Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 22, 2021
Zoom

Attendance

Faculty Senate Executive Committee members present:
1. Mandi Lopez (President, VCS)
2. Ken McMillin (Past-President, AG)
3. Joan King (Vice-President, Food Science)
4. Fabio Del Piero (Secretary, PBS)
5. Marwa Hassan (Member-at-Large, Engineering)
6. Julie Wright-Rollins (Member-at-Large, Education)

Parliamentarian: Joan King

Senators present (X = Present; A = Alternate):

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Guests:
Arend Van Gemmert | Jane Cassidy | Brian Ainsworth | Erin McKinley | Eric Ballard
Fred Achazadeh    | Gundela Hachmann | Jeremiah Shinn | John Hopkins | Joy Blanchard
Judith Sylvester  | Kathleen P. | Marcus Spann | Ryan Landry | Cathleen Williams
Larry Rouse       | Chris Drew | Stacia Haynie | Jen Curry | Margaret Mary Dowell
Lauren Coats

Public Comments on Agenda Items
None.

Consideration of the Minutes from March 17, 2021
Moved by Katherine Henninger and Pamela Blanchard.
Approved unanimously with potential corrections.

President’s Report
1. The FSEC met with Board of Supervisors Chairperson Dampf. Chairperson Dampf expressed his commitment to meeting with faculty leadership. Hopefully, future interactions with the Council of Faculty Advisors will convince them of the need for faculty representation on the Board.

2. Points to be shared with the Council of Faculty Advisors: request equal opportunity to message the LSU community, any administrative tribulations associated with ongoing Title IX allegations are not to be associated with faculty in any way, and the request that a faculty voice be added to the LSU Board of Supervisors.

3. The FSEC supports the Staff Senate resolution that included recommendations for the LSU Title IX office as well as requesting that the Board of Supervisors should be more representative of LSU staff and include staff representation in some form.

4. Legislators appear to be supportive of faculty raises.

5. In terms of campus safety, a budget is in the works to improve campus lighting. There are dark and dangerous parts of campus that have raised concerns for years.

6. Workday changes for receipts have been implemented. Software functions will reduce workloads.

7. There was great consternation with the creation, distribution, and apparent plans for enforcement of PM-16 Protection of Minors Participating in University Programs. There are reinvigorated implementation plans that should be forthcoming.

8. The cost of tuition remission as described in Resolution 19-07 is currently being assessed by Tommy Smith in Finance and Administration. The Budget and Planning Committee is spearheading these efforts.

9. Maternity coverage for dependents will be included in upcoming LSUFirst plan negotiations.

10. The Student Information System procurement process is underway. A product is expected to be selected by early summer and then enter a 2-3-year implementation phase.

11. An outside vendor will be selected to do an in-depth study of pay inequities throughout the University.

12. An attack occurred during a highly attended, thoughtful, and enlightening forum for Asian, Asian American, and Pacific Islander Voices. We members of the FSEC extend out deepest sympathies to those who experienced the attack and are united in our support of our LSU colleagues regardless of personal characteristics, beliefs, or culture. The FSEC puts forth that the appropriate authorities make every effort to identify those responsible and sure that they experience consequences for the attack.

13. The FSEC was surprised at the announcement that Covid-19 vaccinations will not be required to attend in person classes at LSU. Faculty leadership had no notice or role in the decision.

14. Based on current communication with the Office of Academic Affairs, LSU plans to return to face to face instruction for Fall semester 2021.

15. Presidential search committee deliberations were broadcast live yesterday. Of the 23 candidates who submitted their materials for consideration, 2 were women. A total of 8 were selected for further review including 1 woman. Finalists will be selected by the end of this month.

16. Interim President Galligan removed himself from consideration for LSU President and Chancellor. The FSEC acknowledges a commendable leader during a tenure filled with social and political unrest superimposed on a global pandemic and including public exposure of administrator behaviors that endangered our students.

Q & A Summary:

Roger Laine: Who made the decision that classes start without a vaccination mandate?

Mandi Lopez: I do not know, but I will pursue.

Theda Daniels-Race: Will there be a mask mandate for Fall instruction? If the student refuses, can we ask them to leave and as a last resort, ask LSU Police to escort them out?

Mandi Lopez: That is a very good question and the FSEC intends to pursue that. As we move forward, there are many unanswered questions, and we will keep everyone informed to the best of our ability.

