

LSUS FACULTY SENATE MEETING
Tuesday, October 12, 2021, 11 AM
Zoom

I. CALL TO ORDER AT 11:01 A.M.

II. PRESENT: Allen Garcie, Laura McLemore, Cory Coehoorn, Matyas Buzgo, Aadel Darrat, Brian Salvatore, Cheryl White, Doug Bible, Harvey Rubin, Lee Purvis, Minsum Kim, Roger Zhao, Alex Mikaberidze, Felice Williams, Syed Zaidi, Cassandra Williams.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: There being no corrections, the minutes of the September meeting were approved as read.

IV. PRESIDENT'S REPORT: Allen Garcie noted the new [Covid] testing center set up in the B&E building and thanked everyone who helped with that. From what he has heard, students are being tested, and it's going very quickly. He reported that the Faculty Senate is instituting time limits for speaking in the Senate meetings. Administrator reports will be limited to ten minutes and guests will be limited to five minutes. He asked that if anyone has an issue, they reach out to him or to their senator. He emphasized that the Faculty Senate wants to help in any way we can. He is concerned that the faculty know what the Faculty Senate does and what it can help with.

V. ADMINISTRATORS' REPORTS:

a. Chancellor—Dr. Clark expressed agreement with the time limits and welcomed the focus being on the concerns of faculty. He reported that he, Helen Taylor, Julie Lessiter and her counterpart at LSU A&M, Matt Lee, will be meeting at noon today to discuss HR 150, the strategic plan that President Tate wants to begin working on, LSU Online, and some other matters. He commented on the testing center in the B&E building and commended Bill Wolfe for getting it set up. A group of faculty and administrators walked through the testing center on Friday before testing began to see how it would work. Dr. Clark met with the SGA to let them know what was happening. He reported that last week only one person was found to have Covid of 900 people tested. He expressed satisfaction with the job LSUS has done in controlling spread of Covid on campus. Dr. Clark reported that administration is waiting for enrollment figures for the second term of LSU Online and has reason to believe they will be good. Administration is pleased with the direction LSU Online has been going since the departure of the previous head of the program. He reported that commencement will be December 16 and 17, two commencements each day at the Brookshire Center. There will be no receptions for online graduates as in the past in order to keep the process simple. The first day will be for summer graduates. The second day will be for fall graduates, 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. both days. He reported that the new LSUS website is up and running and commended Erin Smith, Wendell Riley, and others involved in the work. Adjustments will continue; anyone having a concern regarding the website should contact them.

Matyas Buzgo asked about the face-to-face policy and who made that decision. Dr. Clark took responsibility. He expressed concern about getting students to come to campus

because some are challenged when forced into an online setting. He agreed to revisit the policy. Matyas pointed out that even online students may come to campus to use educational facilities such as the Success Center and computer labs. Dr. Taylor encouraged faculty to address these concerns up the chain of command on a case by case basis. Dr. Clark pointed out that HR 150 focuses on how many face-to-face undergraduate students are at LSUS. We have to report to the legislature in January. The bill's author, Rep. Cedric Glover, has contended that LSUS does not have enough face-to-face students and therefore would be better off as something other than its current status. Dr. Clark admitted concern about this.

b. Provost—Dr. Helen Taylor reported that she had released to the deans the hiring requests she could move forward with. The spring schedule goes live October 15. Grading is open for midterm grades and will close on October 19. Classes at 100 and 200 level are asked to report these grades. Allen Garcie asked if it were possible to report a mid-term grade for upper level students. Shelby Keith said the portal was open to every class. The main purpose is for students to know how they are doing.

V. CONTINUING BUSINESS: Allen Garcie brought up Policy Statement 2.15.00, which concerns faculty grievance procedure. He reminded senators that he had sent out a document with changes on September 17 and asked that those provisions be officially approved. He asked for a motion to approve the changes. Matyas Buzgo asked if he was correct that the policy, as amended, reflects a move away from the Vice Chancellor towards the committee. Dr. Taylor responded that the move was from just one [designated] Vice Chancellor to any one of the three Vice Chancellors. Matyas asked for confirmation that authority was being moved from a single person to the committee. Dr. Taylor replied that her understanding was that had been the case in the previous policy. Alex Mikaberidze moved to approve the changes. The motion was seconded, and the motion was approved.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Approval of Committee Appointments—Allen Garcie presented the slate needing approval. They are:

- Instruction and Professional Development—Grace Hildenbrand
- Faculty Research & Development—Kevin Krug
- Library Committee—Rachel McDonald
- Courses & Curriculum—Rebecca Bogie

He asked for a motion to approve these assignments. A motion was made and seconded. The motion was approved. Allen thanked Cory and others who helped recruit these positions and to those who had agreed to serve.

B. Parking & Traffic Appeal Committee—Allen reported that Chief Wray had reached out to him about this committee. Cory Coehoorn found two volunteers to serve on the committee. Matyas asked what the purpose of that committee is. Allen replied that it addresses any kind of violation on campus.

