

LSUS Faculty Senate Meeting September 7, 2016

President Michael Meeks called the meeting to order at 3:01 PM.

Present: Beverly Burden, Michael Chikeleze, Tom Du Bose, Chengho Hsieh, Kevin Krug, Zsolt Lengvarszky, Jason Mackowiak, Michael Meeks, Carl Smolinski, Lynn Walford, Cheryl White.

Absent: Jim Ingold, Brian Salvatore, Kay Stebbens Slattery.

Approval of Minutes of the May 9 Faculty Senate Meeting

A motion was made and seconded (Burden/White) 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 said that he will attend the meeting of the Board of Regents on Friday, September 9. He anticipates that financial constraints placed on the state due to the recent flooding will have a significant impact on the budget.
- He reported that tuition has been raised 2.5% for undergraduates, and 5% for graduate students. This academic year the increases will pay for the Student Success Center, and are slated to pay for a 2% raise for faculty and a 4% raise for staff next year. However, Governor Edwards has said that there will be no pay raises for state employees next year. He said that he is glad that we were able to complete a number of new hires prior to the anticipated new budget cuts, and added that the state has mandated fewer openings for next fiscal year.
- He announced that the search has begun to replace Vice Chancellor for Business Affairs Mike Ferrell, who is retiring at the end of the year. The search committee is chaired by Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Information Officer Shelby Keith, and includes Vice Chancellor and Dean of Students Paula Atkins; Athletic Director Lucas Morgan; Bursar (Accounting Services) Kenneth Nolley; Associate Professor of Accounting and Business Law Carl Smolinski; Professor of Spanish Lynn Walford; and Executive Director of Continuing Education Brent Wallace.

Academic Affairs

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

- He thanked the senators for their service and said he was excited about the contributions of new faculty and new deans. He added that he was pleased to see a new level of energy and initiative from new faculty.
- He reported that the search for Dean of the Library had recommenced, and that a search for Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences had begun. He added that he has requested that deans provide him with recommendations for hires for the next academic year, and said that he will prioritize them and take into account financial resources before proceeding with the hiring process.
- He reported that several options will be available to students for evaluations of both online and face-to-face courses: online, Moodle, and paper.
- He reported that LSU has the goal of capturing all online courses throughout the system through one portal. At present LSUS and LSUA&M have only graduate degrees available entirely online, while LSUE has only undergraduate degrees, but that explorations are underway to merge them and to add others. The goal is to have 40,000 online students throughout the system.
- He said that proposals for academic partnerships are in process, but added that we do not yet have any further information about what entities will be our potential partners.

During discussion, President Meeks asked if the list of faculty lines will be shared when they are compiled, and Provost Vassar replied that they will. President Meeks then asked when the academic partnerships might be expected to be completed, and Provost Vassar replied that while the new Workday Administrative System has presented some unexpected challenges, he anticipates that the process will be finalized in approximately two weeks.

Business Affairs

Vice Chancellor for Business Affairs Mike Ferrell gave the following report:

- He said that transitioning to the Workday system has been a challenge, especially for Human Resources.
- He urged faculty to make sure their personal information on Workday is correct before the next paychecks are issued, and warned that there might be disruptions if the information is not correct. He reminded faculty that academic withheld pay is not available through Workday, but must be arranged by each individual.

- He said that Workday also presents a challenge to the relationship with vendors, who must be registered with LSU before they can be paid. He noted the examples of SWEPCO, and of the vendor contracted to repair the swimming pool in the HPE building.
- He expressed his thanks to the senate for working with him, and the senators also expressed their thanks to him.

Development

Executive Director of the LSUS Foundation Laura Perdue gave the following report:

- She announced that two new professorships are up for matches this year, and said that the Foundation has made some changes in ways to raise funds and secure professorships.
- She reported that the Membership Committee had worked over the summer to revitalize the membership program. Previously a \$1,000 donation was required to become a member, and the amount could be given to any program. Now a tiered system has been initiated, in which faculty can become members for \$250, and the amount can be designated for a specific program.
- She announced that the Foundation will hold the first fundraiser of the new academic year on November 3, and added that it will be a parody of *Family Feud*.
- She urged faculty members to tell her about new and ongoing programs, and to give her information on why they are important.

During discussion President Meeks expressed appreciation for the work the Foundation is doing. Chancellor Clark said that at their upcoming meeting the Board of Supervisors will discuss a major campaign initiative and how it will affect LSUS. He urged faculty to consult “News and Notes” for more information.

Old Business

Ongoing issues with the campus bookstore

No representatives from the bookstore were present at the meeting.

Senator Krug asked if the problems with delayed delivery of textbooks have been addressed. Vice Chancellor Ferrell said that there have been some issues with transportation, and that previously some books had not been delivered in a timely manner. He said that the bookstore has changed from FedEx to UPS and that since then most of the problems have been resolved.

