

LSUS Faculty Senate Meeting February 16, 2016

President Tom Du Bose called the meeting to order at 3:04 PM.

Present: Beverly Burden, Tom Du Bose, Mary Hawkins, Chengho Hsieh, Yong Hwang, Zsolt Lengvarszky, Michael Meeks, Brian Salvatore, Carl Smolinsky, Lynn Walford, Cheryl White.

Absent: Jim Ingold, Kevin Krug, Alexander Mikaberidze, Kay Stebbins Slattery.

Approval of Minutes of January 25 Faculty Senate Meeting

A motion was made and seconded (Hawkins/White) to approve the minutes as corrected. The motion passed unanimously.

President's Report

President Tom Du Bose gave the following report:

- At his monthly meeting with Chancellor Clark, they discussed a number of issues, some of which are reflected in the agenda items for today's meeting.
- He and Chancellor Clark met with the SGA and spoke to the students about their initiative to raise their fees and tuition to help fund faculty raises.
- He met with the Staff Senate to observe their meeting style and format and to show solidarity between faculty and staff.
- He attended a meeting of the Policy and Personnel Committee and discussed the issue of equity, along with promotion and tenure.
- He communicated with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to set up the agenda for this meeting.
- He attended the presentation about active-shooter scenarios put together by the LSUS Police Department and the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office.
- He attended a meeting of the LSUS Planning Council.
- He attended a meeting of the Budget Crisis Committee.

Administrators' Reports

Chancellor

Because Chancellor Clark was in New Orleans attending a research summit meeting in New Orleans, there was no report.

Academic Affairs

Provost and Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs John Vassar gave the following report:

- Senator Bill Cassidy has put together a research summit in New Orleans, consisting of presentations from all Louisiana colleges and universities, including LSU, with the aim of showing Louisiana as a good place to invest Federal dollars. Chancellor Clark is attending the summit.
- LSU President F. King Alexander has asked all chancellors to attend the budget hearings at the Capitol on Wednesday, February 17.
- At a meeting with Caddo Parish high school counselors he was frequently asked if LSU was going to close down. He discussed the status of TOPS, and cash flow difficulties, and assured them that no changes have been planned for next semester, and that students currently enrolled would be able to finish. He said that any changes would come only if the legislature did not act, and discussed the affordability of LSU compared to other campuses. The discussion was vague and generic, because as yet we have no concrete knowledge of the situation or its possible consequences, but he emphasized that we are working to ensure students that they are our first priority.
- He met with the faculty of the College of Business, Education, and Human Development to discuss the candidate for Dean, who had visited the campus.

During discussion, Senator Meeks asked if there is a plan for communicating information as it comes from the legislature. Provost Vassar said that when things are announced they flow through the LSU system, and come to this campus through Vice-Chancellor for Business Affairs Mike Ferrell. Vice-Chancellor Ferrell said that the most up-to-date information is on the LSU website, and Provost Vassar commented that unfortunately we often find out information from the news media rather than from official sources. He added that as things happen that affect our campus he will communicate them via email. He said that when information is not received through official channels, such as information about a possible hiring freeze, we continue to operate as usual. Senator White said that there is real concern from students because they hear the same rumors that we do, and asked how we communicate information to them. Provost Vassar said that while rhetoric does not reflect reality, it should reflect what could happen if cuts do take place, and should be communicated to students, faculty, and staff. He said that he has emailed and tweeted students to attempt to reassure and comfort them, but said that in the face of apocalyptic rumors students will find more comfort from their professors and advisors. He added that while faculty and staff have been through similar situations before, students have not. Senator Meeks suggested that Chancellor Clark and Provost Vassar make a video directed to students that will communicate that everything is in the hands of the legislators. President Du Bose commented that students are not just worried, but frightened, and that their greatest concern is about the future of TOPS. Senator Hawkins added that this is the first time the budget crisis has affected students directly in their pocketbooks, and that they are more aware than before about the seriousness of the situation.

- He said that the unavailability of the Internet is due to a cut cable, and that the problem affects online courses and programs. He has asked academic partnerships to email affected students, and added that the system should be running again by tonight.
- He responded to a question from Senator Meeks about the summer schedule, and said that the challenge is to match our schedule to that of LSU A & M, since we have a four-day week in the summer, while they have a five-day week. He added that while this summer's schedule cannot be changed, he welcomes feedback and ideas for next summer. There was discussion of creating longer sessions or longer classes, or of eliminating

summer courses altogether. President Du Bose asked senators to discuss the issue with their colleagues, and said it would be added to next month's agenda.

