

Faculty Senate Meeting
Wednesday, Mar 20, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 PM in the Webster Room of the University Center.

Faculty Senate Members Present: Amy Erickson, Mary Jarzabek, Carl Smolinski, Raymond Taylor, Trey Gibson, Kevin Krug, Harvey Rubin, Robert Leitz, LaWanda Blakeney, Mary Hawkins, Marjan Trutschl, Larry Garrison, Emre Celebi

Faculty Senate Members Absent: Chris Hale, Matyas Buzgo

A motion was made by **Senator Leitz** to approve the minutes of the Feb 19, 2013, meeting. This was seconded by Senator Harvey. The minutes were unanimously approved. **Senator Blakeney** inquired whether it was correct that as of Fall 2014 the entire campus would be switched an 8-week term system. She received an affirmative response.

President Jarzabek first stated that we need legislative and community support. She announced that the Executive Cmte. set up a meeting with area legislators to request support. She stated that attendance of two was confirmed and that Ray Lasseigne from the LSU Board of Supervisors (BoS) also would be attending. The meeting is set for Monday, March 25, 2013 at 8:30 AM. She said that the Exec Cmte. would report back to the Senate. She said this may be the first step where LSUS comes together as a community and presents a campaign for better involvement and representation in the community and community support. She followed by addressing the heartbreaking defeat of the LSUS Basketball team in the NAIA National Championship. She stated that there can be nothing but congratulations from the LSU family and pride in their composure and performance. Senator Leitz suggested that we also acknowledge the Chelsea Anthony who won the debate tournament. **Senator Gibson** mentioned that she is a senior Psychology major who will be with us next year. He also stated that we had the second place novice of over 300 novices who lost by one point. We also placed 2nd and 3rd place in the professional division, and we are the season ranking national champions for the 5th year in a row.

Administrators' Reports:

Chancellor – Dr. Paul Sisson offered congratulations to the men's and women's basketball teams, both making it to conference play (the men's getting to final four). He also offered congrats to the debate team, who he will join this Sunday at their tournament. Dr. Sisson announced that he just heard that the BFA in Digital Media was approved by the Board of Regents (BoR). He stated that the Ed.D., which **Senator Garrison** has been working on, is still being discussed.

Next, Dr. Sisson addressed the BoS meeting he attended two days ago. He stated that budget was a big part of the conversation. The Governor's proposed budget was announced for the upcoming fiscal year. But because the legislative session hasn't started, he cautioned he was speaking in generalities and that the numbers would likely change during the session. He stated that some of the numbers concern him greatly and he would be addressing this at the upcoming meeting with area legislators. Dr. Sisson stated that according the Governor's proposed budget, our total state appropriation is \$9.5 million. He stated that we lost \$250,000 in December and that he is unsure of where we will end up in June. He said that state funding right now for the coming year is a \$7.5-8, which is a big cut of ~\$1 to 1.5 million. Dr. Sisson stated that he is assuming we will compensate for the loss by raising self-generated funds by \$2 million, which will largely be based on increased tuition and fees. Dr. Sisson then emphasized that if we do not increase enrollment we cannot survive. He continued by stating that another concern is the fact that according to the Governor's budget, \$5.5 million of our budget will be statutory dedications, which is a risky source of funds that may or may not materialize and which depend on the sale of public buildings, etc, versus secure state appropriations. We may not even find out if those funds are

available until the end of the 2013-2014 fiscal year, leading to potentially massive cuts at the end of the year which would be harder to cover. This shift to statutory dedications is not happening just at LSUS but it is happening across campuses within the state. He summed up by saying that he wants secure state funding versus funds that may or may not materialize.

