

LEHIGH UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Minutes of the Meeting held on March 4, 2022, 1:00 pm

Via Zoom

Do the Minutes include R&P items requiring Board of Trustee approval – Yes/No

Faculty Senate Chair Professor Kathy Iovine called the meeting to order.

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

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

1. Minutes of the Prior Faculty Senate Meeting

Professor Frank Gunter called for any corrections to the minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting of 02/04/2022. 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 Update and Follow-Up Discussion

Professor Kathy Iovine provided an update. The following are the salient points made during the discussion. Unless otherwise noted, the points were made by Professor Kathy Iovine.

- Mental Health Training is being organized with the opportunity for one person per department to attend.
- Provost Nathan Urban and Vice President for Finance and Administration Pat Johnson would answer questions about the recent restructuring of the Division of Campus Safety during the next Faculty Senate Meeting.
- The Faculty Senate is aware of the faculty frustration related to the communications about the campus mask policy.
- The administration sending emails about changes in the mask policy during the middle of the day was poorly planned and communicated. Faculty members who were teaching

immediately after the email was sent were forced to make strategic decisions about mask-wearing in their classrooms with no notice and no time to prepare themselves or their students. Why not send these emails late in the evening or make the policy effective the day after the email? [Professors Jenna Lay and Jeremy Littau]

- The administration should consult with the Senate before these communications are sent to the campus community. People's preferences (e.g., those who have unvaccinated infants and children and those who are immunocompromised) to wear masks must be respected. It is especially important to bring forward concerns of the untenured employees who contact the Faculty Senate in hopes of having a voice. [Professor Jill Schneider]
- The email could have been prompted by the desire to change the policy as soon as CDC changed its guidelines. [Professor Kathy Iovine]
- There is no university-wide policy for at-risk students to request that everyone in a class wear masks. [Professor Kathy Iovine in response to Professor Angela Hicks]

3. Update on DEI Strategic Plan

Dr. Donald Outing (Vice President for Equity and Community) provided an update. The slides are available in Appendix 2.

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

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

- The antiracism task force has been meeting regularly, and their report will be released soon. [Vice President Donald Outing in response to Professor Kathy Iovine]
- The metrics aim not to declare success in DEI but to measure our progress and incorporate accountability. [Vice President Donald Outing in response to Professor Peter Zeitler's question "what level of granularity do the proposed metrics address?"]
- It will take some thought to define the top two priorities for the DEI plan. [Vice President Donald Outing in response to Professor Peter Zeitler's question "what would VP Outing consider the top two priorities for DEI given how broad the plan is and the realities of funding and implementation?"]
- While the data can be analyzed for different racial groups and geographic locations, the current data does not distinguish the responses between athletes versus nonathletes and participants in Greek life versus others. [Vice President Donald Outing in response to Professor Jeremy Littau]

- Faculty Senate input is welcome on the metrics used for assessing progress in DEI initiatives at Lehigh. [Vice President Donald Outing]

4. First Generation Students - Mid-Semester Grade Request

The following were the salient points made during the discussion.

- Communicating midterm grades for first-generation students would help in early support. [Ms. Denise Beautreau, Director - Center for Student Access and Success]
- Midterm grades should be communicated to all students, and we should make this a standard practice in all of our courses. [Professor Jeremy Littau]
- An email will be sent to all faculty from the Faculty Senate and the University Registrar. Furthermore, faculty members with first-generation students in their courses will be specifically contacted. [Professor Kathy Iovine, University Registrar Dr. Steve Wilson]

5. New Committee on Wellness

Vice President Ric Hall provided an update on the Committee on Wellness. The Spring 2021 report of the committee is available at

<https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/sites/facultysenate.lehigh.edu/files/Wellness%20Progress%20Report.pdf>

The following were the salient points made during the discussion.

- The Faculty Committee on Student Life (FCSL) members or a Faculty Senator who is not on a subcommittee can be part of this new committee. [Professor Ray Pearson; Dr. Ric Hall concurred]
- FCSL can work on the text related to faculty representation on the Wellness Committee. [Professor Jeremy Littau]
- Since this is a new committee, Faculty Senate approval is needed. This will be taken up during the April 2022 meeting. [Professor Kathy Iovine]

6. First Reading: Faculty Representation on the Council for Equity and Community (R&P 1.3.4.2)

The proposal was moved and seconded. The proposal is available at

<https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/sites/facultysenate.lehigh.edu/files/1.3.4.2%20CEC%20Representation%201st%20Read.pdf>

Professor Doug Mahony and Vice Provost Khanjan Mehta provided clarifications about the rationale for the proposed changes. They noted that the changes are proposed to ensure representation from all colleges, reduce the service burden by separating College DEI work and University DEI work, and improve the coordination with the respective college deans. [in response to questions from Professors Sara Kangas and Jeremy Littau]

The proposal will come up for its second reading in the April 2022 meeting.