Vice President Smolinski said that MBA students have had problems receiving books before the beginning of the semester. Dean of the College of Business, Education, and Human Development Nancy Albers-Miller said that the backlog at the bookstore was a result of the backlog of MBA applications, and that due to the backlog some students had been admitted to the program after the deadline. Vice Chancellor Ferrell added that many students are receiving financial aid, which causes

additional delays. Dean Albers-Miller said that MBA admissions are now caught up, and predicted that problems with book orders will not occur in the future. Chancellor Clark added that we now have sufficient staff to keep up with admissions. Dean Albers-Miller thanked Vice Provost for Enrollment Management Julie Lessiter for her help in streamlining the procedure.

Senator Burden commented that Openstax is a program that gives free and open access to textbooks, and Dean Albers-Miller added that some universities now offer free access to textbooks published by their faculty. Provost Vassar said that the library is in the process of purchasing e-textbooks that students can use for free.

Currency of information on campus website and social media page

Senator Burden commented that while the Chancellor had indicated that improvements would be made to the campus website over the summer, no changes appear to have been made. The Chancellor said that a search is underway for a webmaster, and that while there is actually a need for two people to maintain the website, he cannot commit funds to two full-time positions. He said that the greatest need is to change the overall design of the main web page and to make it more accessible. Senator Burden said that to acknowledge both the need for major changes and the impossibility of hiring enough people to make those changes results in a circular argument. The Chancellor agreed, and Senator Krug asked what could be done under the circumstances. Vice Provost Julie Lessiter said that a total overhaul of the website by an outside vendor would cost approximately \$500,000, and suggested that we look for something similar to what LSUA&M has. She added that there are ways to combine a website with email that would cost approximately \$100,000. Senator Krug asked if the cost would include maintenance, and Associate Vice Chancellor Keith said it can be maintained via the cloud. Senator Krug asked what kind of increase in enrollment we might expect as a result of an improved website. Chancellor Clark replied that it is difficult to determine, and commented that the main obstacle to recruitment is the lack of student housing. Senator Krug suggested that we research other universities comparable to ours to find out how they handle their websites. Senator Hsieh asked if we could have a date for a proposal. Chancellor Clark said he should have something by the next senate meeting, and that he would report on progress at each meeting after that. President Meeks said that he will follow up on the progress, since this issue should be of highest priority. Senators White and Walford asked that at the very least existing information should be updated, and that outdated information should be removed. Chancellor Clark said that perhaps students can help with this process.

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

President Meeks said that often issues requiring action by the Administration are discussed at senate meetings, resolutions are passed, and nothing is done. Senator Hsieh suggested that the senate ask for a deadline for a response to each resolution. Chancellor Clark asked the senate to give the Administration a checklist of issues that have been addressed and need a response, and to go through the checklist at each senate meeting. President Meeks commented that he meets with the chancellor before each senate meeting, and that the checklist can be addressed then.

New Business

Approval of Faculty Senate Standing Committees

President Meeks thanked Vice President Smolinski for compiling the list of committees. Vice President Smolinski said that the committees must be approved by the senate. A motion to approve (Hsieh/Du Bose) passed unanimously.

Replacement of at-large member of Faculty Senate Executive Committee

Senator Hsieh is resigning from the Executive Committee. Senator Krug and Senator Du Bose were nominated to replace him. The senate elected Senator Du Bose with a vote of 7-4.

Proposed changes to Freshman Seminars

Senator Walford relayed concerns from Liberal Arts faculty that the Freshman Seminars have strayed from their original purpose, and that the academic content of the courses had diminished. Dr. Stephanie Aamodt, coordinator of the FS courses, said that when then-Provost Paul Sisson elevated the one-credit University 100 course to four three-credit Freshman Seminars (FS 101, 102, 103 and 104), the purpose was to include more academic content in the courses. She said that originally 60% of the curriculum was the same for all four courses, that the remaining 40% was meant to be discipline-specific and academic in nature, and that the intention was to help students succeed in their particular discipline. Dr. Rhonda Failey was the original coordinator, and since her departure from LSUS Dr. Aamodt has assumed the position. She said that over the years the courses have been adapted and changed to some extent, in part to comply with Title IX, and added that perhaps all the FS instructors don't have a full understanding of the purpose of the courses.

Senator Burden asked if perhaps there was not enough communication among the FS instructors, and Dr. Aamodt replied that they used to meet monthly, but no longer do so. She said that the instructors suggested that incoming freshmen attend the August 26 Freshman Convocation as part of their course requirements. Senator Walford asked if all FS instructors were faculty, and Dr. Aamodt said that they used to be, but are no longer because of staffing difficulties. FS instructor Dr. Felice Williams asked if the original concerns expressed came from an FS instructor, and Senator Walford replied that they did not. Senators Burden and White asked who the FS instructors are, and Provost Vassar replied that he did not know them all, but did know that some are adjuncts.

