

FACULTY SENATE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
February 15, 2023

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met on February 15, 2023 at 3 p.m.in MITC 201 and on the TEAMS platform, Vice Chair Robert Detmering presiding.

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Robert Cohn, Robert Detmering, Jose Fernandez, Roy Fuller, Kathy Gosser, Karen Hadley, Patrick Harris, Candace Harrington, Eugene Mueller, Chin Ng, David Schultz

ALSO ATTENDING

Michael Cunningham, Xudong Fu, James Lechleiter, Becky Patterson, Bryson Sebastian

VOTING MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Enid Trucios-Haynes

CALL TO ORDER

ACTION ITEM: APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES - DETMERING

The minutes were rescheduled for approval to next week's meeting.

REPORT:STUDENT GOVERNMENT - SEBASTIAN

The SGA officers will meet with the mayor to discuss the possibility of adding security cameras on the Third and Fourth Street corridor. This security camera system has been approved for the East End.

REPORT: STAFF SENATE - PATTERSON

The Staff Senate met on March 14th and heard from President Schatzel and Dr. Kelvin Thompson. President Schatzel is holding a series of listening tours for faculty, staff and students. Dr. Thompson is the new Vice Provost for Online Strategy and Innovative Teaching.

REPORT: AAUP – CUNNINGHAM

AAUP has questions about the presidential and administrative searches and seeks clarification of The REDBOOK language concerning faculty consultation.

REPORT: FACULTY SENATE CHAIR – MUELLER

Chair Mueller reported on the following topics.

- **Declaration of Appreciation** – The statement of thanks for Dr. Lori Gonzalez's time as interim president was presented to her. A brief discussion took place on creating a similar statement for Dr. Bradly for his time as Interim Provost.
- **DEI Committee** – At a recent CODRE meeting, it was mentioned that the Faculty Senate had not created a DEI Committee. After reviewing the Senate information, the initial efforts to create a DEI committee were stalled due to the unavailability of potential committee members. Instead of discussion today, Chair Mueller asked this be added to an agenda in the near future.
- **President's Meeting Attendance** – Chair Mueller sought the committee's authorization to invite President Schatzel to every Faculty Senate meeting she is able to attend, as opposed to the standing two meetings per semester. The committee agreed to the invitation.
- **House Bill 136** – The SGA has asked the Faculty Senate to support its endorsement of House Bill 136. The bill proposes to freeze tuition at all public state institutions of higher education at the rate a freshman pays for their four year of attendance. Further, it proposes to add extra faculty and student representatives to the Boards of Trustees at the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville. As of Monday, this bill is not expected to move from committee. The protracted discussion was tabled to allow the guests to make their presentation.

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DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS – DETMERING

- **Sustainability Council Resolution – Dr. Xudong Fu and Mr. James Lechleiter**

The Sustainability Council is requesting the Faculty Senate's endorsement of the attached resolution to call on the UofL Foundation and TIAA to divest themselves of fossil fuels, land-grabbing and climate destruction. Further, the proposal requests that the University of Louisville sever ties with TIAA and replace it with another investment institution that practices only responsible investing. Dr. Fu is the chair of the Council's Finance Committee and he reported that a couple of years ago, the Sustainability Council was made aware of the unethical investments made by TIAA that led to this proposal. He presented some [background information](#). After Dr. Fu presented the resolution, this committee had a lengthy discussion on why the proposal only focused on TIAA when no information was presented on Fidelity, the other institution that serves UofL or how many people would be impacted with divesting from TIAA. Without enough information to make a fully-informed decision, the committee chose not to move forward with a vote on this issue. Dr. Fu presented

- **REDBOOK Items – Robert Cohn**

Senator Cohn, Chair of The REDBOOK Committee brought forth the following topics.

- **Minimum Guidelines – Ambiguous Language on Promotion to Associate Professor**
- **Unit's non-compliance with per cent of term v tenure-track faculty**
 - An in-depth discussion took place on the various practices in the units on both of these topics. It was suggested to review the unit documents and if there are revisions from The REDBOOK Review Committee report, to review for compliance at that time.
- **Miscellaneous Follow Up – Mueller**
 - **Regular Order of Senate Business** – Noting that this information is not in the Senate's bylaws, Chair Mueller sought input on the chair's authority regarding a motion that is sent to him via email. A motion for consideration by the Faculty Senate must be made from the floor by a member (faculty senator) who has been recognized by the chair.
 - **ChatGPT** – This is an ongoing discussion on what a policy may include. A brief discussion took place on the various uses/misuses of the platform.
 - **Union of Campus Workers (UCW)** – Chair Mueller invited the UofL representatives to the Faculty Senate meeting.
 - **House Bill 136** – There was no consensus of support for the bill or the SGA's resolution in support of the bill.

REPORTS: STANDING COMMITTEES - No committee reports were made this week.