Lastly, he mentioned that the LSU Presidential Search Committee named a candidate Monday for President of the LSU system which is F. King Alexander. He stated that he is optimistic about the candidate. He said that there were three faculty members from the LSU System on the committee and that two of them, which are well established faculty from LSU-BR and are difficult to impress, had complimentary things to say at the meeting. The third faculty member from LSUHSC was called away on emergency and was not present at the meeting. The two faculty members said they were impressed based both on paper qualifications (he was one of six on the shortlist) and personal meetings. Dr. Sisson stated that he knows one of the faculty members very well. He said Dr. Tom Klei is a faculty member in the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine, he has been a dean, and he is currently Acting or Interim VC for Research and Economic Development. He ended by saying that Dr. Klei's opinion made a big impact on him. Senator Leitz inquired whether their opinion was based upon facts before or after it was announced that the LSU-BR Faculty Senate passed a vote of no confidence in the LSU BoS regarding the way the selection process of the President was carried out, and related to budgeting and reorganization of the system. Dr. Sisson said faculty member opinions were obtained Monday prior to the vote of no confidence being announced. Dr. Sisson said that he thinks the letter will not change faculty members' opinions. He cited that one comment associated with the vote of no confidence was from someone who does not know and has never worked with Alexander but he also stated that someone who has worked with Alexander had nothing but praise. It was suggested by a senator that verbal praise may not accurately reflect the competence of a candidate as has been seen in previous situations. Dr. Leitz asked Dr. Sisson what he thought of the selection process. He responded by saying the process was not conducted entirely the way he would have liked and he may have done it a bit differently. He said that the reason it was conducted behind closed doors was that if it was openly conducted, they may not have gotten certain types of candidates. In sum, he thinks it could have been improved upon.

Senator Gibson suggested that rather than emphasizing that we need to increase enrollment, we emphasize that we need to increase revenue, especially with the \$2 million deficit we face at the start of next year. Dr. Sisson agreed with Senator Gibson. Dr. Sisson explained there are four main sources of revenue for a school like LSUS: tuition and fees, endowment, state appropriations, and research dollars. For us, state appropriations are decreasing, the endowment is ok but not enough to sustain us, and while we bring in and are proud of our research dollars, the funds also are not big enough to sustain us. Thus, we are far and away dependent on tuition and fees. He stated that if we can grow one of the other categories, the effect is the same. In sum, we need more revenue and the obvious way to do this is to increase enrollment but the other ways are just as good. Senator Sisson mentioned the importance of the 8-week plan that will allow us to bypass the legislative condition where students are not charged for tuition beyond 12 hours. Dr. Sisson acknowledged that this aspect of the eight-week term is appealing and the eight-week term also will make time to completion shorter and hopefully attract more students that are going elsewhere.

Senator Gibson asked whether we can absorb a \$2 million cut. Dr. Sisson said no but that some of the cut will be made up with increased tuition and fees if enrollment stays stable. He announced that he feels comfortable that we will pass the Grad Act for a third year and thus will be given the authority to raise tuition and fees by 10%. Given that, he said the revenue from this category will only increase by \$2 million if we have optimum circumstances, where not only tuition and fees increase but enrollment also increases. We do not know what the increase in tuition and fees will be yet for the next year. In addition, we may not know the outcome of statutory dedications until the end of the fiscal year, at which time funds will have been spent and we may be told we have to give back our share of the unrealized funds. Finally, Dr. Taylor suggested that he does not think this is the appropriate forum to make comments about previous administrators; he cautioned senators to be considerate. President Jarzabek agreed.

Academic Affairs – Provost John S. Vassar could not attend as he was in Baton Rouge for a BoR meeting. He did ask President Jarzabek to announce he is still open to receiving ideas about the proposed eight-week term. She also stated that he some comments concerning the transition which she would announce later in the meeting.

Business Affairs – Mr. Michael Ferrell, CFO, stated that he agreed with previous statements made about the LSUS Pilots. Concerning the budget, he announced that currently we receive 28% of our budget from the state while 72% is self-generated (mostly from students). He said that every four-year institution will have less money than at the start of this year, with the exception of LSU-BR. Two-year institutions will have more money. Over the last four years, statutory dedications have not materialized causing losses of anywhere between \$29,000-\$60,000/\$70,000 per year, which we found out about at the end of the fiscal year.

