

**LSU Agriculture Faculty Council Meeting-Meeting Minutes**  
**9:30 AM, Friday May 26, 2023**  
**Room 212, J. Efferson Hall**



**Call to Order**

Rich Vlosky, LSU Agricultural Faculty Council Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:31 AM.

**Attendance** \*proxies are in parentheses.

*In-person*

William Afton, Andre Brock, Sun Joe Chang, Ken Gravois, Bei B. Guo (Rich Vlosky), Steve Harrison (Rich Vlosky), Nathan Lord (Rich Vlosky), Michael Mamp (Rich Vlosky), Donnie Miller, Maddox Miller, Vinicius Moreira, Subramaniam Sathivel, Mark Schafer, Sara Shields, Kristin Stair, and Rich Vlosky.

*Online*

Carol Friedland, Bruce Garner, Kerry Heafner, Raj Singh, and Cecelia Stevens.

*Absent*

Chris Dunaway, and Claudia Husseneder

**Invited Guests**

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

Administrative Update- Provided at Open AgCenter Update Forum Teams Meeting

The academic year is now complete. An email was sent out to all AgCenter employees with highlights regarding faculty awards and accolades. See email sent from [outreach@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:outreach@agcenter.lsu.edu) with the subject line: The Culture of Excellence.

**Personnel Updates**

- Allie Press, former Asst. Dean is vacating 5th position. The interim Asst. Dean will be Jenny Sparks.
- Years ago, the LSU College of Agriculture (CoA) utilized two asst. deans. When one of the Asst. Deans vacated their position, the remaining Asst. Dean took on all responsibilities and the salary was increased. CoA has been running on this model ever since. Dr. Lee would like to rewrite the Asst. Dean job description to reflect the previous two Asst. Dean administration model.
- Andy Shade, Dean Lee, has left their position. Tracy Evans (current LSU Foundation employee) is Dr. Lee's pick to help raise money and fundraise. Monica Guient, is moving to system level job, leaving the LSU AgCenter DEI Director position open.

- Fred and Craig will start working with campus domiciled AgCenter faculty on IT functionality between LSU AgCenter and LSU A&M.

### Legislative Update

Capital outlay requests and one-time monies are both looking good currently but much more will be known by mid-June. There is some potential monies that were added for specific building projects. Dr. Lee is planning an organization wide update meeting at the Hamond Research Station, possibly by the end of June. Dr. Lee and team met with our federal delegation in Washington DC. Topics of conversation included support of farm bill, experiment station upgrades, and the push for LSU AgCenter to be National Center of Excellence. They met with the new NIFA director, Manjit K. Misra. Dr. Lee was very excited to be the first group to meet with the new director. Being the first group to meet with a newly installed leader makes for a memorable event.

### Questions Posed from Faculty Members

Question #1: There are concerns for agents (under 5 years) who are leaving for higher paying positions. Is there a system wide focus on retention of employees?

LSU AgCenter by principal wants to keep talented employees. This is an ongoing challenge and they are trying to get a framework in place to assist. Dr. Lee, Mike Salassi, Tara Smith, and Allen Rutherford are working as a team. One aspect of this framework includes effectively communicating with new employees through the hiring process, setting them up to success. Dr. Lee is in complete understanding that the new pay rates for grad students (20 hour) are higher than some agent ranks (40 hour).

Question #2: With regards to the new evaluation metrics, is there a quota on evaluation ratings?  
There is no quota on the new evaluation process. All regions should be following the same process.

Question from council: Is there a plan to revise Optional Retirement Plan (ORP)?

Dr. Lee confirms there is no secret that LSU AgCenter does not offer a matching program with its ORP retirement plan. This has been forwarded to the financial team. Dr. Lee is not involved. Ryan Barnet is our retirement plan coordinator.

Question #3: Is there an update on the unit head performance evaluation?

Claire is drafting a document and it will be reviewed with the council.

### Closing Comments

Potential AgCenter and CoA partners are coming out of the woodwork. A infrastructure to handle the next 36-48 months of additional funding is needed. This amount of activity from industry has never been seen before. The defining feature of the NC State visit was the number of industry partners involved with the university. During the time of that trip NC

State had 72 industry partners whereas LSU only had 3. Industry partnerships is Dr. Lee's model going forward for the AgCenter.

