

Minutes of Faculty Senate Meeting
Thursday, September 17, 2009
Admin Rm 2-91, ULM Campus
12:30-2:00 p.m.

Senators Present: J. Anderson, M. Bontty, W. Brown, D. Chandler, Y. Dupre, J. Feldhaus, C. Grinnell, A. Hill, C. Hutto, K. Kervin, M. Lowe, M. Matusiak, L. Nicholson, S. Owens, J. Pankey, M. Parker, D. Rhorer, C. Steckline, P. Sylvester, B. Walker. H. Wilson

Senators Absent: W. Campbell*, L. Reid*

Call to Order and Roll Call: President Walker called the meeting to order and Senator Lowe, in the absence of Secretary Reid called the roll.

Approval of minutes: The minutes of the August 20, 2009 were reviewed and accepted with corrections (Feldhaus/Sylvester).

Committee Reports:

Executive Board: President Walker announced the first Faculty Chat had been held on Thursday, September 3, at the University House, and announced that the next Chat would be held Thursday, September 24, from 2-4pm at the University House. He also shared that the Executive Board would be meeting with the deans at 12:30pm on Tuesday, October 6.

President Walker noted the Senate's contributions to shared governance, particularly the information-sharing aspect of the ULM Governance model which would include the presidents of the Faculty and Staff Senates, chairs of major committees, representatives from the administration, etc. This information-sharing process will be kicked off Monday, September 21, to investigate issues on campus. During the University Planning Retreat held in August, President Cofer requested that this process of information-sharing to begin to avoid duplication of efforts and to exchange information.

President Walker also noted the University Planning Committee includes representatives from Faculty Senate, President Walker and Senators Rhorer, Steckline, and Hill. This meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 30, from 2-4pm.

Elections Committee: Assignments on the FS Committees were reviewed. The Elections Committee membership was discussed ensuring representation from the College of Business (Senator Brown agreed to serve) and that Senators Chandler and Owens would be serving as ex officio members.

Faculty Advisory Council: Senator Rhorer presented the UL System FAC meeting report which addressed the recent budget cuts, the cuts to the ORP, suggestions that perhaps a class action suit might be required to solve the ORP problem, and the strength of Louisiana

Faculty Senates speaking as one voice. Senator Rhorer was elected Chair of the Faculty Advisory Council. The next FAC meeting will be October 23, 2009.

Ad Hoc Committees: President Walker observed that Faculty Senate has at least one representative on all the ad hoc committees. He indicated that he would email the list of committees and members to the Senate. He also noted that these committees are emphasizing action.

1. Program Self-Review: Senator Chandler reported that the committee meets on Friday mornings at 9am. There are nine members on the committee, eight on campus and one usually joining by phone from Shreveport. The committee is chaired by Ron Berry, but members take turns facilitating the discussion. Senator Chandler indicated that the facilitator for the next meeting (Friday, September 18) would be Paxton Oliver. She also shared that the last two meetings of the committee had focused on a matrix for review and had examined examples from comparable universities in Florida and Indiana. However, a matrix used by ULM in 1995 was discovered and is being revamped for usage; this revamping will be finalized on Friday, September 18.

President Walker emphasized that the aim of the program self-review committee is not for cutting programs but rather for highlighting the good things in programs. Senator Chandler described the review as a snapshot of where a program is and addressed red flags before reports are made. She also indicated that much of work in the committee is conducted via email.

2. Faculty Productivity and Performance: Senators Hutto and Nickelson serve on this committee. Senator Nickelson reported that the committee met last Thursday, September 10 and would be meeting tomorrow, September 18. He shared that different colleges and departments have different mechanisms and policies for annual review and that the committee does not wish to interfere with those mechanisms and policies. The committee is looking at work load policies and determining if the policies are matching up with annual reviews, thereby providing a more standardized context for work load policy. A comment was made that Senator Steckline had obtained all revisions made to the Faculty Handbook regarding workload policies from the last five years, noting that this work has been done before.

Senator Matusiak remarked on the work load policy in his college and how junior faculty are being overloaded. They are concerned that their work load is not permitting them to do as much as they need toward tenure requirements. Senator Nickelson responded that this is the kind of situation on which the committee is focusing. Senator Rhorer recommended that this issue be brought up at the next Faculty Chat. Senator Kervin described how clinicals are not receiving enough weight in annual review considerations nor is committee work and volunteerism. President Walker said these issues should be pushed in the committee. Senator Wilson inquired as to why newer faculty members have heavier workloads as compared to senior faculty members. Senator Dupre related that her faculty is small and there simply are not enough people resources nor time to do all that is required.

