

## **LSUS Faculty Senate Meeting October 17, 2016**

President Michael Meeks called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM.

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

*Absent:* Tom Du Bose, Cheryl White.

### **Approval of Minutes of the September 7 Faculty Senate Meeting**

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

### **President's Report**

The report will be included at a later date.

### **Administrators' Reports**

#### Chancellor

Chancellor Larry Clark gave the following report:

- He attended the LSUS Foundation meeting.
- Enrollment is 4,678 prior to the beginning of term 2. It will be higher after registration numbers are in for that term. For the first time graduate enrollment is 42%, which means that we need strategies for retention of undergraduates.
- At the Planning Council, the Athletic Council presented a plan to reinstate soccer.
- He asked President F. King Alexander and the Board of Supervisors for authorization to offer scholarships to students in dire financial need. At present, nothing is in place for students who are about to lose TOPS.
- Sabbaticals have been approved, and the positions of faculty on sabbatical will be backfilled to cover all sections of their classes at no cost to the departments.

#### Academic Affairs

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

- The strategic planning process is in place, and an online questionnaire will be sent to faculty in the next week or so.

- The Student Success Center has proven to be a good way to identify students who are struggling. To date 190 students have made 600 appointments.
- The Board of Supervisors has approved waivers of out-of-state tuition for international students, and we are already hearing from applicants from the Japan College of Foreign Languages, and from Slovakia and China.
- The Chancellor has approved ten faculty positions for immediate searches, and has indicated that we need faculty who are multidisciplinary. The positions are:
  - Health Administration
  - Management
  - Marketing
  - Education (two positions: one chair, one faculty)
  - Foreign Language
  - Computer Science (two positions: one chair, one faculty)
  - Mass Communications
  - Physics

During discussion, Senator Lengvarsky asked if faculty could be provided with a list of courses for which tutoring is available in the Student Success Center. Associate Vice Chancellor Paula Atkins said that tutors for English, math, chemistry, and biology are available, but that beyond that no guidelines have been set. She added that interested professors can contact the center's director, Correy Hammond, for information on tutoring in various undergraduate and graduate disciplines. President Meeks reported that the Student Success Center in the library will break ground after the first of the year, and added that the Faculty Senate will invite Correy to report on its strengths and weaknesses.

Senator Salvatore asked for an example of multidisciplinary hires. Provost Vassar replied that Mass Communications, Marketing, and Graphic Design are areas that can be considered multidisciplinary. Director of Online Learning Kristie Weeks asked if there would be a focus on faculty with experience in online teaching, and Provost Vassar replied that it would be a consideration.

### Business Affairs

In the absence of Vice Chancellor for Business Affairs Mike Ferrell, Vice Chancellor and Chief Information Officer Shelby Keith reported that October is open enrollment month.

### Development

There was no report.

## **Old Business**

### Clarification of relationship between Graduate School and Graduate Council

President Meeks reported that at the May meeting the Faculty Senate approved the creation of a Formal Graduate School, and added that since then there have been some questions about whether it has proven to be more expensive than anticipated. He said that the issue is being revisited, and that he is collecting information. Dean Menon distributed a handout with the LSU Board of Supervisors' Bylaws and Regulations pertaining to Graduate Schools. A motion to table the issue (Hsieh/Smolinski) passed unanimously.

### Proposed changes to Freshman Seminars

President Meeks said that at the September meeting the Faculty Senate moved to ask departments to provide syllabi of the Freshman Seminars so they could be reviewed, and expressed surprise that faculty and department chairs resisted doing so, saying that the senate had no right to review them. Senator Hsieh asked the Chancellor if anyone had the right to request copies of syllabi. Chancellor Clark replied that at one of the first Faculty Senate meetings after he became Chancellor, during discussion of irregularities in dual enrollment, he asked the Faculty Senate to take ownership of the curricula. He said that the Faculty Senate and the Courses and Curricula Committee should have the same concerns regarding curricula, and Senator Smolinski added that the Courses and Curricula Committee is a Senate Committee, with members appointed and approved by the Faculty Senate. Senator Salvatore said that the misunderstanding is an honest one, and emphasized that the Faculty Senate wants to support the faculty. Senator Hsieh said that the concern is about whether over the years the Freshman Seminars have deviated from their original purpose, and that the syllabi were requested to verify if syllabi no longer reflect the description in the original Courses and Curricula documents. He pointed out that syllabi are a public good and that anyone can request copies of them. He then suggested that the senate request the syllabi and turn them over to the Courses and Curricula Committee for review, and asked the Provost to instruct department chairs to make the syllabi available to the senate. Provost Vassar suggested that the senate work through the department chairs, and ask them to evaluate the syllabi. Senator Mackowiak commented that the original request was handled poorly and made people feel attacked by the implication that they were not doing their job. He added that he originally voted no to the motion to request the syllabi, but that now he would vote differently, and said that the Courses and Curricula Committee should be responsible for reviewing the syllabi. President Meeks showed Courses and Curricula documents from 2009, when the Freshman Seminars were first implemented, said that over 50% of the curricula had been co-opted by the administration, and asked for suggestions on how to proceed. Senator Ingold asked if the Freshman Seminars had value compared to the old University 100 courses, which were an easy A. Senator Chikeleze, who is a Freshman Seminar instructor, said that instructors met with the Provost to review the content of the courses. He said the curricula had not been co-opted, but revised to include issues such as Title IX. He said that 55% of the course consists of material taught universally to ease the transition from high school to college, and that 45% of the material is academic, and geared to specific disciplines. President Meeks said he would talk individually to chairs to try to clear up the misunderstanding. A motion to table the issue (Burden/Smolinski) passed unanimously.

