



March 2023

Dear Senators,

I hope that you had a restful yet productive Spring break. Below are some items on which I'd like to update you since our last meeting.

1. Campus Infrastructure

The state of our campus infrastructure continues to be a frequent area of concern for faculty, staff, and students. In addition to the highly variable temperatures in buildings across campus addressed by representatives from Facility Services at our last meeting, we are regularly contacted by faculty regarding other major issues across a wide array of buildings. In the last few weeks alone pieces of concrete have fallen from the ceiling in Nicholson Hall, and the Life Sciences building was without power for nearly ten full days. Just this week a pipe burst in the ceiling of Thomas Boyd Hall, flooding offices and resulting in water cascading from the ceiling. Faculty Senate leadership is in contact with representatives from Academic Affairs about these concerns. We are also thinking about ways to raise awareness of these issues outside of the immediate campus community to produce the changes necessary to address these deficiencies. These serious issues are not only a matter of discomfort and safety, but they go against our University's mission as a "leading research-extensive university." This would be impossible to achieve if the lights of university's buildings are either literally out for days or ceilings collapse in spaces where we conduct our research. We hope to be in touch with you with additional information.

2. Faculty Council Meeting: April 17 at 2:30pm at the Royal Cotillion Ballroom, the Union

Please be sure to communicate the Faculty Council meeting to your colleagues and encourage them to submit potential items for inclusion on the meeting agenda by emailing faculty senate@lsu.edu. The FSEC has created a special committee to assist us in identifying potential items to suggest to Academic Affairs and the Office of the President who ultimately control the agenda. Registration for the meeting will follow shortly.

3. Zero-Based Budget and Graduate Student Stipends

Questions remain over many elements of the new graduate student funding model, including how and if graduate students will be provided with health insurance as part of the new packages. The latter is especially concerning as graduate students at LSU have expressed a greater desire to have better, more affordable health insurance than a higher yearly stipend. The FSEC has not heard any development on this issue from the Graduate School. We support our graduate students in their request and will remain in touch with graduate student leadership as we continue to advocate on their behalf.

4. Supporting Faculty in the Face of Emerging Challenges

Like our colleagues across the country, LSU faculty continue to monitor developments in other states which have the potential to reduce the independence and academic freedom of institutions of higher education. At its meeting on March 8 the FSEC passed a resolution declaring that we stand in

support of academic freedom and in solidarity with our colleagues in Florida and elsewhere who are confronting these challenges.

5. Policy Statement and Permanent Memorandum Development and Revision Processes

Recent events on campus have drawn attention to the processes by which Policy Statements and Permanent Memoranda are developed and revised. One issue which has focused attention on these procedures is an impending by the IT Governance Council of a number of new Policy Statements governing various aspects of students', faculty's, and staff's utilization of technology on campus. The FSEC will be meeting with representatives from ITS in early April to learn more about these policies. Additionally, Vice President Tirone and I recently attended a meeting with representatives from Academic Affairs to better understand how these policies are developed and revised. It was a productive meeting that left us with the impression that while good faith efforts are undertaken to include the relevant stakeholders when these documents are created or revised, there is an opportunity to improve the PS/PM revisions' process and make it more transparent. The Faculty Senate Policy Committee has passed a recommendation that a formal process be created governing how these documents are created, revised and approved and we agree that it would be an excellent idea that could avoid unintended and unanticipated negative outcomes by including more expansive feedback earlier in the process.

6. LSU Early Childhood Education Laboratory School (ECELP)

The availability of reliable and affordable childcare has long been understood to be an important factor in the professional success of faculty, staff, and students with young families. The Senate passed two resolutions, 79-12 and 88-30, speaking to this need which aided in the development of the on-campus childcare center. Over the last year the FSEC has heard from a number of faculty and staff with children at what is now the Early Childhood Education Laboratory Preschool (ECELP) who have reservations about recent and proposed operational changes, particularly to the school calendar. The FSEC will be meeting with representatives from the Staff Senate, Graduate Student Association, ECELP, and School of Education (which oversees the preschool) on March 29 to begin a dialogue about how the concerns and needs of each stakeholder group can be accommodated. If you have any specific concerns about ECELP, please contact me directly.

7. Faculty Senate Leadership Compensation

At the beginning of the academic year, Provost Haggerty and Faculty Senate leadership investigated the shared governance practices at peer institutions such as the University of Arkansas, University of Houston, University of Pittsburgh, and University of Maryland, and discovered that we were an outlier in not providing course releases and a stipend for the Faculty Senate President in recognition of the extensive obligations and professional sacrifices this position entails. I am happy to report that Provost Haggerty has made it a priority to bring us into line with our peers by institutionalizing these practices at LSU and I thank him for strengthening faculty governance and recognizing the immense time and effort that that the Faculty Senate President puts into serving the faculty and broader campus community.

8. Faculty Senate Integrative Core Learning (FSILC)

On February 23, the FSEC met with Sandi Gillilan, Associate Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness, to identify ways to improve faculty's experiences with ILC courses. There was a shared desire by all parties to reduce the time and effort involved in approving courses and completing the necessary course assessment each semester. The FSEC will continue to work with

the ILC Committee and the OIE towards these goals, and encourage faculty who have feedback to share to reach out to us.

9. **Canvas**

I was recently asked to find a faculty member who was willing to attend a meeting between representatives of the Canvas learning management system and members of the LSU administration. We appreciate this faculty member's willingness to serve, particularly on less than 48 hours' notice, and for the detailed report he submitted to the FSEC. By all appearances this was a preliminary meeting and there are currently no plans to undertake a process to review whether LSU will switch to Canvas from Moodle. Should this change, we will do everything to can to ensure adequate faculty representation on all relevant committees and keep you informed of notable developments.

10. **Teaching Online Courses**

A number of faculty members have contacted me recently expressing surprise about the intellectual property practices governing the development and delivery of online courses at LSU. While online instruction is a valuable tool in the landscape of contemporary higher education, we strongly encourage every faculty member contemplating teaching in this format to familiarize themselves with the various policies involved, particularly those which determine ownership of course materials. The Office of Research and Economic Development has developed a useful webpage which provides links to various [Bylaws, Permanent Memoranda and Policy Statements](#) that address intellectual property policies. It is a good resource to utilize as part of your research.

11. **Run, Hide, Fight Training**

Last week, I shared with you information regarding an on-campus training on "Surviving an Active Threat." If you haven't done so already, please visit forward registration information to your colleagues: <https://www.lsu.edu/police/files/2023-rhf-student-registration.pdf>

12. **GRACE Training**

The Office of Civil Rights & Title IX invites you to participate in the LSU GRACE (Gaining Resilience and Cultivating Empowerment training), which is a workshop designed to provide faculty and staff the tools to confidently support students and colleagues who may have been impacted by sexual violence. Workshop participants will leave with a greater understanding and knowledge of trauma-informed care, empathy, and resources for survivors. For more information please visit: <https://lsu.edu/civil-rights/training/grace-training.php>

Thank you for your continued support on behalf of yourself and your colleagues. It strengthens our advocacy for you, your departments, and colleges. We are always stronger together.

Sincerely,



Inessa Bazayev
President, LSU Faculty Senate