- Academic Programs Committee (APC) - Harrington
- Committee on Committee & Credentials (CCC) - Gosser
- Part-time Faculty Committee (PTF) - Fuller
- Planning & Budget Committee (P&B) - Harris
- The REDBOOK & Bylaws Committee (RB) - Cohn

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Senator Hadley asked if UofL had lobbyists working on its behalf. Shannon Rickett is UofL's Associate Vice President for Governmental Relations and handles both state and federal legislative issues. The Washington, D.C. firm, Akin Gump handles federal issues.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen Henry
Senate Coordinator

February 10, 2023 DRAFT

**Resolution of the Faculty Senate of University of Louisville calling
on UofL Foundation and TIAA to divest from fossil fuels, land
grabbing, and climate destruction**

WHEREAS, in December 2015, 196 nations signed the Paris Climate Agreement and committed to work together to limit further temperature increases to 1.5-2 degrees C;¹

WHEREAS, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has reported that global emissions must be cut by 45% by 2030 in order to limit warming to 1.5 degrees C and avoid disastrous tipping points;²

WHEREAS, the OECD,³ the UNs Environment Program,⁴ and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights⁵ all call upon the financial sector to do its part in reducing climate emissions and respecting human rights;

WHEREAS, retirement manager TIAA has more than \$10 billion invested in the fossil fuel industry ⁶ and has directly financed the construction of Cricket Valley Energy in Dover Plains, New York, a fracked-gas power station in an economically disadvantaged community next to one of the largest freshwater wetlands in the Northeastern US;⁷

WHEREAS, TIAA owns over 2 million acres of farmland on four continents worth nearly 8 billion dollars, and is the largest accumulator of farmland in the world,⁸ and one of the largest in the timber industry with over 700,000 acres on three continents;

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¹ “The Paris Agreement.” 2015.

<https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>.

² “Headline Statements.” *Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5 °C*. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. 2018. https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2019/06/SR15_Headline-statements.pdf. ³ *Financial Markets and Climate Transition: Opportunities, Challenges and Policy Implications*.

Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). 2021. <https://www.oecd.org/finance/Financial-Markets-and-Climate-Transition-Opportunities-Challenges-and-Policy-Implications.pdf>.

⁴ “Climate change: implications for investors and financial institutions.” United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). 2014.

<https://www.unep.org/resources/report/climate-change-implications-investors-and-financial-institutions>.

⁵ “Human Rights, Climate Change, and Business: Key Messages.” United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights. 2020.

<https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/ClimateChange/materials/KMBusiness.pdf>.

⁶ Link for fossil fuel assets [DOES TIAA DIVEST HAVE THIS?]

⁷ <https://tiaa-divest.org/tiaa-nuveens-bad-bets-on-fracked-gas-power-plants/>

⁸ “2021 Farmland Report.” TIAA/Nuveen/Westchester. July 9, 2021. <https://www.nuveen.com/en-us/institutional/insights/respoeport>

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WHEREAS, these farmland and timberland deals⁹ have exacerbated the problems of deforestation,¹⁰ water contamination and human rights violations against local communities,¹¹ and illegal land grabbing in Brazil¹² and other parts of the world.

WHEREAS, TIAA has hundreds of millions of dollars invested in agribusiness companies associated with deforestation, land grabbing, labor abuses, human rights violations, and severe climate impacts, and billions of dollars in consumer-facing companies in the value chains of these companies;¹³

WHEREAS, over 1,000 institutions, including 100 colleges and universities, have already taken action to divest over \$8 trillion from fossil fuel industries across the globe;

WHEREAS, many of the faculty and staff of University of Louisville contribute to retirement manager TIAA's financial capital through their retirement accounts and recognize the responsibility that comes with such financial involvement;

WHEREAS, TIAA financing that contributes to GHG emissions, deforestation and rural land grabs represent a contradiction between University of Louisville's stated mission, the 2021 re-signing of the Carbon Commitment, and the university's history of leadership in sustainability, conservation, and human development;

⁹ "Timberland Sustainability Report: 2021." TIAA/Nuveen. October 16, 2021.

<https://www.nuveen.com/en-us/institutional/insights/alternatives/timber-sustainability-report>.

¹⁰ "TIAA's Farmland Funds Linked to Fires, Conflicts and Legacy Deforestation Risks in Brazil." Chain Reaction Research. January 23, 2020.

<https://chainreactionresearch.com/report/tiaas-farmland-funds-linked-to-fires-conflicts-and-legacy-deforestation-risks-in-brazil/>.

¹¹ Romero, Simon. "TIAA-CREF, U.S. Investment Giant, Accused of Land Grabs in Brazil". *The New York Times*. November 16, 2015.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/17/world/americas/tiaa-cref-usinvestment-giant-accused-of-land-grabs-in-brazil.html>.

¹² Freitas, Tatiana. "U.S. Pension Fund TIAA Embroiled in Brazil Land Purchase Probe." *Bloomberg*. December 17, 2020.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-12-17/u-s-pension-fund-tiaa-embroiled-in-brazil-land-purchase-probe>.

¹³ "Deforestation Free Funds." As You Sow and Friends of the Earth US. Accessed June 12, 2020.

<https://deforestationfreefunds.org/funds?q=TIAA>.

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Therefore, be it RESOLVED by the Faculty Senate that TIAA takes the following actions in a transparent, time-bound manner, and should TIAA not comply, the Senate asks that the University of Louisville administration replace TIAA with another investment institution that practices only responsible investing:

1. Enact an immediate moratorium on all new direct investments in fossil fuels;
2. Divest from all current fossil-fuel sector investments by 2025;
3. Divest from the Cricket Valley Energy fracked gas power plant in Dover Plains, NY;
4. Enact an immediate moratorium on all new investments in farmland, timberland, and industrial agriculture;
5. Work with independent experts to divest from large-scale landholdings and unsustainable industrial agriculture in a manner that restores landholdings to dispossessed peoples and strengthens local communities and food systems;
6. Commit to full transparency in its investments.

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