

# LEHIGH UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Minutes of the Meeting held on March 5, 2021, 1:00 pm

Via Zoom

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 Faculty Senate Meeting of 02/05/2020

Professor Kathy Iovine called for any corrections to the minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting of 02/05/2021. A motion to approve the meeting minutes was made and seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

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

## 2. Update from the Provost

Provost Nathan Urban provided an update and answered questions. Salient points are given below. Unless otherwise noted, the remarks were made by Provost Nathan Urban.

- The Board of Trustees (BOT) has approved the 2021-22 academic year's budget parameters, including a complete restoration of the University's contribution to employee retirement and a 2% merit raise.
- We should consider the mental health issues resulting from the elimination of the spring break and do everything we can to promote the faculty and students' wellness.
- The default expectation for the Fall 2021 semester is that all undergraduate courses will adopt the "in person" teaching mode; we are expecting the usual number of students on campus and the normal housing capacity.
- Regarding graduate courses, a combination of in-person, online, and hybrid modes will be followed based on each college's specific circumstances. That is the current

policy, and there is no need to change that. Colleges should do what is academically the most appropriate. The University will continue to provide support for online courses.

- These plans are based on the assumption that vaccines would be available. Lehigh will promote the need for vaccination among students, faculty, and staff.
- Given the nature of the current vaccine authorization (emergency use only), we cannot legally require vaccination by students, faculty, or staff.
- The restoration of retirement contribution is not retroactive but effective July 1, 2021. [In response to Professor Frank Gunter]
- Restoring retroactive retirement contributions would require an additional \$15M. So, that is not being considered. [Vice President for Finance and Administration Patricia Johnson in response to Professor Josh Pepper's desire to know the rationale for the decision]
- Students need to be accommodated in their learning, and the Provost's Office is open to hearing faculty ideas. [In response to Professor Jeremy Littau's concern about community spread resulting from students not being required to be vaccinated]
- Faculty/staff remote work policy is being developed.
- Privacy regulations may prevent us from asking about the vaccination status of students. We may develop a survey to collect voluntary information regarding the vaccination status. [In response to Professor Jeremy Littau]
- We will continue to do surveillance testing and testing of symptomatic students. But testing of asymptomatic students cannot be decided at this time.
- Regarding Summer 2021, we are still evaluating options based on the evolving situation. For example, programs involving only Lehigh students are more likely, and programs involving high school students staying on Lehigh campus are unlikely.
- Domestic and international travel and inviting external research personnel \ in the fall semester will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- Possible inequities resulting from people on a 12-month salary plan (versus the nine-month salary plan) need to be considered. [Professor Jeremy Littau; Provost Nathan Urban and Vice President for Finance & Administration Patricia Johnson noted that a small number of people are affected and agreed to review the matter]

### **3. Second Reading: R&P 1.3.2.2 GRC Ex Officio Members**

Professor Kathy lovine introduced the proposal for a second reading. The proposal is available at

<https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/sites/facultysenate.lehigh.edu/files/R%26P%201.3.2.2%2C%20re%20ex-officio%20members.pdf>

The purpose of the change is to clarify that the ex officio members of GRC do not vote.

The following points were made during the discussion.

- Since the Deans get to vote in the Educational Policy Committee (EdPol), do they vote in the Graduate and Research Committee? If not, why is there a difference? [College of Business Dean Georgette Phillips]
- There is a disconnect in the language regarding the Deans' role in EdPol and GRC. [Professors Frank Gunter, Kathy lovine, and Jenna Lay]
- "Ex Officio" does not automatically mean nonvoting. [Parliamentarian Robert Thornton]
- The role of ex officio members is more apparent in some sections of R&P, such as the sections dealing with the Faculty Senate. [Professor Jenna Lay]
- It is better to table the motion due to the uncertainty in the language. This can be taken up at a later date once the confusion is sorted out. [Professor Frank Gunter]

The motion to table the motion was made and seconded. It was put to the vote. It was passed 92% to 8%.

