

LSUS Faculty Senate Meeting

April 14, 2016

President Tom Du Bose called the meeting to order at 3:02 PM.

Present: Beverly Burden, Tom Du Bose, Mary Hawkins, ChengHo Hsieh, Kevin Krug, Zsolt Lengvarszky, Michael Meeks, Kay Stebbins Slattery, Carl Smolinsky, Lynn Walford, Cheryl White.

Absent: Yong Hwang, Jim Ingold, Alexander Mikaberidze, Brian Salvatore.

Approval of Minutes of March 16 Faculty Senate Meeting

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

President's Report

President Tom Du Bose gave the following report on his activities over the past month:

- He received correspondence from senators and other faculty members on issues regarding calendars and scheduling, and how faculty can be more involved in these procedures and decisions.
- He received correspondence from senators and other faculty members on the issue of how best to resolve concerns once they have been brought up as agenda items at Faculty Senate meetings.
- He met with the Executive Committee to draw up the agenda of this meeting, which reflects these faculty concerns.
- He met with the Policy and Personnel Committee at their last scheduled meeting of the semester on Wednesday, April 13.
- He met with the Planning Council on Friday, April 18.
- He met with Chancellor Clark and discussed with him budget concerns and his work in attending sessions of the Louisiana State Legislature in regard to higher education and funding. He also asked if BPC had given any indication that they were about to end their relationship with LSUS or if we had been blindsided. He was disappointed to learn that the latter was true, a situation that he compared to horror stories he has heard from students about getting dumped or broken up with via text messages.
- He received emails from faculty concerned about proposed junior level “readiness” courses and a proposed service learning “honors” program. He said that some faculty are concerned that there seems to be little faculty involvement in the planning and installation of these courses in our curriculum.
- He chatted with various faculty members about potential candidates for Faculty Senate officers for the coming academic year.

- Provost Vassar met with him this morning and discussed the reinstatement of a course download for the faculty senate president—a most welcome announcement. This afternoon he received a call from Chancellor Clark confirming this great news. He said that it is great news not only because it has an impact on him personally, but because it reasserts the importance of faculty leadership in the life of the university. He added that even in these grim days of fearful finances chairs and deans maintain release times, so why shouldn't the faculty senate president? During his meeting with the provost, he also alerted him to faculty concerns about academic involvement in the planning of the “readiness” courses.

Administrators' Reports

Chancellor

Chancellor Larry Clark gave the following report:

- He said that along with the faculty senate president's download, his/her department would receive funding to allow them to hire someone to cover the president's class.
- He said that he was surprised at the way BPCC chose to end their relationship with LSUS, and added that he had sent a note to BPCC Chancellor Rick Bateman, saying that he wished he had been advised sooner of the decision to withdraw, and that he looked forward to future collaboration. He reported that he is working on improving our relationship with SUSLA.
- He said that the revised budget from the Louisiana State Legislature indicated that there would be \$425,000 in permanent cuts to higher education, that TOPS would be funded at 80%, and that the permanent reduction for our campus for this academic year would be approximately \$50,000. He said that the Administration will make necessary adjustments so that academic programs would be protected and no classes would be canceled, and added that currently so many positions are open that some classes are not being taught. He commented that LSUA&M students do not share our students' concern over the availability of classes, since they know the university will remain afloat due to the importance of football. He said that the manager of University Court Apartments told him that renewal of leases for the fall is low, and that many students are unsure of what our situation will be by the start of the fall semester.
- He thanked faculty for their efforts in reassuring students that classes will continue in the fall, and asked that we continue to do so. He praised Vice Provost of Enrollment Management Julie Lessiter for her work with enrollment and retention, and said that the Administration is looking at ways to recruit international students and students from the military. He said that we now have a good relationship with Barksdale Air Force Base.
- He remarked that in many cases LSUS scholarships have not been administered wisely, and said that he has asked Coordinator for Community and Economic Development Jere Hatcher to work on improving the situation. He said that some students are unaware that they have scholarships, while others receive scholarships but don't enroll in the university. He said that the scholarship program needs more leverage to ensure that recipients commit to LSUS, and commented that because part of the problem with administration is a lack of staff another person will be hired to take on some of the responsibilities.

