

If you have questions, please contact K. Sivakumar (“Siva”) (kasg@lehigh.edu).

MEETING OF THE LEHIGH UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Minutes of the Meeting held on February 6, 2026, at 1:10 pm

UC 375 and Via Zoom

Do the Minutes include approved R&P Changes? Yes/~~No~~
Do the Minutes include items ready for a vote of the entire Lehigh Faculty? Yes/~~No~~
Are there items requiring Board of Trustees approval? – Yes/~~No~~

The roster of senators present at the meeting is listed in Appendix 1.

[Appendix 1 available at <https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/meeting-minutes>]

1. Minutes of the Prior Faculty Senate Meeting

The minutes of the 12/05/2025 Senate Meeting were included in the consent calendar. The minutes were deemed approved since no request was made to discuss them separately.

The approved minutes are available at <https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/meeting-minutes>.

2. Second Reading: R&P 2.2.1.5 Criteria to be Applied (in T&P)

The details are available at

<https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/sites/facultysenate.lehigh.edu/files/Second%20Reading%20Proposed%20Changes%20to%20P%26T.pdf>

The proposal was moved, seconded, put to a vote, and approved. This will be voted on by the entire Lehigh faculty and then sent to the BOT for approval.

The approved text is given below.

2.2.1.5 Criteria to be Applied

Excellence in teaching, research and scholarship, and service are the criteria for reappointment, tenure and promotion. These criteria will be applied by the department, college committee, dean, provost, president, and board of trustees. During the course of a faculty member's career, annual evaluations or triennial reviews, as required in section 2.2.4, will indicate a faculty member's progress toward meeting these criteria. In applying these criteria, voting members of the concerned department(s), members of the college tenure and promotion committees, the dean, and the provost are required to conduct a thorough evaluation of a candidate's professional qualifications.

Along with traditional measures, faculty can demonstrate excellence through public-facing work, which consists of research, teaching, and/or service activities designed to engage a broader audience beyond the traditional academic sphere. The types of public-facing activities will be assessed at the department and college levels consistent with department-specific guidelines and with university promotion and tenure standards.

3. Second Reading: R&P 3.1.4.2 Undergraduate Leaves of Absence

The proposal is available at

[https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/sites/facultysenate.lehigh.edu/files/Revised_R%26P%203.1.4.2%20UG%20Leave%20of%20Absence%20Policy%20\(1\).docx%20-%20Google%20Docs_0.pdf](https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/sites/facultysenate.lehigh.edu/files/Revised_R%26P%203.1.4.2%20UG%20Leave%20of%20Absence%20Policy%20(1).docx%20-%20Google%20Docs_0.pdf)

The proposal was moved, seconded, put to a vote, and approved. The change will be effective once the minutes are approved at the next Faculty Senate meeting. The change will be shared with the BOT for information.

The approved text is given below.

3.1.4.2 Undergraduate Leave of Absence

Each student is expected to complete the baccalaureate degree by attending Lehigh for four consecutive academic years (eight semesters), though they may accelerate this pace by using advanced placement credits or summer courses. Requests for a leave of absence must be completed according to the procedures of the university and must be submitted prior to the start of any subsequent enrollment at another college or university. Any single leave is limited to a maximum of two continuous calendar years and does count towards the overall maximum time to degree, as specified in R&P 3.20.1.

Students must complete one regular semester to be eligible for a leave. Students during their first semester who withdraw up to and including the 10th day can defer their admission to the following semester with the approval of the Office of Admissions. Students who withdraw after the 10th day may return the following semester through an

unapproved leave return process, as specified below.

Current Lehigh University students are prohibited from concurrent enrollment at any other college or university without prior approval from the SOS Committee. Unapproved courses taken concurrently cannot be applied to a Lehigh baccalaureate degree. An exception is made for cross registration at another LVAIC institution.

Students cannot assume that a leave will be granted to study at another college or university (this policy does not apply for study abroad through the auspices of Lehigh Abroad or LVAIC programs). Students may take courses at another institution during a summer term without requesting an academic leave of absence. Check with the Registrar's Office for limitations and processes for transfer course approval.

If unapproved leaves are taken, students are declared as non-returning and must contact Academic Life and Student Transitions to determine if a petition for readmission is needed. Courses taken at another college or university while on an unapproved leave will not be permitted to transfer toward a Lehigh University baccalaureate degree. Additional information may be found on the Dean of Students website and student handbook.