7. Senate Subcommittee Updates

The following were the salient topics being addressed by the subcommittees.

University Issues and Initiatives:

- Professors Parveen Gupta and Jill Schneider are representing the Faculty Senate in Phase 0 of the University's strategic planning process started by President Joe Helble. The subcommittee is preparing a 1-2 page document to identify issues and generate faculty engagement, and also suggests VP for Strategic Planning Chris Cook attend the April Senate meeting. The subcommittee welcomes comments and suggestions from Senators about the way the Senate should engage with strategic planning, how the planning should be framed, and/or what goals are most pressing. [Professor Peter Zeitler]

Inclusive Community:

- The committee is working on possible changes to its structure and role. [Professor Ed Gomez]. The following ideas were generated during the ensuing discussion: Avoiding duplication due to the embedding of DEI in several parts of the University [Professors Sara Kangas and Damien Thevenin], creating a community of scholars [Dr. Henry Odi], creating a cadre of future scholars focused on diversity issues [Professor Peter Zeitler], focusing on issues not being addressed elsewhere in the University [Professor Mellie Katakalos], polling faculty for issues to be considered by the committee [Professor Kathy Iovine], identifying ways of including the future generations in decision making (in the context of environmental justice) [Professor Jill Schneider], considering wellness issues as part of the committee's task [Professor Jenna Lay], working with the Student Senate [Professor Jeremy Littau], and linking the work of the Research Subcommittee as appropriate [Professor Jim Gilchrist].

8. Additional Topics Discussed

Future Senate Meetings:

- Faculty Senate meetings in 2022-23 should be in-person for the following reasons: (1) the inability to have sidebar conversations among a set of senators during Zoom meetings, (2) difficulty in discussing complex issues via Zoom, (3) the difficulty to make portions of the Senate meetings closed to non-senators, and (4) preventing multitasking during Senate meetings. Several senators responded. The following are the salient points made. [Professor Frank Gunter]
- Dual option – people attending in person and via remote means – is necessary. [Professor Damien Thevenin]
- The dual option will help vulnerable faculty who may self-select themselves out of Senate service. If we are going to have in-person meetings in the future, the Senate should vote on it. [Professor Jeremy Littau]
- We need to be deliberate in moving to in-person meetings; it is a question of inclusion and equity; online meetings have the potential to diversify the Senate by encouraging research-active faculty, those balancing childcare, and others who find it challenging to attend in-person meetings. [Professor Jenna Lay]
- Senate meetings can be closed to non-senators using the “waiting room” feature in Zoom; nothing prevents very complex issues from being discussed via Zoom; multitasking can also occur during in-person meetings. [Professor Jenna Lay]
- Are we going to make a similar case for remote classes instead of in-person classes? Some committees, such as the Committee on Discipline, cannot meet via Zoom. [Professor Frank Gunter]
- Meetings of the Committee on Discipline are now conducted 100% via Zoom. Zoom meetings for the Senate will provide increased access and transparency. [Professor Mellie Katakalos]
- Faculty should prioritize in-person mode for meeting with students on campus. [Professor Jenna Lay]
- Zoom meetings are becoming the norm for professional organizations and grant-awarding agencies such as the Department of Energy. [Professor Jim Gilchrist]

Follow-ups:

- The Senate should explicitly document cases where visitors promise follow-up information or answers to questions, perhaps by listing and tracking these on the Senate website. [Professor Frank Gunter]

Senate's Interaction with Senior Leadership:

- The Senate should ensure that the less powerful voices, such as non-tenured faculty, are considered when the University administration makes decisions. [Professor Jill Schneider]

Merit Raises:

- It is not appropriate to call the current salary increases merit raises since the increase does not even compensate for inflation. [Professor Jenna Lay]
- Faculty members are unhappy with the recently announced merit raise pool. Faculty members have an opportunity to ask questions during the University Faculty Meeting on 03/25/2022. [Professor Kathy Iovine]

Respectfully submitted by

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Siva". The signature is written in black ink and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

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

Secretary of the Faculty