



Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

March 2, 2026

Noon to 1:00 pm

Room A-126 or Zoom

Senators Present: Rachelle Brown, Rob Jones, Leonor Gonzalez, Lisa Lafleur, Alyssa Marcel, Angela Sonnier, Gary Reeves, Kaitlyn Owen, Bridget Thibodeaux, Elizabeth Monk, Alex Ogacho, Kina Sweet

Senators Absent: David Asbury, Kristen Sonnier,

Administrative Council Representative: none

Staff Senate Representative: none

Student Government Association Representative: none

Administration: none

Guests: Billy Fontenot, Summer Ford, Madison Harmon, Doug Narby, Symantha Jones (Zoom), Maura Cavell (Zoom), Darian Planchard (Zoom)

I. Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 12:03 p.m. by Chair Rachelle Brown.

II. Adoption of Minutes

A motion to adopt the minutes from the Faculty Senate Meeting on February 2, 2026, and the Constitution Review Meeting on February 9, 2026, was made by Kina Sweet and seconded by Gary Reeves. The motion carried.

III. Chairperson's and Administrative Reports

A. Chairperson – Rachelle Brown

- Administration was not present at this meeting due to a scheduling conflict with a ribbon-cutting event for a physical therapy doctoral program in Lafayette. Chair Brown shared information that would have been presented by Dr. Sorenson or Dr. Stewart.
- Enrollment and retention statistics are increasing. Data show first-time, full-time student retention increasing from 46.3% in 2024 to 49% in 2025. Withdrawal rates for Fall 2025 decreased, and students are taking more credit hours. These statistics track only 16-week and 18-week courses and do not include summer or intersession courses. These improvements reflect stronger connections between faculty, staff, and students.
- Per the information shared at the Cabinet meeting today:
 - o Fall 2026 course schedules have been submitted to the Registrar.
 - o Midterm grades are due Tuesday, March 3, by 9:00 a.m.
 - o Faculty positions for Fall 2026. Open positions include:
 - One full-time **Mathematics** faculty member
 - One full-time **English** faculty member with experience in **Folklore or Louisiana Folklore**

- Three full-time **Biology** faculty members (Anatomy & Physiology, Agriculture, and Microbiology)

Advertisements will be released soon. Administration encourages faculty to share postings to reach a wider applicant pool. Nursing may also have three open positions due to upcoming retirements.

- Dr. Stewart and the Strategic Planning Team have proposed attaching concentration areas to General Studies degrees. For example: Associate of General Studies in Business. This approach will help transfer students take courses that better align with their intended major and may improve student completion rates. Implementation may occur as early as Fall 2026.
- The Math faculty have been reviewing program requirements. While College Algebra has traditionally been required, it is not necessary for all majors. Many programs instead require MATH 1029: Contemporary Mathematics **or** Applied Algebra. Students with an ACT math score of 18 or lower must take pathway courses with a co-requisite component. This approach aims to support student success while allowing them to complete courses relevant to their academic programs.
- Three phases of AI training will begin in March. Additional details appear under New Business.
- PS-12 (Recruitment, Retention, Promotion & Tenure) This policy remains under administrative review. Language revisions are being made, and promotion rates have been increased.
- Beginning Fall 2026, all students—including LSUO students—with fewer than 24 credit hours will be advised through Student Success. After completing 24 credit hours, students will transition to advising within their academic major. A concern was raised regarding whether transfer students with more than 24 credit hours might also benefit from initial advising through Student Success before moving to their programs.

B. Dr. Nancee Sorenson: No Report

C. Dr. Charles Stewart: No Report

D. Dr. Paul Fowler: No Report

E. Staff Senate: Not in attendance.

F. Student Government Association: Not in attendance.

G. Cassie Jobe-Ganucheau: Not in attendance.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Policy Committee: No report.

B. Courses and Curriculum Committee:

- The committee will meet on March 17, 2026, to review three courses on the agenda. Per policy, all edits, deletions, changes, or policy proposals must be submitted to Academic Affairs at least 10 days before the meeting, which is March 3, 2026.
- Faculty and Program Directors are encouraged to consider whether MATH 1029 could fulfill the General Studies math requirement instead of College Algebra.

C. Retention Subcommittee:

- The subcommittee has been incorporated into SOVA: Center for Teaching and Learning. A meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 3, 2026. Discussion will continue regarding the structure and function of the Center.

D. Teacher Excellence Subcommittee:

- Academic Affairs has distributed emails containing a nomination link for the Teacher Excellence Award. Nominations will remain open through March 16.
- There is also a nomination period for staff and students. Each department should forward student nominations to its Dean.

E. Faculty Professional Development Funds Committee:

- Next meeting: Monday, March 30th (submissions due to departments by March 25th)
- April meeting: Monday, April 20th (requests due April 13th)
- In February, 10 requests totaling just over \$7,000 were approved. Slightly less than \$1,000 remains available for the current year. Requests are considered in the order received..

F. AI On-Campus Subcommittee: See Old Business.

V. Old Business

- Alex Ogacho was welcomed to the Faculty Senate. He was elected to fill the Math & Sciences vacancy through Spring 2027.
- A template for faculty bios and headshots will be completed this semester, with work beginning during the summer. Faculty without submitted bios or headshots will have only their name displayed.
- The next Constitution Review meeting will be on Monday, March 23, at noon in C117.
- The AI Subcommittee finalized the AI policy that was reviewed in December and February. The Faculty Senate will now submit the policy to Academic Affairs, after which it will proceed to the Faculty Council and then to the Chancellor.
- Student Affairs is currently managing a high volume of academic integrity complaints. Because policy changes cannot occur during a semester, the policy may take effect in Fall 2026. Faculty are encouraged to begin discussing the policy with students.
- A motion to adopt the AI Policy created by the subcommittee was made by Alyssa Marcel and seconded by Lisa Lafleur. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.

VI. New Business

- The Board of Supervisors approved the Physical Therapy Assistant Program. The next step is approval from the Board of Regents. The program is projected to begin in 2027. Approval includes recruitment of a program director, additional faculty, and purchase of equipment. Discussions are underway for LSUE Physical Therapy Assist program to partner with LSUS for students who wish to transfer after completing the Physical Therapy Assistant program. The ribbon-cutting ceremony held in Lafayette today highlights the importance of this initiative.
- Academic Affairs will sponsor AI training. Faculty will receive a survey assessing their current knowledge of AI.
 - o Basic AI training with Microsoft Copilot is scheduled for April and will be required.
 - o In May, up to 50 faculty and staff members may voluntarily participate in a two-day training (one day online and one day in person).
 - o Compensation may be available for 9-month faculty who participate.

VII. Announcements

- Rob Jones announced that Bengal Survival Skills Workshops are held:
Tuesdays: 12:30–1:00 p.m.
Wednesdays: 12:00–12:30 p.m.
Location: Room M-108 (no Zoom option available).
- Doug Narby reported that discussions within the LSU system are underway regarding digital badging and micro-credentialing within courses. This initiative aims to make students more competitive in the job market.
- The next Faculty Senate meeting will be April 6th.

VIII. Bengal Brags

- Angela Sonnier and Ashley Green attended the Atlanta Society for Radiologic Technologists Conference, where they completed their JR Certification.

VII. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn made by Angela Sonnier, seconded by Elizabeth Monk. Meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

