

SJSU ERFA History - Part 1
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On September 17, 1985, seven emeritus faculty members met in the Alumni Room at San Jose State University to decide whether to try to form an Emeritus Faculty Association. The seven were Dwight Bentel (Journalism), Jim Brown (Education), Norm Gunderson (General Engineering/Cybernetic Systems), Walt

Dolores Spurgeon (Journalism), William Sweeney (Education), and Mildred Winters (History), Twenty-five people attended the February meeting, electing Mel Wright as President; Mary Bowman as Vice President; James Brown, Secretary; and Mary Gilbert, Treasurer. Three Members-at-Large were also elected: Norman Gunderson, William Sweeney, and Mildred Winters. The initial standing committees were Membership, Financial, Benefits and Services, Public Relations and Publications, and Activities. Within a year or two, there were also committees focused on Projects, Communications, and Amenities.

The purposes of the organization, as stated in the Constitution, have remained the same through time. They are to:

- Help emeritus and retired faculty members to maintain a continuing and fruitful association with the University
- Keep emeritus and retired faculty informed of University affairs and develop means to facilitate their participation in the life of the University
- Secure and enhance the status, rights and privileges of the emeritus and retired faculty of San Jose State University
- Encourage and facilitate the emeritus and retired faculty to continue their scholarly and professional activities (teaching, research, writing, consultation) as contributing members of the academic community of the University
- Provide social, recreational and educational programs for emeritus and retired faculty
- Contribute to achievement of the University mission by such means as may be determined by Association members.

From the start, the EFA had representation on the Academic Senate, an office, and bulk mailing privileges for letters and flyers. It also had 170 Charter Members (before counting any associate members).

*Also invited, but not in attendance were Peter Buzanski (History), Vergil Hughes (Education), Gerry Wheeler (History), and Pete Zidnak (Business).

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groups as well as more substantial awards since 2014 to faculty for research and creative activities. Once (1997) it funded a beautiful book of biographies of the retired faculty.

Over the years, adjustments were made to the composition of the Executive Committee of the board, the committee structure, and membership. The Bylaws of 1993 grant associate membership to “spouses of deceased SJSU emeritus faculty members, faculty participating in the Faculty Early Retirement Program, counselors, lecturers, and members of the SJSU administration.” By 2006, spouses of regular members of EFA were permitted to become Associate Members of the organization. At this time, Associate Members were also given voting privileges and the right to serve as committee chairs and members. A major revision of the EFA Constitution came in 2009-10 while Bobbye Gorenberg was President. EFA became ERFA: Following the lead of the statewide emeritus organization and several other CSU campuses, all faculty retirees (not just emeritus faculty), librarians and academic administrators who are CalPERS annuitants became eligible for membership. FERP faculty were dropped from the associate membership category because they are eligible for regular membership. The Executive Committee was renamed the Executive Board and was expanded. The Treasurer was no longer required to present an annual report and budget at the annual meeting. Chairs of committees were no longer required to file written reports with the Secretary, and the chairs were invited to all meetings of the Executive Board. The position of Webmaster was added.

Currently, we continue to adjust the Constitution and Bylaws to enable us to operate electronically and to bring you, our members, programs and activities that you will find both educational and interesting. From the start, the Newsletter contained a column with member news; it was first called Personals and is now called Chat Room. As then, so now we ask that you send us news that will help your colleagues keep current with your activities and accomplishments. This is one of the ways we can achieve our mission to help faculty members “maintain a continuing and fruitful association with the University.”