

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

MEETING OF THE LEHIGH UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Minutes of the Meeting held on September 6, 2024, at 1:10 pm

BIB 221 and Via Zoom

Do the Minutes include R&P Changes? Yes/No
Do they require a vote of the entire Lehigh Faculty? Yes/No
Do they require Board of Trustees approval? – Yes/No

The roster of senators present for the meeting appears in Appendix 1.

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

1. Minutes of the Prior Faculty Senate Meeting

Professor Peter Zeitler called for any corrections to the minutes of the combined Faculty Senate and the Lehigh University Faculty meeting of 05/03/2024. A motion to approve the meeting minutes was made and seconded. The Senate unanimously approved the minutes.

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

2. Senate Chairperson's Remarks

Professor Peter Zeitler provided an update on the new senate procedures and operation. The report is available in Appendix 2.

[Appendix 2 available at <https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/meeting-minutes>]

The following are the salient points made during the ensuing discussion.

- The real test of the proposed changes is whether the Senate meetings improve with more thoughtful dialog. [Professor Mike Spear]

- The most important matters that need Senate attention in curriculum review are changes that affect other departments. In practice, this means curriculum changes that have cross-college impact. [Professor Angela Hicks]
- Approval and implementation of curriculum changes follow two different timelines. Catalog timelines should be considered. [University Registrar Michael Dills-Allen]
- Colleges not giving adequate time for proposal approval consideration must be told that the proposals will not be approved on time for timely implementation. [Professor Angela Hicks in response to Professor Peter Zeitler’s comments about the penalty for not submitting course and curriculum changes on time]

3. Update from SCUII (Sub Committee on University Issues and Initiatives)

Professors Angela Hicks and Damien Thévenin provided an update on service assessment and a discussion about next steps. The slides are given in Appendix 3.

[Appendix 3 available at <https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/meeting-minutes>]

- The “Equitable Workforce Committee” formed by Lehigh ADVANCE is in the process of revising its document. Professor Angela Hicks is the only faculty member on the committee. [Professor Jenna Lay]
- “Equitable Workforce Committee” does not consider the amount of workload itself; it only focuses on equity issues. [Professor Peter Zeitler]
- The faculty service burden has increased; we need to quantify the service burden of faculty members. [Professors Angela Hicks and Damien Thévenin]
- The Senate is supposed to be told before committees are formed. [Professor Peter Zeitler]
- Terms such as councils, working groups, and others are used to circumvent the issue. [Professor Damien Thévenin]
- The impact of service work must be considered. [Provost Nathan Urban]
- We must distinguish between impactful work and meaningless administrative service. [Professor Mike Spear]
- We must clearly define what counts as service. There are inconsistencies across departments – for example, whether independent studies count as service. [Professor Filippo Casati]

- It seems that everyone is doing more service. We must consider how much service is actually needed and how duplication of work can be avoided. We should try to minimize everyone's service load. [Professor Beibei Dong]
- Different departments account for service contributions differently. [Professor Nancy Carlisle]

4. Consent Calendar: Second reading of change to R&P 3.6 (Provisional Courses)

The proposal is available at
<https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/consent-calendar>

Professor Anders Knospe pointed out an error (Item 3 not ending in a complete sentence) in the section that was not the subject of this amendment.

Professor Jenna Lay noted that there are several errors in the language of R&P. Non-substantive changes, grammatical errors, and other minor errors will be implemented as University Parliamentarian-approved changes or as consent calendar items. These will be brought forward after a comprehensive Senate review.

With the above clarification, the consent calendar item was approved (Changes in Item 2).

The approved wording is given below.

3.6 Provisional Courses

1) Courses offered by departments as provisional courses must fit into one of the following categories:

a. Trial or experimental courses.

b. Courses of immediate relevance or of current, rather than lasting, issues.

c. Special opportunities courses (for example, a visiting professor could offer a course in his/her particular area of expertise, which could not be taught by a regular faculty member and, therefore, could not become a permanent catalog offering).

