provost: I'm still looking at the completion of the design phase this year, and implementation in Fall 25. But it took a few years to teach out the old core while bringing in the new core, so the implementation may take more than 1 year. So yes, we're on track, but the "3-year-plan" may be longer because the implementation may take longer.</li> </ul> <p>Members expressed a lack of shared governance in SOM, and a high level of fear amongst faculty, especially with enrollment numbers down. Deans are not welcoming shared governance. Faculty in SOM felt they had expressed concerns that were not heard. How can we ensure that faculty voices actually are being heard in all schools? How can we do this better?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provost: I have passed on concerns to the Dean - if you feel the Dean is not responsive or timely, then we need to figure out how to make the existing spaces more effective. I can partner with the Union to set a meeting to talk to the Dean.</li> </ul> <p>Members raised the issue of enrollment, given losing April Crabtree; what can you share with us about enrollments and what the problem was? How much is it due to FAFSA or other issues (SF, peer institutions), etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provost: Upcoming Chat and Chai addresses exactly this topic - please join! We are working with an independent consultant to figure out what happened. We are looking at tuition, our market position - our brand and reputation is not as strong as our competitors; we are looking at a few years of negative perception of SF; visa issues with international students. How can we come up with a system to begin a financial aid package early; tell the story of why our education is distinctive - what is the value? Families are asking about work-force preparedness - this has to go into the Core. Marketing our distinctive value. We need faculty and librarians to be part of recruitment events so families can see who students will really be learning with, and outreach to local high schools.</li> </ul> <p>Members: Please don't blame the faculty for not doing enough when there are huge structural changes that need to be made. This should have come as no surprise to anyone - the alarm bells have been sound for years - our inability to change and evolve has now become detrimental.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provost: I actually don't think that faculty are being blamed. But I think recruitment and retention are all of our jobs. I also think that the work of the faculty is creating and revising majors.</li> </ul> <p>Members: What is wrong with our business model?</p> |



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| Decision |  |
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## 5:25-5:30      Announcements and Open Comment

*During this section of the meeting, any USFFA member can make an announcement or raise an issue that ought to be addressed at a future Policy Board meeting. No motions or discussion is permitted during this section of the meeting.*

- Meeting adjourned at 5:31