

LSUS Faculty Senate Meeting

March 16, 2017

Present: Beverly Burden, Michael Chikeleze, Tom Du Bose, Chengho Hsieh, Jim Ingold, Kevin Krug, Zsolt Lengvarszky, Jason Mackowiak, Michael Meeks, Brian Salvatore, Carl Smolinski, Kay Stebbens Slattery, Lynn Walford.

Absent: Kyle Pierce, Cheryl White.

Approval of Minutes of the February 17 Faculty Senate Meeting

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

President's Report

President Meeks gave the following report of his activities since the last senate meeting:

- On February 20 he attended Chancellor Clark's Long-range Planning Council meeting.
- He attended and participated in the Junior Achievement JA Spark workshop.
- He met with Staff Senate President Scott Hardwick to discuss ways in which the faculty and staff can forge better relations.
- He met with LSUHSC Faculty Senate President Michele Arnold to discuss ways in which our faculty senates might collaborate.
- He met with SUSLA Faculty Senate President Sonya Hester to discuss how we might better relations between our two universities.
- He met with Provost Vassar to discuss a long list of Faculty Senate issues.
- He met with Chancellor Clark to discuss a long list of faculty issues, including faculty compensation.
- He met with Senator Hsieh to discuss and work on revisions to the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws.
- On March 8 he held the Faculty Senate Executive Committee meeting.
- He was asked by Chancellor Clark to appoint a faculty member to his 50th Anniversary Committee. Senator Cheryl White has accepted the position.
- He was asked by Chancellor Clark to appoint a faculty member to his LSUS Advancement Council. Dr. Harvey Rubin has accepted the position.

- He met with Director of the Student Success Center Correy Hammond to discuss the status of the SSC.

Administrators' Reports

Chancellor/Academic Affairs

In the absence of Chancellor Clark, Provost John Vassar combined the reports:

- He reported that Governor Edwards has announced a budget cut of 2.5%, with TOPS to be funded at 70%.
- He said that we are working with LSU colleagues to examine bids and subcontractors for the Student Success Center, and hope to break ground in approximately thirty days.
- He met with the Graduate Council and gave them recommendations for starting a formal Graduate School.
- He reported that this semester class evaluations will include online and face-to-face classes. The latter will use scantron, and be similar to the evaluations used in the past.
- He said that in order to allow faculty time to grade large online classes, end-of-term grades for the spring semester will be due at 10:00 AM on the Tuesday following the last day of final exams. He added that the disadvantage is that the change means that there will be only one day to process grades, and said that in the future we might have to adjust graduation dates.

During discussion there were questions about the summer sessions of different lengths. Provost Vassar said that he is willing to consider having one seven-week term, which is what LSUA&M has.

In response to a question from Senator Walford at the previous senate meeting, Dean Menon reported that The Language Company (TLC), which has been on campus for more than a year, is suspending services at its centers around the country because of dropping enrollment. It will close here on March 24, after allowing one student to complete the course of ESL instruction. Through collaboration with TLC we will have gained five new international students. He said that Director of International Student Services Penny Lyons was not affiliated with TLC, and added that she has left LSUS and been replaced by Peter Situmeang. President Meeks asked what we spent to contract TLC, and senator Lengvarsky asked for the details of the contract.

Senator Burden commented that the faculty had very short notice about the new 3½-week terms, leaving little time to make necessary adjustments to syllabi and course organization. Provost Vassar agreed that he had not sent out the information in a timely manner, and that it should have been made available earlier.

Senator Salvatore commented on a Memorandum of Understanding between LSUS and Bickham Dickson Park that allows students to use the facility, and asked if the MOU included the city and the larger community. Provost Vassar replied that the city is working in collaboration with a nonprofit wildlife organization, and that LSUS is embedded in their agreement.

Business Affairs

In the absence of Vice Chancellor Cannon, Chief Information Officer Shelby Keith gave the following report:

- He thanked everyone for completing the Workday survey, and said that many of the concerns raised, primarily regarding requisitions, have been addressed since the survey went out. He said that the remaining major concerns are:
 - There is a need for intensive initial training for users, which will be handled by the Office of Business Affairs.
 - Individual faculty and staff members must be able to see their budgets; we are working with LSU to arrive at a solution.
- He reported that LSUS ID numbers can now be used to change the Workday password, and that there is usually a delay of one to two hours to reset the password. He encouraged those having to reset it to contact him or Scott Hardwick.
- He said that Beth Anderson has been named Director of Accounting Services.