Academic Affairs

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

- He said that the search for Director of the Student Success Center has been completed, and Correll (Cory) Hammond has been hired. He has experience in both the public and private sector, and began his duties on April 11.
- He attended a meeting in Baton Rouge with LSUA&M Provost Rick Kubech and the chief academic officers from all the LSU campuses. Provost Kubech presented his plan to integrate the academic side of all the campuses, and said that his goal is to improve connections and communication among the institutions, and to align their program requests to the Board of Regents. Provost Kubech also said that he hopes that all the CAOs will attend the meetings of the Board of Regents. He discussed ways in which new programs on one campus can affect other campuses, and said he wanted to focus on the distinct and distinctive abilities of each campus. He also stated that he wants to expand LSUS from a regional to a statewide institution.
- He announced that letters of intent for the Ph.D. in Psychology and for several certificate programs are in process.
- He said that he recently met with representatives from SUSLA regarding collaborative programs. They indicated that they have experience in working with programs on other campuses, and think that collaboration with LSUS can work well.
- He reminded senators and faculty that the Pilot Palooza event will be held Friday, April 22, from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM.
- He said that he has met with several faculty members to plan a 1-credit course similar to the Freshman Seminar, which might be a possibility for the direction of the Honors Program. He added that the talks are just beginning, and said that he will share more information at a future senate meeting.

Business Affairs

Vice Chancellor for Business Affairs Mike Ferrell reported that the new pay schedule to be implemented after July 1 will be out soon. He said that he wants summer school pay and academic withheld pay to be handled from our campus, but that all other pay will be generated from Baton Rouge. The first checks for the fall semester will be on September 21, and will be monthly for faculty, biweekly for Civil Service employees, and weekly for student workers. He added that beginning next year, academic withheld pay will be generated from Baton Rouge, and that eventually financial aid will be handled through Baton Rouge as well.

During discussion, Senators White and Hawkins asked for more clarification, and Vice Chancellor Ferrell replied that the details are still being worked out, and that as soon as a payment schedule is in place it will be communicated so that Senators can discuss it at departmental meetings. He assured them that he is striving for simplicity.

Chancellor Clark suggested that senators not report to their departments until more information was available, and said that he hopes to have the information in the next two weeks, along with information regarding the TOPS schedule. He also said that the Governor's Office will not allow the requested 4% raise for staff and 2% for faculty, and that no merit raises will be allowed.

Development

There was no report.

Old Business

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

Senator Smolinsky, who serves on the committee, reported that he emailed the senators the documents the committee had generated at their last meeting, and asked that they review them so that they can be discussed at the next meeting, scheduled for August. He pointed out that a checklist has been added so that candidates will be informed after every stage of the promotion/tenure process in order to avoid problems of candidates not knowing until after the fact that they have been denied. He also pointed out that in addition to teaching, scholarship, and service, candidates will undergo a review of conduct and professional behavior.

During discussion, Senator Hsieh suggested that the documents be sent to the entire faculty for comments, and added that it is necessary to define terms carefully, since terms that are judgmental and subjective in nature can lead to abuse of the process. Senator Meeks commented that he is presently going through the process, and that he has concerns about its length. He said that now that the decisions are made on campus rather than through the Board of Supervisors, the process should be shorter, but that the added steps lengthen it again. Senator Hsieh said that the Policy and Personnel Committee's role should be limited to checking the procedure and is no position and has no basis to make the tenure/promotion decision. Senator Burden commented that there have been instances where the candidate had been approved at every level on campus but was denied by the Board of Supervisors, and said that this will no longer be the case. Provost Vassar commented that the extension of the tenure clock is a good addition that follows the AAUP and LSUA&M guidelines.

A motion (Burden/White) to formally thank the committee for their work was approved unanimously. President Du Bose said he will send the documents to the faculty and ask them for feedback. Provost Vassar said that he will review it with department chairs.