### **Dr. Fred Piazza, Chief Information Officer, LSU AgCenter**

1. Overview of recent cybersecurity incident  
Back in Early February there was a major cyber security issue. Federal law enforcement contacted Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) with reason to believe that state universities were affected. Southeastern University was believed to be the first one affected. They found 6 other universities including the LSU AgCenter, Southern University Shreveport, and a few community colleges showed evidence that attackers were trying to breach their systems. Homeland Security, Louisiana State Police (LSP), and National Guard met with LSU AgCenter to improve their systems. 1.2M in hardware and software were provided to prevent future events of a similar nature. **DO NOT CLICK ON EXTERNAL LINKS IN EMAILS UNLESS YOU ARE EXPECTING THAT EMAIL.**
2. LSU AgCenter IT and LSU A&M ITS collaboration for jointly appointed faculty members  
Craig Wooley (LSU IT Department Head) and Fred Piazza are starting to work on helping LSU AgCenter faculty who work on LSU campus on IT related issues. To help identify issues and problems with this subset of faculty, Dr. Piazza is looking for affected faculty to serve on a focus group. AgCenter and CoA (LSU A&M) are two separate campuses even though the buildings are next to each other. This means two purchase agreements for subscription services. LSU A&M and LSU AgCenter don't have all of the same services. (i.e. Zoom and MS Teams). Joe Chang, Mark Schafer, Vinicius Moreira, and Subramaniam Sathival asked to be a part of this focus group.
3. New Policy Statement Draft: PS-47 – "Appropriate Use of Information Technology Resources". This policy statement informs readers about the appropriate use AgCenter IT services. It basically reiterates state and federal policies. Do not assume that an LSU AgCenter owned computers are private. Please review and add comments.
4. New AgCenter IT hardware acquisition request process and catalog of pre-approved items  
IT reviews all software purchases. Last year IT worked out the procedure on software purchases where a form is filled out, IT reviews the information, and then IT lets you know whether its okay to move forward on acquiring. IT is now working on a similar procedure for hardware purchases.  
The reason that subscription software purchases would need to be reviewed by IT every year is because of terms of service (TOS) contracts change with each update.

### **Dr. Tara Smith, Interim Executive Associate VP and Director for the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service**

- Everything has been going well on the Extension side of things. Dr. Toby Lepley, Dr. Gina Eubanks, and Dr. Tara Smith went on listening sessions to each region of the

state with the purpose of letting agents and faculty to be heard by administration. The team received good feedback.

- Internship program was implemented through the Extension Service funding by the Director of Extension office. 13 applicants submitted packets. Six interns were chosen (2 ANR, 24-H, and 2 FCS). There is hope for this program to grow over the years to help fill extension jobs in rural areas where applicants are hard to come by.
- Dr. Smith will be attending the Louisiana County Agricultural Agents Association (LCAAA) annual Conference, along with the LEAFCS meeting later in June.
- Administration will be adding an ANR program leader soon. This will most likely be internally advertised and is anticipated to happen later this summer. ANR regional coordinator positions are being discussed. 4-H and FCS have regional coordinators to help agents in the region progress in their positions.
- A revised list of ANR commodity contacts has been sent out. A lot of comments were received so another revised list will be coming.
- Dr. Lepley, Dr. Eubanks, and Dr. Smith are working on reviewing Extension Agent job expectations. This is for all extension agents. General things that all extension agents should be doing like program development, advisory meetings, and impact statements. This will also help with the evaluation and portfolio process.
- Dr. Smith is working to enhance the training and expectations for agents and volunteers.
- A statewide field supervisors training will be held on September 19, 2023. The program is being developed at the moment, but will provide training to supervisors, managers, and parish chairs.
- Congratulations to Elizabeth Martin on being named the Louisiana Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Outstanding Dietitian of the Year, James Hendrix on being named the Conservation Systems Soybean and Corn Researcher of the Year, Dr. Christine Navarre on being named Veterinarian of the Year, and Mandy Armentor on being awarded Dr. Janet F. Pope Outstanding Nutrition and Dietetics Alumni Award.

### **Dr. Mike Salassi, Interim Executive Associate VP and Director for the La. Agricultural Experiment Station**

- Faculty are being encouraged to be more aggressive in seeking out competitive grants because that is one area of funding we can easily increase. From July 1 through May 1 of 2021-22, \$60M worth of proposal yielded \$24M in awards. This year \$115M worth of proposals were sent this year within in that same time frame with \$41M being funded. The F&A that comes in with these grants provides uncommitted money to help will expenses. Equipment is being purchased for research stations like tractors and a growth chamber.

- Faculty are joining multi-state projects, where they get access to \$1M in Federal Hatch Multi-State funds every year that could source graduate students or equipment.
- Tara Smith, Allen Rutherford, Matt Lee, and Mike Salassi are meeting as a group and developing a budget for next year with research and extension priorities in mind.
- Efferson Hall room assignments are being reconfigured to facilitate office space for the new administration hierarchy.
- Danielle de Tarnowsky is retiring at the end of July. The replacement position is currently being advertised. Danielle works closely with Salassi on budget issues.
- The Collaborative Seed Grant program has funded 7 proposals (\$380k). This program may be paused to see how these proposals turn out.
- LSU A&M has put in for an NSF Engines Grant Proposal. Mike Salassi is involved and will serve on a panel to review internal research proposals that could be funded with the NSF Engine Grant monies.
- Question from council: How is F&A money distributed? LSU AgCenter and LSU A&M have different procedures on F&A monies. Depending on what organization the proposal went through determines where the F&A money goes. At the AgCenter, 25% goes to the principal investigator, 25% goes to the unit, and 50% goes to administration. Of that 50% to administration, 35% goes to Salassi's office.

