

LEHIGH UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Minutes of the Meeting held on October 4, 2019, 1:00 pm
Venue: Linderman Library 200

Faculty Senate Chair Professor Douglas Mahony 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 09/06/2019

Professor Doug Mahony called for any corrections to the minutes of the Lehigh University faculty senate meeting of 09/06/2019. These had been posted at <https://facultysenate.lehigh.edu/meeting-minutes>.

Motion to approve the meeting minutes was made and seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

2. Remarks by Senate Chair Doug Mahony

Senate Chair Doug Mahony provided an update. The salient points are listed below. Unless otherwise noted, the points below were made by Professor Mahony.

- Transportation Services would get feedback from the campus community and making changes to focus on driver training, bus route planning, and so on.
- There is a discussion going on among the senior leadership regarding how faculty can be informed and be involved in active shooter situation training. Incorporating compliance statements in class syllabi and Lehigh Police coming to college meetings to keep faculty involved are also being discussed. While these measures will not be sufficient, the goal is to design a set of processes to ensure that students and faculty are informed and trained about active shooter situation.
- As the College of Health (COH) starts hiring faculty members, we need to think about COH representation in the various standing committees. One option is to convert all “at large” positions to COH positions.
- Incorporation of COH should be done for each committee differently since the rules of membership vary. [Professor Frank Gunter]
- The continuation of Faculty Compensation Committee must be discussed, especially in the

context of specialized resources needed for analyzing faculty salary data in a comprehensive manner.

- Eligibility and qualification of members for various committees will be looked into by the Senate Executive Committee. [In response to a question from Professor Heibatollah Sami who supported the exclusion of chairpersons and associate deans from serving on the Faculty Personnel Committee due to potential conflicts; Professor Frank Gunter supported the exclusion]
- Integration of COH faculty into various committees will be done in a staggered manner in consultation with COH Dean Whitney Witt.
- Provost Patrick Farrell noted that of the 50 or so students that will join COH next year, most will be taking classes in CAS. COH courses will be started as provisional courses before being made into formal courses. [In response to a question from Ray Peterson]
- Decisions have not been made about increase in the number of faculty members in other colleges due to additional students joining COH. This will be handled as part of the colleges' annual requests for hiring in May 2020.
- Similarly, changes are being made to the role of Faculty Personnel Committee in advising on the appointment of the President, Provost, and other senior positions above the rank of Dean since these tasks will be handled by the Senate Executive Committee. [Partly in response to Professor Jenna Lay's question]
- While Professors James Gilchrist and Josh Pepper supported Professor Doug Mahony's idea of abolishing the Faculty Committee on Advancement now that the capital campaign is underway, Professor Jenna Lay asked about future campaigns and wondered if the Senate Executive Committee will handle advancement. Professor Doug Mahony agreed with Professor Gilchrist's suggestion that future capital campaigns should be discussed by the new Senate subcommittee on major initiatives. There was general support for this idea.
- It is important for all senators to participate more fully as members of the Senate subcommittees. Several senators agreed on the need for more engagement by senators since some senators are currently serving on two subcommittees.
- The role of the Visiting Lecturers Committee is also being examined since there is a confusion as to the rule of this committee.
- Department of Biology and the Department of Earth and Environment Sciences have provided report summarizing their concerns related to BIOS. The financial liability is a very small compared to Lehigh's operations. Other issues are being examined and the Senate will be updated.

3. Common Exam Policy

Professor Ray Pearson talked about the increasing number of conflicts arising in the scheduling of common exams. Issues regarding the need for and the administration of

the common exams need to be discussed especially in light of the changes in class times starting this semester. Several issues were discussed by the senators, Registrar Steve Wilson, and Deputy Provost for Academic Affairs Jennifer Jensen. A number of issues/considerations were pointed out. Some are listed below.

