

# **Louisiana State University in Shreveport**

## ***Faculty Senate Correspondence***

**Minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting held September 14, 2010 in the Red River Room of the University Center.**

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by **Faculty Senate President Mary Jarzabek**.

**Present:** Mary Jarzabek, Carl Smolinski, Larry Garrison, Rhonda Failey, Elahe Mahdavian, Robert Miciotto, Raymond Taylor, Harvey Rubin, Chris Hale, LaWanda Blakeney, Lonnie McCray, Marjan Trutschl, Matyas Buzgo, Julie Bergeron

**Absent:** Emre Celebi

**Approval of the minutes, as corrected, for the May 6, 2010, meeting was unanimous.**

**President's Report:** **Faculty Senate President Jarzabek requested** that her comments in the Faculty Council meeting on Sept. 13, 2010, be inserted in the minutes as her report to the Faculty Senate this afternoon. A transcript of those comments follows.

Good morning: While I want to be very brief in my remarks there are some things that I need to share with you,

First: I take on the leadership role of the Faculty Senate with some trepidation. These are disastrous times for the Louisiana economy and the budgets for Higher Education.

Our legislators appear to have abrogated their fiscal responsibilities squarely on the shoulders of the administrators for higher ed in this state. Thus far, those administrators have had to make deep cuts that have impacted jobs and services, and ultimately, our students. And now those administrators are being asked to cut even deeper.

1. We see the backlash with rumors spreading about LSUS programs being cut
2. Our colleagues are looking for other, more secure positions
3. We are all afraid of the next round of cuts looming before us in 2011-12 that will, here at LSUS, lead to jobs being lost – both staff and faculty.

No one seems to know exactly what to do. There are plenty of ideas out there:

1. Baton Rouge's faculty senate is investigating unionization.
2. UL System Faculty senates are fighting a proposed policy change that dilutes tenure protection for their ranks.

3. LSU System president Lombardi has told EVERYONE – YOU must get the word to the legislators to STOP THE CUTS.

So that will be our focus: a community outreach program to get business leaders, parents, students, and professionals to take up the call – DON'T CUT HIGHER EDUCATION IN LOUISIANA ANY MORE.

To that end your faculty senate will be working in three key areas:

1. Your faculty senate executive committee is forming an ad hoc committee to facilitate Project Crisis Call. This is a coalition of SGA senators and Faculty senators to get the population of the Shreveport/Bossier City area involved in a FIGHT to save higher education from further budget cuts.
  - a. SGA representatives will be asking to make presentations in your class to get our students informed & involved in this fight – I ask that you let them in.
  - b. Your Faculty Senate needs help making presentations to a myriad of groups and organizations throughout the twin cities. – I urge that you volunteer to help
  - c. Project Crisis Call meetings are being scheduled – I hope you will make time to attend.
2. Your executive committee will be charging another ad hoc committee to explore ideas and procedures if the worst comes to the worst and programs and/or jobs must be cut in the future. Dr. Garrison will be heading up that effort to ensure that STRONG faculty input is available to our administrators if they must cut the LSUS budget any further. This committee will work with the Policy & Personnel committee to gather information and investigate how other campuses are dealing with these types of cuts.
3. There will be discussions with the Policy and Personnel standing committee about reviewing and amending the financial exigency policy here at LSU-Shreveport (Baton Rouge has amended theirs to better protect faculty & staff on that campus). This is appropriate because even though our governor does not want to call financial exigency for the state he does not seem to mind individual campuses doing so in order to make more horrific cuts).

Let me wrap this up with an observation:

4. I have just come from a meeting of the faculty senate presidents this weekend in Baton Rouge. Everyone generally agrees that the blood-letting can only be stopped by legislators that are currently disinterested in limiting spending.
  - a. This is “Almost” understandable

- b. Colleges & universities across the state have rewarded their lack of fiscal concern by saving their collective butts and taking these injurious cuts.
- 5. We...you, I, our students, and our community members must speak with a loud and single voice....NO MORE!!!!
  - a. We should be able to unify our voices
  - b. We should be able to devise plans and policies that serve us all
  - c. We need to make a difference while everyone else says “what can be done”
- 6. So this speech is not about me...it is about us. Get involved, volunteer to help, come to the faculty senate meetings....stay informed

\*\*\*\*\*and for god’s sake...stay vocal ... We MUST be determined that they will hear us!