Student Affairs – Vice Chancellor Dr. Randy Butterbaugh, announced that Ms. Gina Starnes, Director of Career Services, retired. He also announced that the Career Services and Counseling Center will be reorganized as the Student Development Center, which will house: Career Services, Counseling, Disabilities Services, and Learning Support. They will be eliminating the Director position and picking up an Assistant Director of Student Development that will assist with Career Services and Operations. He also announced that Ms. Kim Thornton, who was Director of Student Activities, is now Director of Admissions. The positions of Director of Student Activities and Director of Recreational Sports have been combined, and the position is now led by Ms. Angel Martin. He said that they are creating efficiencies but not at the expense of effectiveness.

LSUS Development – President Jarzabek thanked the Foundation for supplying breakfast for the upcoming meeting with legislators. **Ms. Laura Perdue, Executive Director, LSUS Foundation** stated that the Foundation is here to support university efforts and that the Foundation is committed to increasing awareness about our campus. She suggested that the email sent by Dr. Dave Gustavson, which praised our basketball team, was an excellent example of creating awareness. To that end, she stated in April, the Foundation in collaboration with Student Affairs, will kick off the Scholarship Blitz which is a luncheon on April 10th that brings together scholarship donors and recipients and allows us to show off our campus. Prior to that there will be a thank you ad in the newspaper thanking donors. On May 1, there also will be another luncheon bringing 14 new potential donors to campus. She said that these events represent the Foundation's effort to show the community the great job LSUS is doing and that we are needed in this area but at the same time, we need community support.

Old Business

- a. Faculty Senate Election By-laws – President Jarzabek** stated that the by-laws revision related to election procedures made it to the constitution. It was amended on April 30, 2012 at a Faculty Council meeting.
- b. Eight-week Plan Survey – Senator Krug** offered information based on his research regarding implementation and effectiveness of the eight-week plan system (see attached report). First, he mentioned that Colorado College adopted the system in celebration of their centennial vs. as a means of increasing enrollment. He then cited University of Wisconsin OshKosh, stating that they switched to eight-week terms in the 1970s but proceeded to have enrollment issues in the 1990s. He stated that transition from a 16 to an eight week term at most colleges was based on faculty voting to approve such a change. He also offered that if faculty were supportive of such a change then students tended to be influenced positively by their opinion of the change. Senator Krug expressed concern that such a shift could place additional stress on our students. He said that since students have different aptitude levels, such a change could cause us to lose students. Senator Krug suggested administering a student survey to get student opinion on the topic and possibly link it to registration. He also brought up the possibility of partnerships with local institutions and companies, such as Barksdale AFB and Chesapeake, respectively. Senator Krug said that implementation plans for such a switch have been published and that we should pay

attention to these plans. In sum, he said that the results of switching to eight-week terms were a mixed bag.

Senator Gibson cleared up some confusion regarding the proposed eight-week term and the quarter system, which is nine weeks long. **Senator Hawkins** mentioned that she was in contact with a group in Galveston who use this system online for graduate students. She said that the reason they adopted the system was because students requested it. She is curious how the program is doing. **Dr. John Miralles** suggested that faculty be surveyed as well. Senator Hawkins motioned to do both student and faculty surveys, and this was seconded by Senator Garrison. President Jarzabek suggested using SurveyMonkey. **Dr. Dave Gustavson** suggested that we need to provide appropriate information regarding the survey. He suggested using focus groups. He stated that it is important that students are aware of what they are voting on. **Ms. Julie Lessiter** thanked Senator Krug for creating a survey. She cautioned that on the mandatory advising survey, students have bulleted in the first answer to complete it quickly. She also cautioned against making it mandatory during registration. Senator Gibson announced he has issues with the survey. He said that we would be surveying individuals who are uninformed. He suggested that several of the questions were biased. For instance, he said one of the questions implies the quality of education will be lowered. He said administering a survey implies that students have knowledge of the outcome of such a change. He added that only two questions were posed in a positive light and that the survey does not point out major benefits.