Dr. Aamodt said that she would like more full-time faculty to participate so that they would also be able to instruct students in QEP. Senator Hsieh suggested that the issue be taken to the Courses and Curricula Committee for review. Dr. Williams commented that the instructors have the freedom to teach the courses as they want, and to include discipline-specific academic content in them. Dr. Aamodt commented that the courses have not been substantially changed since they were sent through the Courses and Curricula the first time, and added that instructors have been given academic freedom regarding course content. Dean Albers-Miller suggested that we analyze similar courses in other universities and compare ours with them.

Senator Burden moved that the senate ask FS instructors to provide the Faculty Senate Executive Committee with their current syllabi, and that they be discussed at the October senate meeting.

During discussion, Dr. Banks stressed the importance of the FS courses as part of QEP. Senator Chikeleze, who is also an FS instructor, commented that the main issue he sees is one of insufficient communication. Senator White commented that she doesn't think adjunct faculty should teach Freshman Seminars. Dean Albers-Miller expressed concern that it seemed inappropriate and judgmental to compare FS syllabi.

The motion passed 8-3.

Observations and concerns

Graduate School and Graduate Council

President Meeks commented that the senate passed a resolution to open a formal Graduate School as long as no additional cost was involved, but added that since then enrollment in the graduate programs has increased rapidly. He expressed concern that the Graduate Council acts on issues regarding the Graduate School without input from the faculty. Dean of the Graduate School Sanjay Menon said that the Provost has been considering ways to accommodate the growth of the programs, and will make a presentation to the Planning Council.

Dr. Mary Lois White asked if the Chancellor would share any concerns about how changes to the structure of the Graduate School might affect the accreditation process, and Chancellor Clark responded that he didn't think accreditation would be affected.

Senator Burden commented that there are three different and distinct bodies: Graduate School, Graduate Council, and Faculty Senate. She asked if there is a hierarchy among them, or if they are all equal. Chancellor Clark replied that the Graduate School is on the same level as all the other schools within the university. President Meeks asked how the structure would be drawn—for example, does the Dean of the MBA Program report to the College Dean or the Graduate Dean? Dean Albers-Miller agreed that there should be a clear delineation, and added that in many cases the PMs are inconsistent with the policies themselves.

President Meeks noted that there are eight Faculty Senate committees, but that the senate has no connection with the Graduate Council, and asked if the Graduate Council should be a Faculty Senate committee. Dean Menon said that the Faculty Senate is not directly connected with Graduate School committees, and Senator Hsieh said that those committees should be under the purvey of the Faculty Senate. Dr. Mary Lois White said that information should be shared among all the bodies to increase clarity and facilitate communication. Dean Albers-Miller said that the Graduate Council should be chaired by a faculty member and should report to the Faculty Senate.

Senator Krug commented that the MBA Program is growing so quickly that applications are not being processed in a timely manner. Dean Albers-Miller said that the problem has been resolved, and that even with the record numbers of applicants everything is now up to date. Senator Burden remarked that this is a good problem to have.

Senator Burden suggested that the Dean of the Graduate School/Chair of the Graduate Council report to the Faculty Senate at each meeting. President Meeks said that the proposal to make the Graduate Council a Faculty Senate committee chaired by a faculty member will be considered under New

Business at the October Faculty Senate meeting. Provost Vassar said that if the senate wishes, he is willing to postpone reporting to the Planning Council until after the issue is discussed in October.

Faculty concerns regarding Office of Admissions

The concerns about the processing of requests for admissions were discussed above.

Faculty research support

President Meeks reported that the LSUS Foundation has found funds to once again support faculty research, and thanked Foundation Executive Director Laura Perdue for her efforts. Provost Vassar said that President Meeks was instrumental in locating funds, and thanked him. He said that after several years, the Faculty Research and Development committee is once again active.

Student Conduct Board/University Hearing Panel

President Meeks said that the Student Conduct Board (now called the University Hearing Panel) has been reorganized, and that the Panel was approved by the Faculty Senate at the November 2015 meeting. He added that he was unaware that the senate does not have the authority to approve; that it must be approved by the Faculty Council. Dean of Students Paula Atkins said that either the Faculty Senate Bylaws or the makeup of the University Hearing Panel should be changed. President Meeks said that the issue will be discussed under New Business at the October meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:29 PM. The next meeting will be Monday, October 17, 2016, at 3:00 PM in the Webster Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Walford
Secretary