### **Administrators’ Reports:**

**Provost Paul Sisson:** **Dr. Sisson** reported that Chancellor Marsala could not be present today as he is working on a report. He stated that the administrators are currently besieged with requests for reports on various issues concerning the budget. He stated that since last spring the GRAD Act had been killed, then reenacted, and is now in place. The GRAD Act is now law. Dr. Sisson said the GRAD Act is very important. Some parts of the law are good, others are not, but we must abide by all of them. The GRAD Act agreements are not yet approved by all parties concerned, and this is a problem. We have collected increased tuition and fees from our students this semester, but if the GRAD Act agreements and goals are not approved we have to give the money back. This money is being held in escrow right now. **Dr. Sisson** will be visiting each school to fully explain the details of the GRAD Act including required improvements in retention. These requirements break down into improvements in first and second year retention rates, third and fourth year retention rates, and same-institution graduation rates. We are signed up to pursue increases of two percent per year in our same-institution graduation rate for the next six years. At the end of the sixth year we must establish a same-institution graduation rate of 30%. Legislators want an increase in this rate to 50% in 12 years time. They want a 60% increase for research universities and a 70% increase for LSU Baton Rouge. The definition for same-institution graduation rate is the percentage of first-time full-time freshmen who start at LSUS in a fall semester and graduate from LSUS within six years. 60-80% of the students who graduate from LSUS do not start as first-time full-time students at LSUS. A large number begin as part-time students. A proposed alternative definition is the number of degrees awarded divided by FTE enrollment. Baton Rouge opposes this proposed definition because it will lower their ranking. The traditional definition of graduation is unfair to LSUS and other universities. **Dr. Sisson** reported that our overall enrollment for this fall is down 3.5%. However, our retention rate is up by 3% from last fall to this fall. The GRAD Act requires

1%, so we are slightly ahead. Graduate enrollment is the same as last fall, so this is good. Dual enrollment is up slightly.

**Dr. Sisson** asked for any questions from the Senate. **Senator Blakeney** questioned why enrollment is down. **Dr. Sisson** replied that there are several factors. The state is pushing students towards two-year campuses. From the governor on down to the legislators the emphasis from politicians is on two-year campuses. Economics play a role, as the two-year campuses are cheaper (from a third to half the cost of a four-year institution). There are over 6,400 students at BPCCC this fall. Transfers from two-year campuses do not help our graduation rate because they do not count in our same-institution graduation rate. A student who transfers to LSUS after one year at BPCCC (having not obtained an associate degree) does not count towards any institution's graduation rate. **Senator Garrison** asked if we have a full-time representative on the BPCCC campus. **Dr. Sisson** replied that our representative at BPCCC is not full-time. **Glenda Erwin** reported that of the 6,400 students registered at BPCCC this fall, 2,000 of them are registered as online students. **Senator Mahdavian** asked about the budget cut percentage. **Dr. Sisson** deferred this question to Mike Ferrell. **Senator Mahdavian** asked about a revision of the exigency policy. **President Jarzabek** replied that the Chancellor will look at information that she brought back from a meeting in Baton Rouge on Saturday, September 11, 2010.

**Vice Chancellor Mike Ferrell:** **Mr. Ferrell** explained that in our budget we have non-discretionary funds which cannot be cut. This amounts to about two million dollars. For example, payments to the Office of Risk Management, retirement benefits, and health insurance/life insurance coverage cannot be cut under any circumstances. The percentage for the budget cuts keeps changing. There are three levels of reductions: 1) those items that have no effect on instruction/research; 2) activities that support instruction/research, such as admissions, HR, and purchasing; 3) instruction/research. Information will go out to the entire campus when the budget cuts are finalized. When this information is disseminated there will be nothing specific about any of the cuts, as this is what they were told to do. On September 9<sup>th</sup>, a consultant to higher education and the four system presidents met with the Commissioner of Administration and talked about the budget and the steps each school has to take. There will be a follow-up meeting sometime in September. Campuses are being asked to fill out reports daily/weekly, and then asked to do them over when the figures change. Mr. Ferrell reported that this kills morale. He said it seems they are doing reports for report's sake. Mr. Ferrell explained the Table of Organization. The legislature has put us under a restriction on the total number of employees we can have, regardless of the source of funds. We are allowed to have a total of 374 full-time employees on the payroll at LSUS, whether we have the money to hire more than that or not. We cannot exceed 374 full-time employees. **Senator Buzgo** asked if we can outsource or have free-lance faculty. Mr. Ferrell explained that part-time faculty and

