

LSU Agriculture Faculty Council Meeting-Agenda
9:30 AM, Friday, April 19, 2024
Room 212, J. Efferson Hall



Call to Order

Attendance

In-person

Online

Absent

Invited Guests

Dr. Matt Lee, Vice President of Agriculture/Dean, College of Agriculture

1. Legislative update
2. Messaging strategy update
3. Responses to stakeholder questions (separate document).

Ashley Gautreaux, Assistant Vice President; Department, Human Resource Management

1. Policy updates

Dr. Mike Salassi, Exec. Assoc. Vice President & Director LAES Administration (Nothing to Report)

Dr. Tara Smith, Exec. Assoc. Vice President & Director LCES

- The Louisiana Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics has named LSU AgCenter nutrition and community health agent **Becky Gautreaux** its **2024 Outstanding Dietitian of the Year**.
- **Rubayet Bin Mostafiz** will serve as the Assistant Director of Research at the LSU AgCenter **LaHouse Research and Education Center**.

4-H Youth Development and FFA

- The **4-H Food Challenge** was hosted on Wednesday, April 3rd at the Evac Shelter in Alexandria, LA. with 58 teams competing from 28 different parishes and over 200 youth were present. Each round had a secret ingredient. Catfish filets donated from Guidry's Catfish in Breaux Bridge and Louisiana strawberries donated by Rouses Markets.
 - The first-place team in Division III from St John parish will go on to represent Louisiana at the National Food Challenge in Dallas, TX at the Texas State Fair in October!
 - Division I (4th – 6th grade): Evangeline: Audrey Caulkins, Audrey Pitre, Anne Morein, Vivian Chapman

- Division II (7th – 8th grade): Winn: Ella Higginbotham, Emma Miller, Catherine Page, Emily Grace Adams
 - Division III (9th – 12th grade): St John: Sarai Gaines, Di'ayre Brown, Dalie Green
- The **2024 AgMagic-Baton Rouge** had a total of **7,743 students, teachers, volunteers, and visitors** from the public over the seven-day event. Our **volunteers contributed 1,977 hours which totals an economic impact of \$62,868.60. Our in-kind sponsorships topped \$100,000** which is a new record for this event.
 - **Nearly 200 FFA members** were interviewed for **Proficiency and Star Awards** on March 1. Annually, FFA presents Proficiency Awards in 49 agricultural areas to members who have operated the top Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAE) in those areas. Star Awards are presented to the top-performing members who have earned State FFA Degrees.
 - **Around 2,000 FFA members** from across the state participated in **nine Career Development Events (CDEs)**. Area competitions were held in March, and the top 16 teams in each event competed at the State CDEs in Alexandria on April 12. The state winners are:
 - Electricity - Many FFA
 - Floriculture - Weston FFA
 - Meats Evaluation and Technology - Jennings FFA
 - Milk Quality and Products - Jennings FFA
 - Nursery/Landscape - DeRidder FFA
 - Poultry Evaluation - Acadiana FFA
 - Small Engines - Ruston FFA
 - Veterinary Science - Jennings FFA
 - Welding - Marksville FFA

Old Business

1. Motion to accept the minutes from the March 22, 2024 LSU AFC meeting.
2. Service unit faculty satisfaction survey – would be part of overall employee satisfaction survey.

New Business

2024 Meeting Dates

January 19	July 19	First Day of Annual Conference 8:00 a.m.- 10:00 a.m. (Current and New Members)
February 16	August 16	
March 22	September 13	
April 19	October 18	
May 10	November 15	
June 14		

Adjourn

Questions & Discussion Points for Administrators and Service Unit Directors
LSU Agricultural Faculty Council Meeting-April 19, 2024

