

# LEHIGH UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Minutes of the Meeting held on October 2, 2020, 1:00 pm

Via Zoom

Faculty Senate Chair Professor Kathy lovine 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 09/04/2020**

Professor Kathy lovine called for any corrections to the minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting of 09/04/2020.

Before the meeting, a minor revision (to include "(former)" before "Senate Subcommittee" in the last paragraph of item # 6) was requested by Professor Frank Gunter, which was incorporated by the Secretary of the Faculty in the draft minutes. A motion to approve the meeting minutes was made and seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

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

## **2. Discussion: Student Retention**

Deputy Provost for Academic Affairs Jennifer Jensen began the discussion by noting that student retention is being treated as an important issue at Lehigh in light of Covid-19.

Director of Retention Donna Mohr provided an update. The slides used by Dr. Donna Mohr are in Appendix 2.

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

Vice Provost for Admissions and Financial Aid Dan Warner followed up with some additional perspectives to elaborate on the efforts being made by the Office of Admissions. Some salient points discussed are listed below.

- Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, traditional tools such as campus visits by students and their families and the visits by admissions counselors to different regions in the country are not possible.
- Word of mouth, based on current students' experience, will be an important factor determining the generation of the applicant pool.
- The Office of Admissions is implementing new activities and scaling up some activities that can still be conducted during the pandemic.
- Recruiting of a particular batch of students starts some 18 months before they arrive at Lehigh.
- Students are being contacted based on various lists of target students, and enhanced virtual experiences, including different kinds of virtual tours, are being offered. Social media is also being used to communicate with students and parents.
- Virtual open house attendance is larger than the on-campus open house attendance.
- Joint information sessions with partner universities are being arranged.
- This year our student recruitment success will depend upon contacting smaller groups rather than large group events traditionally used.
- Deans and faculty members can motivate potential students to apply and convince admitted students to come to Lehigh.
- Lehigh is already experiencing a high retention rate. Everyone's help is needed to ensure that it stays at that level. [Deputy Provost Jennifer Jensen]

### **3. Updates by Provost Nathan Urban**

Provost Nathan Urban acknowledged the critical role of student retention. Furthermore, he provided an update on the Covid-19 situation at Lehigh. He described campus actions in response to the increased cases of Covid-19 among Lehigh students. Provost Urban summarized some elements of the communication dated 09/29/2020. He also noted that another detailed communication would go out to the campus community in the afternoon.

[Follow up note from the Secretary of the Faculty:](#)

The communication dated 10/02/2020 is available at <https://www2.lehigh.edu/news/10220-scaling-back-campus-activity>

Periodical Updates, including a subsequent communication dated 10/08/2020 to the campus community, are available at

<https://coronavirus.lehigh.edu/latest-updates>

The following are the salient points discussed during the ensuing discussion. The points were made by Provost Nathan Urban unless noted otherwise.

- Research labs will be open under the Phase 3 guidelines established in summer 2020. [In response to Professor Clay Naito]
- A few senators expressed their concern for implementing widespread testing, speedy results, and effective contact tracing. [Professors Parveen Gupta, Kathy Iovine, and Craig Hochbein]
- It is important for the Faculty to reach out to students and engage with them under these difficult circumstances.
- Resources regarding how Faculty can advise students and help them in these unusual times will be compiled. [In response to Professor Jeremy Littau's comment that the Faculty are not trained to counsel students and that faculty members need more guidance]
- There is a need for Lehigh to provide proactive information to correct misinformation and rumors. [Professors Parveen Gupta and John Vilanova]

#### **4. Discussion: Faculty Ranks Proposal**

The revised proposal is available at

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

Professor Kelly Austin presented an overview of the changes made to the proposal in response to the senators' feedback. The slides used by Professor Kelly Austin are in Appendix 3.

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

The following are the salient points discussed.

- The timelines mentioned for promotion are cumulative and not consecutive. [Professor Frank Gunter in response to Professor Sihong Xie]

- There is a need to clarify the process for Faculty who are on soft money. [Professor Peter Zeitler]
- Suitable changes will be made in the proposal to address these and other clarifications. [Professors Kelly Austin and Frank Gunter]
- The maximum reappointment period is five years. [Professor Frank Gunter in response to Professor Clay Naito regarding the need for consistency in reappointment contracts]
- Lehigh senior administration is not in favor of rolling contracts. [Professor Kelly Austin]
- Voting by the teaching Faculty and the research Faculty will be determined by individual colleges and the specific contract terms. [Professor Frank Gunter in response to Professors Jenna Lay and Yaling Liu]
- The associated changes needed in the R&P must be considered. [Professor Jenna Lay]
- 23% cap is for the University overall. The Provost will have flexibility in deciding individual college ratios for non-tenure-track faculty members. [Professor Frank Gunter in response to Professor Angela Hicks]
- After the second reading and Senate vote in November 2020, Faculty vote, and Board of Trustee Approval, Deputy Provost for Faculty Affairs will establish procedures in Spring 2021 to transition to the new system. [Professor Kathy Iovine]

## **5. First Reading: Changes to R&P 1.3.2.2 Graduate and Research Committee**

The proposal is available at

[https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/sites/facultysenate.lehigh.edu/files/1.3.2.2%20GRC\\_1.pdf](https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/sites/facultysenate.lehigh.edu/files/1.3.2.2%20GRC_1.pdf)

The motion was made and seconded. It will come up for a second reading at the next Senate meeting.

## **6. Additional Points Discussed**

- It will be useful for the Faculty Senate to hear directly from the Director of the Health Center. [Professor Frank Gunter]
- Faculty members are drowning in the increased responsibilities thrust on them due to Covid-19. [Professors Jenna Lay and Jeremy Littau]

- The Covid-19 extension for promotion and tenure should be expanded to all faculty members who joined Lehigh after 2013. [Professor Jenna Lay]
- The Faculty Affairs Subcommittee is examining the issue. [Professor Kathy Iovine]
- It will be useful to track the number of calls coming to the Health Center. [Professor Angela Hicks]
- To help Faculty, not requiring the completion of PAR for the year should be considered. [Professor Jeremy Littau]
- Lehigh should be thinking about the long-term implications of the Post-COVID-19 world. [Professors Frank Gunter and Kathy Iovine]
- Lehigh President's working group on the future of Lehigh is discussing long-term implications. [Professor Jenna Lay]
- Professor Jeremy Littau will update the Senate on the deliberations of the working group.
- The University Faculty Meeting will be at 4:30 pm on 11/19/2020. The senior administration will discuss budget priorities. [Professor Kathy Iovine]

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 pm.

**Respectfully submitted by**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Siva", underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

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

**Secretary of the Faculty**