Senator Gibson reiterated the issue of increasing revenue and passed out a spreadsheet that documents the revenue we would generate by being able to charge students for registering for more than 12 credit hours. For this semester alone, charging students per credit hour vs. only for the first 12 would have brought in an additional \$750,000. He also cited the fact that combined revenue of Faculty Senate members is over \$1 million. Given a potential cut of \$2 million, we need to consider added revenue over inconvenience of switching to a new system. He added we have already engaged in or attempted to engage in partnerships. He followed by saying that Commissioner of Higher Education Purcell is in favor of the switch. **Senator Erickson** thanked Senator Gibson for providing information on how much revenue we stand to gain by switching. She then countered that the questions are not biased and that it is important to conduct the survey so that we can determine whether students are apprehensive about such a switch and so we can anticipate additional assistance they may need. She then asked whether the legislature will be able to challenge such a change. Senator Hawkins concurred that the survey is not biased and thanked Senator Krug for his efforts. She said that her department is divided. She said we need to find a way to meet in the middle. She thinks we are making the change too quickly and questions whether there is a cost of doing so. She said she is concerned we will lose students, and thus, we should do student and faculty surveys. Senator Blakeney added that we request the comment box be used in the survey. President Jarzabek suggested Senator Krug work with Dr. Helen Wise to get the survey administered over SurveyMonkey given her experience. She may be able to help with rewording of questions so they are not biased. Senator Gibson countered Senator Hawkins' statement by saying that administrators do not have a 'we must do it now' mentality. He stated that over the next year, it will be tried and implemented in Fall 2014. Concerning the survey, he would suggest a simple survey with open-ended questions and a comment box per Senator Blakeney's suggestion. President Jarzabek said she thinks the survey is too long in its current form and that Dr. Wise would likely recommend only ten questions, to which Senator Krug replied there are only ten questions in its current form. Senator Krug stressed the importance of the survey being quantitative so we can identify statistical trends so generalizations can be made about student body opinion as a whole. Senator Gibson suggested a transition committee could just look at the responses and try to address them. He continued to say that he is not concerned about statistical trends, he doesn't think people will understand them, he is not an academic but a communications person who understand politics, and that our

legislature is not concerned about higher education. He cited a mailer from an area legislator who wanted to know his thoughts on legislative issues. This mailer did not even mention education at any level. He also mentioned that only a few legislators have committed to coming to the upcoming meeting with our Executive Cmte and Dr. Sisson. Senator Gibson suggested that we must do something and not just talk about ideas, especially given the impending \$2 million cut. He commended Senator Buzgo for offering ideas of what we should do even if told no. He said that we already have explored partnerships with Chesapeake, and we still should, but that we are not going to raise enough funds to cover the cut by working with them. He said that these monetary problems will continue into the future. He said he currently does not have faith in the legislature concerning higher education because he believes the legislature is uninformed on this topic. So, he thinks we need to do something radical to save our school. He suggested everyone push forward and get together to make this switch work. He said that is why he advocates an open-ended survey which will produce information about how we can make this plan work. Senator Gibson then departed for a debate event.

Senator Hawkins suggested that next semester is 'immediately' and she wants to see research that has been on this topic. President Jarzabek said she would like digital copies of research from Senator Krug so we can familiarize ourselves with what has been done on this topic. Ms. Lessiter added that we would be running a freshman cohort using this model as a focus group for some general education classes. This will be for students new to the school and it will be limited in size. If students do not sign up for this cohort, it sends us a strong message they are not interested in this group. Senator Hawkins is concerned open-ended questions will not give us what we need. She referenced the lack of open-ended questions being answered on the SIRII. She suggested she does not understand why Senator Gibson thinks students will comment if he already thinks they are uninformed. She thinks it will be important to guide students in a survey rather than given open-ended questions which will not help to inform them. President Jarzabek asked Senator Hawkins if the last survey that was created had seven questions. Senator Hawkins could not recall the number but said it should not be more than a page long. **Senator Celebi** added that surveys can be problematic and students may rush through it if associated with registration. He suggested allocating a portion of a class to do it.