During discussion, President Meeks asked if there had been any new information on the development of Workday for students. Mr. Keith replied that LSU will not begin consideration of adding it until they have had input from the other campuses, and that the other campuses will have the option of starting along with LSU or waiting until later. He predicted that we will not have the student system in place for three to five years.

Development

There was no report.

Old Business

Student Conduct Board

At the last senate meeting a proposal was made to follow the other LSU campuses in changing the name of the Student Conduct Board to the University Hearing Panel, to allow Title IX cases to be handled only by people trained in Title IX, and to have no staff members on the panel. A motion to approve (Hsieh/Ingold) passed with a vote of thirteen for, one against.

LSUS Surge

Senator Krug said that according to the responses to his query, the primary interest of the faculty is to make improvements to the Admissions office. He also said that he has met with Senator Mackowiak to discuss recruiting and retention efforts, and ways to create a greater presence in the community. He will follow up these issues at the next meeting.

New Business

Term limits

Senator Smolinski suggested that the proposal to call for equal term limits for members of all Faculty Senate committees provide for exceptions in case some committees cannot otherwise be filled. The proposal will be voted on at the next meeting.

Faculty census

President Meeks reported that under the newly completed faculty census, which allows for one senate seat for every nine faculty members in each school, Mathematics and Sciences will lose one seat, and Humanities and Social Sciences will lose one seat. Senator Smolinski observed that if the Constitution were rewritten to call for one senate seat for each eight faculty members, there would be no change in the total number. Senator and Parliamentarian Burden commented that because of several ongoing faculty searches, the faculty is in flux, and suggested that any consideration of the census be postponed and revisited in one or two years, when faculty numbers have stabilized. There were no objections, so the senate decided to include the item on the agenda under Old Business at the next meeting.

Review of Constitution and Bylaws

President Meeks reported that the Policy and Personnel Committee is still working on the changes, but will not be able to complete them until the beginning of the fall semester.

Nomination of officers

Senator and Parliamentarian Burden said that the nominations made today will be valid but not closed, and will remain open until each college has completed their elections for senators. She added that at the next senate meeting nominations will be open from the floor. The Following nominations were made:

President: Tom Du Bose, Jason Mackowiak

Vice president: Carl Smolinski

Secretary:

Parliamentarian: Beverly Burden, Chengho Hsieh

At-large (two to be elected): Zsolt Lengvarszky, Jason Mackowiak, Kevin Krug

Observations and Concerns

Lack of faculty involvement in major policy decisions

Senator Walford made available a handout with concerns she had received via email regarding our relationship with Academic Partnerships (AP). Provost Vassar said that the discussion had been prompted by the proposal to add four online undergraduate degrees: Management, Marketing, Mass Communications, and General Studies. He said he has heard concerns from faculty members he admires, and that he has shared those concerns with the Faculty Council, the College of Arts and Sciences, the chairs of Arts and Sciences, and the General Studies Committee. He stressed that he does not want LSUS to become an online university. He said that his overriding goal is to recruit more students, to have an impact on the region, to have the opportunity to serve students outside our

area, and to increase revenue in order to improve all programs. He added that the idea that we are in financial straits is not the impetus at all. He said that he has never had a program go online without the endorsement of the faculty, and that of the undergraduate programs, all have agreed so far except the General Studies committee, which he hopes will reach a decision this week. He said that General Studies students are a good fit for online instruction: many are nontraditional students who for various reasons have not been able to complete college and are looking for the means to do so. He added that LSU-Alexandria has an online General Studies degree, and that there is concern that unless we add the degree they will take some of our potential students. He also commented that General Studies is not a primary interest of AP, and that they would rather focus on professional degrees at the undergraduate level.