Update on the Response to the Husch Blackwell Report, Jane Cassidy, Interim Vice President for Civil Rights & Title IX

Professor Jane Cassidy serves as the Interim Vice President of the new Office for Civil Rights and Title IX. Her office is tasked with working through the Husch Blackwell recommendations. Their mission is to prevent discrimination and support those who have been discriminated against. Professor Cassidy gave an overview of their activities. The office operations have been expanded with the division of Civil Rights office and the Title IX office. Previously, the Title IX office reported to General Counsel. Civil Rights reports directly to the President and the Title IX division reports to the Vice President for Civil Rights and Title IX. State law will require quarterly reports. The offices are located in the LSU Quad. Professor Cassidy explained the new timeline for discrimination cases (no more than 90 days), the process for a complaint if the process was not handled properly, the restorative justice process currently in use, and the sanction for failure to report up as described in PM-73. There are several future items and deadlines in progress for the office such as: the new Civil Rights and Title IX policy that will describe reporting process, define mandatory reporters, and provide sanctions for employees who fail to report: July 15, presumptively appropriate Sanctions for students found responsible for sexual misconduct: July 15, and confidential advisors being identified, trained, and named on website: July 15. Professor Cassidy’s office has made several accomplishments towards training and education. Those are that: all Athletics appointees required to make reports of sexual discrimination of students directly to the Title IX Coordinator, a contract was established between Athletics and STAR for education, training, and policy development, a contract was established between LSU and STAR for education, training, and review of current online training modules, STAR has provided a first educational session on sexual misconduct to members of the LSU football team, and a bystander intervention program was implemented by
Athletics. Additional changes and deadlines for the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX include annual mandatory training for employees, graduate assistants, and student workers reviewed by STAR, recommendations included in revisions, and implemented: August 15, MyStudentBody training for new students reviewed by STAR, recommendations for new or additional training in place: August 15, and training for Title IX personnel: First week in June. Reporting can be completed through the website.

**Q & A Summary:**

Heather Kirk-Ballard: Are these changes system-wide or specific to the A&M campus?

Jane Cassidy: They are system wide.

Mandi Lopez: Is this the same as reporting to LSU Cares?

Jane Cassidy: No, reporting to LSU Cares is not the same as reporting to Title IX. There is no overlap.

Pamela Blanchard: If there is behavior that has occurred in the recent past, and because of that behavior that individual has left the country, should we report that behavior?


Julia Ledet: If a report was made to LSU Cares, would it make it over to Title IX?

Jane Cassidy: The Title IX coordinator sits on the Cares team; however, it is easy for things to slip through. Communication is challenging and continues to be a top priority.

Joan King: Why are there no faculty members on the Athletic Oversight Committee?

Jane Cassidy: I will ask.

**Standardized Syllabus Template with Required and/or Highly Recommended Components, Professor John Hopkins, Faculty Senate Courses and Curricula Committee Chair**

Professor John Hopkins, Chair of the Courses and Curricula Committee, explained that the standardized syllabus template was generated by his committee in response to the proposal requirement for new courses and new curriculum. The syllabus can be found on the Registrar’s website. Professor Hopkins emphasized that for general faculty, minor modifications could be made. It is recommended that a syllabus include contact information, office hours, course topics, assignments with the mode of transmission (i.e., Moodle), planned examinations, and grading scheme. Professor Hopkins repeatedly expressed that faculty have control over their courses including syllabi. These items are recommendations by the Senate Courses and Curricula Committee and should try to convey course information as clearly as possible for students. There are several statements that syllabi must include such as: an absence policy (PS-22), a statement on disabilities, LSU student code of conduct, and academic success. There are also considerations of requiring a Title IX statement.

**Q & A Summary:**

None.

**Supporting Survivors of Sexual Assault on College Campuses, Racheal Hebert, LCSW-BACS, President & CEO, Sexual Trauma Awareness & Response**

Postponed to the August meeting.

**Q & A Summary:**

None.

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**Old Business**

Postponed to August Meeting, Resolution 21-02, “Faculty Endorsement of the Graduate Student Bill of Rights”  
*Sponsored by Faculty Senator Daniel Tirone*

Ad Hoc Committee Minimum Standards for Remote Teaching, Professor Wright, Faculty Senate Member-at-Large
Professor Wright thanked the Faculty Senators for their previous comments and feedback. The recommendations originated from concerned faculty, students, parents. The Ad Hoc Committee collated all responses, and the suggestions were incorporated into the document. All senators should have received the updated document in the meeting notice.