President Jarzabek mentioned that we modify the motion that after certain adjustments have been made to the survey, we present it to the student body. Senator Krug suggested everyone email him with issues or suggestions and he would send the amended survey back. Senator Krug said to send him info over the next week and he would send it back by the second week. President Jarzabek said we could have an online vote and present the survey to Student Affairs and recommend they present it to the students. Mr. Shelby Keith recommended that we not tie this to registration, nor have a new survey presented via Moodle before April 15. President Jarzabek then said she would rather see the survey administered in the classroom.

Senator Erickson inquired to Dr. Sisson when students will officially be informed of the change to an eight-week system. Dr. Sisson said that he will be talking to focus groups this semester. He responded to Senator Hawkins that we are not doing this too quickly in his estimation. He said we will gather data over the next year to determine what works and what does not. He said we will run the pilot program before an initial announcement is made. Senator Hawkins stated that faculty members feel their input has not been taken into consideration. She stated faculty members feel that LSUS is pushing forward with this idea no matter what, and that without being consulted, they are being forced into it. Dr. Sisson clarified that is not what he ever said in initial discussions. In his initial meetings with department chairs, he said he presented the idea and wanted to use this semester to discuss pros and cons of and concerns relating to the idea. He proposed running the pilot program over the next year. Dr. Sisson stated that this shift to an eight-week term is NOT a done deal. He alleviated concern by stating that if the pilot program

fails, we will NOT push forward with the idea. He then stated that we will NOT do something that fails.

In response to Senator Krug, Dr. Sisson stated that we have talked with a number of companies and that even those we have a good rapport with have told us that this has been a bad year and they cannot offer as much support as they have in the past. Senator Krug said that he is concerned when he sees LA Tech at Barksdale to which Dr. Sisson said there is a lot of history behind that. Senator Krug stated it would be beneficial to figure out if they are not offering something there that we can offer, and Dr. Sisson said we are constantly revisiting that. **Senator Garrison** stated in Education, faculty members have experience with shorter classes, and he said that it will be important to collect data and create professional development programs for our faculty because it will involve a transition in the way we teach. President Jarzabek said she would be hosting an informal focus/advisory group in her classes. President Sisson said he has met with some student focus groups and that he has been able to clear up some misinformation. The end result was the focus groups went well. He said that it is important to meet with focus groups prior to a survey so students know what they are responding to.

Senator Hawkins made the recommendation that Dr. Sisson clarify to the faculty the purpose of doing this project and that this is a trial vs. a definite change. She also suggested drafting a document for students to inform them of the proposed idea, how things will change, and benefits of doing so. We were informed that Dr. Vassar is working on a document for students. Dr. Sisson stated that Commissioner Purcell loved the idea of the shift to an eight-week term and especially the reduced time to completion. Dr. Sisson also wanted to be clear that this shift **MUST** be approved by the BoR, and he does not want the BoR to think that we have superceded its authority. One very appealing aspect of the plan, again, is that the shift may allow us to offer a degree in less time, with the potential goal of offering a three-year baccalaureate degree, which Dr. Sisson thinks is feasible. Senator Garrison added that \$10,000 baccalaureate degree proposals are being written. In addition, CCs are being authorized in FL to offer four-year degrees in limited areas such as Business. Senator Hawkins said in her experience students who come from a CC find it difficult to keep up and that courses here are faster paced. Dr. Sisson said he has experienced the opposite.

Dr. Miralles asked at what point we squeeze students out of the market. **Ms. Christianne Wojcik** stated that according to the Presidential Scorecard, we are less expensive than BPCC.

