

LSU Agricultural Faculty Council Meeting Agenda
9:30 AM, Friday, May 22, 2026
Room 212, J. Efferson Hall



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by William Afton at 9:35AM

Attendance

In-person

Willaim Afton, Giovana Aita, Kai, Aryana, Eric DeBoer, Prashant Jha, Donnie Miller, Maddox Miller, and Tripp Morgan

Online

Michael Burnett, Erika Derma, Jennifer Duhon, Claudia Husseneder, Greg Lutz, Randall Mallette, Vinicius Moreira, Brittney Newsome, Jonathan Richards, Joe Willis, Brett Wolfe

Excused

Carol Friedland, Becky Gautreaux, Chuanlan Liu, Kevin McCarter, Jessica Richard

Absent

A. Remarks and Items from Dr. Matt Lee, Senior Vice Chancellor & Dean, College of Agriculture

Spring commencement was last week. The field house was packed with attendees that we may need to find a new location for future graduation events.

The legislative session is moving along. There are no new recurring funds. There is about \$2M funds in one time money. This is the third year in a row that the AgCenter has not received any new recurring funds. Twelve months ago, Dr. Lee said that the AgCenter finances were good, but operating costs are continuing to rise. The situation is still being discussed. Dr. Lee will start talking with regional directors, unit heads, and department heads along with ag consultants, leadership boards, and Farm Bureau, about how the AgCenter will move forward with no recurring funds while costs continue to rise. Both raises in the past two years have come out of pocket and with multiple years of no recurring funds There will be some “belt-tightening” in the future.

Recently the LSU Chancellor, Dr. James Dalton, visited CoA. CoA is more heterogenous than most colleges with departments like animal science, textiles, and food science. He appreciated the visit and is looking forward to learning more.

Fall enrollment is looking strong. Students seeking admission into CoA were up 23-26% since mid-spring. He is looking forward to a strong fall class.

A budget hearing with LSU A&M CFO and Provost is scheduled soon. Dr. Lee is responsible for managing the strategic use of AgCenter and CoA funds and will be attending to explain the current situation. He's not expecting any significant new money from A&M but wants to make sure CoA has enough resources to fulfill the teaching mission.

There are a variety of events coming up. A number of AgCenter staff will attend the National Agriculture Alumni Development Association (NAADA) meeting which is scheduled for June 15-18. Dr. Lee will accompany Klein Kirby of A. Wilbert's Sons to the meeting because they received a national award for corporate partner of the year. The Association for Communication Excellence meeting is scheduled for June 15-17. AgCenter Communications won two awards. One for the overall Louisiana Solutions Global Impact campaign and one for the booklet made for the campaign. The Farm Bureau Convention is scheduled for June 18-21 in New Orleans, LSU AgCenter Sugar Field Day is June 17, and the LSU AgCenter Rice Field Day is June 24.

Council member questions

Recently, it was announced that Dr. Dalton visited AgCenter research stations. Which stations did he visit? Dr. Lee brought Dr. Dalton to the Burden Station for the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Burden Museum & Gardens Welcome Center. He also brought him to the Sugar Cane Technologists meeting earlier this year. He might have visited some extension offices, but Dr. Lee couldn't recall specifics at the moment. Dr. Dalton is aspiring to engage with LSU AgCenter events. He will be invited to the rice field day and possibly inviting the LSU President to the Sugar Field Day. However, it is difficult to coordinate due to everyone's business schedules.

Can you explain more about what belt-tightening means? Dr. Lee responded that belt-tightening means less money. A few things might happen. Positions that have been vacant for some time that are still on the books will probably be closed down. Couple hundred thousand dollars on the books can be saved. If the job isn't that critical, they will have to go. There might be a small cut to operating budgets across the board. A 3% cut would free up \$519K in savings. A final decision has not been made. Some of the executive salaries will probably be moved off of unrestricted funds (state money) to restricted funds (from other sources of revenue). This is not a permanent strategy but a temporary solution to free up some state funds. There will also likely be a freeze of some sort. Most likely a hiring freeze or a possibly a generalized spending freeze. Budget folks are looking at what a 3-month or 6-month freeze could save the organization. The goal is to shield professorial and agents ranks as much as possible from effects of these decisions. They are looking at how to use restricted funds to keep the operation going. Outstanding

commitments like 3-year F&A commitments and start up commitments will not be affected.