Q&A Summary:
None.

New Business

First Reading, Faculty Senate Resolution 21-03, “Continued Vote of No Confidence in the LSU Board of Supervisors”

Sponsored by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and Profs. Kevin Cope and James Robinson

Whereas the Louisiana Constitution charges the Board of Supervisors of Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College (LSU) with supervising and managing the institutions, statewide agricultural programs, and other programs administered through its system, and

Whereas the Board of Supervisors is invested by law with the authority to organize the University as necessary to achieve its mission of delivering instruction, conducting research, facilitating scholarly activity, and performing service and outreach to Louisiana, and

Whereas the faculty or Faculty Council is likewise charged with establishing curricula, fixing standards of instruction, determining requirements for degrees, and generally setting educational policy, subject to the authority of the Board, and

Whereas the Board of Supervisors has not fulfilled its officially as well as frequently stated goal of unifying the LSU campuses into a single efficient system (“One LSU”) a failure which continues to hinder communication and collaboration among the faculty, staff, and students on the LSU campuses and which has created a confusing and inefficient non-system in which some administrators oversee all campuses and other administrators with similar titles only serve the A&M campus, and

Whereas athletic department personnel have not only been retained, but have escaped investigation despite documented evidence not only of the use of vulgar language, but also of a host of more serious violations of policies and best practices governing workplace behavior, including fostering sexism, indulging in racism, and regularly ignoring reports of sexual assault, and

Whereas the Board of Supervisors peremptorily and unadvisedly overruled the LSU A&M administration and LSU A&M faculty leaders by ordering that classes be cancelled on the occasion of the 2019 championship football game, doing so with little warning and with wanton disregard for the academic mission of the university, and despite having known the date of the aforementioned game for two weeks, leaving faculty, staff, and students little time to plan for said closure or to compensate for the disturbance of classes, and

Whereas the previous University President was hired with no faculty input and with a completely closed search process, with no sharing of information and no transparency until a lawsuit by local newspaper publishers compelled the naming of the candidates, and

Whereas the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) censure imposed on LSU for its egregious failure to adhere to appropriate academic freedom principles has never been addressed by the LSU System Board of Supervisors, and

Whereas the LSU System Board of Supervisors has repeatedly stressed the importance of shared governance while hypocritically rebuffing continuing requests to appoint faculty members who are not administrators to the Presidential Search Committee, and

Whereas the retirement system for faculty and staff at LSU, which is woefully underfunded and to which LSU contributions to individual accounts fall far below those of LSU’s peers, has received no attention from the LSU System Board of Supervisors despite its severely adverse effects on the recruitment and retention of LSU faculty and staff members, and

Whereas the admirable as well as longstanding aspirations for LSU to join the Association of American Universities (AAU) and thereby to be recognized as one of the top research universities in the United States appear to have been forgotten by the habitually underinformed and negligent Board of Supervisors, and

Whereas the students in the LSU System have voting representation on the LSU Board of Supervisors, and

Therefore be it resolved that the LSU Faculty Senate declares that it has no confidence in the LSU Board of Supervisors;

Therefore be it further resolved that the LSU Faculty Senate calls on the President and Board of Supervisors to treat this vote of no confidence as an opportunity for both structural and policy reforms that will restore the confidence of both the LSU community and the citizens of Louisiana in the governance of our venerated university;

Therefore be it further resolved that, given the nature of the offenses that have exposed LSU to public scandal and recrimination, the first area to undergo reform shall be all policies and practices, including those of the Board itself, that have proved injurious to students, faculty and staff, and especially women and to those of non-binary gender;

Therefore be it further resolved that the aforementioned reforms pertaining to the equal treatment all genders will include the addressing of gender-based inequities in promotion, tenure, and other academic opportunities;

Therefore be it further resolved that the Board of Supervisors, in recognition of the inadequacy of its policies with respect to quality of life in the LSU community, shall direct special attention to the improvement of salary, benefits, and health care for all employees, regardless of gender;

Therefore be it further resolved that the Board of Supervisors shall take steps to improve the diversity of its membership with respect both to the familiar criteria of race, ethnicity, class, and gender and also with respect to the diversity of vocations practiced by Board members;

Therefore be it further resolved that the Faculty Senate expects the Board to take immediate action to promote the inclusion of faculty members on the Board and that it also create both formal and informal channels for a regular dialogue with the faculty;

Therefore be it further resolved that the Board of Supervisors issue a clear and definitive statement declaring its support for faculty governance and for faculty involvement in the university decision-making process;
Therefore be it further resolved that the Board of Supervisors should create a commission to draft a formal affirmation of LSU’s commitment to academics and of the subordinate or auxiliary role played by athletics and should also charge that commission with creating an implementation plan for the ideas expressed in that statement.

