

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



Call to Order

Rich Vlosky (Chair) called the meeting to order at 9:30am

Attendance

In-person: Kayanush Aryana, Chris Dunaway, Carol Friedland, Becky Gautreaux (proxy Maddox Miller), Ken Gravois, Kevin McCarter, Maddox Miller, Brittney Newsome, Sara Shields (proxy Maddox Miller), Raghuwinder Singh, Cecilia Stevens (proxy Rich Vlosky), Rich Vlosky, Evelyn Watts

Online: Sun Joseph Chang, Vinicius Moreira, Claudia Husseneder, Heather Kirk-Ballard, Richie Roberts, Dennis Burns, Stephen Harrison

Absent: Mark Schafer, Kerry Heafner, Michael Mamp, Bruce Garner

Invited Guests

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

1. Legislative Update

There is no major news other than pushing the message about the success the AgCenter is having and is a good investment. Dr. Ashley Mullens has been very active on a daily basis. LSU Day, 4-H and FFA Day will be major events.

2. Other Updates

We regularly track research activity, with net new grant awards around \$46 million – about 50% increase over prior 3-4 years, which averaged \$32 million/year.

3. Asked at April 19 meeting:

1. We have gotten complaints 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.
 - a. Please provide more specifics about where this is a problem. If anyone has issues, contact Denise Fontenot – ADA coordinator – she can work with the employees to provide adequate accommodation.

2. Are raises awarded in years with promotions?
 - a. There is not a specific policy at the AgCenter for this. The history at the A&M campus is that if raises were available and one received a promotion, they were not eligible for a merit increase. Agents who earn master's degrees earn raises.
3. The Ag Faculty Council is considering an employee satisfaction survey instrument.
 - a. A survey like this may surface some infrastructural needs. Priority is increasing new faculty lines, which does cause a bit of strain on service units.
4. What is administration's stance on flex time?
 - a. We do not have a policy statement on this at AgCenter. We are an auditable agency. We need to give supervisors the ability to provide flexibility. If there are some areas where flexing is not allowed, these areas need to be elevated to the regional directors.
5. What information is available about the recent request for information for the Food and Agricultural Education Information System (FAEIS)?
 - a. This is part of a USDA NIFA data collection effort at the federal level. There are some issues as PII data are being requested.
6. What is the process for getting summer money for teaching?
 - a. In general, offering summer courses needs to be strategic. There is not necessarily a uniform way that faculty are compensated – may vary across colleges and even departments.

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

1. Policy updates

PS-42 version with highlighted changes has been posted on the website. However, it is important to note that there is no change to the structure of the package. If someone is working on documentation for promotion, the package requirements are unchanged. An informational meeting is scheduled for 5/29 (last Wednesday in May). The cover page is due July 1 for promotion effective 7/1/25.
2. When was the faculty performance evaluation system fixed? What about people who went through the faculty evaluation where they went through the process not being able to see the information?

It was fixed last month after AFC notified administration about the issue. May be a good idea to start with department heads to alert them they might need to relook at those that submitted early. Wholesale changes to the performance evaluation system are unlikely. There is a committee that works on that.

Ryan Barnette, HR Benefits Manager

Provided PowerPoint presentation about retirement, including data on retirement, the Windfall Elimination Provision, deferred compensation, 403(b) and 457(b) supplemental

retirement accounts, Medicare, insurance benefits at retirement, and long-term disability. If anyone has any questions, please reach out to Ryan and he is happy to help.

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. Maddox Miller made a motion to accept the minutes from the March 22, 2024 LSU AFC meeting. Kayanush Arayna seconded the motion.
2. Service unit faculty satisfaction survey – revised strategy
3. We are thinking about a broader customer service satisfaction survey that would cover service units in multiple ways, like a generalized satisfaction survey. If we could keep to a succinct and manageable survey, that might be a viable direction. We can review previous examples.

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

Maddox Miller motioned to adjourn the meeting. Kenneth Gravois seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.