Questions & Discussion Points for Fred Piazza
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- 1. We would appreciate an update on if the IT-related errors encountered in completing and saving the Faculty Evaluation documents have been fixed. The problem had to do with the supervisor seeing a different document submitted by faculty members. At the March 22, 2024 meeting, Ms. Ashley Gautreaux identified this as an IT issue.*
This issue has been resolved for some time. If anyone is still having issues, please let me know.
- 2. Regarding the focus group to improve the interconnectivity with LSU campus, issues keep popping up: LSU campus latest upgrade of the Office of Disabilities Services has been a disaster for some of us in our school. Not sure if other schools/departments also have issues, but students who need ODS the most are having to jump through lots of hoops to schedule their exams with ODS for my course. (Not sure there is much Dr. Piazza can do about it, but I wanted to inform him.)*
If the issues the students are encountering are IT-related in nature, please let me know and I will reach out to LSU ITS. If they are procedural in nature, this issue would likely need to be addressed by LSU's Office of Disability Services.
- 3. Update on AgTelecom (MS Teams phone) project on campus:*

Migration is 87% complete.

The remaining depts are:

1. SPESS
2. Pesticide
3. Plant Path
4. LaHouse
5. BAE
6. OVP
7. Exp Stats

The tentative switch-over date for the departments above is May 8th. We must coordinate these dates with LSU ITS . We are currently waiting for their part of the process to be completed.

Questions & Discussion Points for Matt Lee

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1. For the future: I got some complaints from walking-impaired faculty about disabled parking spots being too far away from workplaces since Parking has apparently bundled them in certain spots instead of having them close to buildings, but I have not been to campus in ages, so I have not researched that yet. Do you think that might be something to tackle in the future?
2. Something that I've seen (and personally experienced) was to aim to not have a promotion in the same year that a raise was being given. In several circumstances, employees have been awarded the promotion (either to Associate/Full Agent or change in job titles) and accompanying salary adjustment but were not eligible for the COLA/raise given that year. I find that discouraging and counterproductive to keeping employees that have worked hard to earn a promotion.
3. We have decided to take a different, more easily executed approach to discerning AgCenter employee satisfaction. The lengthy block of questions for each service unit will be eliminated. Service units will be evaluated briefly in one grid of items. Tomorrow, the council will be discussing other constructs for instrument inclusion.
4. After lengthy discussion at the March 22 meeting, we would like to hear administration's stance on flex time.
5. My department chair has asked me to raise some questions at the Faculty Council meeting about the recent request for information for the Food and Agricultural Education Information System (FAEIS).

Specifically, the questions are:

- a. What is the "Food and Agricultural Education Information System (FAEIS)" and who maintains it? Is this part of a government system? If so, what agency? What data security measures do they have in place?
- b. Is faculty participation required, or voluntary? If it is required, on what basis is it required? There is concern because they are asking for personally identifying information as part of these data. It is typically the case that informed consent is required in order to acquire and store personal information like this. Concern has been expressed that we have not received enough information along with this request that could reasonably be considered as providing enough information to be able to make an informed decision about whether to participate, and it seems doubtful that the

university would mandate providing this type of information to a system over which they exercise no control with regard to security.

Questions & Discussion Points for Ryan Barnette

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1. For those of us who have accumulated 40 quarters and are eligible for social security, we need better explanation regarding the Windfall Elimination Penalty. It is difficult to get useful information.
2. The cost of health insurance continues to increase every year and the “raises” that are given have not kept up with inflation/cost of living. I’m not sure if this is something that can be addressed, but I think it’s helpful to voice that concern.
3. Another issue that had taken place in previous years was that some Extension personnel (including myself) were not emailed information about health insurance options and the annual enrollment period. I’m not sure why that information would not automatically be sent to all full-time employees, but it was not prior to 2023. I would appreciate assurance that the information will be shared with all employees in all future years.
4. If an employee retires and takes a position elsewhere, what happens to 403(b) retirement account funds. Are they available for drawdown?
5. Upon retirement, what is the status of *Life insurance, Long-term disability, Vision, Dental* policies that have premiums deducted from employee’s salary? Can the premiums continue to be paid by the retiree to retain active policy status?

Questions & Discussion Points for Ashley Gautreaux

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1. Status of the vegetable specialist search. When will that position be filled?
2. After lengthy discussion at the March 22 meeting, we would like to hear administration’s stance on flex time.---(Also posed to Matt Lee).