

LEHIGH UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Minutes of the Meeting held on May 7, 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 Prior Faculty Senate Meeting

Professor Kathy Iovine called for any corrections to the minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting of 04/02/2021. 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. “Sense of the Faculty Senate” Resolution on the Possible Budget Surplus

The resolution was moved and seconded. The text is available in Appendix 2.

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

Salient points made during the ensuing discussion are given below.

- There is some uncertainty about the nature of the surplus. The motivation behind the resolution is to agree on the principle that any budget surplus should be returned to the faculty. [Professor Kathy Iovine]
- The surplus is not money that can be spent for any purpose. Part of the surplus comes from not spending money on capital investments. There are still concerns about undergraduate and graduate enrollments. It is also essential to keep in mind that the actual audited surplus might well be less than the projected amount, as was the case last year. The Provost’s Office is preparing a document to explain things to the faculty. [Provost Nathan Urban]

- It is important to consult with the faculty regarding the decision to withhold retirement contributions; an unrestricted portion of the budget could be used to restore the retirement contributions. [Professor Peter Zeitler]
- Last year was unusual due to a significant decrease in revenue and unprecedented changes that were necessary to make. There is no structural mechanism currently to gather faculty inputs on such issues. The Provost's Office is open for discussion with the faculty members to gather the best ideas that Lehigh can implement to face future challenges. [Provost Nathan Urban, in response to Professor Josh Pepper's comment that future strategic hiring will become difficult if future salary cuts are perceived to be possible.]
- The stimulus funds received from the Recovery Bill were spent on the least compensated employees. [Provost Nathan Urban in response to Professor Damien Tevenin]
- It is not clear how the money can be used for strategic purposes if it is restricted in the way that has been described (allocated to particular units, in endowment funds, earmarked for faculty hires). [Professor Jenna Lay]
- A \$1-2M surplus may likely be available for next year, but the final picture will emerge only after knowing the yield rate in undergraduate admission and the impact on graduate tuition revenue. [Provost Nathan Urban]
- It is not possible to restore the university retirement contributions withheld during 2021-22. [Provost Nathan Urban in response to Professor George Nation]
- The University should be committed to prioritizing the restoration of retirement contributions and compensation to faculty and staff. [Professor Jennifer Midberry]
- The University is committed to doing what is in the best interests of the University. These interests include faculty research and financial aid. [Provost Nathan Urban]
- Faculty and staff made and are making many sacrifices during the pandemic. This commitment to restore faculty compensation is the minimum that should be done. [Professors Jeremy Littau and Josh Pepper]

The resolution was put to the vote and passed 96% to 4%.

3. Greek Life and Campus Climate

Vice President for Student Affairs Ric Hall and Associate Dean of Students Chris Mulvihill Provided an update on Greek Life and Campus Climate. The prepared remarks by Vice President Ric Hall appear in Appendix 3.

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

The following are the salient points made during the discussion.

- Greek Life is not even mentioned in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategic plan. The idea of inclusion seems to be at odds with the practices of Greek Life Organizations. [Professor Peter Zeitler]
- More than 30% of the parents are looking for a Greek Life option on campus; eliminating the Greek system will create a vacuum, and the problem will shift to off-campus locations. The goal should be to make improvements. [Associate Dean Chris Mulvihill in response to Professor Jenna Lay]
- The Office of Student Affairs is aware of the public perceptions about Greek Life at Lehigh, and things must be done to rectify the situation. [Vice President Ric Hall]
- More than 90% of the Greek Life residents are expected to be vaccinated; therefore, housing arrangements would not be an issue. However, we have less control over off-campus events. Similarly, it is challenging to control off-campus organizations that are not recognized and registered with Lehigh. [Vice President Ric Hall and Associate Dean Chris Mulvihill in response to Professor Tony DiMaggio]
- In addition to focusing on the negative aspects of Greek Life, we should also focus on the positive aspects. [Professor Frank Gunter]
- Despite the positive aspects of Greek Organizations related to academic performance, leadership development, fundraising for social causes, etc., the focus, unfortunately, is on social life. [Vice President Ric Hall and Associate Dean Chris Mulvihill]
- It is essential to revisit the notion of gendered Greek organizations to accommodate the evolving gender classifications. [Professor Mellie Katalalos]

4. University COVID Impact Statement

Deputy Provost for Faculty Affairs Jackie Krasas initiated a discussion on the COVID impact statement to be included in the communication to external reviewers for promotion and tenure cases. The draft is available in Appendix 4.

[Appendix 4 available at <https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/meeting-minutes>]

Several issues were raised during the discussion. These relate to providing the option to the department to include the statement [Professor Sara Kangas], providing additional

details regarding lab closures [Professor Frank Gunter], incorporating the restrictions placed on Research Assistants [Professor Jeremy Littau], fine-tuning the language to avoid inconsistencies related to acknowledgment of difficulties without stating that we are lowering standards [Professor Jeremy Littau, Professor Bo Thornton], to make the statement less broad but more specific to individuals [Professor Josh Pepper], the possibility of the statement creating a bias against the candidate [Professor Jim Gilchrist], providing an opportunity for individuals to add something in their statements voluntarily [Professors Jim Gilchrist and Jenna Lay], and recognizing that some faculty members may not want to include health-related information in their statements for privacy reasons [Professor Jenna Lay]

Deputy Provost for Faculty Affairs Jackie Krasas noted that the statement would be revised to consider the suggestions from the Senators, the final version will be posted on the Provost's website [in response to Professor Jim Gilchrist's point that faculty should be aware of the inclusion of the statement], the statement will be applicable for all promotion cases but more relevant for junior faculty [in response to Professor Sara Kangas], and the statement may be needed at least for the next five years [in response to Professors Jim Gilchrist and Peter Zeitler].

5. Faculty Code of Ethics

Due to lack of time, a motion to have the first reading during the September 2021 Senate meeting was made and seconded. The motion was put to the vote and passed.

5. Other Points Discussed (by Professor Kathy Iovine Unless Otherwise Noted)

- Fall pacing break will be split into two: One day as usual in October (Monday of the 8th week of classes) and the second day in November on Election Day (Tuesday).
- The senior administration is moving toward making Lehigh a tobacco-free campus effective August 2021.
- There will be a central location for receiving packages from outside. This decision seems to have been made. [In response to Professor Clay Naito]
- It is not clear how the campus access protocols will work in the Fall semester. [In response to Professor Jenna Lay]
- The Senate meetings in Fall 2021 will be via Zoom.

- We need to clarify procedures for voting and presentations at the meeting. Reading prepared statements should be avoided; instead, they should be sent to the senators in advance. [Professor Josh Pepper]
- The agenda for the Faculty Senate retreat on 05/13/2021 will be made available before the retreat.

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