Meeting Minutes - SSU Staff Council
November 3, 2026

Call to Order
A meeting of the SSU Staff Council was held on November 3, 2026. The meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m.
Attendance: 59 participants

Chair's Report
- Kyle shared that he attended a meeting where the first draft constitution for a system-wide CSU Staff Council was ratified. There will be an election soon for two SSU staff reps to the system-wide Staff Council. Kyle and Sadie met with Staff Council officers in SFSU and East Bay, and they hope to invite them to our Staff Council meetings in the future. Once the final system-wide Staff Council constitution is sent to Kyle, we'll send it out on Stafflink and upload it on our Staff Council website.
- We are still looking for staff reps for the Provost and the VP for Strategic Enrollment Management search committees and ask that staff fill out the interest survey by Friday.

Administration & Finance Report
- Chief Financial Officer Mike Ogg shared an experience following up on a faculty complaint that was raised at the Academic Senate meeting last week. A faculty member reported that they saw recycling and compost going into the trash by Toast. Mike spoke with the custodian who takes out the trash at Toast and said the signage on the cans needs to be updated to indicate which side should have which type of refuse. He shared this as an example of an issue quickly resolved, and invited staff to bring issues forward to him. Hope shared that some staff have seen recycling going into trash bags in offices, and Mike said he will investigate this claim. He admitted that our janitorial team is understaffed, and that his office will look into how they can better serve the campus.

Academic Senate Report
- Sadie Pettit gave her report, since she acted as proxy for Megan Kane at last week's Senate meeting on 10/29.
- President Spagna discussed a new financial aid initiative, tentatively called the Seawolf Promise, which would cover tuition and mandatory fees for eligible students with demonstrated financial need. The proposed benefit would extend up to four years for first-year students and two years for transfer students. The university is expanding guaranteed-admission and transfer partnerships, including new agreements, involving institutions serving Lake and Mendocino counties. The new "So. Much. More." marketing initiative displayed on 101 driving into Petaluma, plus other billboards, buses, and online social media. There's an opportunity to host students to Santa Rosa Junior Colleges California Experience. Students will visit Sonoma County from April 8th through 26th, and host families are needed. The president and his wife have participated in the past and highly recommend it. Application deadline is Nov. 6th. Email Bryan Burton for info. The president met with an individual in charge of 12 Sonoma County libraries who is interested in co-branding opportunities with the university. SSU loaned the use of our pools to the city of Rohnert Park when theirs had to shut down, building on a pattern of "town and gown" partnership with the local community.
- Ed Mills presented an update on strategic enrollment. Fall enrollment was 4,529 students, exceeding the university's internal goal of 4,400. SSU welcomed approximately 1,060 new students this fall. For spring, the university is projecting enrollment of approximately 4,450 students. The goal is to exceed 250 new students entering in spring, and Ed expressed confidence that the university will meet that target. The university is projecting annualized enrollment of just under 5,000 students for this academic year. This figure includes

summer enrollment and some dual-enrollment students, and is different from the fall census headcount. Ten athletic teams are expected to return next fall, potentially bringing approximately 200 additional students.

- A faculty representative reminded the Senate that CFA was conducting a strike authorization vote and encouraged eligible members to review bargaining communications and participate.
- A faculty member asked whether the university's computer refresh program was restarting. Some faculty had been scheduled to receive replacement computers approximately two years ago, before the program was paused. The president confirmed that restarting the computer refresh is a high priority. Leadership is working with IT, the provost's office, and others to establish a regular replacement cycle and address the backlog. The stated goal is to establish a predictable refresh cycle for both faculty and staff, rather than addressing replacement needs sporadically.
- The Senate considered three academic proposals, all of which advanced from their first readings to second readings at a future meeting: an Ethnic Studies bachelor's degree, combining existing programs into one major with four concentrations (Black Studies, Chicano and Latino Studies, Native American Studies, Asian American Studies), an accelerated pathway allowing students to earn both a bachelor's and master's degree in History (students could apply up to 12 units toward both degrees, reducing the total coursework required), and a proposal to rename the Department of Music as the School of Music, with a proposed implementation date of fall 2027 (they believe the designation would make its programs more competitive in recruiting students interested in professional music education). SSU does not currently have a consistent, clearly defined policy governing when academic units should be designated as departments, schools, or colleges. The administration and Senate leadership acknowledged the need to develop such a policy.
- The Office of Tribal Relations delivered a presentation about its work supporting compliance with federal and California Native American repatriation laws, commonly known as NAGPRA and CalNAGPRA. All campus employees are expected to complete the annual NAGPRA survey. This includes staff in administrative offices, facilities, grounds, laboratories, storage areas, and other locations. (Staff have recently received an email to this effect) Last year's survey achieved approximately 65% participation. The office is seeking 100% participation this year. The office can be contacted at nagpra@sonoma.edu.
- The Senate also held a first reading of revisions to the Student Grievance Policy. The proposed changes are primarily intended to clarify and streamline the policy, removing some procedural detail from the policy itself.
- Claude AI: The Chancellor's Office is conducting a pilot involving Claude AI for research, data analysis, literature synthesis, and other advanced applications. Participation is limited, but the opportunity is not restricted exclusively to faculty. The provost's office is coordinating interest and selection.
- Assoc. Students: Student government reported upcoming service opportunities, a November food and hygiene donation drive, and three open student government positions.

