



November 20, 2024

Dear Senators,

I am pleased to provide a brief report on developments since our last meeting on October 29th.

1. Academic Freedom

This is clearly a challenging time in higher education across the country and I have spoken with a number of faculty who are concerned about what the future may hold. I am pleased to say that I can provide some words of reassurance: I have no indication that there will be any changes to the ability of faculty and students to engage in the research and teaching at the heart of LSU's academic mission at this time. Senate leadership remains steadfast in our support of academic freedom and I believe that our administration shares our commitment. If at any time you feel that your ability to engage in scholarship has been infringed upon please let us know and we will pursue all available options, including a possible referral to our Faculty Adjudication Committee, to investigate the situation and seek redress if appropriate.

Our ability to advocate for faculty is strengthened when a case is clearly covered by the principles of academic freedom, the parameters of which are sometimes misunderstood. One of the foundational documents defining academic freedom is the American Association of University Professor's (AAUP) [1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure](#). A useful [FAQ on Academic Freedom](#) on the AAUP website summarizes the main elements as follows:

- **Teaching:** freedom to discuss all relevant matters in the classroom;
- **Research:** freedom to explore all avenues of scholarship, research, and creative expression and to publish the results of such work;
- **Intramural speech:** freedom from institutional censorship or discipline when addressing matters of institutional policy or action; and
- **Extramural speech:** freedom from institutional censorship or discipline when speaking or writing as citizens.

The AAUP also highlights some limitations on academic freedom. The website states that when speaking on public matters, "faculty members should strive to be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show appropriate respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution." Additionally, the 1940 statement cautions that while faculty are free to discuss their subject in the classroom, they "should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter *which has no relation to their subject*". (14, emphasis added)

The primary document addressing academic freedom at LSU A&M is [Policy Statement 15: Academic Freedom, Free Speech, and Tenure](#). The Policy Committee has been in discussions with Academic Affairs about revising this PS to incorporate the recommendations from [Senate Resolution 24-01](#), passed in April of this year, and there may be opportunities for other updates during the revision process. I am optimistic these changes will be finalized sometime in the spring semester.

2. Administrative Process Improvement Committee

The Administrative Process Improvement Committee (APIC) is up and running for this year. The committee brings together representatives from the faculty, staff and administration – including the Office of Academic Affairs – to provide a forum for the identification of opportunities for improvements in operational and administrative processes on campus. If you believe your concerns can be addressed by the committee please consult the [APIC website](#), which has more details about the committee’s charge and a link to an online submission form. Matters that are academic in nature should continue to be brought to the attention of the Office of Academic Affairs and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

3. Parking & Transportation Services

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee recently met with representatives from the office of Parking & Transportation Services to hear updates on the plans for parking during construction of the new library and the longer-term campus mobility plan. Please continue to monitor email communications from this unit as they will include important updates. We have also invited the office to make a presentation at a future Faculty Senate meeting.

4. Faculty Colloquium

The Office of Academic Affairs and the Learning & Teaching Collaborative will be hosting a faculty colloquium on January 10, 2025 from 8:30 to 1:00pm with sponsorship by Campus Federal Credit Union. The keynote speaker, Dr. Bonni Stachowiak, is the Dean of teaching and learning and professor of business and management at Vanguard University of Southern California, and also the host of the Teaching in Higher Ed podcast. She will lead the session entitled “Go Somewhere: Reimagining Technology in Education for a Better Tomorrow”. More information, including the event agenda and a registration link, can be found on the [colloquium’s website](#).

5. Louisiana Lights Volunteer Opportunities

The Burden Museum & Gardens is seeking volunteers for their inaugural year of Louisiana Lights, which begins Friday, November 29 and continues through the end of December. Information about the event can be found at the [Louisiana Lights website](#), and volunteers can create an account at the [LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens Volunteer Application Form](#). Once an account has been created you can see available volunteer opportunities by going to the [VicNet website](#).

Sincerely,



Daniel C. Tirone
President, LSU Faculty Senate