



santa rosa junior college

All Faculty Association

*AFA is working for you.
The strength of faculty working together.*

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

February 14, 2024

(Approved by the Executive Council on February 28, 2024)

Executive Councilors present (noted by *):

* Sean Martin, <i>presiding</i>	* Brenda Flyswithawks	* Venona Orr	* Ivan Tircuit
* Ashley Arnold	* Amanda Greene	* Jessie Paisley	* Carlos Valencia
* Marc Bojanowski	* Steven Kessler	* Salvador Rico	* Sarah Whyllly
* Bita Bookman	* Dawn Lukas	* Emily Schmidt	* Patsy Young
* Wayne Downey	* Siobhan McGregor-Gordon	* Christie Soldate	

Negotiators/Appointed Positions present: Mark Ferguson

Staff members present: Stephanie Simons

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. in Bertolini 4734, on the Santa Rosa campus and via Zoom conferencing.

CLOSED SESSION REPORTS

1. **Conciliation/Grievance Report**. This report and discussion were conducted in Closed Session.
2. **Cabinet Report**. This report and discussion were conducted in Closed Session.

Closed Session adjourned at 4:03 p.m.

OPEN SESSION

Open Session reconvened at 4:03 p.m.

MEMBER CONCERNS

1. **Professional development for associate faculty**. A Councilor reported on behalf of a member that associate faculty teaching exclusively online never have a FLEX obligation, and thus never have an opportunity for paid professional development. The faculty member requested that associate faculty teaching exclusively online should have access to paid professional development opportunities.
2. **AFA representative for online teaching**. A Councilor reported on behalf of a member who requested AFA dedicate a representative to the interests of faculty who teach online.
3. **DSPs not found on the AFA webpage**. A Councilor reported that a faculty member was looking for DSPs regarding requirements for online teaching, but was unable to find them posted to the AFA website.
4. **Edit DSP form**. A Councilor reported on behalf of a member who requested that the text in last box on the DSP form be enlarged as it is too small and illegible.
5. **College-wide training for online instruction**. A member stated that the District Online Committee was discussing the idea of college-wide training for online instruction.
6. **Faculty grievance process**. A member expressed concern about the manner in which the grievance process is conducted. They stated that not all sides of the conflict are heard before a resolution is made. If a faculty member has not accurately stated a situation, other faculty members, including Department Chairs, may be put in an unnecessarily difficult position. It was requested that the Dean include the Department Chair in discussions to confirm departmental procedure before any resolution is made.
7. **AFA letter to unit members regarding SLOs**. A member read a prepared statement in response to a recent communication from AFA regarding student learning outcomes. The member quoted, "ACCJC requires that all course SLO's be assessed, not that all faculty members conduct SLO assessments."

The member feels those most qualified to assess a course's learning objectives are the faculty teaching the courses. The member would rather the Union work with the District to discern an equitable and sustainable way for SLOs to be completed by the instructors of those courses being assessed. The member stated that AFA appears to be operating as a political party, endorsing select District-wide initiatives. The member asserted that AFA works at the behest of the faculty, and faculty have an increased desire to conduct SLOs. The member requested that AFA increase the frequency with which they seek the opinion of the faculty.

8. AFA letter to unit members regarding SLOs. A member read a prepared statement in response to the AFA email sent on February 7, 2024 regarding SLO assessments. The member was particularly concerned with the fifth paragraph which cited examples of types of college service, with learning assessments at the bottom of the list. The member expressed disappointment that the Union placed the assessment of student progress as a form of college service, not as a part of instructional duties. The member noted that the statement, "ACCJC requires that all course SLOs be assessed, not that all faculty members conduct SLO assessments," read like overt discouragement. Further, the member disliked that AFA stated a faculty member may "decline the assignment." The member expected the Union to negotiate appropriate compensation and working conditions so that faculty can successfully complete the obligations of their job, including SLOs. The faculty member felt the data from SLOs are crucial to determining meaningful assessments. The member announced that the Academic Senate recommended a specific plan to address SLO assessment completion, and the AFA email strays outside of the purview of the collective bargaining agent.
9. AFA letter to unit members regarding SLOs. A member involved in the development and implementation of the SLO assessment plan expressed disappointment with AFA's letter. It was viewed as a negative response to their work, and left them feeling personally slighted by their Union.

MINUTES

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the January 24, 2024 Executive Council meeting (19 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions). (Approved minutes are posted at <http://www.afa-srjc.org/minutes.shtml>).

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. AFA Retreat: February 23, 2024

Sean explained that the semesterly retreat will occur on February 23. The AFA Cabinet discussed some possible topics of discussion, and invited the Council's input on topics for the retreat.