- He introduced Brent Wallace, the new Director of the Division of Continuing Education. He said that the position has been restructured, and that the new director would be a liaison with the business community. Mr. Wallace said that he has experience in both the business and academic communities, and that he wanted a career that would allow him to create a real collaboration between them. He wants to build upon strengths of the past as well as to form new partnerships, and invited senators to reach out to him with questions and comments.

Business Affairs

Vice-Chancellor for Business Affairs Mike Ferrell gave the following report:

- At his regular meeting with Director of Financial Aid Chelsey Chance, they discussed the delay in scheduled TOPS payments. All the funding had not been received, and on the evening of February they were told that TOPS had been cancelled. By the next morning, they learned that 80% of TOPS payments would be made. He said that it is difficult to work under different scenarios and with no concrete information, and added that legislators appear not to want to hear anything from universities except worst-case scenarios. He applauded the faculty and staff for their willingness to help in a bad situation, and said that we are doing the best we can with what we have.
- A bill is being proposed for those enrolled in the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP). Details have not yet been provided, but will come out in the regular legislative session.
- Our Human Resources and Financial Aid departments will change to the Workday® system to be in compliance with LSU (formerly the LSU System). The change will take place at the beginning of the next fiscal year, when everyone will be paid through LSU. Civil Service employees will continue to be paid biweekly, but faculty will be paid monthly. Difficulties might arise for those who receive academic withheld payment, and different scenarios have been suggested for coping with it. The new system will not affect faculty until the fall semester, and there might be more changes between now and then.

During discussion, Senator Meeks commented that although he is a relatively new member of the faculty, he has been told that we have had steady budget cuts since 1990, some of which were absorbed through tuition hikes. He asked for a summary of the history of these cuts, and Senator Hawkins suggested that the topic be discussed later.

Development

There was no report.

Old Business

Report from Policy and Personnel Committee on revision of policies on promotion and tenure

Because the committee has not met since the last Faculty Senate meeting, the report was postponed. The committee will meet on February 24. Provost Vassar said he is reviewing the committee's report, and that it should be ready for the March meeting of the Faculty Senate.

New Business

Report from SGA on proposed student fee to provide faculty raises

Because the SGA President was unable to attend this meeting, the report was postponed.

Proposal for formal Graduate School

Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences Dalton Gossett gave a report and PowerPoint presentation outlining the reasons why the establishment of a formal Graduate School would be advantageous to LSU:

- Over one-third of our student body is made up of graduate students, and the number will probably grow; thus, we must allocate more resources to this portion of our student body.
- We are actively recruiting international students, many of whom are likely to be graduate students; a Graduate School could include a liaison with international students.
- A formal Graduate School would have the means to recruit, admit, and serve graduate students, who pay more in tuition than undergraduates, and who are likely to conduct research that will increase our external funding and enhance our academic reputation.
- A formal Graduate School would be much more efficient than the current situation of trying to coordinate graduate activities among different offices
- The existence of a formal Graduate School would help streamline the process of changing, improving, or adding graduate programs.
- As we have moved from a primarily undergraduate institution to one with a number of master's and one doctoral degree, it would be advantageous to house graduate operations in one unit.
- The Graduate School would be appropriate to house the Director of Online Learning and Faculty Development, as well as Sponsored Research, because these programs focus primarily on the graduate level.

During discussion, Senator Salvatore asked how long the approval process would be, and Senator Lengvarszky asked if we have submitted any more specific graduate programs. Director of Graduate Studies Menon said that we have submitted some programs, and have received feedback from Baton Rouge. Provost Vassar said he would ultimately evaluate the proposal for the Graduate School, after it had been submitted to the Planning Council. He said the senate should be concerned primarily with the academic aspect of the proposal, and that the Planning Council would consider the financial aspect. President Du Bose asked senators to get input from faculty regarding the proposal. He said it would be put on next month's agenda, and that the senate would vote on it then.

Report from QEP Committee on implementation of metacognition process

Chair of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Committee Stephanie Aamodt gave a report and PowerPoint presentation in which she outlined the progress that has been made to date:

- Freshman Seminar instructors have had training in the implementation and standardization of metacognition instruction.
- Troubleshooting issues with grading and processing data have been addressed.

- Stephen Chew’s online video, “How to Get the Most Out of Studying,” has been made available to students, and an additional video, “The Cognitive Principles of Effective Teaching,” has been made available to faculty.
- Interim Director of Online Learning and Faculty Development Kristie Weeks is organizing faculty development workshops to be held this semester.

Observations and concerns

Director of Graduate Studies Sanjay Menon said that the open house for the International Student Center, held on Monday, February 15, was very successful. He said that he has sent an email to faculty and staff inviting them to provide housing for incoming international students.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, March 16, at 3:00 PM in the Webster Room of the University Center. The Executive Committee will meet the week prior (date and time TBA) in Bronson Hall 224.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Walford
Secretary