Summer Advisory Committee Notes

Meeting: Friday, August 21st at 4:00 PM via Teams

Attendees: Interim Provost Clark, Anita Brown, Brian Flores, Thomas Lamey, Amit Poddar, W Brooke Rogers, Ellen Schafer-Salins, Emily Zerrener

1) Concerns Around Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- The 2025-2026 SU AI Taskforce Executive Summary Included the Following Recommendations

From the AI Taskforce Report: *After reviewing the initial and short-term recommendations of the working groups, five funding themes emerged: faculty training and presentation support, pool of AI account licenses for learning and experimentation, pilot chatbot for gaining experience and learning, professional external AI use training for the campus, and engaging AI expertise (consulting) to provide strategic guidance.*

i) The estimated budget from the AI task force report is listed below:

(1) Faculty training and presentation support $50,000

(2) Pool of AI account licenses $60,000

(3) Pilot chatbot supporting Enrollment $50,000

(4) Professional on campus AI training $50,000

(5) Engaging AI consulting $50,000

Q: <u>What is the status of these recommendations? What happens when this funding is depleted?</u>

This full funding has been placed in the budget of Information Technology (IT). While this funding is essentially for up-front training (focused largely on education and professional development), the hope is to find continued funding for licenses, etc. that we deem necessary.

Q: <u>Should this funding all be with IT? Shouldn't CAFÉ and other faculty groups be involved and have some of the funding?</u>

The majority of this funding is indeed for licenses or other items that IT would be involved in purchasing. The funding is not just for Academic Affairs, but rather for the entire University.

Q: <u>Who will decide exactly what licenses, programs, etc. are purchased? Faculty, and Faculty Senate should be involved in these decisions.</u>

Interim Provost Clark is happy to hear from Faculty Senate (FS) regarding how to pilot programs and make decisions about final purchases for Academic Affairs. If FS wants to have a committee, such as the Library and Learning Resources Committee (LLRC) be involved, that can happen, but FS would need to inform her soon of a recommended process. We definitely will need input from faculty regarding use in the classroom and for research needs.

Interim Provost Clark wants to ensure that we have wide participation from faculty and requested how we might achieve that. SAC members suggested decentralization of funds/choices during the first pilot year with ways to then share what was learned; that there will need to be a clear mechanism to get multiple views and then to make decisions.

Interim Provost Clark has reached out to Ken Kundall, Associate Vice President of Information Technology, to get clarification on representation and process for decision making.

- <u>Q: What can faculty do or not do – what is okay and not by law (including FERPA)? And what is APC's involvement with AI concerns?</u>

  The 2025-2026 co-chair of the APC provided information in the SAC meeting. The APC believes it is very important that faculty understand that their full policies regarding AI use (including exactly what is permitted and exactly how violations will be handled for assignments and for assessments both inside and outside the classroom) need to be distributed to students in writing. Faculty cannot assume that students just understand what is permitted and not regarding AI.

  In April and in August, Deans were asked by the APC co-chair to distribute to all faculty (through chairs and directors) a statement from the APC about identifying their AI expectations to students in writing including a statement in their syllabi. For reference, that statement from the APC is appended at the end of these notes.

  APC wanted to provide further guidance for faculty prior to the beginning of the Fall 2026 semester. In August, several members of the APC met with SU's new General Counsel, Mark Romano, and then drafted a Guidance/FAQ related to AI for Faculty. The document is under review and the APC hopes to provide it to Faculty on Wednesday, 26 August.

  This APC statement and the APC Guidance/FAQ are <u>not</u> official policies, so they cannot be posted on policy web pages. APC members are discussing where the statement and guidance documents may reside on SU webpages.

Some APC members and the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, Melissa Granger, have developed an initial document for student guidance.

APC will continue to work on these issues.

SAC members discussed how difficult it is to create policy regarding AI because AI is a tool that students will need to learn to use, but that in some instances faculty will want to restrict. They do not want the time and energy spent by faculty in policing AI use to negatively impact our teaching or student learning.

Q: Can SU purchase and provide good AI checking software? Some APC members have asked FS Officers and Academic Affairs to consider Pangram as an AI checker.

Pangram does have promising statistics regarding false positives, but some more investigation into its performance would be needed. No AI checker is perfect and so an AI checker alone is not likely to be sufficient. APC is welcome to investigate Pangram and its cost, but IP Clark indicated that the last messaging she recalled from the University System of Maryland (USM) was that Universities could not purchase and use AI checkers. However, IP Clark will check to see if this is still the stance of the USM.

IP Clark has reached out to the Kirwan Center for more detail on current guidance. This is also on the agenda for discussion next week at the USM Provost and VPSA meeting. IP Clark will follow up.

2) FTNTT-Adjunct contracts, benefits, and access

- Please provide updates regarding dissemination to FTNTT faculty of what benefits are offered, how faculty obtain them, how faculty pay for those benefits.

  For both Full-Time Non-Tenure Track (FTNTT) and Tenure Track (TT) incoming faculty, the orientation that occurs in late August was changed to improve the information that is provided – to make it more clear. This training for incoming FTNTT faculty was also increased to a full day.