- Suggestions from the Cabinet included:
 - Union literacy: EERA, workload versus working conditions
 - Bypassing and direct dealing
 - Special assignments: short-term or long-term duration
 - Explanation of why AFA would be involved in certain things
- Additional ideas may be submitted until Wednesday, February 21.
- Questions & Comments
 - C: Some ideas include EERA, union obligations, and contract language. It would be useful to talk to members regarding the use of contract language to protect the working conditions of faculty.
 - C: A session on negotiation techniques was suggested.
 - Q: Can the Council decide the prioritization of the negotiations list for the semester?

2. AFA Leadership Elections: At-Large Negotiators

The process developed by the Elections Policy Workgroup guides the election. The Cabinet determined that it was necessary to divide the election for At-Large Negotiators into two elections because one position was open only to associate candidates and the second was open to contract and associate candidates. The associate-only position was determined via online voting, with a clear, majority winner. The second At-Large Negotiator position was opened to both contract and associate faculty. Statements were made available to Councilors in the packet. In the event no one candidate secures a majority vote, another election will be held between the top two vote recipients.

- The winner of the associate At-Large Negotiator position was Emily Schmidt (8 of 15 in favor, conducted online).
- Ballots for the second At-Large Negotiator position were delivered by email directly following the meeting, with a seven-day voting period.
- Questions & Comments

◦ Q: What is the timeline for the next election?

⇒ A: The next balloting period opens today after the meeting and closes on Wednesday, February 21.

3. One-semester Contract Councilor Vacancy, Fall 24

Sean announced that the winner of the contract Councilor Vacancy for Fall 24 stepped down due to scheduling conflicts. There remained two candidates. Sean asked the Council to discuss whether to appoint a candidate or send the vacancy to an election.

- Several Council members expressed support for sending the vacancy to the membership for an election because the position was contested.
- Clarification was provided regarding the process of appointment versus election.
- A motion was made and seconded to move this Item to an Action Item.

4. FACCC Contract Membership Referendum Results

Sean announced that the FACCC referendum passed, with an overwhelming majority: 91.67% of participating associate faculty and 84% of participating contract faculty voting to join FACCC. AFA will have an opportunity to send a representative to serve on the board of FACCC. AFA will benefit from access and financial support for attendance at conferences, and the services that FACCC will bring to AFA. The Item was opened for discussion and comment.

• Questions & Comments

- C: On February 13, FACCC presented a webinar on the 50% Law. There are non-faculty forces that want to remove the law. It is important to understand that entities wishing to remove the 50% law means they wish to devote less than 50% of the budget to student contact hours.
- C: The League wishes to remove the 50% Law. The League is outspoken against an audit of District expenses and comparative changes between non-fac and faculty positions. The number and salaries for administrative positions have skyrocketed in the last decade, where faculty compensation has not had nearly as brisk an increase.
- Q: Would AFA be interested in having a discussion to push in the other direction, advocating for more than 50%?
- C: Thanks for all involved in educating faculty about FACCC and the benefits of Contract Membership with FACCC, and in achieving meaningful participation in the referendum.
- C: Thanks especially to Emily Schmidt for her work in educating the faculty. AFA is encouraged by the interest of the members in the town-hall meetings.
- C: As a CDCP faculty member, there is worry about AB1705, AB705, the effects of COVID-19, and students not graduating. While the rationale behind some of these things is understood, there remains no mechanism for students to take classes that prepare them for rigors of transfer-level courses. Many students are leaving because they cannot complete the transfer level courses. Is this a topic that can be addressed by FACCC?
 - ⇒ A: Yes, this is absolutely a topic which FACCC can address. FACCC is dependent on other bodies (unions, faculty organizations, etc.) to inform their discussions and direction.
- C: SGA is scheduled to attend a SSCCC policy conference for students. One of the resolutions they were asked to support was related to student equity and graduation rate. Graduation is not an accurate metric by which to measure all students. CDCP students are not represented in SGA, which is antithetical to student equity.
- C: FACCC has a long-established relationship with the CCC Student Senate and the new advisor to this statewide group is a former legislative advisor for FACCC with great understanding of the need for faculty and students to work together. Some students that were part of the hearings that have led up to some of the larger initiatives in recent years, have revealed that they were coached to speak out without consulting with faculty.
- C: A Councilor recommended AFA request a workshop around the idea that CCC are for career education, not only for transfer. Non-transfer students need equality and representation.
- C: There was a recent case of counselors filing a PERB charge around workload. Allied faculty could use the help of FACCC to ensure all allied faculty work is being recognized.
- Q: What is the next step to picking the board member? When does membership begin?
 - ⇒ A: The contract with FACCC specifies the Union will appoint a representative to the FACCC board. The Council will need to develop a process for this appointment. The contract with FACCC has been approved and is active, requiring only a list of AFA members to finalize billing with the college.
- C: FACCC will host some informational sessions for AFA. FACCC has previously held workshops on unemployment and retirement. FACCC may be able to provide some guidance on helping those we would traditionally serve that do not fit the college-track system.