- the new class schedule that involve classes between 4 pm and 7 pm;
- reduced number of days available for common exams;
- the need for scheduling two exams for the student on the same day;
- first year students, especially first generation students are already dealing with other issues related to adjustment to college life and there is a need to make sure we are not creating additional problems to the students to increase their stress level;
- more and more students requiring extra time due to learning disability reasons;
- students who are on medication and the medication wears off during the exam time;
- need to accommodate co-curricular and extra-curricular activities such as theater, sports, music, and experiential field trips that need additional consideration in time management;
- to consider that not all universities have common exams across the entire university;
- reducing the undue burden on faculty in terms of creating different versions of the exam for the same course;
- to deal with some faculty advising students to skip other classes to come on time for their exam;
- need for placing stricter limits on which classes are eligible for common exams,
- need to avoid exams too early in the morning;
- need to reduce the time duration of the common exam;
- provide adequate notice to students to enable planning;
- need to consider what other universities are doing;
- need to take into consideration that some departments have strong feelings to support the common exams while others will like them to be dispensed with;
- need to come up with a workable policy in consultation with Education Policy Committee.

After an extensive discussion, it was agreed that the Senate Subcommittee on Academic and Student Affairs should work to come up with a VIABLE SOLUTION to the issue of common exams. While it was understood that no solution will be perfect, until such an arrangement is finalized, all senators agreed that student inconvenience should be minimized and that faculty should not ask students to skip others' classes in order for the students to attend a particular exam. The Senators unanimously agreed that on behalf of the faculty senate, a statement along the following lines (proposed by Professor Jenna Lay and seconded) should go to all faculty members (Faculty Secretary's follow up note: A draft version of the statement below was proposed and approved by the Senate with the understanding that Senate Chairperson Doug Mahony will fine-tune the wording in consultation with University Parliamentarian Robert Thornton before sending the same to all faculty members. The statement below is the statement sent by Professor Mahony to all faculty members on October 7, 2019).

While not a new problem, the recent changes to the class schedule exacerbated the frequency of such conflicts. Accordingly, the Faculty Senate will take up consideration of policy changes within R&P to resolve this issue by the start of the Spring semester. Until such action is taken,

the Faculty Senate (under the advisement of the Parliamentarian in accordance with [R&P](#) section 1.1.3) unanimously affirms that while R&P does not yet address such conflicts directly, it does, when considered in totality, prioritize regularly scheduled classes. Section 3.2.5 of R&P, for example, states: “The university assumes that regular class attendance is an essential element of its academic operations.”

In all cases of conflict, therefore, the regularly scheduled course will take precedence over the conflicting common exam, and faculty offering a common exam must then provide a make-up exam. Faculty are also reminded that the new course schedule includes classes that end at 4:15pm; students should not be expected to arrive at their common exam until the scheduled start time.

4. Consent Calendar:

As per R&P 3.2.1, substantive course and curriculum changes will be handled by the Senate Subcommittee on Academic and Student Affairs. The workflow in CIM is being modified.

5. Update by Senate Subcommittees

Updates were provided about the reconstitution of the Committee on Student Life, recently concluded townhall meeting about the proposed R&P changes regarding Professors of Practice, and proposed development of a Faculty Code of Ethics. Additional details will be communicated to the faculty when drafts become available.

In response to Professor Peter Zeitler, Professor Doug Mahony noted that issues related to BIOS are being examined and the actual decision by Lehigh may be somewhat delayed. Professor Mahony noted that the financial impact due to the acquisition of BIOS will be minimal, the senior administration sees real value in contributing to Lehigh’s educational mission related to health and climate issues, there are a lot of questions related to the process of decision making related to BIOS, and there are still issues related to governance of the new entity. Thus, there a need to talk to faculty members in all affected departments about the remaining issues.

Professor Jenna Lay noted that it would be useful if the Senators are informed about the discussions in the Senate Executive Committee. Professor Kathy Iovine concurred.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Siva

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

Secretary of the Faculty