Motion to move into discussion: Joan King and Fabio Del Piero

Q&A Summary:

Stephen Shipman: What is the expectation when voting if you agree with some “Therefore” statements, but not all? What is the overall goal of this resolution?

Mandi Lopez: The overall goal is to increase the focus and the Board of Supervisors on academics. During meetings, there seems to be an inordinate amount of focus on football and faculty would like that to shift. We have also tried for several years to get a faculty seat on the Board.

Motion to move to a vote: Jason Harmon and Inessa Bazayev.

Vote: Motion passes

Vote on resolution: Resolution passes

First Reading, Faculty Senate Resolution 21-04, “Faculty Compensation for Thesis & Dissertation Credit Hours”

Whereas faculty provide intensive instruction and customized, individual mentoring to graduate students pursuing a thesis or dissertation;
Whereas graduate students pay full tuition and fees for thesis and dissertation hours;
Whereas the university depends on faculty to graduate students who produce high-quality publishable research as per Carnegie research status;
Whereas faculty investment in time per graduate student for either thesis or dissertation credit hours is commensurate to the time investment for coursework;
Whereas graduate advising is evaluated in annual faculty reports as part of “teaching”;
Whereas doctoral advising disproportionately impacts disciplines that are typically populated by women, persons of Color, and other underrepresented groups in the role of faculty creating workload disparities between these groups and majority group, male colleagues in historically valued disciplines; Whereas past practice within the last decade of not replacing retired and separated faculty in some units places an undue burden on remaining faculty to work with legacy graduate students from faculty who have left LSU;

Therefore be it resolved that the LSU Faculty Senate requests LSU Academic Affairs to draft a compensation structure to fairly

Motion to move into discussion: Chantel Chauvin and Brandi Conrad

Q&A Summary:

Joan King: Should honors thesis hours be included?

Pamela Blanchard: That is a great point. We can add that as a friendly amendment.

Robert Cook: What data led to the third to the last “Whereas” statement?

Pamela Blanchard: I am in a college that is primarily women, so, most of us are carrying extreme loads due to existing vacancies.

Joy Blanchard: We did query the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Given the divisions within the School of Education, 80% of the faculty members with graduate faculty status are women, and equally a majority are persons of color. The University conveniently calls it service; however, the imbalanced workload is clear.

Peter Doran: In my case, I pretty much decide how many graduate students I will have, many of them being tied to research grants. The only thing I need compensation for is advising them during summer.

Mandi Lopez: This issue came up when the FSEC looked at the proposed resolution. It is very different from college to college. 9000 level courses are not always part of the teaching load and they should be. There is a significant lack of consistency.

Jen Curry: There is a disparity in our college between those that are overloaded with graduate students, and those that have none (mostly male colleagues). There must be equity in this structure.
Margaret Mary Dowell: When researching for this resolution, we also reached out to several peer and not peer institutions. For the majority, those faculty members that have 9000 level doctoral students have course releases. Some even provide a stipend for every doctoral student that graduates. At LSU, we feel the pressure of accepting students and those students are not necessarily tied to grants. The University charges tuition and fees for 8000/9000 level courses, but there is a disparity and inconsistency in how faculty are compensated.

Pamela Blanchard: In a dwindling number of faculty in the School of Education, this is becoming a greater problem.

Joan King: When taking on students, do you accept every student that applies to your program? Is that the reason for so many students per faculty member?

Pamela Blanchard: No. Some of my graduate students are from professors that have left the University.

Mandi Lopez: Will you accept the thesis hours as an amendment?

Pamela Blanchard: Yes. We will also add undergraduate research courses and independent study courses.

Stephen Shipman: I support the idea of adding independent study courses. In my department, many of us have independent study students and are not compensated. There are also added difficulties working with students during the summer without the aid of any grants.