2) No course may be offered as a provisional course for more than two years. No course may be offered as a provisional course more than twice and must be done within a single two-year timespan. Changing a provisional number is not permitted to reset the timeline.

3) Provisional courses are proposed by departments. Each must be approved by the dean of the college in which the offering department is located. If a proposed course may have a material effect on course offerings or enrollments in another college.

4) Interdisciplinary provisional courses for which a departmental designation is inappropriate may be offered, subject to the approvals of the programs involved and the dean(s) of the college(s) in which the offering is located. If a proposed interdisciplinary provisional course may have a material effect on course offerings or enrollments in another college, it must be designed in consultation with the affected department(s). Interdisciplinary provisional courses will bear a course designation of the relevant college or program.

5) Provisional courses are given course numbers ending with 95, 96, 97, or 98.

6) The titles of provisional courses shall appear on students' transcripts.

5. Report on Recent Strategic Plan and Provost retreats

Professor Jenna Lay provided an update. She noted the following: (1) the administration recognizes that some aspects of the strategic plan were rolled out in a rushed manner; (2) we should improve communication between the administration and faculty; (3) areas of strategic planning such as interdisciplinary education, student outcomes, and research overlap with the work of the faculty and this overlap must be recognized; (4) areas we might address on the senate include: lowering barriers for students rostering courses outside their home colleges, recognizing public-facing research and translational research in tenure and promotion, and procedures for hiring faculty into research centers.

The following were the salient points made during the follow-up discussion.

- The goal is to achieve 95% student retention between the first and second years, reduce DFW grades by 10%, and broaden high-impact practices such as meaningful research and interdisciplinary teaching in our undergraduate curricula. [Provost Nathan Urban]
- We need to support high-impact research with additional funds. [Professor Damien Thévenin]
- All students should be provided opportunities for high-impact activities during the summer since the summer activities are not covered by student financial aid in all cases. [Professor Jenna Lay]
- There is a need for better communication about rationales for decisions about campus priorities. [Professor Damien Thévenin; Provost Nathan Urban noted that he is willing to have additional conversations on this matter]

- We can request that Deputy Provost for Undergraduate Education Terry-Ann Jones attend an upcoming senate meeting. [Professor Jenna Lay, in response to Professor Mike Spear's comment about the need to know more about DFW grade issue, including whether W grades are a result of bad advising; Professor Filippo Casati's comment about differences in grading across departments and colleges; and Professor Ravi Chitturi's comment about the frequency of F grades given at Lehigh]
- There is limited data on why DFW grades are high in some courses, but effective advising, the ability to assess student performance early on, and caring instructors can help reduce the problem. [Provost Nathan Urban]

6. Discussion of Transition Away from Senate Subcommittees

Professors Peter Zeitler and Jenna Lay provided an update. The following were the salient points made about the transition. The points below were made by Professors Peter Zeitler and Jenna Lay unless otherwise noted.

- The new approach introduces flexibility in time management and agility to dispose of issues promptly.
- The new structure does not decrease the ability of senators to bring important issues to the Senate Executive Committee at any time.
- It is challenging to document faculty contributions under the new structure. Additionally, there may be unequal contributions across senators based on their willingness to be members of working groups. [Professor Angela Hicks]
- Faculty senate service should be recognized as substantive service; every senator should contribute.
- The performance of the new structure will be tracked, and changes will be made as needed.
- The minimum size of each working group should be three. [Professor Ravi Chitturi]
- The new structure seems to be limiting in its ability to accomplish things. [Professor Anders Knospe]
- Any senator can make a motion against changing the subcommittee structure.

7. New Business

1. Post Doc salaries: FSEC will get some information from the VP of Research and then decide if and how the Senate might respond. [Professor Peter Zeitler in response to Professor Anders Knospe's comment about the lack of consultation in determining salaries for Post Docs at Lehigh]
2. Professor Peter Zeitler thanked Professor Frank Gunter for his service as the Chairperson of the Faculty Senate for the previous two years.

Respectfully submitted by

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Secretary of the Faculty