### Replacement of at-large member of Faculty Senate Executive Committee

At the September meeting, Senator Du Bose was elected to replace Senator Hsieh on the Executive Committee; however, it was then learned that three senators from the same school cannot serve together. Senator Krug was elected by acclamation to replace him.

### University Web Page challenges

The senate went into closed session with Chancellor Clark, Provost Vassar, Director of Online Learning Kristie Weeks, and Chief Information Officer Shelby Keith. President Meeks said that there continue to be many complaints about the outdated web page, that many promises have been made but nothing changes, and that faculty are becoming increasingly impatient, especially since the website is important for recruitment. He said that we are now told that a “landing page” for recruitment will be developed. Senator Ingold commented that in the past faculty manipulated their own home pages. President Meeks said that Director of Online Teaching Kristie Weeks and a web design coordinator will resolve the problems and educate faculty on keeping their own home pages current. Senator Mackowiak said that initially all changes to individual pages had to be approved by the Office of Public Relations in order to ensure conformity among them, and added that the major problems are with the main web page. Ms. Weeks said that potential freshmen need information different from that needed by other people, and added that the web design coordinator will help us determine what information is needed by which groups. Mr. Keith said that until 2009 the IT office managed the website. Provost Vassar commented that over the years the faculty’s awareness of their ability to manipulate their own home pages has been lost, and that the web design coordinator must educate faculty and facilitate their ability to make changes. Chancellor Clark said that in the future the Office of Public Relations will not be involved in approving faculty home pages, but that individual departments, schools, and colleges will have that responsibility. Provost Vassar said that while the search for the web design coordinator is in process, Associate Director of IT Services Scott Hardwick will retrain faculty. President Meeks said that he is concerned that the idea of having faculty maintain their own home pages usually doesn’t work, and added that other pages on the site are also out of date. He also said that he fears that the web design coordinator will have too many responsibilities and will be “spread too thin” to be effective. Ms. Weeks said the search will begin next week, and that the position should be filled in a month or two. Senator Hsieh asked Ms. Weeks to give the senate a timetable for resolving the web page problems, and she replied that a timetable will be ready for the next senate meeting.

### Faculty research support and changes to Research and Development Committee

The Policy and Personnel Committee approved the following changes to the Faculty Senate Bylaws regarding the Faculty Research and Development Committee:

- Any member of the committee who is applying for a research or development grant or for sabbatical must recuse him/herself from judging that award.
- Committee members will be elected, not appointed.

During discussion, Chancellor Clark reiterated that the university will pay for the replacement of faculty on sabbatical, adding that the difficulty of replacing faculty might discourage some from applying for leave. Senator Hsieh said that replacement of faculty should be the responsibility of the chair, and that in most cases substitutes can be found. Senators Mackowiak and Salvatore commented that many faculty are concerned about what would become of their students in their absence. Senator Burden said that the committee did not discuss that issue directly, and commented that faculty should not be punished for having expertise that is hard to duplicate. Senator Mackowiak suggested that the next time sabbaticals are offered the information should be shared more openly, and President Meeks asked the Provost to share the information with the chairs. Chancellor Clark said that the administration has to find ways to hire replacement faculty, including going to other campuses if necessary. A motion to approve the changes (Hsieh/Pierce) passed unanimously.

## **New Business**

### Online education and University Distance Learning Council

Director of Online Learning Kristie Weeks distributed a proposal to create a Faculty Senate Committee on Distance Learning, along with a Distance Learning Council which will function as a subcommittee of the senate committee. Senator Burden asked how one becomes a member of the Distance Learning Council, and Provost Vassar replied that he/she is appointed by the Provost. President Meeks said that the senate committee will oversee larger issues, and that the council will train faculty, provide workshops, review best practices, and oversee proctoring. He added that making the council a subcommittee of the senate committee will avoid overlap between the two bodies. Provost Vassar said that the policy statement must be studied, and suggested that it be discussed at the next Faculty Senate meeting. Senator Burden added that the entire faculty needs to take part in the discussion, and asked that the proposal be distributed faculty-wide.

### Student Conduct Board and University Hearing Panel

President Meeks reported that under the Faculty Senate Bylaws and Constitution there is a Student Conduct Board. Title IX is an important addition, so a Title IX Task Force has been created to review policies and procedures related to sexual misconduct. Director of Student Advocacy and Accountability Grace Nickels and her committee made changes to the Student Conduct Code, and the Faculty Senate approved them, but there was no suggestion that the bylaws or constitution be changed. Changes would require a vote of the entire faculty. Associate Vice Chancellor Paula Atkins suggested that the University Hearing Panel remain in place. She added that the University Hearing Panel members must receive Title IX training, and that our code must be aligned with that of LSUA&M.

During discussion, it was noted that at times two panels are necessary to discuss sensitive issues between two or more students, or to discuss academic and non-academic issues. Dr. Amy Wren said that while training is needed for those dealing with Title IX, it is also needed for other areas such as confidentiality and student privacy. She added that the Student Conduct Board should include staff as well as faculty, in part to create greater diversity, and Senator Hsieh commented that staff should be non-voting members. President Meeks commented that The University Hearing Panel, as a subcommittee, is appointed by the Chancellor and thus strays from the spirit of a senate committee.

Provost Vassar said that on other LSU campuses the Student Conduct Boards are not senate committees. Dr. Wren commented that most are comprised of staff and administrators, and added that as issues become more diverse panels must become more diverse. The issue will be further discussed at the November meeting.

### **Observations and concerns**

#### Faculty census changes for senate seats

The issue will be discussed at the November meeting.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, November 10, at 3:00 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor assembly room of the library.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:59

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Walford  
Secretary