

## LEHIGH UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Minutes of the Meeting held on October 1st, 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 09/03/2021. A motion to approve the meeting minutes was made and seconded. Professor Gunter proposed a change in the last sentence of the minutes: Replacing “Thursday” with “Wednesday and Thursday.” The Senate unanimously approved the minutes with these changes.

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

### 2. Undergraduate admissions updates

Vice Provost for Admissions and Financial Aid Dan Warner provided an update. The slides used are available in Appendix 2.

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

The following are the salient points made during the discussion.

- Faculty are encouraged to identify strong undergraduate applicants to Lehigh and to provide recommendations. However, after the applications are submitted, the Office of Admissions has the sole responsibility for admission decisions. [Vice Provost Dan Warner in response to Professor Josh Pepper’s question regarding faculty involvement in the admissions process. Provost Nathan Urban concurred and added that we should avoid inappropriate influences in the admission process.]

- The changes in the financial aid process were made because it is not possible to sustain the very high discount rates. We will still offer financial aid without loans for the neediest students; however, “no loan” financial aid may not be provided to others. The policies will be revisited in the future. [Vice Provost Dan Warner in response to Professor Jenna Lay’s question related to dropping need-blind admissions mentioned in Slide 5 of Vice Provost Dan Warner’s presentation]
- It is helpful to know how the policy affects our goal of attracting students from financially disadvantaged families. [Professor Jenna Lay]
- We are still focused on under-resourced and underrepresented populations. We also need more middle-class and wealthy families to pick Lehigh. [Vice Provost Dan Warner]
- Rankings do matter, especially for attracting international students. However, it is more important to tell better stories about Lehigh. [Vice Provost Dan Warner]
- The limit on the number of yellow ribbon scholars has been removed. [Vice Provost Dan Warner; Professor Frank Gunter noted that this is a positive development]

### 3. Graduate Admissions Updates

Interim Deputy Provost for Graduate Education Oliver Yao provided an update. The slides are given in Appendix 3.

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

The following were the salient points made during the discussion.

- Some departments have conducted surveys about graduate students; it may be useful to compile the survey results to identify common themes. [Professor Kathy Iovine; Deputy Provost Oliver Yao concurred]
- Increasing the size of the Master’s Programs helps support TAs and RAs; the revenue also helps support research; the programs also help to enhance Lehigh’s reputation. Currently, due to low enrollment in some graduate programs, the resources are not fully utilized. Promising programs should be increased in size while some others may have to discontinue. [Deputy Provost Oliver Yao in response to Professor Jenna Lay’s concern about whether we are contributing to predatory practices in the creation of new master’s programs, given national data on low starting salaries of some graduates and the loans incurred by the students]
- In consultation with Dr. Kathleen Hutnik, TA/RA packages are being reviewed with the goal of increasing them. [Deputy Provost Oliver Yao in response to Professor Tony DiMaggio’s concern about the shortage of tuition waivers]

- It will be useful to get another update about graduate programs in a couple of months. [Professor Kathy Iovine]

#### 4. Faculty Letters for Promotion and Tenure

Deputy Provost for Faculty Affairs Jackie Krasas initiated a discussion. The proposal is available at

<https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/sites/facultysenate.lehigh.edu/files/Proposal%20to%20Remove%20Individual%20Letters.pdf>

The following were the salient points made during the discussion.

