

Recommendations for Improvements in Faculty Senate Practices

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Whereas, attempts underway across the United States to abolish or weaken tenure, limit faculty's right to freedom of speech, and eradicate the principles and practices of shared university governance highlight the importance of the LSU Faculty Senate serving as a strong and effective advocate for faculty interests and concerns; and

Whereas, the LSU Faculty Senate rejects any efforts to curtail academic freedom or protected faculty speech in any way, and supports the right of faculty to participate in shared governance and advocate for their interests via all legal channels; and

Whereas implementation of the following recommendations would improve the ability of the Senate to serve in its aforementioned role; therefore, be it

Resolved, that the LSU Faculty Senate is to immediately implement or observe the following best practices, many of which are already part of its guidelines, so that it may better serve the interests of the faculty it represents:

1. The FSEC is to operate according to established Senate rules and general parliamentary procedure and is to set and approve the agenda for Faculty Senate meetings via deliberation and a vote by all eligible FSEC members, in accordance with the requirements laid out in the Constitution and Bylaws, during their normal meetings.
2. Time limits are to be strictly enforced as follows: a three-minute limit for public comments; ten minutes for presentations by outside speakers followed by a five-minute question-and-answer period; ten minutes for committee reports; and the President's Report is to be circulated in written format to the Senate in advance of the meeting with a ten-minute in-meeting presentation of the most pressing issues followed by a five-minute question-and-answer period. The FSEC may at its discretion allocate a longer time period for a presentation when it approves the agenda, but the extended time must be notated on the agenda with the agenda item and shall not exceed thirty minutes.
3. All FSEC members are to be notified of any potential changes to any LSU Regulation, Policy Statement, Permanent Memorandum, or other standing practice or policy originating from inside or outside of the Senate within two business days of the information becoming available to any member of that committee, and Senators are to also be informed in a timely manner but absolutely no later than the following meeting of the Senate.
4. The Senate is to be advised of all actions taken on its behalf by the FSEC in a timely manner but absolutely no later than the following meeting of the Senate, in accordance with the requirements laid out in the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws.

Resolved, that the LSU Faculty Senate also directs the FSEC to investigate the possibility of retaining outside counsel for consultation as necessary on legal questions that may arise as part of Senate business, the findings of this investigation to be presented to the Senate at or before the meeting held in October of 2022.

Resolved, that the Senate recommends that in the fall of 2022 the LSU Faculty Senate create an ad hoc committee composed of five Senators to review the Senate Constitution & Bylaws, as well as the Senate's policies and practices, and to present a series of recommendations for revisions and improvements at or before the Senate meeting held in November of 2022.