



November 2023

Dear Senators,

Since our last meeting in October, there are several items that I think would be of interest to you:

### **1. Board of Supervisors Meeting**

Vice President Tirone, in his role as our alternate representative to the Council of Faculty Advisors, presented the LSU A&M faculty report to the Board of Supervisors at their recent meeting on Friday, October 20. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee believes these presentations are important opportunities to celebrate our faculty and other notable developments on campus, and consequently the recent report included the following highlights:

- National Academy of Sciences funding for a five-year, \$22M consortium of 38 principal investigators and 14 institutions co-led by LSU and Tulane aimed at bolstering the critical Mississippi River Delta and surrounding region;
- LSU leadership in Artificial Intelligence, which will include over 40 courses that will incorporate AI into the curriculum in the spring term;
- The very positive results of a recent survey of Louisiana residents discussed in our most recent broadcast email;
- The six [National Science Foundation CAREER awards](#) given to early career LSU faculty in Chemistry, Geology & Geophysics, Biological Sciences, Mechanical Engineering, Oceanography & Coastal Sciences, and Physics & Astronomy;
- The American Journalism Historians Association (AJHA)'s selection of John Maxwell Hamilton, Professor of Journalism at the Manship School of Mass Communication, for their [Sidney Kobre Award for Lifetime Achievement](#); and
- The Association for Library and Information Science's (ALISE) recognition of Dr. Edward Benoit, Associate Professor and Associate Director of the LSU School of Information Studies (SIS), as the 2023 senior faculty recipient of their [Excellence in Teaching Award](#).

We are immensely proud of our faculty and the amazing work they do. We also do not take for granted the conditions that enable us to continue our pursuit of academic excellence. I recently had the opportunity to meet with faculty from universities in Florida and Texas as part of the SEC Leadership Program and heard firsthand how recent changes to tenure and academic freedom policies in their respective states had tremendous negative impacts on their institutions. We, in Louisiana, are fortunate to have thus far avoided the national and regional trends affecting these cornerstones of higher education and given that we are unaware at this time of any pending developments, which would change the status quo, we are hopeful that we will continue to do so. Rest assured, however, that Faculty Senate leadership remains steadfast in our commitment to free academic inquiry and the policies that support it, and we have been assured that the LSU administration shares our sentiments and will be staunch allies of the faculty should the situation

change. Moving forward we will continue to maintain regular communication with the administration as we both monitor the situation and will let you know if there are any developments.

## 2. Updates on ongoing processes

- Joint Committee on Student Success – we have formed a joint committee with the Office of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Data Analytics, and Enrollment Management to start a collaborative process of addressing student success, especially in their first year at LSU. We have a meeting scheduled next week and I will keep you apprised of its developments. The goal is for this group to meet quarterly, share information, and make best decisions for our students.
- Faculty Handbook – we are in the process of updating the Handbook, especially bringing it in compliance with state law concerning vacation time.
- Policy revisions/submission process – We are working with the Office of Academic Affairs to streamline the process involving policy statements and permanent memoranda.
- Student evaluations – I have been working with the Office of Academic Affairs and the Graduate School to continue the work, which was discussed at the initial meeting with the FSEC, intended to streamline graduate student evaluations. Through this collaboration progress has been made. Moving forward, the process should be very easy for faculty to complete. Please let me know if you face any problems with it in coming semesters.

We hope to continue strengthening faculty governance. Please continue keeping us informed about pressing matters and issues on campus. We are stronger together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Inessa Bazayev". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Inessa Bazayev  
President, LSU Faculty Senate