

LSUHSC August 12, 2025, Staff Senate Agenda 2pm

Lions Eye Center 632 and Zoom: <https://lsuhsc.zoom.us/j/99296197424>

Senators present included:

Patricia “Patty” Oates – President

Cody Palazzolo – President-Elect

Treva Lincoln – At Large

Michele Holmes

Pam Galindo

Dale Prince

Nic Manuel

Tonika Lockhart-Mackie

Courtney Martin

Toya Shanklin

Michael Boutte

Jessica Riche

Registered proxies included:

Kyle Walker (Jessica Riche, proxy)

Angelica Bruno (Pam Galindo, proxy)

Call the Meeting to Order - 2:01PM – Senator Oates

Invited Speakers / Special Presentations

Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Announcement – Dale Prince, VCAA Senator

- Office of Research Services – Executive Director search is underway
- Financial Aid – The Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program enables eligible students to work part-time while enrolled. Depts benefit by hiring student workers at a reduced cost, 75% of wages may be covered by FWS funds. Departments are responsible for the remaining wages and fringe expenses.

To qualify, students must have a FAFSA on file, be enrolled at least half-time at LSUHSC, and meet eligibility requirements. All hiring follows standard HR student worker procedures.

Interested in hiring through FWS? If you have an approved position: Let us know if you have applicants in mind, and we’ll assist with eligibility and hiring.

If you need position approval: Please follow the steps in the [Student Worker New Hire Checklist](#) and coordinate with HR and your budget approver. Once approved, you’ll be able to view applicants and we’ll help identify eligible students.

- QEP - VCAA is implementing iGrad, a web-based platform that teaches students financial literacy and helps them manage their finances and student loans. It will launch early in the Fall semester.
- Student Health – Hired an LPN starting August 11; processing an additional hire currently for a Student Health Coordinator
- There will be no LSUHSC Fall Commencement; schools will handle their own ceremonies.

Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance – Ben Lousteau, VCAF

- Raises retroactive on July 1. Catch up payments for July and August will be paid in October. Increases reflected in September (if eligible). Departments/schools are determining eligibility.
- Merit based raises are up to 4% and up to 1% for equity raises, as necessary. Not every area has an equity problem as some have been addressed in recent equity raises.
- Tuition reimbursement – the current policy will not be changing this academic year. VCAF will be looking at this for next fiscal year.

Ombudsman - Catherine Briley, JD

- One area of focus for Ombuds role is conflict resolution. Another area of focus/standard of practice – confidentiality exists within the role. The role is not treated as a mandatory reporter. Records are not kept. It's asked that individuals don't include details in emails as that constitutes as a record. Another focus is neutrality. The Ombuds serves as a resource to give conflict resolution techniques and policies/procedures that are available to employees at the institution.
- Trends are reported quarterly and distributed to Chancellor, Compliance, HR and VCAF. Annual reports are on the website – lsu.edu/ombuds.
- If someone is in conflict with others or the university – it can be hard to prioritize issues, identify goals and understand advocates/points of contacts that are available to use through the process. The Ombuds serves as a thought partner to identify threads of what's creating the conflict and communicates options available.
- Can meet in person, zoom, phone. Email is problematic when it comes to confidentiality as it becomes a documented record when it is in email. Have met off campus, by phone, can meet in offices/on campus. Most often, meetings are held via zoom.
- Difference between CAP – mental health services are not provided. Ombuds can make a referral to CAP. Likewise, CAP can make referrals to Ombuds. Difference

with HR – Ombuds is neutral, not an advocate to the institution. HR is required to act. Ombuds will not act without consent of individual

Approval of Minutes from July Senate Meeting:

- Senator Martin motioned to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Senator Oates. seconded.

President's Report - no update

Committee Reports

- Communications – Chair: Senator Courtney Martin. Senator Co-Chair- Kyle Walker
 - Chair Martin remarked that the committee is continuing to update website.
 - It was noted that the committee has started a draft of a Microsoft Form to field questions before meetings. The form will be available on the website ahead of next month's meeting.
 - 3-2-1 reminders are in effect – a week after meeting, but 3 weeks before next, a recap meeting will come out. 2 weeks ahead of next meeting – signage will be posted about each monthly meeting. 1 week ahead of meeting – communication about final details and agenda items to be discussed.
- Community Engagement and Development- Chair: Senator Patty Oates
 - Chair Oates discussed Staff of the Quarter. A parking space is secured on the third floor of the S. Roman garage. Nomination form and Criteria is being drafted for nominations. The Dental School will have an alternate option. Lafayette is also going to speak to the hospital administration since the LSU staff located here is hospital-based. The goal is to have first selected Staff of the Quarter in January.
 - Senator Riche reported on Pumpkin carving contest. This will be in collaboration with a food donation option. It also may be organized with Student SGA groups. Voting will take place – prizes will be awarded to winners. More information to come.
 - Chair Oates discussed Toys for Tots having a donation box around the holidays.
- Elections – Chair: Senator Patty Oates
 - Chair Oates discussed the creation of an email for nominations, this should go out on Monday, August 18. QR code will be made available which links to

the Microsoft Form. The nominations will close on August 29. Elections will take place in October. Additional seats to be filled include: 4 Seats in School of Medicine, 4 seats in VCAA, 1 seat in School of Nursing, 1 seat in Graduate Studies (will be an at-large position to backfill).

- At-large positions will fill any open seats that are not filled by staff in each of the respective areas.
- Staff Advocacy and Retention- Chair: Senator Michele Holmes
 - Chair Holmes remarked about the great committee meeting in July. The Committee explored Employee Pathway Experiences – an employee leaving discussing her experience. The committee also discussed job-specific training. Tuition benefits and options were reviewed. Suggested questions for the staff survey were submitted and reviewed.
 - Conversations have been had about scholarships for tuition reimbursement. Criteria will be drafted and finalized so that applications can be submitted.

Old Business

- All Staff Survey is on pause after further discussions with HR. Senate may have the ability to work with a third party vendor that LSU main campus uses to pursue gathering this feedback.

New Business - Updates from LSUSHC Committees and Schools

- Senator Oates opened the floor to suggestions from the public about community development opportunities. Chancellor Nelson recommended Staff Senate look for opportunities to collaborate with local organizations. Multiple organizations were discussed including – Dress for Success, NAMI, Son of a Saint. A few individuals mentioned a focus on men's charities as there are few that target those individuals. Another suggestion was a staff-initiated craft fair or shoe box Mardi Gras float competition.
- Public comments also focused on career progression. HR was in attendance to discuss Coursera and how certain tracks could be followed to obtain certification in various job roles that exist at LSUHSC. HR was also receptive about how to explore certifications being added to resumes, used for job experience, etc. However, it was noted Supervisors must be part of this dialogue. There was additional commentary about uncertainty around Supervisors authorizing employees to have time to pursue this professional development. Senator Martin remarked it would be beneficial for Staff

Senate to make recommendations to Supervisors to allow employees to pursue professional development.

- Other public comment included a Training committee – look at bringing together resources and professional development, career growth, specific training for individuals.
- Faculty Senate - Michael Boutte – No updates
- Wellness - Angelica Bruno – Wellness fair is on Aug 20, 3:00-8:00pm, LEC 130. Open to all.
- Hunger Free Campus workforce - Angelica Bruno - \$10,000 grant secured for food pantry.
- Schools – no specific updates

Adjourn – 2:58pm motion by Senator Oates, motion was seconded by Senator Riche.