

LSU Council of Faculty Advisors Meeting

December 11, 2025
LSU University Administration Building
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808

-APPROVED-

I. Call to order.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Members present: Daniel Tirone (LSUA&M) - Chair, Rachelle Brown, (LSUE), Shelly Dolan (LSU Health New Orleans), Sujoy Ghosh (Pennington), Kevin McCarter (LSU Ag) Dawn Sonnier (LSU Health Shreveport), and Cynthia Thomas (LSUA).

Members absent: Cassandra Williams (LSUS) - Secretary.

III. There were no public comments.

IV. Approval of Minutes from October 24, 2025 meeting

Draft minutes were not provided, will be considered at the next meeting.

Vice Chairman Mallett and Supervisor Alvendia stopped by and expressed their appreciation to the faculty group.

V . New Business

The Chair went over the items that will be included in the oral report. The full report items are included in an attachment.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 am following a motion by Dolan which passed without objection.

Minutes prepared by Daniel C. Tirone, Chair

Attachments:

LSU Council of Faculty Advisors Report December 11, 2025

LSU Council of Faculty Advisors Report

December 11, 2025

Assembled by Daniel C. Tirone, Chair

LSU AgCenter

- **Dr. Ronnie Levy**, LSU AgCenter Extension Rice Specialist, received the **2025 Rice Industry Lifetime Achievement Award** after four decades of service, on Dec. 8, at the **USA Rice Outlook Conference** held in New Orleans.
- **Dr. Carol Friedland**, LaHouse Director and Professor of Biological and Agricultural Engineering, has been named a **Fellow of the Structural Engineering Institute of the American Society of Civil Engineers**. This honor recognizes her leadership and sustained contributions to the structural engineering profession.
- **The Louisiana Land-grant Agriculture Summit** will be on the LSU campus, Dec. 15th & 16th. Over **500** participants from both **Louisiana Land-grant Universities – Louisiana State University and Southern University** --will share agriculture, nutrition, community and youth research, Extension and teaching expertise focusing on innovation, current issues and professional development. The Keynote speaker is the director of the **United States Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Dr. Jaye Hamby**.
- The LSU AgCenter was awarded **33 grants** in November that totaled **\$2,2135,551**.
- The LSU AgCenter's **Precision Agriculture Summit** was held Dec. 10 in Alexandria. Topics included adoption of precision agriculture technologies to artificial intelligence to economic feasibility

LSU Alexandria

LSUA is enjoying state and national recognition for its academic success.

- The **2025 Niche Best Colleges** ranked LSUA the #4 Best College in Louisiana.
- Additionally, LSUA earned national recognition in **Newsweek's "America's Top Online Learning Schools in 2025"**. LSUA received a 4-star rating, highlighting its commitment to delivering high-quality online education to students across the country.
- LSUA's LPN to Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) program has been ranked among the top LPN-to-RN programs in Louisiana by **EduMed**, a national resource for students pursuing online or hybrid degrees in nursing, allied health, and medical careers. EduMed's annual rankings highlight programs that deliver exceptional value by combining affordability, academic rigor, flexibility, and strong student support, standards that only a select group of institutions nationwide meet.

We are honored to receive this acknowledgment.

Dr. Carol Corbat, Professor of Biology, is the 2025 recipient of the **Carol A. Luthman Meritorious Service Award**, presented at the 2025 SACSCOC Annual Meeting. Dr. Corbat completed 23 site visits, chaired 10 of those visits, and was a member of the Annual Meeting Program Planning Committee for several years.

LSUA is committed to cultivating an environment of academic excellence in both their students and employees. In doing so, several members of faculty and staff are pursuing additional advanced degrees and certifications.

