



January 29, 2025

Dear Senators,

I hope you were not significantly impacted by last week's unusual weather and had an opportunity to enjoy the snow. Please find the updates from this month's President's report below.

1. Speech in the Classroom

As you are likely already aware a faculty member has been temporarily removed from their course and an investigation is being conducted into comments made during a class which some participants feel may have been inappropriate. I have been in contact with him and discussed the ways in which the Senate may be of assistance, including the option to meet with representatives from the [Faculty Adjudication Committee](#) to see if a grievance may be warranted. Due to the ongoing investigation and possibility of later Senate involvement I will refrain from going into details of the matter at this time, though I will continue to monitor the situation and remain available to the faculty member as appropriate.

As awareness of this situation has increased, I have been contacted by many faculty members who are understandably concerned about the possibility of repercussion for engaging in speech which may be alleged to be political as they teach their classes. In discussions with members of the administration about these concerns they confirmed their commitment to complying with LSU's policies on academic freedom and speech, including [PS-15 Academic Freedom, Free Speech and Tenure](#), [PM-79 Freedom of Speech and Expression](#), and Article X, Section 2 Academic Freedom in the [Board of Supervisors Bylaws](#). The administration will also evaluate each case relative to prevailing professional standards, such as those laid out in the AAUP's guidelines on academic freedom and free speech discussed in [November's President's Report](#).

I appreciate the tension many feel around this subject and share their concerns. At this time the best advice I can provide, based on the numerous discussions I have had on this topic with the current administration, is to teach your courses guided by your best professional judgment about what constitutes appropriate content and methods for your field. There is no restriction on teaching contentious material or topics which may be understood as political so long as the material is germane to the course and, to quote from the Bylaws referenced earlier, instructors refrain "from insisting upon the adoption by students or others of any particular point of view as authoritative in controversial issues." Furthermore, do your best to avoid introducing material which is not relevant to the course as recommended by the American Association of University Professor's [1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure](#). I believe that following these guidelines will allow faculty and students to pursue their research and teaching without issue, and in the circumstances when disputes about the appropriateness of comments or conduct in the classroom do arise Senate leadership is committed to working with faculty and the administration towards a fair and timely resolution.

2. Annual Reports and PS-36T CVs

As we approach the deadline for submission of our annual reports using Elements, I wished to make you aware of a number of resources the Office of Academic Affairs has made available to assist you in this process. There is a dedicated page on their website providing trainings for [Faculty Annual Reviews via Elements](#), including the timeline and a number of guides. There is also a separate page with resources on [Elements & Discovery](#). The [Faculty Activities in Elements](#) page may be of particular interest as it provides an overview of how to classify various achievements, such as scholarly and creative works, teaching and mentoring, and service and leadership within the system, a frequent source of confusion for faculty.

The Office of Academic Affairs has also informed us that due to a recent policy change PS-36T formatted CVs are no longer required for promotion and tenure reviews. Instead, faculty may use their professionally formatted CV for these processes so long as 1) the CV contains all of the information appropriate for one's field which is required to be entered into Elements and 2) that the information is classified in accordance with the [relevant guidelines](#). The requirement to maintain multiple CVs was a frequent source of frustration for faculty so we believe this will be a welcome change. More information will also be included in a forthcoming broadcast email from the Office of Academic Affairs.

3. Ad hoc Committee on Generative AI Policies

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee has created an ad hoc committee to evaluate the quickly changing impact of generative artificial intelligence on scholarship and teaching. The committee's task is to review emerging best practices from professional societies, journals, peer institutions and other sources and make recommendations for areas where existing LSU policy may need to be updated. We intend to include faculty, staff and student representatives and will undertake the process of populating the committee soon. If you or a colleague would like to be considered for inclusion, please let me know.

4. Building Conditions

I recently met with representatives from Facility Services and the Office of Academic Affairs to discuss how to more effectively let faculty, staff and students know when there is an issue with conditions in a particular building, such as excessive heat or cold, and the steps being taken to address them. While the ultimate goal is to minimize the frequency of these incidents the age of the campus infrastructure makes it difficult to maintain the equipment and obtain parts when it breaks down. Facility Services is working on a long-term plan to address these issues, but in the near term they are evaluating various options to provide more timely and comprehensive information to individuals who may be impacted. I will share additional details about these plans once they become available.

5. ORP/TRSL Retirement Plans

Please remember that some participants in the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) who wish to switch to the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL) under the provisions of [Act No. 109](#) must do so by June 30th of this year. The recent passage of the [Social Security Fairness Act](#) which eliminated the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) may influence this choice. If you are interested in learning more please contact [Human Resource Management](#) and/or a personal financial advisor for assistance in deciding if this option is right for you.

6. Faculty Council Meeting

I am working with the President's Office and the Office of Academic Affairs to identify a date and location for this year's annual Faculty Council meeting and hope to more information to share soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Tirone', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Daniel C. Tirone
President, LSU Faculty Senate