- c. **Eight-week Plan Transition Committees – President Jarzabek** stated that the Eight-week Term Committee will likely be a University Cmte vs. an ad-hoc Faculty Senate Cmte.
- d. **LSU 2015 Transition Advisory Team Sub-committee Reports – President Jarzabek** read a report offered by **Dr. Dalton Gossett** who is on the sub-committee for Research (please see the attached report). Next, she offered information from Dr. Vassar who serves on the Academic Sub-Committee. Dr. Vassar stated that the committee will try to determine a model so that one degree can be offered across all campuses. This will involve the evolution of the Commitment Plan. SACS is being consulted to avoid issues with accreditation. The second idea discussed was that students will be served by one department that reaches across all campuses. The third topic of discussion was faculty reviews. The consensus was that faculty reviews at LSU-BR will be focused on research while those at regional campuses will be focused on teaching. President Jarzabek suggested we need to level the playing field in terms of compensation. Next, Dr. Vassar mentioned that there would be both a loss and move of some staff members in IT, Accounting, and Human Resources. Finally, 2015 is a start date with completion in 2020. President Jarzabek said a lot of the discussion still only involves LSU-BR vs. all of the campuses. Senator Erickson suggested that all faculty members at LSUS respond to the survey sent via email by Ms. Brooke Rinaudo concerning the transition so that the Transition Advisory

Team who created the survey is aware of our concerns (www.ssasurveys.com/lsu2015) and will present them to the LSU BoS. Dr. Erickson inquired when courses will be available in myLSUS and Mr. Keith said they will be on March 22.

New Business

- a. **Retirement Plan Changes– Mr. Bill Wolfe, Director of HR**, spoke about new retirement legislation. He stated that currently, there are two options: 1) TRSL – defined benefit plan where both the state and employee make contributions, and benefits are based on years served and final salary, and 2) ORP – optional retirement plan where you have a choice of vendors in which you invest your funds. The new law creates a cash balance plan which will be the default plan, instead of TRSL which will no longer be available for higher education, where state contributions fall from 5.18% under TRSL to 1.8% under the new plan. New hires starting July 1, 2013 will be affected and expected to choose among the new plan and ORP. Legislation has been introduced to defer the start date of this new plan. This is a concern for new hires. He also reminded us of the annual ethics training we must complete and the safety newsletter which was published recently.

Observations and Concerns

- a. **Faculty IDs – Senator Trutschl** stated that we have funding for new IDs and that designs will be created and sent to Drs. Sisson and Butterbaugh for approval.
- b. **LSUS Spirit Day – President Jarzabek** reminded us of LSUS Spirit Day. If you wear the LSUS logo on the 1st or 3rd Wed day of the month, you get 10% off at the bookstore (on all items but textbooks) and at the Port. For faculty, this translates into a 20% discount as we already receive 10% off.
- c. **Advisory Curriculum Sheet – Senator Erickson, on behalf of Senator Buzgo**, announced the Advising Committee has devised a new online curriculum sheet that self-fills and is consistent with the current sheet that we use. Select programs can beta-test this new curriculum sheet this summer.
- d. **LSUS Soccer – Senator Erickson** inquired why we had to drop our soccer teams and what was done to avoid their loss. Dr. Sisson stated the program had a \$200,000-250,000 deficit and that he was not happy that the program had to be cancelled but unfortunately there was no other solution at this time. He commended those involved in having to make the tough decision to do so. To satisfy NAIA regulations, we added women's cross country which is less expensive. He said that he has been working with students to raise money to revive the program, that the program needs about \$70,000 to be revived, and that the program is also receiving assistance from faculty and staff. Dr. Butterbaugh said they have been working to come up with financial packages for students who have lost scholarships so the students can finish their degree here.

There was no further business. Senator Hawkins moved that the meeting be adjourned. This was seconded by Senator Smolinski. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Amy Erickson.