

LSUS Faculty Senate Meeting

February 17, 2017

Present: Beverly Burden, Michael Chikeleze, Tom Du Bose, Chengho Hsieh, Jim Ingold, Kevin Krug, Jason Mackowiak, Michael Meeks, Kyle Pierce, Brian Salvatore, Carl Smolinski, Lynn Walford, Cheryl White.

Absent: Zsolt Lengvarszky, Kay Stebbens Slattery

Approval of Minutes of the January 24 Faculty Senate Meeting

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

President's Report

President Meeks thanked the senators for their work, and introduced the new Vice Chancellor of Business Affairs Barbie Cannon. He then reported on his activities for the month:

- He met several times with Director of Online Learning Kristie Weeks to discuss Online Education Committee matters, the possibility of a new hire, and updates to the Faculty Senate webpage and faculty webpages on the LSUS website.
- He met with Web Coordinator Micah Murphy to discuss updates to the Faculty Senate webpage, compiled information to update it and the Faculty Senate Committees webpage, and created a Faculty Senate Calendar page.
- He met with the chair of the Policy and Personnel Committee to discuss upcoming agenda items and anticipated review completion dates, and compiled a list of all LSUS faculty for the committee to review for the upcoming election of Faculty Senators.
- On January 30 he attended an Academic Partnership's workshop: Leading in Online Learning: Making Higher Education More Accessible and Affordable.
- He compiled data from the Association of Louisiana Faculty Senates (ALFS) survey regarding Louisiana faculty career perceptions and provided the data to the ALFS chair.
- On February 1 and 2 he attended two sessions of Louisiana Higher Education Commissioner Joe Rallo's 2017 Spring Higher Educational Leaders Institute Forum.
- He met with Chancellor Clark and Provost Vassar to discuss Faculty Senate issues.
- On February 8 he arranged and attended the Faculty Senate Executive Council meeting.
- On February 13 he led the Faculty Council meeting.
- On February 15 he attended the LSUS Town Hall meeting.

Administrators' Reports

Chancellor

Chancellor Larry Clark gave the following report:

- Head weightlifting coach Dr. Kyle Pierce has arranged for LSUS to host the Japanese weightlifting team for the eighth straight year. Because of the efforts of Dr. Pierce, students from around the United States and from various other countries have come to LSUS.
- The women's basketball team includes seven graduating seniors, most of whom have been at LSUS for their entire college career. Under the leadership of head coach Curtis Loyd they have proven to be true student athletes and are involved in community service. The success of our athletes reminds us of just some of the things that we do very well.
- Retiring Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Mike Ferrell is still working to finish some projects, and will stay until March 15.
- On Friday, February 17, LSUS hosted the second annual Student Scholars Forum. The program included undergraduate and graduate presentations and posters by students from nine universities in Louisiana and Mississippi.
- He attended a ceremony at Barksdale Air Force Base for pilots from around the world. He has spent a great deal of time at Barksdale lately, has been involved in numerous community projects, and hopes to spend more time there.
- He discussed budget issues with Vice Chancellor Barbie Cannon and Chief Information Officer Shelby Keith.

During discussion, President Meeks asked if there has been any word yet from the Legislature about possible budget cuts, and Chancellor Clark replied that there has been none yet. Senator Salvatore commented that a representative from AAUP said that LSUS receives 47% of its funding from student tuitions—the highest percentage of all the LSU campuses. Chancellor Clark said that the Board of Regents said we are not allowed to raise tuition any further. He added that we have never been well funded, but that now the funding is even worse. Vice Provost Julie Lessiter added that funding is based not only on the number of students, but on the number of programs.

Academic Affairs

Provost John Vassar gave the following report:

- Ten faculty searches are underway. He has enjoyed meeting individually with candidates. He said that the search committees evaluate candidates' credentials, and that he gives them information about the university.
- The search committee for Dean of Arts and Sciences is finalizing their list of top ten candidates.
- A verbal offer for Director of Admissions will be given today.

