

LSU Agriculture Faculty Council Meeting
9:30 AM, Friday March 18, 2022
Efferson Hall



Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 9:37 AM

Members In Attendance:

Online:

Albert Orgeron, Brad Pousson, Kristin Stair, Cecilia Stevens, Nathan Lord, Gary Stockton, Bei Guo, Evelyn Watts

In-person:

Will Afton, Stuart Gauthier, Becky Gautreaux, Ken Gravois, Steve Harrison, Mark Shafer, Raj Singh, Joe Chang

Absent:

Richard Cooper, Sallye Dugas, Blair Hebert, Chuanlan Liu, Subramaniam Sathivel, Daniel Swale, Chandra Theegala.

Vice President and Dean's Remarks

Mr. Hampton Grunewald provided remarks on behalf of Dr. Lucien Laborde. LSU President, Dr. William Tate IV, is pushing for collaboration between LSU AgCenter, College of Ag, and external groups (joint efforts) to better compete for grants. The USDA is investing one billion dollars into partnerships to support America's climate-smart farmers, ranchers, and landowners. Deadlines to apply for funding have been extended. Proposals requesting between \$5-100 million are due by May 6, 2022, and proposals requesting from \$250,000 - 4,999,999 are due by June 10, 2022. Visit <https://www.usda.gov/climate-solutions/climate-smart-commodities> for more information.

Legislative Update.

Currently there are currently 1378 bill filed. LSU AgCenter is paying attention to fifty of those bills (General 8, HR Related 8, Cannabis Hemp Related 27, and General legislation 7) that would affect LSU AgCenter.

Budget Update.

Last year's budget cut was \$3.6 million. The governor's Executive Budget included \$2.6 million additional funding, funding for a 3% pay raise (it requires \$1.8 million to give all AgCenter employees a 3% raise across the board), monies for mandated costs, and money for special institutions. Funds to cover salaries must come from re-occurring funds and many traditional revenue sources (i.e., tobacco tax, higher ed initiative fund, tobacco settlement interest) have been drastically reduced from what they provided years ago. The LSU AgCenter is requesting an additional \$2.7

million for Precision Ag programs and an additional \$5.75 million for lab upgrades and modernization. The LSU AgCenter is requesting an additional \$4 million from the Governor's Office to fill thirty-nine extension positions in ANR, FCS, and 4H Youth Development. The list of thirty-nine positions came from meetings between program leaders, regional directors, and parish chairs.

Miscellaneous updates:

Ashley Mullens does not work with the LSU AgCenter at this time.

Dr. Michael Salassi, LSU AgCenter ANR Program Leader

- 4-5 years ago the LSU AgCenter put a majority of hatch funds on salaries. This limits cost/share abilities with grants. These faculty members need to be located and worked with on an individual basis. Research faculty members must always maintain an active Hatch project.
- Sponsored programs (large grants): Primary Investigators are not putting a percent of their time on the grant applications. This presents a potential issue with accounting/sponsored programs. A team is working to identify the grants in question and will work to incorporate/mandate time or cost/share.
- There are issues finding funds for equipment at our research stations because there is no specific budget for research stations.

Business

Subramaniam Sathivel approved the minutes from the December meeting. Richard Cooper seconded the motion.

Organizational matters

Elections of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Executive Committee began. Call for Chair nominations opened. Richard Vlosky was nominated to chair. Stephan Harrison motioned to close nominations. Richard Cooper seconded the motion. Motion passed. Richard Vlosky was elected to Chair. Call for Vice Chair nominations opened. Al Orgeron nominated Becky Gautreaux to Vice Chair. Stephen Harrison motioned to close nominations. Richard Vlosky seconded the motion. Motion passed. Becky was elected to Vice Chair. Call for Secretary nominations opened. Al Orgeron nominated Will Afton to secretary. Stephen Harrison motioned to close nominations. Richard Cooper seconded the motion. Motion passed. Will Afton was elected to Secretary. Chuanlan self-nominated to Executive Committee. Gary Stockton self-nominated to Executive Committee. Richard Cooper motioned to close nominations. Stephen Harrison seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Reports

- Diversity Council. Mark Shafer provided a report on the LSU AgCenter Diversity Council.
 - Council meets once a month. Both Dr. Laborde and Dr. Tate attend each meeting.
 - The council is continuing with establishment of Affinity Groups. The groups are sponsored by the organization, and they are open to all. Some of the current groups are International Networking Group, Women in Ag, and Southern University Networking Group.
 - Diversity Mini-Grant 2021-22 recipients: LA Master Gardener Training (Joe Willis, Chris Dunaway, and Anna Timmerman), Environment and Equity Speaker Series (Jerrod Penn), Diverse Representation in Agronomy (Xi Zhang), Food Insecurity and Int'l Students (Kritee Niroula), and UNAs at LSU Assn Visiting Scholar Program (Kensy Rodriguez).
- Dr. Rich Vlosky reported that there were no major impacts from the Board of Supervisors meeting that was held on Mar 4, 2022.

Discussion Items

1. Rich Vlosky sent a file through email regarding a "Service Unit Survey" that was given back in 2005. Members should review and provide comments for April meeting. Members were asked to send in comments via email before April meeting.
2. It was said that LSU (main campus) suffers from grant access because the research from Pennington and LSU AgCenter are not included in the calculation. Dr. Tate took the initiative with planning the UK and UGA trip to learn how these two universities operate. Dr. Tate and Dr. Laborde visited with administrations from both universities to look at how each university runs their agricultural enterprises and extension service programs. UGA has 2.5x more funding than LSU AgCenter and a large part of their funding comes from state appropriations.
3. Rich Vlosky asked membership if the council has any influence with the College of Agriculture. Does CoA have any representation in Agricultural Faculty Council? Dr. Bill Richardson set up a separate policy council with the CoA to be advised on CoA matters. That council has now been suspended. Agricultural Faculty Council will ask Dr. Laborde to start including "teaching updates" to his monthly address to the Ag Faculty Council. Members would like to view data on holistic admission policy so the Agricultural Faculty Council can provide advice.
4. Dr. Raj Singh questioned the salary increases involved with promotion and tenure process. He thinks they are low and should be evaluated for possible increases. Right now, going from Assistant and Associate gives a 4% increase with an additional \$3,400 and going from Associate to Full gives a 4% increase and an additional \$4,400. LSU A&M is similar but lower: Asst. to Assoc. (4% + \$2,500) Assoc. to Full (4% + \$3,500). Council suggested to compile data on starting salaries and promotional increases to further compare.

5. Rich Vlosky would like to meet with Dr. Tate in person to talk about the letter and invite him to the next meeting
6. Council members should look at signing up for a Council Advisory Group. The excel file is being passed around via email.

Next Meeting: Friday, April 22, 2022

Adjourn

Ken Gravois motioned to adjourn the meeting. Becky Gautreaux seconded the motion. The meeting ended at 12:29 PM