With UNO coming on board in July, does that affect the money situation? No. President Rousse has been clear that LSU will take in UNO, but we will not use existing LSU System monies and putting it into UNO. LSU will assist them in providing operation guidance, like how to get their program enrollment running and how to streamline their academic offerings. There are active discussions about relocating Orleans Parish extension offices to a space at UNO to make them more publicly available. No revenue from LSU student tuition at A&M will be sent to UNO.

B. Approval of Agenda

Donnie Miller made a motion to approve the May 22 LSU AFC Meeting Agenda. Kai Aryana seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

C. Approval of Minutes – April 24 LSU AFC Meeting Minutes.

Maddox Miller made a motion to approve the April 24 LSU AFC Meeting Agenda. Tripp Morgan seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

D. Guest Presentations – LSU Faculty Senate President Dan Tirone

No guest presentation

E. Chair's Report

No chair's report

F. Robert's Rules Briefing – Kevin McCarter

No presentation at this meeting

G. Committee Reports – each committee will provide a brief summary of their meeting and provide a written report for the minutes

- Executive Committee

Met vis MS Teams on May 1 and attended by Carol Friedland, William Afton, Kevin McCarter, Maddox Miller... April 24 AFC Meeting Minutes draft were revised. The committee discussed the MFTRP questionnaire that was brought up at the April 24 AFC meeting. A draft document was going to be shared with AFC to provide comments, but earlier that day the MFTRP document was shared with all CoA faculty. The committee agreed to send a reply email

asking why AFC wasn't provided with an opportunity to provide comments. The next executive committee meeting is scheduled for June 5.

- Bylaws Committee
No meeting this month
- Policies Committee (Jonathan Richards)
LSU AFC Policy Committee Meeting – 05/18/2026
Attending: Jonathan Richards, Claudia Husseneder, Joe Willis
During this meeting, we discussed a new system for handling incoming policy draft requests to allow us to generate feedback in a timelier manner. We agreed that the current load for the policy committee was too heavy at times, and involving other members of the council on a case-by-case basis would alleviate some of the issues. Outlined below is a rough sketch of the proposed system.
 - a. Assemble ad hoc “go teams” to process policy draft requests in a timely manner
 - i. Draft policy would be introduced at the regularly scheduled AFC meeting and people with expertise/interest in the subject could volunteer
 - ii. Turn around feedback solicitation within two weeks
 - iii. Policies committee can meet and review feedback, as well as summarize for the council at the next meeting and forward comments to Ashley Gautreaux
 - iv. This “typical” process would take 1-2 months from the receipt of the policy draft to the return of feedback
 - b. Urgent policy review can be done by forming committees via email
 - i. In these cases, feedback may be needed sooner than the 1-2 month typical schedule
 - ii. Volunteers requested via email and an expedited schedule would be created.
 - iii. Feedback/comments would be shared with the AFC via email and forwarded to Ashley Gautreaux
- Strategic Plan Committee (Donnie Miller)
No meeting this month. Committee is at a standstill until something changes.
- Work Environment Committee (Brittney Newsome)
Did not meet this month.
The committee met with Dr. Lee back in February and he provided feedback. As more issues are added, he is willing to meet again. If anyone has issues related to the work environment, please send them to the committee.

- Elections Committee (Eric DeBoer)
Did not meet this month.
The committee was looking for a list of eligible CoA faculty that can serve in the LSU Faculty Senate. The list has been acquired, and the committee is moving forward on how to send out ballots.
- Hiring Policies Special Committee
Waiting to reengage with Dr. Lee before moving forward.

Discussion of Committee Reports

H. Other Agenda Items

- a. COFA Update – Kevin McCarter, Eric DeBoer
The last meeting was prior to the April 24 AFC meeting and Kevin gave an update at that meeting. No new information
- b. Policy Committee Business

I. New Business

2026 Meeting Dates – 9:30am-12:00pm/Room 212 Efferson Hall or Teams

January 16	May 22	September 18
February 20	June 19	October 16
March 20	July 17	November 20
April 17	August 21	December TBD

Adjourn

Donnie Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kai Aryana seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:22 AM.