During discussion President Meeks quoted SUSLA Faculty Senate President Sonya Hester: “If we don’t have a seat at the table, we might find ourselves on the menu.” Provost Vassar said the challenge of adding online undergraduate degrees is that they must include General Education courses. He said he should have met with the Mass Communications faculty and the General Studies committee earlier, and apologized for the lack of communication. Senator Salvatore commented that a recent report on KTBS was disheartening in that it appears that the community wants us to recruit undergraduates, but does not mention online courses. He said that many high school students do not consider coming to LSUS because we make little effort to recruit students, and added that online courses will do nothing to make us appeal to face-to-face students. Provost Vassar said that he wants us to be a campus where his own children want to go, and stressed that he hopes to reinvest revenue from online courses into campus programs. He gave as an example the fact that revenue from online courses has enabled us to conduct searches for ten new faculty members—something we have not been able to do for years. He gave as another example the fact that by adding athletic and student activity fees to online tuition, we have been able to bring soccer back to campus. Senator Salvatore said that we should pressure State Representative Cedric Glover to lobby for us and raise funds. Provost Vassar said that the Caddo Parish Commission, under the leadership of President Steven Jackson (an LSUS alumnus), has put together a task force to study the needs of higher education in this area. Senator Hsieh commented that we have a method that works well to raise revenue, but that we must think of other ideas and use them as well. Senator Burden suggested that faculty be compensated for developing new online courses. English Department Chair Terry Harris asked if every school and department has the infrastructure to support online classes, and President Meeks asked if we have sufficient bandwidth to support a large number of online classes. Chief Information Officer Shelby Keith replied that we have one gigabyte, and Provost Vassar agreed that we need more technical resources and more IT support. Dr. Mary Lois White commented that not all online courses require the same technical resources, and that courses can be adapted to different technological levels.

Further discussion centered specifically on Academic Partnerships. Senator Walford asked if we had done our homework on AP before signing the contract. Provost Vassar said we entered into the first contract five years ago, and that it ended this year. He said that after considering several other companies we renewed the contract for another five years, and added that we have had none of the negative experiences with AP that other campuses have had. He cited as positive experiences the willingness of AP to accommodate students who were unable to complete online work during the flooding in the Baton Rouge area, and the fact that for the past two years AP has underwritten receptions for graduating online students. He said that last semester over two hundred students and their families came from all over the country, and were happy to be on campus for the first time. Senator Du Bose said that his biggest worry is that he has heard that AP alters syllabi and course content on occasion, and Provost Vassar said that maintaining control over course content should always be a foremost faculty concern. Senator Du Bose added that what he has enjoyed most about

teaching at LSUS is the academic freedom, since his personality is an integral part of his classes. Dean Miller said that AP does not involve itself with academic issues. They will help with texts and materials at faculty members' requests, and will also help with content if asked to do so, but they are primarily an advertising and recruitment firm. Senator Salvatore commented that corporate culture often includes a lack of integrity, and that people tend to accept it if the company is successful. He asked if it is ethical for AP to collect 50% of our tuition, and said that if they do so they should invest more heavily in the campus. He asked how AP compares with other similar companies, and Provost Vassar replied that we chose AP because of their track record with public institutions, their length of service, and the cost of their services. President Meeks commented that 50% of our tuition seems outrageous, but we don't have the resources to do what AP does. Dean Miller said that they only represent colleges with high accreditation, and that if we lose ours they won't want to work with us. Dr. Harris said that some objections come from the idea of "one size fits all," since some courses do not fit the online format. Senator Hsieh asked why we don't try, and said that those who haven't tried should do so. Senator Walford asked Dean Miller to address the differences in the MBA program pre- and post-AP (*see attachment*). Dean Miller said that the perceived changes were actually clarification of the standards that appear in the catalog. She said current students are of higher quality now, and that qualifications are considered individually. She added that nothing has really changed except the process of appeal, which has been tightened up. Provost Vassar commented that the School of Business compared their requirements to those of other institutions, while the requirements for undergraduate programs are mandated by the state. Senator Burden suggested that we end discussion and move the topic to New Business for the April meeting. There were no objections.

Provost Vassar announced that the new Director of Admissions, Mary Catherine Harvison, will start Monday.

President Meeks announced that there is currently an initiative underway toward library unification vis-à-vis serial and database offerings (databases of online journals, etc.) which we hope will lead to providing LSUS with access to LSUA&M resources.

Senator Burden introduced the new grant writer, Amanda Lewis, who said she welcomes the opportunity to work with faculty.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 PM.

The next Faculty Senate meeting will be on Wednesday, April 5, at 3:00 PM in the Webster Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Walford
Secretary

Attachment