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

#### 1. Policy project update

- PS1: *LSU Agricultural Center Policy Statements* is online as of May 1, 2023.
- PS47: *Appropriate/Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources* has been revised and HR would like comments and corrections sent in ASAP. The draft of this document includes the May meeting notes.
- AgCenter HR and IT are working together with LSU A&M counterparts to develop a single set of log on credentials. Currently, AgCenter faculty use A&M credentials for workday tasks and AgCenter credentials for email.
- PS42: *Promotion and Tenure* is next on the list to revise.
- A P&T informational meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 31, 2023.

### **Organizational Matters**

1. AFC Website: <https://faculty.lsu.edu/ag-faculty-council/index.php>
2. Report on April 21, 2023, Council of Faculty Advisors & Board of Supervisors meetings at LSUA in Alexandria. (Ken Gravois)

Council of Faculty Advisors meeting

Most of the discussion was centered around Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) versus Teachers Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL) programs.

LSU Alexandria is getting a visit in the Fall 2024 from the SACS Accreditation group. Pennington Biomedical Research Center held their first in-person scientific retreat since the pandemic. LSU Health New Orleans had a general faculty in-person meeting on May 10.

Board of Supervisors meeting

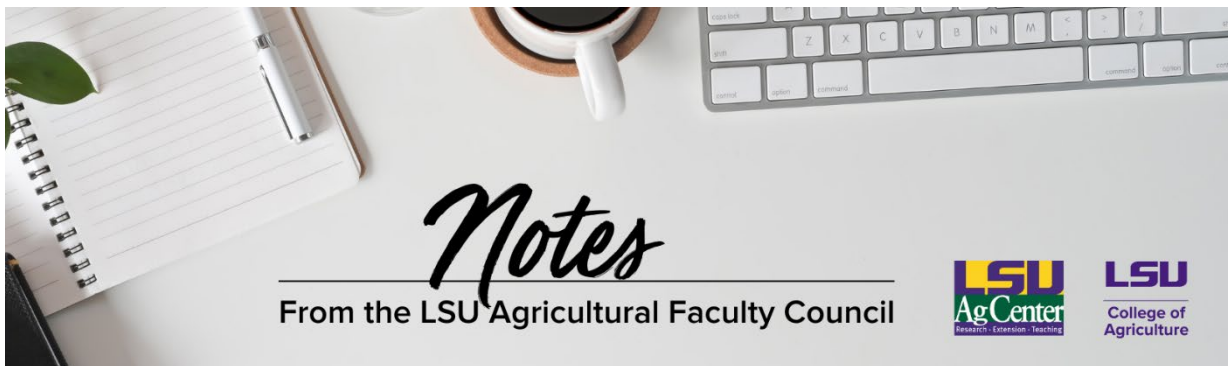
Majority of conversation was about the food contract on campus. A few degree programs were approved.

3. Council Monthly Update Dissemination. (Rich Vlosky)

- a. Rich Vlosky is working with Tobie Blanchard (AgCenter Communications) and Adam Woerner (AgCenter IT) to disseminate Council Agenda & Minutes after each meeting. Recipients will be All AgCenter/All College of Agriculture.

Any comments about this monthly email newsletter to Rich. Also send Rich pictures of Louisiana Agriculture to be included on the newsletter header.

b. **Page DRAFT**

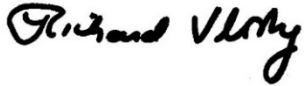


The LSU Agricultural Faculty Council meets monthly. From these meetings, agendas, minutes, and ancillary ad-hoc documents are generated. Since the council represents all agricultural faculty members, we want faculty to be able to access council information, which can be found at the [council's website](#). Content on the website includes the [council by-laws](#), a list of [council members](#) and contact information, all [meeting minutes](#) from 2002-present, [agendas](#) 2021-present, and [ad-hoc documents](#).

Click to read the [Agenda](#) and [Meeting Minutes](#) from the most recent meeting.

Please contact me if you have any questions or comments about the council.

Sincerely,



Richard Vlosky  
Chair, LSU Agricultural Faculty Council  
Director, Louisiana Forest Products Development Center  
Crosby Land & Resources Endowed Professor of Forest Sector Business Development  
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<https://www.lsu.edu/rnr/people/profiles/vlosky.php>

**Old Business**

1. Motion to accept the minutes from the March 17, 2023 LSU AFC meeting.  
Sathival Subramaniam made a motion to approve the March meeting minutes. Vinicius Moreira seconded the motion.

**New Business**

**Remaining 2023 Meeting Dates**

January 20	June 16	November 17
February 17	July 21	December 18 8:30 a.m.-
March 17	August 18	11:00 a.m. (Current and
April 21 (Cancelled)	September 15	New Members)
May 26	October 20	

**Adjourn**

Andre Brock made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sara Shields seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 12:21 PM.