

Louisiana State University in Shreveport
Faculty Senate Correspondence

Minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting held April 5, 2011 in the Webster Room of the University Center.

The meeting was called to order at 3:06 p.m. by **Faculty Senate President Mary Jarzabek**.

Present: Mary Jarzabek, Carl Smolinski, Rhonda Failey, Larry Garrison, Lonnie McCray, Raymond Taylor, Chris Hale, Marjan Trutschl, Matyas Buzgo

Absent: Harvey Rubin, Julie Bergeron, Elahe Mahdavian, LaWanda Blakeney, Emre Celebi, Robert Miciotto

Approval of the minutes for the March 9, 2011, meeting as corrected.

President's Report: **Faculty Senate President Jarzabek** reported that work is progressing on looking at a 4-day academic week. Department chairs have not been polled but will be after the student poll is finished. The student poll will go out next week and will have 7 or 8 questions. Results of the student poll will determine if we continue on with the faculty poll. President Jarzabek stated that an informational meeting was held on March 30th with the faculty council to discuss the two proposed amendments to the constitution. The minutes from the March 30th meeting were mailed to the faculty but no responses have been received. She encouraged all senators to get in touch with their colleagues and make sure they vote on the amendments at the spring faculty council meeting. President Jarzabek suggested that the title of vice-president may need to be changed to president-elect, but that this could be taken up by the senate next year. Due to the vote on the constitutional amendments, elections for new faculty senators have been put on hold until after the April 13th meeting of the faculty council. Our revised constitution states that there will be 1 representative on the faculty senate for every 9 faculty members in a school. We now have 5 schools instead of 4 colleges. President Jarzabek reported that two SGA resolutions were passed, one concerning parking for students and the other addressing the separation of athletic fees and tuition. President Jarzabek urged the senate to avoid becoming apathetic about the current budget crisis. The promises of protection for higher education likely rely on legislation which will not be passed by the legislature. She stated that it appears our supervisors do not have our best interests at heart and that it is business as usual. She encouraged all to stay energized in our fight to keep our programs, and to continue to contact our governor, legislators, and community leaders about the budget cuts.

Administrators' Reports:

Provost Paul Sisson: Provost Sisson stated that the governor's budget is unrealistic. The governor is running for reelection and attempting to gain favor. Provost Sisson stated that the SACS fifth-year report has been written and compiled by Julie Lessiter. The report was sent in before the deadline. We will likely have a response to the report in June or July. He announced that the first GRAD Act report has been completed. He had to address 52 criteria and is waiting on a report back from the Board of Regents. He said that the response to the low-completer programs was 104 pages long, and that it contained letters of support and was well-thought out. Even so, the Board of Regents did not approve it and now more programs are on the chopping block. Provost Sisson stated that their recommendations will cripple us and cause a downward spiral and that all our projections for the next six years for the GRAD Act will be out the window. He reported that representative Sherry Cheek promises to fight for us and is incensed by these actions. We must respond to the rejection by April 11th, although it is likely the board will ignore the new report as well.

Julie Lessiter: Ms. Lessiter reported on the accreditation process. She stated that areas for improvement have been identified. These areas include an assessment of learning objectives and the need for mission statements for all our programs. A written report is available in writing on the LSUS webpage.

Vice Chancellor Mike Ferrell: Mr. Ferrell reported that health insurance coverage will transition from a fiscal year to the calendar year. Insurance rates may go up again in October, and reminded us that this is an unfunded mandate. Mr. Ferrell announced that in the future we may be using the end of semester enrollment count instead of the 14-day count. This will take a two-thirds vote from the legislature to pass.

There were no other Administrators' reports.

Old Business:

President Jarzabek reminded everyone of the two constitutional amendments on the ballot on April 13th and asked that all attend the special meeting and cast their vote. She reported that we are continuing to study the possibility of a 4-day academic week in the fall and spring semesters. There are many areas of concern which need further investigation. Department chairs need to be included in this ongoing discussion and we must accommodate student needs.

New Business:

Senator Blakeney expressed concerns about the online student evaluations. She stated that previously the administrators received the numeric data, while the student comments went only to faculty. She is worried that the comments of disgruntled students might give administrators the wrong impression. **Shelby Keith** and **Julie Lessiter** replied that Chairs and Deans get the numeric data only, and that faculty cannot be forced to forward student comments to a tenure review committee or anyone else. The Deans and Chairs cannot demand to see these comments. It was reported that the next student survey will be on MyLSUS instead of Moodle, from April 25th-May 6th. It was noted that the survey was supposed to run after the drop date but before final grades were posted, and **Senator Matyas** remarked that this is too late, that students already know their grades at this point. He stated that this survey should run the week after the drop date. He suggested that for future semesters we make the recommendation directly to the Provost. A motion was made and passed that the student evaluations will start the week following the last day to drop with a W and will run for two academic weeks when classes are in session. It was stated that we need to educate faculty to let them know that they are not required to share the student comments with anyone. It was suggested that an amendment be made to the faculty handbook reflecting this policy.

President Jarzabek stated that she and **Senator Matyas** will investigate whether this policy is already in the handbook and if it is not they will propose a resolution to include it.

President Jarzabek stated that the FPR appears to be diverse across campus. She said that she understands that different disciplines need different examination processes, but there seems to be some inequity in the way contributions are valued in different areas. She noted that writing a novel counts in the FPR, while directing a play or contributing in an area such as graphic arts do not. She stated that these acts are our gift to the university and that numerical points should be assigned to creative work of this kind. She suggested that we talk about this with our colleagues. **President Jarzabek** questioned what steps can be taken when a department, school, or college does not follow the evaluation guidelines fairly. **Senator Taylor** responded that there is a grievance policy in the faculty handbook.

Observations and Concerns:

President Jarzabek announced that she is going to Alexandria to ALFS (Association of Louisiana Faculty Senate members) on April 16th. She urged all who can to join her in creating a common voice. President Jarzabek announced that the SGA resolution will be considered under Old Business in the May meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:33.