Thomas Dixon, Chief Information Security Director and Data Privacy Officer, San Francisco Bay Region Network Information Technology Services

- Thomas Dixon joined to talk about AI security. He sees it as another tool we have in our toolbox. What you put in, you'll get out. We have been given a space to work in, and there are certain things we can and can't do in that space. Pay attention to what the rules are for the use of these tools. Always check the work that comes out of AI – don't blindly trust the results. The data doesn't live with us, so we don't want to put Level One data into ChatGPT. Kyle asked for clarification about Level One and Level Two data (sometimes FERPA data). Thomas said Level Two data is not blocked from using in ChatGPT (Level One data is not allowed). He reminded the group that AI is used a lot in phishing schemes and has made them much more sophisticated. If an email offers

you something 'too good to be true' it probably is. He warned people against buying gift cards for their boss after receiving urgent emails. Sara shared that many staff are leery of using AI, and it would be nice to have more direction to promote its correct use. Thomas said the SFBRN security site will be publishing soon, and AI resources will be included. People with follow-up questions can email him: thomas.dixon@csueastbay.edu.

David Crozier, AVP for Financial Services

- David Crozier shared a presentation that he made to the CSU Board of Trustees about the SFBRN. SFBRN was created to help mitigate financial downturns at SSU, SFSU and CSU East Bay. It is intended to improve efficiency and reduce duplication. The network hopes to have 15-30% annual recurring savings. Labor is the greatest expense, and SFBRN planned on attrition and maintaining vacancies to reduce labor costs. SFBRN is working to align contracts. Financial Aid will be the next division proposed to join the network. The three Presidents meet monthly about the network. Jeff Wilson is still the CEO and CFO, but they are currently interviewing for his replacement. The Chancellor's Office invested $10 million into the SFBRN for the first 5 years (covering new salaries and Deloitte consultant contract) since the discussion of a campus-based shared services model had stalled for many years, and it needed financial backing to have every chance of success. They plan to use the savings from the three campuses to pay for SFBRN expenses when the $10 million is used up. Each campus covers 10% of the SFBRN cost, and the remaining 70% is divided based on enrollment (33% EB, 48% SFSU, 19% SSU) and is adjusted each year based on enrollment. They're continuing to work on consolidating contracts across campuses. Kyle shared that the WSCUC steering committee is looking at how to answer the concerns that WSCUC had during their visit last year. The steering committee has to compile a report addressing concerns about savings, expenses, and impacts of the SFBRN. Sadie asked who will be in charge of spending the $10 million from the CO. David said that Jeff Wilson drafted the initial $10 million budget, and proposed it to the CO. Projected 2026 savings are only from salary savings (not from consolidation of contracts and other efficiencies). Sara asked if current savings are being felt by campuses, or do those just show up in the full SFBRN budget. David said that our campus will eventually benefit from the savings. Kyle shared that leaving positions vacant leaves work with no owner, and asked if there is an expectation that their work is no longer being done. David said that efficiencies of scale should eventually make up for that work not being done. Kyle asked for a timeline for when people can expect to get relief from doing double-duty. David said that eventually Jeff (or the future CEO) and Karen Moranski will make the call on which open positions can be backfilled. They should make these choices based on the full picture of how work is being done, and what savings need to be made.

Adjourned at 1:57pm
Aidan Humrich
Custodian of Records



Date of Approval: 11-5-26