- The contract for Academic Partnerships has been renewed for the next five years.
- The Louisiana Marine Consortium visited campus recently and discussed using our facilities for class offerings.
- In the recent review of low-completer courses, the English B.A. was included. The department responded to the report and defended the program. He said that the LSU system coordinates all low-completer reports, and determines how programs fit into the entire system.

During discussion, Senator Ingold remarked that it is foolish to do away with the English degree, since the courses must be taught to fulfill requirements in other majors. Provost Vassar replied that this argument was made in the response, and added that he is optimistic about the results.

Business Affairs

Vice Chancellor of Business Affairs Barbie Cannon gave the following report:

- The Chancellor has given her a great deal of information about Workday, and Chief Information Officer Keith will likely give her more. It will be her main focus at present, because there is a lot of work to be done on it.
- She asked the senate to tell her what kind of information she should present at the meetings.

During discussion, Senator Hsieh said that budget information is necessary. He suggested that at the beginning and end of each fiscal year she provide the senate with a concise, two-page budget that included information on spending and revenue. He commented that such information is necessary if we care about the future and strategic direction of the university, and added that the two pages will provide useful information on where the university is going. Vice Chancellor Cannon agreed that regular reports are needed, that having a budget keeps people accountable, and that senators should have the same information that administrators have. Chancellor Clark said that we must have a better way of reporting, and that we must use Workday for that purpose. President Meeks pointed out the difference between managerial accounting and compliance accounting, and said that managerial accounting is what is used in decision-making. He added that the information in the budget must be meaningful. Vice Chancellor Cannon said that we must figure out how to use money wisely to grow the university. She said that explaining a budget is similar to teaching a class, and asked the senators to have patience with her. Senator Hsieh reiterated his suggestion for a simplified budget without excessive detail. Senator Burden said that we want to know if we will be paid, and if the lights will stay on. Vice Chancellor Cannon said that the strategic plan must fit within the budget if it is to be meaningful.

Development

Chancellor Clark gave the following report:

- He attended the last meeting of the LSUS Foundation.
- We do not have a strong annual campaign in place, nor do we have strong support from alumni. Things have not changed since he left in 1994, and practices must be updated. He

hopes to use the fiftieth anniversary celebration as a means to do so, and hopes that individual departments have access to their alumni and can reach out to them.

Old Business

Term Limits

Senator White said that in her view all senate committees should have the same term limits; however, some committees have members who have served uninterrupted for many years. Vice President Smolinski said that the Policy and Personnel Committee is reviewing the Faculty Senate Bylaws, and suggested that we table the issue until the committee comes up with a recommendation. Senator Burden commented that we should make room for newer faculty to serve on committees, and Senator Hsieh commented that because of our small faculty, it is not unusual to have the same person serving on the same committee position for several terms. He added that it is not optimal, and that term limits should be considered. A motion was made and seconded (Smolinski/White) to table the issue.

New Business

Strategic Plan

Provost Vassar said he had presented the Strategic Plan at the Faculty Council and Town Hall meetings, and offered to address questions from senators. He added that the Strategic Planning Team sets forth proposals, and that the Planning Council determines if or how they can be implemented. Senator Smolinski asked if state law prohibits us from having dormitories on campus, and Provost Vassar said that the original legislation is no longer in force. Senator Salvatore said that students are in favor of campus dormitories, and that funding is the primary problem. He added that most LSU funding goes to athletics. Senator Ingold asked if we have enough room to build dormitories, and Senator Salvatore said there is sufficient room. He added that what attracts students are programs, and Senator Ingold commented that we have never offered enough programs to become a major urban university.