  The Office of Academic Affairs is working on a website for FTNTT faculty that will delineate benefits information in what is hopefully a simple and clear manner.

  Q: Are we sure that the information provided to FTNTT was clear regarding C2 benefits?

  IP Clark will investigate more regarding what Human Resources (HR) presented at orientation. This will be made clear on the Academic Affairs web page.

- Please provide updates on critical access for new FTNTT and adjunct faculty.

  We are trying to disconnect from the contract start date as many things as we can that faculty need to do their jobs effectively.
  - Melissa Thomas, Manager of Instructional Design and Delivery (IDD) has already made access to MyClasses available regardless of a contract officially being in place.
  - Lisa Gray, Director of the University Bookstore, is trying to make it so that faculty can order books for their courses regardless of a contract officially being in place.
  - Ken Kundell, Associate Vice President of Information Technology/Chief Information Officer, is trying to make as many items available as we can regardless of contract date. However some we cannot. Policy clearly prevents building access until the contract is in place. Many things are kept in gullnet, and because of FERPA, can't be accessed by people not on contract. They are working to separate verba connect and building access. MyClasses can be managed by Melissa Thomas as needed.

Q: Is it true that we expect contractual obligations to begin on 15 August, but it seems contract start dates are later? Is that not a significant problem? If this is true, can we not do something about this?

For all faculty, we ask that their contractual obligations begin on 15 August. The first pay cycle for TT faculty began on 19 August but for FTNTT faculty it begins on 26 August. Unfortunately the person in HR who made this discrepancy between the pay period and actual start date smoother in Workday has left SU, so HR is having to sort out how to make this more smooth. IP Clark is also discussing possible changes with Aurora Edenhart-Pope, Vice President of Administration and Finance.

Q: If there is not something in place that identifies to an originator why processing of a contract is stopped, can we institute such a practice to improve efficiency for the originator? (This question was asked and received a response prior to the meeting.)

At this time during this summer, IP Clark was not aware of alarming concerns regarding return of contracts in Workday.

3) 2026 COLA

- Will COLA follow the usual pattern, where the state makes SU pay it up front and then pays SU late in the fiscal year?

  This is still to be determined.

- If this funding arrives later in the year, will there be a call for proposals for one-time uses of surplus funds with a short response time, especially at the end of the Spring semester?

We recommend that a call for potential uses for such funds be made much earlier, even in the Fall (with the understanding that if there are no surplus funds, no projects will be funded).

IP Clark has developed a process that should make such calls be accomplished earlier. She has asked Administration and Finance that notification come earlier if we are in a similar position.

4) Open house and admitted students' day for Fall 2026 & Spring 2027

- There have been notifications of possible Saturday/Sunday (back-to-back) days for visitation /open house events. Is this plan definite?

  It is the plan, but it is not definitive. Students who play sports and participate in other extracurricular activities have indicated they cannot attend Saturday open houses. Hence Enrollment Management would like to offer Sunday open houses. Having a Sunday open house the day after a Saturday open house means less disruption for set up and tear down. Allen Koehler, Associate Vice-President of Enrollment Management, surveyed Deans and Faculty and received a favorable response.

  Q: SAC members who participated in open houses last year were not polled. This will be very difficult for smaller departments/programs. This will be a real problem if Faculty do not agree to do this.

  If we do not have enough faculty interest/buy-in this will not work.

  Q: Would Friday be a better choice than Sunday? Then visiting prospective students could see a more lively campus.

  Weekdays can be difficult because a large number of parents tend to work on weekdays. However, seeing the campus in full-swing on a weekday might be beneficial. IP Clark will reach out to Enrollment Management to see if a Friday would be considered.

5) Digital accessibility and support for faculty impacted

Are we providing appropriate support to faculty regarding making all of their materials digitally accessible?

The law regarding digital accessibility goes into effect April 2027.

The University has invested in more open captioning options for meetings (open captioning is automatically displayed while closed captioning is selected by the viewer). SU has purchased machines to provide open captioning during in-person meetings. The hope is to

add their use as an option in reservations/work-orders. These machines will be piloted at the Provost Welcome Back on 26 August.

Meeting time ended.

Notes respectfully submitted by Anita Brown, 22 August 2026.

APC Statement Submitted to Deans for Distribution to Faculty

(29 April 2026 and 7 August 2026)

Advice from the Academic Policies Committee regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Academic Misconduct

Views and practice regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI) vary among disciplines and individual instructors. Thus, there is no "hard and fast" rule regarding the use of AI at SU—faculty must decide for themselves whether they see it as a help or a hinderance.

The SU AI Task Force has recommended three levels of usage as guidance: Inclusive, Conditional, and Restrictive. The APC hopes faculty will use these levels or craft their own specific AI usage policies for their syllabi for Fall 2026 (and going forward). **If you need to charge a student with academic misconduct for AI use, it will be important to have a clear written statement, in your syllabus and/or in the written instructions for the assignment regarding what is acceptable.**

We hope this information will be helpful when you begin preparing for the Fall semester. As ever, if you have questions about this or other areas of academic policy, please reach out to one of the members of the committee.