- The nature of the Department Summary letter can be changed to include additional details to reflect the entirety of the points discussed at the meeting. [Deputy Provost Jackie Krasas in response to Professor Angela Hicks' remarks about direct citations for the reasons behind a negative vote would be useful]
- Since the faculty member undergoing the review does not see the individual letters, the proposed change introduces transparency. The chairpersons should spend more time crafting the summary letter. [Professors Jeremy Littau and Josh Pepper]
- Individual letters help keep all faculty members engaged in the process since it forces them to provide a logic for their vote. The summary letter is also better informed due to this written documentation from individual faculty members. [Professor Peter Zeitler]
- In the case of a split decision, one letter from the department that is even-handed is more valuable than individual letters that may unduly focus on some specifics. Some chairpersons will need training to write effective summary letters. [Deputy Provost Jackie Krasas]
- The changes will not increase the overall time required for the process. [Deputy Provost Jackie Krasas in response to Professor Craig Hochbein]
- There is no problem with the individual letter. The minority opinion may be minimized in an unhealthy department. [Professor Clay Naito]
- A consensus summary letter from the department and a consensus dissenting letter from colleagues are more valuable than individual letters that talk past each other without convergence. Also, we can have a system that allows departments to incorporate individual letters if they feel it is necessary. [Provost Nathan Urban]
- Since a minority report can be added to the department summary letter, it solves the problems associated with some individual letters indicating a "yes" vote but articulating some severe issues with the candidate's record. [Deputy Provost Jackie Krasas]

- It is essential to train the department chairs in writing summary letters. [Professor Angela Hicks; Deputy Provost Jackie Krasas concurred]

## 5. Second Reading - Code of Ethics

The document is available at

[https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/sites/facultysenate.lehigh.edu/files/LU\\_Faculty%20Code%20of%20Ethics%20Sept%206%2C%202021%202nd%20reading.pdf](https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/sites/facultysenate.lehigh.edu/files/LU_Faculty%20Code%20of%20Ethics%20Sept%206%2C%202021%202nd%20reading.pdf)

The following are the salient points made during the discussion.

- Any provision can be abused if the person implementing it is not acting in good faith. [Professor Tony DiMaggio in response to Professor Frank Gunter’s concern that words such as “hostile” are difficult to define and this can lead to abuse of the Code of conduct]
- If any provision can be potentially abused, why are we taking a chance? [Professor George Nation]
- Faculty members going to the Ombudsperson is not prohibited; action under the Code of conduct and consultation with the Ombudsperson are both available. [Professors Kathy Iovine and Ageliki Nicolopoulou]
- The original motivation for the Code of Conduct was to address behaviors that are not serious enough to be addressed by other provisions but still violate norms and create discomfort. The Code of Conduct can be revised based on our experience with it. The usefulness of the Code of Conduct will depend upon the people implementing it. [Professor Doug Mahony]
- The process involved in the Code of Conduct can create opportunities for conversations about certain behaviors not addressed by other policies; this is also a mechanism for having discussions to solve issues, make faculty accountable, and facilitate faculty engagement to reduce misunderstanding. [Professors Kathy Iovine and Jeremy Littau]
- Using the Code of conduct to have a dialogue is very important to help faculty members facing an unfriendly environment. [Professor Kathy Iovine]
- Professor Robert Thornton noted that in section 2.4.3. discussing sanctions, “college” committees are not mentioned in item “b” but university and department committees are mentioned. Professor Tony DiMaggio agreed that it was an oversight. The proposal to amend “university and department committees” to “university, college, and

department committees” was moved, seconded, and approved.

The proposal was put to the vote and passed. 91% voted yes, 4% voted no, and 4% abstained.

Professor Kathy Iovine noted that the entire university faculty will now vote on the proposal. The Senate will provide opportunities for discussing the Code of Conduct before the vote.

## **7. Other Points Discussed**

Professor Jeremy Littau raised concerns about the availability and the cost of Covid-19 testing. Professor Angela Hicks talked about the difficulties for faculty and staff who get their health coverage from the HMO. Professor Kathy Iovine noted that LVHN seems to have some coding issues related to the expenditure for Covid-19 testing. The matter will be taken up with the Covid Response Team.

Professor Frank Gunter proposed that faculty teach in their academic regalia on October 13th and October 14th during the Founder’s Day week to increase faculty morale.

**Respectfully submitted by**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Siva" with a horizontal line underneath it.

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

**Secretary of the Faculty**