- Kelli Rachal, Assistant Professor of Nursing: Graduating with EdD in Adult Learning and Education
- Sarah Barnes, Chair for Dept of Allied Health and Program Director for Radiology Technology: Defended the first section of her Dissertation for her Doctorate in Education Leadership with concentration in Higher Education
- Monique Bowers: Successfully defended her dissertation proposal for her PhD in Psychology. Her research is a qualitative study that explores the experiences of counselors who provided teletherapy to clients who have attempted or completed suicide.
- Adena LeJeune, PhD, recently earned two additional certifications from the AICPA: Financial Forensics (CFF) and Specialized Forensics Accounting Knowledge.
- Thomas Pippen, Nursing Professional Advisor: Graduating with Master's in education administration
- Jimena Valle, Nursing Professional Advisor, Graduating with Master's in public administration
- Elizabeth Azua, Med, RT®(CT), (ARRT), BS, Clinical Coordinator for Radiology Technology Graduated with her Master's in Education with concentration in Educational Leadership
- Kimberly King, Administrative Assistant School of Nursing: Graduating with Bachelor's in Psychology

While LSUA's focus remains primarily on undergraduate student teaching, faculty has been intentional about increasing research scholarship and cultivating opportunities for students. Recent publications and presentations include:

- Truax, J. & Vonk, J. (2025). Assessing judgment bias in ambassador animals: Two case studies. *International Journal of Comparative Psychology*, 38(1). <https://doi.org/10.46867/ijcp.35431>
- Truax, J. & Vonk, J. (2025). Cages or conservation? Providing information improves public perceptions of zoos. *Anthrozoös*, 38(3), 453-472. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08927936.2025.2488602>
- Jordyn Truax received a Technology Fee Grant to purchase multiple pieces of technology for use with her research at the Alexandria Zoo, including touchscreens, outdoor tvs, and outdoor speakers.
- Beverly Alwell, PhD, Assistant Professor of Business, Presented "Career Readiness in the Classroom" at the 2025 ACBSP Region 6 Conference. Her presentation focused on practical strategies to help students develop essential career skills through classroom learning.
- Stacy Austin, DNP, Assistant Professor of Nursing, RN-BSN Program: Presented at Fall Showcase, *Conquering Test Anxiety in Undergraduate Nursing Students*
- Jacob Whitmore, PhD, Assistant Professor of Business, Presented "I'm Safe, I'll Speak Up...Or Will I? The effects of psychological safety and approach motivation on safety voice" at the Southern Management Association 2025 Annual Meeting in Greenville, SC.
- Matthew Farley, MSN, RN, CNE ASN Program Director and Matthew Scalfano, MSN, RN, ASN Program: Presented at SPIN Learning Nursing Educator Conference in Biloxi MS: *Enhancing Clinical Judgment through Virtual Reality Simulation: A Comparative Analysis of Student Perceptions Across Two Semesters*
- Stacy Mayeux, PhD, Associate Professor of Nursing, ASN Program: Presented at Organization for Associate Degree in Nursing in Nashville, TN- *From Chaos to Competence: Clinical Teaching Strategies for Nursing Students with ADHD*
- Crystal Smith, MSN, RN, Assistant Professor of Nursing, ASN Program: Presented at Lilly Conference in Traverse City, MI: *Building Communication and Professional Identity Through Active Learning*
- Dr. Holly Wilson Presented at an International Conference in Serbia: "Kant on Natural Predispositions in Natural and Human History" *Three Centuries of Kant: Knowledge, Science, and Values*.
- LSUA now has access to LSU's High-Performance Computing (HPC) cluster. Research performed in several departments has already yielded results that will lead to publications in scientific journals, hence improving chances for students to attend professional or graduate schools or to enter the workforce in high paying professions.
- Twelve students from several Louisiana Universities took part in the Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE) paid for by the Department of Biological Sciences Board of Regents grant conducting research in biology and computer science. This program was hosted by LSUA and led by Christof Stump.

Faculty have been busy across campus, contributing diverse learning opportunities for students and community members.