- C: Can we ask that FACCC work to rescind WEP?
- ⇒A: Yes. The Retired Teachers Association (RTA) also works on such topics. Please see Sean for contact information for RTA.

ACTION ITEMS

1. One-semester Contract Councilor Vacancy, Fall 24

- This Item was moved from a Discussion Item.
- A call was made for further discussion.
- There being no further discussion, a motion was made, seconded and approved by unanimous show of hands to send the vacancy to the membership for an election.

OTHER REPORTS

1. President's Report.

- College Council and Shared Governance. Siobhan McGregor-Gordon served as the President's proxy for the most recent meeting of College Council. The group is developing a process for creating the Shared Governance handbook. This handbook can serve AFA very well if the district follows through with commitments made in recent years at College Council. It will describe what shared governance does and does not do. AFA's goal within committee meetings is to ensure that the union's purview as exclusive bargaining agent is being upheld. The district has assured AFA that the handbook will contain language to ensure that members working in shared governance understand when a topic should be brought to AFA, rather than addressed in a shared governance meeting. It is hoped that this understanding will address any ill-feelings that may occur when AFA must object to work completed illegitimately, without being fully negotiated between the District and AFA. When shared governance interferes with bargaining rights, AFA has a legal obligation to interject.
- New Leadership at the College. Sean remains encouraged by Dr Garcia's open, forthcoming stance when working with the Union.
- Associate Faculty Inclusion. Sean stated he will work to include associate faculty more systemically in shared governance. He noted that other groups feel their place is also inequitable, and those groups are welcome to discuss their positions. Associate faculty have no system wide method of being included, and focus will be on that body.
- FACCC Membership. Sean will share more about integration with FACCC as it is available.
- Consultation to inform the HR Department. Sean met with a consultant who was hired to inform the HR department. AFA wants to help the District to better understand its duties, and pursue processes that more effectively meet the needs of AFA members. Previously Sean shared with the Council, a list of concerns he took to the consultant. The process will develop a report to share with faculty.
 - Concerns brought to the consultant:
 - ADA compliance. HR should have a thorough understanding of their legal obligations with ADA and related statutes in California. There is an acute need for more timely responses to a person's ADA needs.
 - Training on EERA (union law). Sean offered to assist with a training session on the topic. Most of AFA's interactions are with the grievance process. Though AFA has seen significant improvement in this area, AFA will remain diligent in ensuring that this process follow Article 11, not the protectionist instincts of the administrative body. Currently, HR answers to the President. It was asked, to the extent possible by law, that HR be independent of direct oversight by the administration. Many faculty feel that bringing concerns to HR is a dead-end because the District is more interested in protecting the District rather than faculty. The consultant agreed that following the law requires that HR resist partisan prejudices, but perceptions and interpretations can interfere with the best intentions.
 - Uphold Contract language. This affects primarily Article 11: Conciliation/Grievance/Arbitration and Article 23: Misconduct Investigation and Progressive Discipline. Sean wants all of the team involved in upholding the letter and spirit of the Contract to understand those aspects of the contract.
 - Faculty-on-Faculty Conflict. It was requested that the process to deal with faculty-on-faculty conflict be clearly outlined. AFA doesn't have a direct role in this matter, but there needs to be a mechanism where a person can feel their concerns are heard and addressed.

AFA requested that all processes be conducted according to a procedures that align with the law and protects persons who are the recipients of problematic behavior from being forced into an alternative remediation process. This would include a more effective process on receiving complaints of harassment and discrimination. The impression currently given is that, unless required by law, HR does not keep a record of informal complaints received. Going forward, there is expected to be a significant turn-over of personnel in HR and so it is important that such changes are implemented as new leaders are onboarded.

◦ Questions & Comments

- Q: Was there any timeline established for these ideas to be implemented, specifically regarding faculty-on-faculty conflict?

⇒A: It will be included in a report that will be presented to the board. To my knowledge no timeline has been established.

- AFA Executive Council Policy Changes. The Cabinet will be entertaining changes and updates to the existing policies to align them with the evolved needs and current practices.
- Guided Pathways Workgroup. The District, Academic Senate, and AFA have each forwarded two candidates for the workgroup. Dr. Garcia will be making the final selection of three faculty members to serve on the workgroup.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Stephanie Simons.