C. Creation of Gen Ed Standing Committee—Allen noted that in the past the colleges had their own general education committees, but this appears to be changing. In view of the fact that there are already plans to review general education in coming months, he suggested this issue be tabled for now. In the future, a standing committee will be created with

representation from all colleges. Anyone who has questions about that should reach out to Helen Wise.

D. Creation of Ad hoc By-laws Review Committee—Allen reported that the by-laws were overdue for revision, and he had reached out to Gary Joiner as chair of the Policy & Personnel Committee, which had done by-laws reviews in the past. Allen expressed the desire to form an ad hoc committee consisting of himself, Gary Joiner, and one other person to conduct a review of the by-laws to see if any changes need to be made and to pass on the information to the Faculty Senate.

E. Assessment—Helen Wise reported that she had discussed the cycle of assessment with Allen Garcie. Student evaluations of teaching have not been touched in ten years. Allen asked for an overview of the need to update student evaluation of teaching. Helen noted that previously the same evaluation had been sent out for face-to-face and on-line courses. She observed that effective teaching has changed in the past ten years and different elements might need to be considered. Second is the need to update how assessment relates to our mission as a teaching university. In looking closely at all of this, it starts with the Faculty Performance Review. We measure Service, Teaching, and Research, but they are not all weighed equally. Teaching accounts for 60% of the Faculty Performance Review each year. Thus, it is important to measure it in a way that is valid and reliable. Student evaluations also factor into promotion and tenure. It is important that what we are actually measuring is what we need to measure. Helen noted that at this point, we do not try to remediate evaluations that are sub-par or not meeting the benchmark within a college. The Provost is committed to providing professional development around this issue. Helen went over the development of the current evaluation instrument. She presented a recommendation to review and revalidate the SET. Allen Garcie reported that the Instruction & Professional Development committee is going to work on this.

VIII. OBSERVATIONS AND CONCERNS

Allen reminded everyone to always allow two hours for the Faculty Senate meeting even though the goal was to finish in one hour, because the possibility that a meeting will run overtime always exists.

Email system changes—Peter Siska commented that the changes affect communication on the campus. He didn't see campus-wide email as a problem before and he doesn't see limiting it as a positive development. Allen reminded everyone that the senators need to be the ones to bring up concerns. Matyas commented that he welcomed the change because it limited the volume of emails he has to go through, which is already burdensome. Brian Salvatore stated that he also does not see the limiting of mass email to faculty as a positive and considers it a free speech issue. Matyas Buzgo replied that it was less a restriction of free speech than a practical matter of controlling workload. Allen Garcie pointed out that there was a bigger issue involved in the decision that the Chancellor can speak to. He also pointed out that LSUS email is a company account and that personal email is the appropriate platform for exchanging personal views. Dr. Clark agreed with Dr. Salvatore that if there were abuse, take action, but, he said, it is business email, and open access, under the law, makes LSU responsible for monitoring and taking action if necessary. He emphasized that Jason Rachal's recent email to the faculty at large was not the reason for the change of policy. It was a concern about

inappropriate emails that could become public and create liability for the university. He also noted that he had received a lot of complaints from email recipients not wanting to receive so many open emails. He observed the institutional email was not intended to be “social media.” Peter Siska commented that, having lived under repressive regimes, he was sensitive to the value of freedom and that anytime freedom is limited, people should be concerned. He noted that freedom costs something, and the inconvenience of having too many emails in one’s mailbox or being exposed to something one finds offensive is a relatively small price to pay. Dr. Clark acknowledged Dr. Siska’s heartfelt objection. He reiterated that he had been under pressure from LSU to eliminate the open access email since he had become Chancellor and had resisted for a long time. He explained that it would be up to him to identify abuse and take action, which presented a considerable burden in itself. He also noted that if there was abuse that escaped notice, there could be legal consequences. Allen agreed that there is a larger issue--that when we work for a large business like ours, there are always constraints. However, he wanted to see us have a way to communicate and asked for alternatives. Dr. Siska brought up Faculty Council. Allen responded that he was looking for something online that did not involve scheduling an in-person meeting. Matyas pointed out that if someone had something very important to communicate, that could be sent to the Faculty Senate president to distribute or to another appropriate authority to distribute. He pointed out that policy also enabled screening of such emails. Allen agreed that it might be an option. Dr. Clark pointed out that Allen had the authority to decide what was appropriate. There was additional comment about the need for open, unfiltered access in some way. Allen agreed that he did not want to become the moderator of every email someone wanted to share. Matyas pointed out that there are social media platforms available for that purpose, such as Slack. Dr. Clark pointed out that if it was a university sanctioned platform, it had to be monitored, which no one is eager to do. Allen encouraged people to send ideas they might have to him so that we might find a viable option.

IX. ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.