4. Discussion: Non-Medical Benefits Review – Recommendations

Professor Shamim Pakzad and AVP of Finance Dave Hammer provided an update. The slides are available at

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1NwjfozuRYoeb1vRGgeGASpS_sO-6Dx7o/edit?slide=id.p1#slide=id.p1

The following were the salient points discussed.

- A decision about the extent of details to be shared with the campus community will be made after meeting with the senior leadership. [Vice President Chris Cook, in response to Professor Jenna Lay's comment that it is useful to share the entire report with the faculty]
- The issue of the level of salary and benefits affecting recruitment was not the focus of the working group. [Professor Shamim Pakzad and Vice President Chris Cook in response to Professor Angela Hicks, Jenna Lay, and Wenxin Liu]
- Faculty salaries are reviewed every couple of years, and suitable adjustments are made in individual cases, although the budget available for such adjustments is very small. [Deputy Provost for Faculty Affairs, Larry Snyder]
- The Senate Executive Committee will prepare a collective response from the Senators to the proposal. [Professor Peter Zeitler]

- It is important to ensure that the senior administration does not cherry-pick the recommendations that result in cost savings. [Professor Anders Knospe]
- When these changes are communicated, tax implications should be communicated to the faculty. [Professor Mike Spear]

5. Discussion: Proposed AI Principles

Vice Provost for Educational Innovation and Assessment Dom Packer provided an update. The Slides are available at

https://coursesite.lehigh.edu/pluginfile.php/9645834/mod_resource/content/1/Preread%20for%20AI%20Principles%20Discussion%20-%20Fac%20Senate%20-%20Feb%2026.pdf

The following were the salient points made during the discussion.

- The principles as stated do not reduce any ambiguity and do not account for possible grey areas. [Professor Will Lowry]
- The principles do not offer anything specific. It would be useful to provide examples, such as the vignettes available on academic integrity issues. [Professor Mike Spear]
- Different units or departments may be using these principles differently; we need to account for that. Clarification is also needed whether there is expectation how different units implement these principles. [Professor Haiyan Jia]
- People who want to exclude AI should also be supported. [Professors Jenna Lay and Anders Knospe]
- There is no intention to prohibit or require any faculty from using AI. This is a draft. Additional changes will be made based on faculty, staff and student input. [Vice Provost for Educational Innovation and Assessment Dom Packer]
- It is important to explain to students the benefits of avoiding AI for certain assignments. As technology develops rapidly, these principles will be transient. The principles may help us think about how and why AI should be used and not used. [Provost Nathan Urban]
- Faculty and students need to use AI to understand its benefits and harms. [Professor Hyonok Choi]
- We need to ensure that these principles are not mistakenly understood as policies. [Professors Jenna Lay and Jeremy Littau]

- We must ensure that the technology is not adversely affecting the human experience in higher education. [Professor Al Wurth]

6. Update: Explore Lehigh

Deputy Provost for Undergraduate Education Terry Jones provided an update. The slides are available at

https://coursesite.lehigh.edu/pluginfile.php/9650379/mod_resource/content/1/Explore%20Lehigh%20F25%20Outcomes.pdf

The following were the salient points made during the discussion.

- The program appears to duplicate the strengths of what the College of Arts and Sciences is already doing. [Professor Will Lowry]
- It is important to examine whether the program is steering students away from the College of Arts and Sciences and how the college is presented to the students. [Professor Anders Knospe]
- It is important to clarify the program's goals (student retention, supporting students with extra challenges) and how this year's results factor into next year's selection process. [Professor Jenna Lay]
- Next year's students self-selected themselves into the program. [Deputy Provost Terry Jones]
- Feedback from the program should be used to identify blind spots in what we do in different colleges. [Professor Mike Spear]
- It appears the program could be construed as a backdoor into business. Additionally, since these students are allowed to change colleges earlier than others, equity issues must be considered. If students were allowed to transfer colleges without satisfying the prerequisites, we would need to track their time to graduation. [Professor Kelly Austin]
- The progress of all students in the program will be tracked. [Deputy Provost Terry Jones]

7. New Business

Professor Peter Zeitler encouraged everyone to attend the all-faculty meeting on February 20, 2026.

Respectfully submitted by

K. Sivakumar ("Siva")
Arthur Tauck Chair and Professor of Marketing
Secretary of the Faculty