- Professor Rafael Romero led the third season of Bark Tank, a startup-pitch competition for business-school students, modeled after the TV show Shark Tank. Teams develop business ideas, create full business plans, and present them to local business leaders known as the “Top Dogs.” The best teams receive mentorship and recognition. Its purpose is to give students real-world entrepreneurial experience, help them build practical business skills, and connect them with community professionals who can support their growth.
- Sona Kumar- Team lead for accreditation site visit for NAACLS MLT program in Minnesota, Oct 2025 and attended the First Women in Laboratory Science Symposium in Virginia, Oct 2025.
- LSUA students will be featured at Rapides Orchestra Christmas event with Skips; the script was written by LSUA professor Patrick Hunter.
- Guoyi Ke organized two workshops for STEM students entitled: Unlocking your future: Graduate school opportunities in STEM and Launching Your Future: Preparing for Careers in STEM Fields
- Jennifer Wright is leading a Service-Learning project where LSUA’s students in Digital Marketing partner with local K-12 schools to help produce social media content.
- Katy McClure is the Career Champion for the College of Business. She has led our Career Advisory Council. This effort is critical for our ACBSP reaccreditation efforts.

LSUA and the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana have signed a MOU establishing a five-year partnership to expand educational, research, and workforce development opportunities across Central Louisiana and beyond. The agreement supports the Tribe’s long-standing mission to create pathways for economic growth and educational advancement for its more than 1,700 citizens nationwide, while furthering LSUA’s commitment to community-based collaboration and regional impact.

Finally, we are looking forward to welcoming Wade Rouse, PhD, and James Dalton, PhD, to our campus on December 15.

LSU Eunice

Faculty Features

- **Dr. Charles Stewart is the new Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs and Chief Articulation Officer.** He has served as Interim in the position since June of 2025. The hiring committee, after a nationwide search, unanimously approved Dr. Stewart.
- **Dr. Billy Fontenot is the new Dean of Arts and Sciences.** An alumnus and faculty member for over 25 years, Dr. Fontenot has served as Interim Dean.

General Program and Campus Achievements

- **Audwin Donatto is the newly appointed Vice Chancellor of Business.** Mr. Donatto has served as Interim for 18 months. During his Interim, he oversaw a shift from deficit, to a balanced budget to now a surplus. A nationwide search was completed, and Mr. Donatto was selected by the hiring committee.
- LSUE Received an **NSF E.P.I.C. grant for \$400,000** for chemistry technician training and certification to build capacity in the agriculture, biomedical and energy workforce.

LSU Health New Orleans

Our campus Wellness Committee's Hunger-Free Campus Workforce team held its annual Holiday Food Basket Event. We offered both nonperishables and perishables that include the main dish (turkey, turkey breast, chicken, Cornish hen, or ham) and an 8lb bag of potatoes. We provided and handed out to 80 students and staff.

LSUHSC VC OFFICE

Dr. Joseph Constans has started as the Director of the Office of Research Services on a part time basis and transition to full time January 12.

LSUHSC Registrar's Office

- To align the academic calendar with all other LSU schools and adjust the current 16 weeks/semester to 15 weeks/semester.
- Shortening the time to add and drop classes

LSUHSC HR

Trying to use a program that will centralize the process and add for those who fit under different roles and responsibilities. Using performance rating scales that are more conducive to motivating employees.

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Academic Affairs

- Accreditation (CEPH & SACSCOC):
- Final draft of the CEPH Self-Study submitted; feedback under review.
- SACSCOC reporting adjustments underway to align with reaccreditation timelines.
- Curriculum & Programs:
- Joint degree applications finalized and posted online.
- BSPH application nearing completion with transcript process updates.
- Collaboration with LSU-BR Kinesiology approved for 3+2 program integration.

Academic Calendar:

- Registrar confirmed transition to centralized calendar beginning AY 2026–2027.
- SPH-specific dates will be tracked separately to ensure compliance.

Recruitment

- Fall events included LSUHSC Advisor Open House and Virtual Graduate Open House.
- Spring recruitment events planned for February and April.

Career Services

- Speed Networking and alumni engagement events successfully held – We had 19 students and 28 organizations/mentors.
- Career Services website and newsletter expanded to include alumni outreach.

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

- We anticipate opening the first floor of our 200,000 square foot laboratory renovation in April 2026. We plan to open the other two floors in the months that follow.
- We continue to have success in the recruitment of cancer clinicians and researchers, and we are gaining momentum in our goal to achieve NCI designation.

SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH

Human Development Center

- Contract with LA Department of Ed for \$45,000 to provide training (statewide) on LEAP Connect (High School Equivalency) to Educators and Educational Administrators
- Tracy O'Donnell secured a MOU with Ochsner to allow HDC to conduct job development, pursuant to providing employment training and supports to individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in their facilities

SCHOOL OF NURSING

- The school of nursing plans to graduate about 102 students in December.
- Two nursing school faculty members- Dr Manning and Dr Chatmon - have been inducted into the Academy of Nursing.

Pennington Biomedical Research Center

- **Highly Cited Researchers:** Four researchers from LSU's Pennington Biomedical Research Center have been named among the world's most highly cited scientists, according to the 2025 Highly Cited Researchers list from Clarivate Analytics. Pennington Biomedical's Dr. Steven Heymsfield, Dr. Peter Katzmarzyk, Dr. Eric Ravussin, and Dr. Donna Ryan are recognized among the top 1 percent of researchers whose work has demonstrated significant and broad influence in their respective fields. The list identifies scientists whose publications rank among the most cited globally over the past 11 years, as measured in the *Web of Science* database. Steven Heymsfield, MD, LSU Boyd Professor and Professor of Metabolism & Body Composition, has a lifetime h-index of 145 with 1,407 publications cited more than 86,000 times. His most cited paper, "Epidemiology of sarcopenia among the elderly in New Mexico," published in the American Journal of Epidemiology, has been cited more than 2,900 times. Peter Katzmarzyk, PhD, Associate Executive Director for Population and Public Health Sciences, Professor, and Marie Edana Corcoran Endowed Chair in Pediatric Obesity and Diabetes, has a lifetime h-index of 114 with 874 publications cited more than 81,000 times. His paper, "Effect of Physical Inactivity on Major Non-Communicable Diseases Worldwide: An Analysis of Burden of Disease and Life Expectancy," published in Lancet, has been cited more than 5,900 times. Eric Ravussin, PhD, LSU Boyd Professor and Douglas L. Gordon Chair in Diabetes and Metabolism, has a lifetime h-index of 124 with 876 publications cited more than 65,000 times. His paper, "Definition and diagnostic criteria of clinical obesity," published in Lancet, has been cited more than 7,200 times. Donna Ryan, MD, Professor Emeritus, has a lifetime h-index of 81 with 687 publications cited more than 38,000 times. Her paper, "Cardiovascular Effects of Intensive Lifestyle Intervention in Type 2 Diabetes," published in the New England Journal of Medicine, has been cited more than 2,000 times.
- **COBRE Renewal:** Following a competitive review process, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding for Pennington Biomedical's Metabolic Basis of Disease Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) was renewed for an additional five years. This Phase II renewal builds on the momentum achieved since the center's establishment in 2020, enabling continued support for young scientists who are focused on the mechanisms through which nutrition and metabolism contribute to health. The renewal represents a \$10.9M NIH investment over five years expanding intellectual, scientific and technical infrastructure that enhances the study of metabolic components of disease states. This five-year renewal will provide approximately \$2.2M per year to support three essential features for research: The center will provide direct research support for three junior researcher positions, with the goal of supporting multiple scientists through the program as they develop independence. When researchers successfully secure independent funding, they graduate from the program, creating opportunities to recruit additional early-career scientists in Louisiana. The center will directly support infrastructure related to Genomics, Bioimaging, and Preclinical Disease research. Competitive research is dependent on state-of-the-art equipment and expertise, and COBRE-funded infrastructure enables Pennington Biomedical researchers to stay at the forefront of their fields. The center will support a Pilot and Feasibility research program, providing direct support to early-stage ideas and discoveries.