LSUS Surge

Senator Krug expressed concern that LSUS did not have a presence at the recent job fair at the Integrated Technology Center in Bossier City. The job fair was sponsored by CSRA, a global company specializing in technology services to the federal government. He said that it appears that LSUS is attempting to do too many things at once, and suggested the concept of a “surge,” that is, to determine one short-term goal at a time, focus on it, accomplish it by means of a concrete plan, and then determine the next goal. He suggested the following possible goals:

- Focus on the next CSRA effort
- Focus on support for faculty research
- Focus on using faculty to recruit students from high schools

During discussion, Senator Mackowiak pointed out that all the proposed goals seem rather nebulous. He added that in the past we have invited high school guidance counselors to spend an entire day on campus, and that the effort garnered a lot of interest. Provost Vassar said that he will share Senator Krug’s ideas with the Strategic Planning Team. Vice Provost Lessiter suggested that the Faculty Senate focus on faculty issues. She added that faculty can assist with recruiting efforts, but that the organization and implementation should be centered on the Admissions Office. She suggested that a

possible goal for the “surge” might be to examine core competencies, general education courses, scheduling, and the relevancy of degree programs—for example, targeting five things about each degree program that make it relevant to prospective students. Senator Krug asked that for the next Faculty Senate meeting each senator suggest one goal to be voted on. Senator White asked that he email a list of possible goals to senators so they can discuss them with faculty. Provost Vassar said he agreed with Senator Krug that we are going in too many directions, and thanked him for his suggestions.

Admissions office

President Meeks said that there are ongoing difficulties in the Admissions Office. Vice Provost Lessiter said that the failed search for a Director of Admissions forced her to examine the entire process, and that she found that there is no continuity either between successive directors, or between directors and staff, and that there is no institutional knowledge. She is currently working on communication flows and the processing of applications using technology to compensate for the small staff. She added that the number of applications is within the normal range. She said that the student bridge for online enrollment via the website is finished, and organization and reporting are better than they were two years ago. She said that the new Director of Admissions plus the new technology should greatly improve the admissions process.

During discussion, President Meeks asked why there was so much turnover of staff in the Admissions Office, and asked if it was a result of low pay. He added that the problems have resulted in bad publicity, both local and statewide, for LSUS, making it difficult to attract new students. Senator Burden commented that a major problem is the long “hold” times for those who telephone the office, and suggested that phone volunteers be recruited from among faculty during peak times.

Undergraduate online programs

Senator White expressed concern that when four new online undergraduate programs (Management, Marketing, Mass Communications, and General Studies) were added, key faculty who teach courses in those programs were not consulted. She said faculty have expressed questions such as who will teach General Education courses online, how the programs were chosen, and whether they came from Academic Partnerships. Provost Vassar replied that he takes responsibility for the lack of communication. He said that Academic Partnerships has long had an interest in increasing online offerings, and that as the LSU system coordinates programs among campuses LSUS has become something of a “middle child.” LSUA&M focuses on online graduate programs, and LSUA focuses on offering all undergraduate programs online. He is concerned about the possibility that LSUS will be shut out of the undergraduate market, and that unfair weight is being placed on one unit to generate revenue. He emphasized that he wants faculty to take part in the process, and repeated that he takes responsibility for the lack of communication. To Senator White’s question about who will teach online Gen Ed courses, he replied that LSUA faculty will teach some of them so that we will not have to hire more faculty. Director of Online Education Kristie Weeks said that she contacted individual faculty members who teach courses in the proposed online programs, and that the decision about who teaches the courses rests with the chairs. She said undergraduate online courses will begin in the fall and then increase from there. Senator White commented that 100-level courses are where we recruit majors, and that we will not be able to do so if those courses are offered online through LSUA. She added that we will lose control of our academic integrity if we don’t teach the courses on our campus. Ms. Weeks said that only courses not taught here will be offered online through LSUA, and that online courses will not be marketed to freshmen. Provost Vassar stressed that there is no attempt to make LSUS an online institution, and that he personally does not want it to happen. He

said he supports online classes only so that revenue from them can be used for faculty to teach face-to-face courses. He added that he is willing to talk to departments individually.

Observations and Concerns

- Senator Krug suggested amending the Faculty Senate Constitution to allow senators to serve six-year terms as long as they fulfill certain obligations.
- Senator White expressed concern that faculty are being charged for retrieving images from the Noel Memorial Library Archives.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.

The next Faculty Senate meeting will be on Thursday, March 16, at 3:00 PM in the Webster Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Walford
Secretary