

LSU Agriculture Faculty Council Meeting-Minutes
9:30 AM, Friday, March 22, 2024
Room 212, J. Efferson Hall



Call to Order 9:30am

Attendance

In-person: Kayanush Arayna, Dennis Burns, Carol Friedland, Becky Gautreaux, Ken Gravois, Stephen Harrison, Maddox Miller (proxy Becky Gautreaux), Sara Shields, Raghuwinder Singh (proxy Stephen Harrison), Rich Vlosky

Online: Sun Joseph Chang, Kerry Heafner, Evelyn Watts, Kevin McCarter, Mark Schafer, Bruce Garner, Cecilia Stevens, Vinicius Moreira, Brittney Newsome, Claudia Husseneder, Heather Kirk-Ballard, Michael Mamp, Richie Roberts

Absent: Chris Dunaway

Invited Guests

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

1. Legislative Update

President testified on behalf of the LSU System. The LSU AgCenter is the only institution that independently provides testimony. Dr. Lee's speech recording is available on the AgCenter website. The Legislative impression of what we are doing is very strong. Four non-capital outlay items were requested from the legislature:

- \$6.2 million in recurring funds for mandated cost increases/raises.
- \$5.2 million in recurring funds over the next four years to build faculty capacity for net new faculty lines.
- \$2 million for youth development programs 4-H/FFA.
- \$20 million in one-time money for equipment for labs/campus

2. Messaging Strategy:

The AgCenter needs to think strategically about what we are posting on social media. Dr. Lee has worked with Tobie Blanchard to put together tight social media messages to flood social media before a large executive meeting. He asks that every social media channel throughout the AgCenter sends out the same message at the same time. Legislators look at social media – especially Twitter. 43 million social media engagements occurred last year. We want legislators to see posts the day before/day of the session as they are walking into the session. AgCenter is coordinating additional future messaging. As asked by a faculty

council member, they will work on coordination – it was a little frantic. We were given a toolkit, and it was super easy to use.

3. LSU AgCenter Therapeutic Cannabis Program:

2019 is the latest found anything about the Therapeutic Cannabis Program. Around \$1.5 million, not \$3.4 million. These are restricted funds to support research. It has generated some money – that has been put toward research. We are the licensee. We issue permits to cultivate. We are the designated legal license holder. There is legislation in play to remove that. It is unclear what our role will be if they remove that. The head scientist is Reeve Legendre, a non-tenure track research assistant professor. Sue Hagus administers the program.

4. Asked at March 22 meeting:

1. Where are accurate up-to-date AgCenter and COA faculty salaries available?
 - a. Dr. Lee will find out and report at the April meeting.
2. Raises should be communicated clearly to employees by the unit head, which has not been done consistently across units.
 - a. Dr. Lee will communicate this to unit heads and report to AFC in April that this has been done.

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

Question posed by AFC member regarding PS-42:

1. Who reviews the Other Non-Tenure-Track Faculty (term faculty appointments) Assistant Professor-Extension, Assistant Professor-Research, Associate Professor-Extension, Associate Professor-Research, Professor-Extension, Professor-Research, Assistant Communications Specialist, Associate Communications Specialist, Communications Specialist.

Response: These fall under the same process as for other faculty. There would be a unit review, faculty committee review, department head committee review, etc.

2. Performance Review Evaluation Problems

- Meggan Franks is working on the IT issues submitting and viewing portfolios. Meetings should happen between the employee and supervisor on the evaluation document submitted to let the employee know what the outcome is on their evaluation and why.

3. Other

- HR is working on the broken website links on their site.
- One faculty member asked for a definition of how many days of leave can be taken before retirement. PS34 explains greater than greater than 40 hours in one leave request sends a red flag to HR to prevent possible lapse in FMLA benefits. PM 20 explains of approximately

182 hours of leave may be taken prior to retirement. Employees can sell around 300 hours of annual and 200 hours of sick leave.

Dr. Mike Salassi, Exec. Assoc. Vice President & Director LAES Administration

1. Selected Positions:

- Sugarcane Quantitative Geneticist, Sugar Research Station – currently advertised
- Ornamentals Plant Trials Coordinator, Hammond Research Station – currently advertised
- Precision Ag positions – search committee evaluating applicants

2. Meeting with Shimadzu Equipment 2/23: M. Salassi, A. Schade, M.P. Hayes, P. Carter

- Advanced lab equipment (spectrometers, etc.)
- Partnerships with universities, i.e., GA, travel, etc. funding

3. Leased Tractors Contract with Sunshine Equipment started March 1 – Lease term for 12 months

4. Meeting with Sunshine Equipment 3/7 ☐ M. Salassi, D. Stephenson, K. Guidry, G. Gentry

- John Deere See & Spray sprayer will be sent to Dean Lee Research Station for evaluation

5. Legislative equipment funds (\$11 million). All purchase approvals have been sent – holding for Red River irrigation system

6. FY24 Community Project Funding – Ag Conservation through Precision and Digital Ag Technologies. \$5 million request for precision ag research/extension (\$3.8 mil in equipment)

- Selected for funding at \$1 million – working to develop proposal through NRCS

7. Gourrier Greenhouse. AgCenter Facility Services is continuing work to prepare for growth chambers

8. Faculty Survey of Aquatics Research & Extension

- Identify areas of strength and need. Aquaculture facility at Central Station – summer 2025
- Need to identify aquatic research strengths/needs – including crawfish