adjuncts do not count towards the total of 374 full-time employees on the payroll. We can hire someone for six months, and we can hire adjuncts. We are within two of the 374 number presently, although we have roughly 14 vacancies on campus. We have lost 89 positions on campus in the last two years. **Mr. Ferrell** reported that some capital expenditures are continuing, including deferred maintenance. The lighting project is underway, which involves refitting every light fixture on campus to be more energy efficient. Lights are our biggest expense in utilities. We are replacing air conditioners. Again, all this cost is covered with funds from deferred maintenance. These ongoing project expenses do not come from our budget. Mr. Ferrell stated that his office is going through continual budget exercises. There is nothing concrete about this budget at the moment. They are being asked to submit reports based on figures which change daily in some cases. When they feel they have a solid number to work with they will make the necessary decisions and report the figures campus-wide. Last spring they were asked to come up with figures for how much they would save from a hiring freeze, how much would they save from freezing the purchase of supplies, and how much they would save from instituting furloughs, and these kinds of exercises are continuing. He said it is hard to know what “the game” is when it is constantly changing. Mr. Ferrell stated that the fight has to be about students and their education. This state has plenty of unskilled labor. Corporations need university support and university graduates. **Senator Trutschl** asked if there were any federal grants for solar power. **Mr. Ferrell** replied that we are already very efficient, and SWEPCO is the cheapest provider in the state. He stated that the federal stimulus money in our general fund budget has a tremendous amount of paperwork that goes with it along with long delays in the processing of that paperwork.

**Associate Vice Chancellor for University Development, Glenda Erwin** reported that the community leaders are on our side. Phillip Roseman and the alumni association are putting together political letters to go out to the legislators. Wayne Waddell’s seat is being replaced. The Chamber of Commerce is forming an ad hoc committee with Phillip Roseman as the chair. The Chancellor has been meeting with them. \$250,000 has been raised to pay a lobbyist to go to Baton Rouge and fight for LSUS and Southern. Students need to get their parents involved. This needs to be a coordinated effort among faculty to write letters and speak up.

**There were no other Administrators’ reports.**

#### **Old Business:**

**Revision of Constitution:** **President Jarzabek** reported that the new constitution is in effect after approval at the Faculty Council meeting on September 13, 2010. She thanked everyone who worked on the revision. She extended a welcome to the new members of the Faculty Senate.

## **New Business:**

**Project Crisis Call: President Jarzabek** announced that we need to form an ad hoc committee to help unify our voices in the community. There is a meeting for students on Friday, September 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. in BH310. All those interested are invited. The committee will begin looking at the wording for the petition and will talk about the concept of saving higher education and outreach to the entire community. The ad hoc committee needs to do three things: 1) produce the wording for the petition, 2) finalize the mission statement on Facebook, and 3) develop a script for the presentations to the community. We need a concise six-minute presentation. We need to decide what we should say and in what order. President Jarzabek's first presentation is going to be to the Shreveport Foundation on September 29<sup>th</sup> and she would like it to be approved by the SGA and the ad hoc committee ahead of time. Motion and second were made for forming this ad hoc committee. Motion approved. There was a discussion about how many members should be on this committee. It was decided that there will be four members plus President Jarzabek. Members will be Kenna Franklin, Julie Bergeron, Brian Salvatore, and Lorraine Krajewski. A meeting calendar will be sent out as soon as it is finalized. The committee will meet the first and third Wednesday of the month during common hour.