- **The Louisiana ECHO program:** Louisiana’s Environmental Influences on Child Health Outcomes, or ECHO program, has secured a share of \$13 million in funding from the National Institutes of Health, or NIH. The award, which is for the program’s third award cycle, will support its efforts and research for five years. Founded in 2016, Louisiana’s ECHO program unites researchers from Pennington Biomedical Research Center, Ochsner Health System, Tulane University, and LSU Health Sciences Center New Orleans with leading pediatric clinicians at Our Lady of the Lake Children’s Hospital and Children’s Hospital in New Orleans. This collaboration brings together research capabilities and two free-standing children’s hospitals in the state, with a third under construction. The Louisiana ECHO program, anchored at Pennington Biomedical in partnership with Ochsner Health, is Louisiana’s site of the IDeA States Pediatric Clinical Trials Network. The ECHO program prioritizes clinical trials that focus on five focus areas: pre-, peri- and postnatal outcomes; obesity; upper and lower airways; neurodevelopment; and positive health.
- **New Associate Executive Director for Scientific Education:** Pennington Biomedical Research Center announced that Dr. Corby Martin has been appointed as the Associate Executive Director for Scientific Education, effective November 1, 2025. This appointment comes as Dr. Leanne Redman transitions to an extraordinary opportunity as Executive Director of the Charles Perkins Centre at the University of Sydney, one of the world's premier obesity and metabolic health research institutes. In his new role, Dr. Martin will provide strategic leadership for the Division of Scientific Education, including our T32 Postdoctoral Training Program, the Pennington Scientific Symposium, the Bray Obesity Symposium, and our expanding portfolio of educational programs and partnerships. He will also serve as our Chief Academic Officer, representing Pennington Biomedical on LSU's Chief Academic Officer Committee.
- **NIH Reproductive, Perinatal and Pediatric IRG:** Dr. Gang Hu of the Chronic Disease Epidemiology Lab at Pennington Biomedical was invited to serve as a member of the NIH Reproductive, Perinatal and Pediatric Health Study Section, Population Sciences and Epidemiology Integrated Review Group (IRG) for approximately six and a half years. This IRG reviews applications submitted to the NIH, makes recommendations on the applications to the appropriate NIH national advisory council or board, and surveys the status of research in the field of population science and epidemiology. In his invitation letter, the Center for Scientific Review acting director Dr. Bruce Reed, noted that Dr. Hu was selected for his competence and achievement in his scientific discipline and the quality of his research accomplishments, publications, achievements and honors.

LSU Health Shreveport

Research Update

- LSUHS recently completed an analysis of the return on investment from our intramural grant programs, showing that the \$3.5M awarded in FY2020–2023 supported more than \$28M in extramural funding, over 90% from the NIH. These intramural awards also supported more than 110 research publications.
- LSUHS recently completed a national search for a new Associate Director for Basic Research at the Feist-Weiller Cancer Center and Chair of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. LSUHS is pleased to announce the hiring of Dr. Jianxun “Jim” Song, a leading cancer immunologist whose work has advanced T-cell– and microbial-based immunotherapies. Dr. Song is widely recognized for his scientific leadership in cancer immunology and currently holds multiple major federal grants, including several active NIH/NCI R01 awards and large translational cancer projects. He has published over 100 articles in leading journals in cancer immunotherapy and immunology.

School of Health Professions and Sciences

- Our new Doctorate of Physical Therapy Program recently received approval from the APTA to proceed with **the first hybrid DPT program in Louisiana** to be located in Lafayette. LSUHS pitched this offering to expand access to physical therapy education to help meet the state’s critical healthcare workforce needs. This degree program is in partnership with Ochsner Lafayette General through the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) Healthcare Education Reinvestment Opportunity HERO Fund and will welcome its first cohort in May 2026.
- Dr. Cory Coehoorn, the Chair of our Rehabilitation Sciences Department, was recently notified of a Department of Defense Subaward for a project entitled: “PRIME: Personalized Risk and Injury Management Engine”, sponsored by the Medical Technology Enterprise Consortium.

School of Medicine

- Second-year medical student Alexandra Dubuisson was selected for Harvard Medical School’s prestigious Visiting Research Internship Program, **one of only 11 students nationwide**.
- Dr. Christina Notarianni, Professor of Neurosurgery and Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery, and Dr. Rachel Bishop, Assistant Professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, led the team in **performing the region’s first endoscopic cranial vault surgery**, an innovative, minimally invasive procedure that improves recovery and outcomes for infants with craniosynostosis, showcasing LSU Health Shreveport’s commitment to cutting-edge care.
- LSUHS recently installed safety enhancements to include blue light poles, additional lighting and patrol officers in student centric areas in support of crime prevention.
- LSUHS is launching a campus beautification and branding project to enhance navigation of campus while strengthening the visual appeal and branding as a LSU campus.