First Reading, Faculty Senate Resolution 21-05, “A Call to Add Covid-19 Vaccination as a Requirement to the Existing List of Mandatory Immunizations At LSU”  

Sponsored by Inessa Bazayev and Tara Houston

Whereas LSU has no current policy requiring COVID-19 vaccination for a safe return to campus; and
Whereas medical ethicists and researchers from the University of Pennsylvania have argued that vaccinations for students wishing to participate in in-person classes should be mandatory; and
Whereas a growing number of universities across the country, including Duke, Rutgers, Notre Dame, Brown, and Cornell are requiring COVID-19 vaccination to safely return to campus in the Fall; and
Whereas LSU has already begun administering COVID-19 vaccines to faculty, staff and students through events held on-campus; and
Whereas LSU already has Policy Statement 72, “Immunization Policy,” which requires students to be immunized for measles, mumps, rubella, tetanus, diphtheria, meningococcus, and in some cases be screened for tuberculosis; and
Whereas numerous members of the LSU faculty have already expressed support for a requirement that all students who are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine be vaccinated in order to participate in on-campus classes and events beginning in the Fall of 2021: Therefore, the LSU Faculty Senate requests that PS–72 be revised to require COVID-19 vaccinations for all eligible students wishing to enroll in in-person classes or other events

Motion to move into discussion: Joan King and Matthew Vangjel

Q&A Summary:

Roger Laine: I completely agree with this resolution. Students need to be vaccinated.

Katherine Henninger: Would you accept a friendly amendment in the “Therefore” clause that says upon final approval by the FDA? I think it still has provisional status.

Inessa Bazayev: There was a recent article in which the CDC supersedes the FDA. Employers can require Covid-19 vaccinations.

Mandi Lopez: Yes, final FDA approval is not a requirement for employers to require the vaccine.

Meredith Veldman: It is false that FDA emergency use authorization for the vaccine somehow prevents the requiring of vaccination. The CDC has stated that a state government or employer can require the shot. As the resolution notes, many other colleges are requiring them, and LSU relies on medical techniques approved via the FDA emergency authorization in the form of coronavirus testing. LSU’s declaration that Fall 2021 will run with normal procedures like Fall 2019 and will not mandate vaccination creates a dangerous situation. A large cohort of unvaccinated students has the potential to severely disrupt learning. Outbreaks on campus may require students to remain out of class for extended periods of time and faculty will be forced to provide recordings or remote access while in 100% face-to-face instruction. Further, the new variant is now the most common source of new infections. By not requiring vaccinations, LSU is aiding in the evolution of variants. The legality or legal implications of LSU requiring the vaccine are not clear.

Fabio Del Piero: The addition of influenza complicates the issue as well. There are new variants in Louisiana and the United States and outbreaks are likely. I suggest an amendment to include other viral diseases.

Mandi Lopez: That would be a substantial change. We will need a motion and vote on it.
Inessa Bazayev: That might take away from the purpose of this resolution. Maybe we can propose a separate resolution later.

Fabio Del Piero: I understand. Let’s keep it focused on Covid-19.

Robert Cook: I support this resolution. We really need to vote on this today to have any impact.

Daniel Tirone: I wanted to thank Professors Houston and Bazayev for their work. LSU is already scheduling classes with 100% classroom capacity, with every intention on filling every seat. Their mitigation measures are not clear and only reinforces the need for a vaccination mandate. The last sentence of policy statement 72 expressly says that the President has the authority to change the definition of adequate immunization. We already go beyond what is statutorily required. As has been suggested, I suggest we vote on this today and seek that the administration commit to making this a requirement as soon as the vaccines have received full authorization from the FDA. The administration will have to make great efforts to substantiate the basis of their objections to faculty. Simply assuming we can return to normal operations is a problem.

Mandi Lopez: It has been suggested by several that a vote to bypass normal Faculty Senate processes and move this resolution to a formal vote is needed.

Motion to move to vote: Robert Cook and Joan King

Vote: Motion passes.

Vote on resolution: Resolution passes

Faculty Senate Standing Committee Reports
Admissions, Standards, and Honors Committee
Benefits Advisory Committee
Courses and Curricula Committee
Library Committee
LSU Press Committee

Faculty Senate Officer Elections
President: Mandi Lopez
Vice President: Joan King
Secretary: Marwa Hassan
Member at Large: Inessa Bazayev, Roger Laine/Robert Cook
Member at Large runoff: Roger Laine

Faculty Senate Standing Committee Elections
Budget and Planning Advisory Committee: Joseph Mason, Judith Sylvester
Faculty Adjudication Committee: Fabio Del Piero, Pamela Pike

All moved to adjourn at 5:50pm.