

# LSU Agriculture Faculty Council Meeting Minutes

9:30 AM, Friday, March 21, 2025

Room 212, J. Efferson Hall



## **Call to Order**

Will Afton called the meeting to order at 9:35 AM

## **Attendance**

### *In-person*

William Afton, Kayanush Aryana, Becky Gautreaux, Greg Lutz, Maddox Miller, Jha Prashant, and Sara Shields.

### *Online*

Jennifer Duhon, Bruce Garner, Becky Gautreaux, Claudia Husseneder, Vinicius Moreira, Brittney Newsome, Jonathon Richards, and Mark Schafer.

### *Absent*

Giovana Aita, Michael Burnett, Chris Dunaway, Carol Friedland, Michael Mamp, Kevin McCarter, Rich Vlosky, and Brett Wolfe.

In the absence of the chair and vice-chair, the meeting will be conducted by the recorder, Will Afton.

## A. Remarks and Items from Dr. Matt Lee, Vice President of Agriculture/Dean, College of Agriculture

Dr. Allen Rutherford joined Matt Lee to address the council.

The LSU AgCenter Strategic Plan was just released and was presented at the organization-wide meeting on Tuesday, March 18. The new strategic plan will guide the organization through 2030. It is a different structure from previous documents. Instead of a separate plan for CoA and LCES, both are now combined into one. The complete plan, along with supporting documents, can be found at <https://www.lsuagcenter.com/portals/administration/about-us/vice-president-dean-office/strategic-plan>

Dr. Lee has visited several experiment stations and extension offices and noticed older, outdated branding material. LSU AgCenter will be entering a branding phase to help with organizational-wide buy-in. Pictures, posters, signs, and banners will be updated.

Over the next 6-8 months, the Ag Faculty Council can help Dr. Lee get organization-wide buy-in. Dr. Tara Smith is organizing regional meetings for administration to inform faculty. Dr. Lee and his team want to know how they can help the organization achieve the goals listed in the new

strategic plan. More discussion on how the Ag Faculty Council can assist Dr. Lee will be held in the future.

Two LSU AgCenter positions have been reconfigured to better track institutional-level metrics like extension contacts, youth enrollments, publications released, grant making, etc.

Dr. Lee and his team are still educating legislators on the LSU AgCenter in general. They are showing them exactly what the AgCenter does for local communities, how it affects constituents, and the economic impact across the state – all of which are interconnected with the strategic plan.

Becky Gautreaux asked Dr. Lee about a way to get anecdotal information on behavior changes in local communities. Dr. Lee is the organization's main storyteller and is open to discussing a way for him to receive information on current local programs and behavior changes in ongoing programming efforts to help him put together a presentation for that local constituent group. Greg Lutz suggested adding a section to the annual portfolio program that asks the user how their work supported the strategic plan.

Kai Aryana asked a question about how to receive information from faculty with regards to the work environment committee. Dr. Lee responded that he is trying to create a positive people-centric organization. Dr. Lee will telephone faculty members to congratulate them on awards and invite them to take pictures. The LSU AgCenter is having more events to recognize people throughout the organization. Human Resources has been working on programs like the Wellness Wagon and mental health awareness. He needs a systematic procedure in place to learn about the different layers of the faculty work environment, but with an appropriate level of collegiality.

#### B. Approval of Minutes

Maddox Miller made a motion to accept the February 21, 2025, meeting minutes. Kai Aryana seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

#### C. Guest Presentations

There are no guest presentations at this meeting.

#### D. Chair's Report

There is no chair report at this meeting.

#### E. Committee Reports – written report from each committee for inclusion in the minutes, brief summary from each committee

- Executive Committee (Will Afton) – The committee discussed protocols, especially regarding minutes and agendas. The Teams file structure and organization were reviewed. The committee will meet monthly to continue progress.
- Bylaws Committee (Mark Schafer) – The committee met in March and will meet monthly. The next committee meeting is scheduled for April 14. Some of those discussions will include updating bylaws to reflect the state's open meeting laws and going over Robert's Rules of Order for online participation.

- Policies Committee (Jonathon Richards) - The committee communicated via email to discuss LSU AgCenter PS 53, Insurance for Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service Sponsored Activities and Programs. The Committee had a question about the definition of “extension personnel” on whether they are employees with explicit extension appointments or anyone performing in an extension capacity. The committee will reach out to Ashley Gautreaux for further clarification.
- Strategic Plan Committee (Donnie Miller). The committee exchanged a few emails, but the statewide strategic plan update meeting occurred just three days ago.
- Work Environment Committee (Britney Newsome) The committee met on March 14 and discussed potential approaches and actions on work environment issues. Dr. Lee provided a list of talking points for discussion, such as organizational leadership, management, supervision, is the current model of extension personnel sustainable, and employee engagement. The committee is still looking for ways to receive data on these issues from faculty. The next meeting will be April 11, with monthly meetings to follow.

#### F. Other Agenda Items

- Elect alternate faculty member for LSU System Council of Faculty Advisors ([LSU PM 24, II.](#))  
tabled to April 25 meeting
- Discussion on Teams structure and sharing  
MS Teams makes it easy for the council to meet, discuss, and share materials related to council matters. The council needs to review the new version of Robert’s Rules of Order concerning online meetings and voting and to use it as a guide forward.
- General discussion of committee vision and functioning  
Everyone is in agreement about working in committees and presenting a report to Dr. Lee.

#### G. Introduction of New Business

No new business was discussed.

### **2025 Meeting Dates – 9:30am-12:00pm/Room 212 Efferson Hall or Teams**

Dates-Planned for 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of Each Month. Meeting Invitations Sent

January 17	October 17
February 21	November 21
March 21	December ?
April 25	
May 16	
June 20	
July 18	
August 15	
September 19	

## **Adjourn**

Kai Aryana made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Greg Lutz seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 AM.