Faculty Senate

- LSU Health Shreveport is actively involved in creating guidelines around AI with a focus on academic, legal, and research applications and in the annual review of bylaws.

LSU Shreveport

- LSUS sets yet another enrollment record with 11,359. It's the fifth straight semester of either overall record enrollment or summer record enrollment. This semester's growth is particularly exciting because it's centered around undergraduates, whose enrollment spiked 15 percent from one year ago.
- LSUS's Pilot Pitch, the annual student entrepreneurial competition, had its best slate of entries yet as students spend a semester honing and developing their business plans with the help of faculty and community partners. Undergraduate winner Paige Schuldt used her own experience as a mom of a 13-month-old baby to create The Nurture Nook, a portable pop up that provides breastfeeding mothers a place to nurse. Graduate winner Max Haubrich sought a solution to the run-of-the-mill children's birthday party with his business idea SurPrize!, an all-in-one boutique toy store that offers kids and their guests an immersive birthday party experience.
- LSUS continues to strengthen its portfolio in biomedical research as students Nezar Zeidan and Thomas Dean finished first and second, respectively, at the 2025 Biomedical Research and Industry Day at LSU Health Shreveport. Both participated in LSUS's first-ever Summer Biotechnology Research Program.
- LSUS athletics continues to shine as the men's soccer team is having the best season in program history. The Pilots play in the Round of 16 on Monday (Dec. 1). Other athletics news includes the first-ever perfect college baseball team being honored with an exhibit at the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and the launching of the school's first-ever women's volleyball varsity team. The LSUS men's and women's weightlifting teams also captured regional titles for the first time in more than a decade.
- LSUS student Layla Arendell won two gold medals at the taekwondo world championships in Argentina.
- Business student Tory McCoy wants to put Shreveport on the global map as the new state liaison for Sister Cities International, an organization that forms partnerships with cities around the world.
- The James Smith Noel Collection organized an American Revolution Symposium featuring world-renowned scholars on Nov. 6-7. The symposium was free and open to the public.
- Applied behavior analysis student Jana Beaubouef presented at the Gulf Coast Applied Behavior Analysis Conference in November, championing the model of faculty-student research and the benefits to developing scholarship and future researchers.

LSU A&M

- LSU is quickly becoming “America’s Energy Campus”. In the last two months, we’ve hosted Integrated Nuclear Energy Day on the flagship campus, bringing TerraPower and NVIDIA to Baton Rouge to talk about opportunities to invest and collaborate on advanced nuclear development. We also recently combined our Center for Energy Studies, Institute for Energy Innovation, and Louisiana Geological Survey as the LSU Energy Institute, most recently bringing Tyler Gray on board as its inaugural director of energy innovation.
- On November 7, the Office of Research and Economic Development submitted proposals for \$142 million, including:
 - An ~\$52 million GLOE joint proposal between A&M and the AgCenter with an LED match of \$5 M. This proposal builds on LSU’s designation as 1 of 31 EDA Tech Hubs in 2023.
 - A ~\$45 million FUEL NSF Engines renewal between A&M and 7 other universities, the second phase of funding for this project.
 - ~\$20 million was submitted for two proposals from Art & Design / Coast & Environment and College of Business.
- This December 15-19, LSU will host two booths and bring more than 250 researchers to the Annual American Geological Union (AGU) Meeting in New Orleans. This is the premier Earth and space science conference and the world’s leading gathering of Earth and space scientists, bringing together tens of thousands of researchers, educators, and innovators to share breakthroughs that shape our understanding of the planet: <https://lsu.edu/research/agu/index.php>
- We have a new National Academy of Inventors fellow! Dr. Gouqiang Li from Mechanical and Industrial Engineering will be officially inducted as a Fellow of the Academy during their 15th Annual Conference on June 1-4, 2026 in Los Angeles. Dr. Li is one of two new NAI from LSU, with Executive Vice President Dalton also receiving this prestigious recognition.