**Budget Cap Restructuring: President Jarzabek** announced that we need to form an ad hoc committee to have a voice in any upcoming budget cuts. **Senator Garrison** referred to what happened at Tulane after hurricane Katrina. Tulane lost a lot of students, faculty, and revenue. The university had to reinvent itself. He proposes that we look into how other campuses have handled critical financial situations. What did they cut? What did they save? How did they make these decisions? We need a fair and equitable process in place with a strong faculty voice when the Chancellor has to start making the decision to cut programs and faculty positions. **President Jarzabek** announced that the Louisiana System is trying to change the definition of tenure. We need to have fully considered all possible issues when the faculty voice is called for on the budget cuts. **Senator Buzgo** stated that even if the budget cuts do not come maybe we should investigate restructuring anyway. Motion made and seconded to set up the ad hoc committee. Motion passed. The committee will consist of Dr. Garrison, Dr. Hale, and Dr. Paul Sisson as advisor. Dr. Jarzabek will provide information that is coming from the other Louisiana Faculty Senates.

**Bill Wolf, Assistant Director of Human Resources: Mr. Wolf** announced that he is the author, editor, and publisher of the Safety Newsletter. The university has a requirement to acknowledge the safety newsletter. Louisiana is self-insured, which means the state pays for its own claims through the Office of Risk Management. If an agency performs to standards on the annual audit it will receive a 10% discount on insurance premiums. We pay approximately \$900,000 in insurance premiums to the state every year. ORM publishes a checklist that the

auditors go by. One of the requirements is that the university will conduct quarterly safety meetings that all employees must attend. This is more challenging in higher education than in a manufacturing plant. After negotiation, the university was granted the ok to allow a safety newsletter to take the place of face-to-face meetings. Electronic acknowledgment is allowed to make it easier on the faculty. A minimum of 75% of employees must acknowledge the newsletter every quarter. If we do not meet the 75%, we are in danger of failing the audit. There is no latitude on this requirement. The state considers graduate assistants, adjuncts, etc., to be state employees. There is a two to four week window for return of these acknowledgements. There are representatives in the various departments to remind faculty to acknowledge these newsletters. If you receive less than two weeks to sign the newsletter there has probably been a break down at the college level. College representatives will be told to forward the safety letters immediately upon receipt. Mr. Wolfe welcomes comments and guest columnists. There is also a new safety award. Nominations should go to the safety committee.

#### **Observations and Concerns:**

The possibility of a four-day academic week was brought up. **Mr. Ferrell** noted that there is not a significant utility savings in moving to a four-day week. There might be a \$2,500 savings for a total shutdown. There are always functions going on in the UC and around campus. It was suggested that students prefer a four-day week, and that Northwestern has lost students to ULM because ULM switched to a four-day academic week. We would have to re-work the entire schedule if we moved to a four-day week. The question of moving to a quarter system was raised. Dr. Sisson will be asked to address these concerns in the next senate meeting. We might consider another student poll. Further consideration of the questions will be moved to the October meeting.

**Senator Taylor** stated that we need entire degrees offered online and suggested that more faculty complete the online faculty training course. **Senator McCray** responded that students are asking for more online courses. **Senator Buzgo** stated that we need more statistical feedback from Moodle with the quizzes and exams used in online classes, and more safeguards to prevent cheating and dishonesty. **Senator Garrison** said we should be proud that we have faculty standards here for our online courses. **President Jarzabek** will ask the Distance Learning Council, along with IT representatives, to make a presentation to the faculty senate at the October meeting.

Sibylle Mabry will be asked to attend the October senate meeting to discuss the progress of the online Teacher Evaluation.

**President Jarzabek** addressed the possibility of a resolution to show our support for the ULM faculty over the proposed change of the definition of tenure in the Louisiana system. She asked

that all senators read the draft, send comments to her, and we will then vote via email. President Jarzabek proposed an additional resolution to address the budgetary crisis. She has discussed this idea with other faculty senate presidents. The senators agreed that this resolution is a good idea. **Senator Rubin** suggested that we invite the eleven local legislators to attend a faculty senate meeting to see who among them cares enough to show up.

Remaining items are tabled to the October meeting.

**Meeting was adjourned at 4:56.**