9. 2022 Soybean & Feed Grain Projects ☐ 2022 project accounts must be zeroed out by 3/31/2024 end date

10. Paraquat lawsuits/subpoenas received by LSU AgCenter over past few weeks

- LSU AgCenter - 7-8 subpoenas/ lawsuits received, also received by other state exp stations
- Request for research/education/training material – 1964-71 or 1964-present
- One lawsuit names LSU Ag Center as a defendant
- Received early March with early April submission deadline
- Hamp is working to get extension on submission date

- AgCenter will develop one set of materials in response to all subpoenas

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

- Plans continue to come together for the first Extension Summit to be held November 12-14, 2024. The theme for the event is ***“Empowering Extension Excellence.”*** The committee met this week to form sub-committees and discuss plans. Sub-committee chairs will be engaging our faculty for input as this professional development experience continues to come together.

Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR)

- Five regional ANR coordinator positions were filled December 1, 2023. These individuals are working closely with the ANR Program Leader and regional directors. They are coordinating professional development, onboarding and mentoring for ANR agents in each region.
- The LSU AgCenter recently hosted the 4th annual Precision Agriculture Summit. The event targets the agricultural industry and brings together academia and industry partners. Additionally, we recently hired a Precision Agriculture Specialist, who will begin work on July 1. We are also advertising for a cluster hire of precision agriculture faculty that will focus on high throughput phenotyping, variable rate technology and crop and environmental modeling. All new hires will have an extension appointment.
- The area poultry agent position in the northwest region was recently filled. Will Strickland will begin work on August 1.
- The Vegetable specialist and Soil Science positions are still in motion. The committees have met to discuss candidates.
- A horticultural weed science specialist position will be advertised soon. This position will be majority extension and domiciled at the Hammond Research Station.
- The statewide Cotton, Corn and Grain Sorghum position was recently filled with anticipated start date of June 1.
- Field days are planned for the spring and summer throughout the state focusing on agronomic crop production, beef cattle and horticulture.

Nutrition and Community Health (formerly FCS)

- The LSU AgCenter LCES Family and Consumer Sciences Program recently underwent a name change. The new name is Nutrition and Community Health. The name change more accurately reflects the scope and direction of programming focused on the family and consumer sciences area in the AgCenter. Nutrition and Community Health programs include SNAP-ED, EFNEP, Flavors of Health or general nutrition, CDC, high obesity directed

programs. All programs support healthy communities and improving the health and wellness of Louisiana's citizens.

- Over the past two years, the LSU Ag Center Healthy Communities program has guided small communities through the application process while working with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development to make funding projects possible. As a result, 11 communities with populations under 5,000 received over \$13 million for pedestrian improvements thanks to changes in the state's Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).
- NCH has a new partnership with Rouses, a Louisiana based supermarket. NCH agents will conduct cooking demonstrations in six parishes. The goal of the demonstrations is to increase knowledge and confidence of patrons to purchase, plan and prepare healthful meals for a healthier lifestyle. The agents will demonstrate recipes from the LSU AgCenter's Geaux Shop Healthy and Build a Healthy Meals videos.

4-H Youth Development

- Louisiana 4-H ended the 2022-2023 4-H year on July 31st with 91,127 youth engaged in Extension youth delivered opportunities. More than 10,520 volunteers assisted in the delivery of programs to the youth.
- The LSU AgCenter and Louisiana 4-H Foundation hired a new 4-H Foundation Executive Director on February 15, 2024. Mr. Jon Carr has joined the foundation as the lead storyteller and fundraiser of the 4-H program. Jon comes to the AgCenter from the LSU Foundation and while he personally was not involved in 4-H, his wife was a very active 4-H member receiving the highest honors awarded in Louisiana 4-H.
- Livestock show season recently culminated with the LSU AgCenter State Livestock Show. 1,520 participants showed 4,234 animals, including 1,989 breeding animals, 774 market animals, 218 pens of broilers and 811 exhibition birds. After competing at the parish and district levels, youth from across Louisiana reached the pinnacle of success statewide.
- The Winn Parish Consumer Decision Making Team represented Louisiana 4-H at the National FCS competition in San Antonio and won Reserve National Champion.
- Louisiana 4-H has announced an International Travel opportunity to Ireland in 2025. We have seen a great response thus far with over 900 participants engaging in informational meetings thus far.
- Ag magic on campus wraps up this weekend. Over 6,000 youth will experience this event. Annually, over 35,000 youth are touched with our Ag Awareness events across the state.

Old Business

1. A motion was made by Carol Friedland to accept the minutes from the February 16, 2024 LSU AFC meeting. Becky Gautreaux seconded the motion.

New Business

According to our bylaws, “The Executive Committee will consist of the three officers, past chair, and two to four additional members, with representation from on- and off-campus Council members, elected at the first meeting of each year after election of the officers.” As the result of an electronic nomination and vote, the results were sent on 3/21/2024. Britney Newsome (off-campus) and Richie Roberts (on-campus) were elected to the Executive Committee.

The faculty council agreed to start introducing the service unit heads each month depending on their availability. This will start with the April 19th meeting.

Rich Vlosky will check with Dr. Lee on ramifications of AFC conducting service unit faculty satisfaction survey.

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

Steve Harrison motioned to adjourn the meeting. Kenneth Gravois seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 11:44am.