Note: The three documents are attached: (1) promotiontenurerequest; (2) promotiontenurepolicy; (3) promotiontenureclock.

Report from Calendar Committee on issues regarding scheduling

Provost Vassar reported that he communicated the senators' concerns to the committee, and was told that in the future they will communicate the dates in a more timely manner. Senator Smolinsky and President Du Bose reiterated the concern about the fact that at present only one faculty member serves on the committee, and said that since the calendar has a great impact on faculty, they should be better represented. He added that faculty should communicate their concerns to their representative, Mr. Allen Garcie, so that he can pass them on to the committee.

There was discussion over how many faculty representatives should be on the committee, and President Du Bose suggested that there should also be a representative from the SGA. Senator Hawkins asked how much of a voice LSUS has in designing the calendar, since we are required to align it with that of LSUA&M. Provost Vassar said that feedback from the different campuses is valuable. President Du Bose reminded senators to get input from faculty about their preferences for a 4-day or 5-day week during the summer session, and said that the issue will be on the agenda for the May senate meeting.

Vote on approval of proposal to create a formal Graduate School

President Du Bose mentioned two concerns that senators voiced at the March meeting: whether there will be costs associated with the creation of a Graduate School, and whether faculty and staff associated with the Graduate School will no longer work with undergraduate programs.

Dean of the Graduate School Sanjay Menon gave the following report:

- The proposal for a formal Graduate School was initiated by Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences Dalton Gossett out of concern that many candidates for the Master's Degree in Biology go elsewhere because we have insufficient staff and resources to bring them into our program.
- We are unable to recruit students from other undergraduate programs, since there is insufficient staff to prepare and distribute publicity and recruitment materials.
- In the past we had far more undergraduate students than graduates, but currently 41% of our students are graduates (1,811 out of 4,390). In the spring 2016 semester we enrolled 531 new graduate students.
- A formal Graduate School will not require additional faculty or staff, but will redirect resources we already have. People assigned to the Graduate School will report to Dean Menon, but will still work with undergraduates. The goal is to improve the focus and organization of the graduate programs.

During discussion Provost Vassar said that any funds needed for processing or administrative help will be for both graduate and undergraduate programs. Senator Hsieh asked why there is a need for a separate entity if faculty and staff will have the same duties they have now. Dean Menon said that currently there are 157 applicants for the MBA program, registration has begun, and there is no one to process the applications, and emphasized that a center of control is necessary in order to increase the efficiency of processing by providing structure. Senator Meeks asked why the Office of Admissions cannot handle all applications without separating them into graduate and undergraduate categories. Senator Hawkins commented that applicants often "fall through the cracks" unless they can be directed to a dedicated office, and added that graduate applications are different from undergraduate applications and should be handled differently. Provost Vassar pointed out that staff in the Office of Admissions are also recruiters for undergraduates, and do not have the time or resources to devote to graduate students. Senator Meeks commented that now that we have a program for international students we will have to concentrate on undergraduates who are in the process of completing ESL studies. Senator White expressed concern that recruitment efforts will be diminished if staff were reallocated. A motion to table the vote until the May meeting (Burden/Hawkins) passed unanimously.

New Business

Maintaining currency of information on campus website and social media page

A motion to table discussion until the May meeting (Hawkins/White) passed unanimously.

Process for following up on resolution of issues presented at previous senate meetings

A motion to table discussion until the May meeting (Hawkins/White) passed unanimously.

Nomination of senate officers

Vice President Burden said that the deans must call for senate elections before officers can be nominated, since several senators will be rotating off due to term limits. She added that we can accept nominations now, but not close them until all senators are elected.

The following nominations were made:

- President: Tom Du Bose, Michael Meeks
- Vice President: Carl Smolinsky
- Secretary: Lynn Walford
- Parliamentarian: Beverly Burden
- At Large: ChengHo Hsieh, Cheryl White

Observations and concerns

There were none.

A motion to adjourn (White/Burden) passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:35 PM.

The next Faculty Senate meeting will be Monday, May 9, 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.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Walford
Secretary