#### **4. First Reading: Proposal to remove harassment policy from the Appendix of R&P**

The motion was made and seconded. The document describing the rationale and process for this proposal is available at

<https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/meeting-documents>

Ms. Karen Salvemini noted that all university policies apply whether they are cited in the R&P or not. Furthermore, removing the item from the Appendix of the R&P does not affect the faculty's ability to review or make changes. Professor Frank Gunter concurred with this interpretation.

The motion will come up for a second reading at the next meeting.

## 5. Discussion: Possible roles for the Greek system on creating a diverse and inclusive university

Professor Peter Zeitler started a discussion on the topic. The following are the salient points made during the discussion.

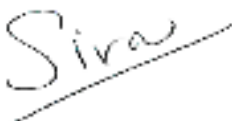
- There is no mention of the Greek system in our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion strategic plan. There is a lack of awareness of the role, processes, and impact of the Greek System at Lehigh, which needs to be rectified. [Professor Peter Zeitler]
- What is the relationship between the Greek system and the University? [Professor Josh pepper]
- The University owns all Greek houses; annual leases are signed, Greek houses can hire their own cooking staff, and Rush is different in different Greek houses. [Vice President for Finance & Administration Patricia Johnson]
- More things happen in off-campus houses owned and operated by the Greek system. [Professor Doug Mahony]
- The student subcommittee of the Senate and the Committee on Student Life are good committees to begin a comprehensive examination of the Greek life at Lehigh. [Professors Kathy Iovine and Jeremy Littau]
- It is time to have a broader conversation about Greek Life. How come the Faculty Senate does not know about the DE&I strategic plan? [Professor Jeremy Littau; Professor Melli Katakalos concurred]
- Senate Chair and Vice-Chair have seen the DE&I strategic plan. The plan can be more broadly shared with the senate subcommittees or the Senate after getting clearance from the VP for Diversity and Inclusion. [Professor Kathy Iovine]
- CEC has a system for obtaining feedback on the strategic plan. [Professor Sara Kangas]
- Lehigh was not prepared to eliminate the Greek system altogether and that our best hope was to reduce its size and significance. It was the policy of campus police not to enter a Greek building specifically to check on illegal alcohol. The Greek control of illegal alcohol on campus has always been key to their control of social life on campus. [Professor Micheal Raposa summarizing his conclusions and learning about the Greek System at Lehigh]
- It seems that the number of students in the Greek system is declining. How can we contribute to redirecting student interest toward other vibrant activities on campus as alternatives to Greek life? [Professor Jenna Lay]
- It is helpful to have Vice Provost Ric Hall make a presentation about the Greek system to the Faculty Senate. [Professor Kathy Iovine]

- It is useful to have the Police Chief and others associated with Student Life and Greek Life attend the meeting to make the discussion comprehensive. [Professors Doug Mahony and Jeremy Littau; Professor Kathy Iovine concurred]

## **6. Other Items Discussed**

- Deans should be asked to consult with the Faculty Senate before establishing temporary committees. [Professor Frank Gunter]
- The Senate should work with the deans to limit the increase in the number of committees. [Professor Kathy Iovine]
- More attention must be paid to mental health issues and work-life balance issues. [Professor Kathy Iovine]
- Proper expectations must be developed and articulated about not requiring responses to emails during the weekend and evenings [Professor Josh Pepper], creating boundaries between regular semesters and the summer semesters [Professor Bridget Dever], faculty being allowed to opt into the teaching modes more suitable for them until Covid-19 situation stabilizes [Professor Ray Pearson], and faculty should not be being expected to teach using both in-class and remote teaching modes resulting from the variance in student adherence to the vaccination policies [Professor Jeremy Littau].
- If international students are not coming back to campus, teaching modality issues may become more complex. [Professor Angela Hicks]

**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**