



11 April 2024

Dear Senators,

I hope that the sight of the end of the semester is clearly visible by now. Since our last meeting, the Faculty Senate leadership was involved with several important initiatives.

1. **Legislature**

There are a large number of bills which could impact higher education under consideration at the legislature. We are working closely with the Governmental Relations team and other members of the administration to monitor the progress of these bills and pursue strategies to make sure LSU and our faculty are not adversely affected. We will continue this work throughout the entire session and update you if there are significant developments of which you should be aware or if it becomes necessary to have faculty become more engaged in the process.

2. **Grammarly**

Thank you for those who volunteered to be part of the AI committee. We have a good representation from faculty ranging from the Library to HSS. This is a committee led by the Office of Academic Affairs and the first meeting will be held soon to develop policies to govern students' use of AI in their assignments.

3. **Noise from Student Union**

There have been several complains related to noise coming from Free Speech Alley in front of the Student Union. This especially affects academic buildings in the surrounding area where classes are held regularly. The FSEC is working with Academic Affairs to find a good solution to address it.

4. **FS budget for 2023–24**

FS operational budget will be distributed for your perusal today. This includes expenses involved to run the Faculty Senate (e.g., Tricia Cobb's salary, room rentals for FS meetings, etc.). Let me know if you have any further questions about it.

5. **Faculty Council Meeting – Monday 22 April, 3–4pm**

The Faculty Council meeting has been scheduled for **Monday 22 April at 3pm** at the Royal Cotillion Ballroom, Student Union. The agenda and accompanying documents can be found [here](#).

Important: For those who participated in the Faculty Technology Survey and opted for incentives and participation in a raffle for a chance to win one of the three grand prizes, they will be available at the Faculty Council meeting. You must be present at the meeting to participate in the raffle.

As this is my last Faculty Senate meeting in the role of Faculty Senate President, I thought that it would be meaningful to highlight what we have achieved in the last two years. These can be grouped in the following categories:

(A) Communication

- Shortly after taking office in August 2022, we instituted **monthly broadcast emails**. These aimed to keep faculty at large (beyond the Faculty Senate) informed about our monthly meetings and anything that was pertinent to teaching, scholarship, and matters related to faculty in general. These

communications also included the much-beloved What Every Faculty Member Should Know—an instant favorite that was started by our intrepid FS Secretary Meredith Veldman (2022–23).

- We published **FS President’s Report** in advance of each FS meeting detailing the monthly pertinent updates. This was also included in the broadcast emails.

(B) Shared Governance

- We instituted **biweekly hour-long meetings with Provost Haggerty**, bringing to him and his team pertinent issues concerning faculty. This was one of the most successful aspects of our partnership that helped us to work collaboratively together to address various problems.
- We worked closely with the administration, including the Governmental Relations office, to **address proposed legislation** in each of the last two legislative sessions that could impact higher education to make sure faculty interests were represented.
- We created an **ad hoc Policy Committee**, which regularly collaborates with the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) and other administrative bodies on campus to revise and address issues related to various policies that include but not limited to PS-22, PM-24, PS-36, PS-104, and PS-109.
- One such partnership resulted in Provost Haggerty’s instrumental effort and support in the **revisions of ITS policies**. As a result, last Spring, we created an ad hoc FS IT committee, spearheaded and chaired by Param Singh. This was (and continues to be) an incredible partnership with ITS, which involves revisions of complex policies and standards related to IT at LSU. This committee was made up of incredibly dedicated faculty who came together very quickly at the end of the Spring semester (last year) and worked tirelessly through the beginning of summer. Their work resumed in the Fall and is still ongoing.
- The collaborative work continued with the development of an **IT Survey**, which was sent out to faculty a couple of weeks ago. This was another example of shared governance with ITS and OAA. The results of this survey will be instrumental in identifying current IT-related problems and try to address them collaboratively.
- Another successful moment in shared governance involved the FS Benefits Committee, HRM, and Governmental Relations in efforts to help advocate for a **one-time ORP/TRSL switch for faculty and staff**. This resolution was proposed by the Benefits Committee in December 2023 and was passed unanimously at the FS. A similar resolution was echoed by the Staff Senate in early Spring 2024, making it the first resolution that was ever co-sponsored by both bodies. There is a bill currently in legislature trying to address this very issue. I’d like to especially thank Roy Heidelberg, the interim chair of the Benefits Committee for his leadership and unflinching commitment to this important endeavor.
- In efforts to help our students succeed at LSU, we collaborated with the OAA to **create Joint Committee on Student Achievement**, which includes FS President as its chair, Jackie Bach (OAA), Brandon Common (SAA), Danny Barrow (Enrollment Management), and Keena Arbuthnot (Data Analytics). The charge of the Committee is to identify opportunities for collaboration based on the strengths of each membership unit and to share and address issues with campus community and educate how to better contribute to student achievement.
- We worked with the OAA to **help create an AI Committee** to develop policy on the use of AI by our students (e.g., Grammarly).

(C) Engagement

- We instituted **monthly meetings with President Tate**, bringing him pertinent issues from the faculty.
- For the past year, we have been working with faculty members and members of the upper administration to **lift AAUP’s double censures**. This process is ongoing, and we are cautiously

optimistic about its prospects. I'd like to especially thank Dan Tirone for his expertise in all things policy-related, whose work has been instrumental in revisions of policies and on-going conversations with the upper administration and the AAUP.

- We **created four ad hoc faculty committees**—Committee on Committees, IT Committee, Policy Committee, and Sabbatical Review Committee—to address various pertinent issues related to educational policy and faculty governance, creating more engagement and proactivity on these issues across campus.
- We **engaged with the Board of Supervisors** through the systemwide Council of Faculty Advisors and delivered faculty reports at their meetings, highlighting faculty achievements at each LSU campus.

These are some of the things that we have done in the past few years. Our work is nowhere being close to the finish line. However, I think we set the tone in the right course for the next Senate Leadership. Of course, none of this would have been possible without the hard work put in by the chairs and members of our committees. I'd like to thank Tricia Cobb—our wonderful FS Coordinator—who has seamlessly grown into her job and helps run our meetings and other logistics smoothly. I'd like to especially thank the members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. They all have continuously empowered me with their invaluable feedback and expertise that helped me make the best decisions for our faculty. I could not have done it without their guidance, thoughtfulness, and dedication. Their commitment to shared governance cannot be overstated.

Thank you for your trust in our leadership. It has been an honor to serve you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Inessa Bazayev". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Inessa Bazayev
President, LSU Faculty Senate