- 3. Administrative Productivity and Performance:** Senators Hill, Lowe, and Matusiak serve on this committee, but the committee has not met. Senator Steckline indicated to Senator Hill that once the committee meets, there will be instruments available for examining the issue. This committee is chaired by Vice President Nicklas; President Walker volunteered to follow up with VP Nicklas. Senator Hill indicated that she would call a meeting if necessary.
- 4. Student Success:** Senator Brown is on this committee. She related that the committee met Friday, September 11, and that subcommittees were formed. These subcommittees would report to the committee next Friday, September 25. Senator Brown is serving on a research subcommittee that is examining enrollment and retention and feedback from FRYS/UNI 101 classes and issues in those classes. President Walker observed that enrollment was up.
- 5. Curriculum Review:** Senators Chandler and Grinnell serve on this committee. Senator Chandler stated that the committee has only met once, and that she was just put on the committee recently.
- 6. Revenue Generation:** Senator Parker represents the FS on this committee. The committee has met three times and is chaired by Dean Ryman. It is focusing on two basic areas of possible revenue: (1) fee structure in tuition, perhaps employing an a la carte model and (2) consulting income. A subcommittee is examining this issue; the idea is to establish a consulting program from experts on campus; experts would charge a fee, a portion of which would go to the University. This aspect of the committee's focus should wrap up within two weeks. Senator Wilson suggested raising parking tickets. Senator Parker commented on charging for the use of facilities and the military-friendly possibilities. Senator Lowe inquired as to whether the committee looked at the solutions proposed by the Creative Solutions Committee. Senator Parker said he was not familiar with said committee; Senator Steckline provided Senator Parker with the results of that committee's work.

There was discussion as to the posting of policies, resolutions, etc. generated by FS be published/posted on the FS website. Senators Steckline and Rhorer volunteered to follow-up on this discussion.

Unfinished Business:

- A. **Election of Officers:** President-elect: Senator Anna Hill was nominated (Feldhaus/Owens). She accepted the nomination; no opposition and was voted into office. Senator Hill will join the Executive Board at the next meeting on October 6. Senator Steckline recommended that Senator Hill attend the chats. Senator Hill asked to be removed from the Faculty Welfare Committee due to the increase in her responsibilities as President-elect, which was approved.

Election of the Secretary-Elect: Senator Matthew Matusiak was nominated (Feldhaus/Hill). He accepted the nomination; no opposition and was voted into office. Senator Steckline reminded Senator Matusiak that he is supposed to receive a course load reduction for his service.

New Business:

A. New Faculty at ULM/ Faculty Friends: President Walker indicated that the Welfare Committee needs a chair and that he would meet with the committee following the Senate meeting. He stated that the committee needs to look at the Faculty Friends program and something for new faculty on campus, or at least offer them the option of the program. He suggested something in line with the potluck/party/meet-in-greet done when the program was first started. Senator Steckline stated that she still has paper products from Faculty Friends parties past in her possession.

B. Faculty Club –President Walker shared that he has talked with Robert Hoag of Aramark. The economic reality, President Walker stated, is that Faculty Club should expand to include staff. Questions of location and structure need addressing, including how membership is handled, as well as discounts. President Walker recommended that the Welfare Committee examine the issue.

The issue of the reading of memorials of former faculty members into the Senate minutes was addressed. Two faculty members have recently passed. The question was asked as to whether deans of the colleges in which the faculty served should read the memorials or can persons familiar with the deceased read the memorials. A formal way of finding out about faculty members who have passed and who will read the memorials is needed. It was suggested that the Secretary-elect handle this issue; Senator Lowe recommended a subcommittee of Welfare handle the issue. President Walker volunteered to contact deans to address this issue. A suggestion was made to have a subcommittee chaired by the Secretary-elect. A comment was made regarding the guidelines in the by-laws regarding this issue, so the topic was tabled until clarification could be obtained.

C. Parliamentarian: Senator Lowe was reappointed.

D. ORP Issues: President Walker reported that he had received communication regarding reduction in ORP contributions from Kevin Cope of LSU. Donna Rhorer, Chair of the UL System FAC reported that she had received the same information. She also noted that there is such interest in this development among employees from around the state that in the end all groups would probably stand as one on the issue. A discussion of the LSU FS Resolution regarding ORP was discussed. In his communication with groups around the state, LSU Faculty Senate President Kevin Cope, shared several numerical pieces of data namely: a 1.2% reduction in ORP contributions, causing the percentage to fall from 6.9% to 5.7%, reducing contributions from 14.8% to 13.6%, TRSL collects 0.1% which is an administration fee; a huge part of the cost goes towards paying off a

debt accrued between 1936 and 1989 as a result of benefits paid to teachers in that time period. State contributions to ORP are supposed to equal those made to Social Security, which is presently 6.2%. Employers have to match the SS contribution. Theoretically, this match is being made. However, the burden has been passed from the State to the universities and, consequently, their employees. TRSL maintains that they have nothing to do with this reduction, per se; they simply pass the money through to the respective financial agencies. Theoretically, if they are not serving a real purpose, then, they shouldn't be involved in the process (i.e., receiving the processing fee). Suggested options proposed by President Cope include: (1) ORP should be taken from TRSL, or (2) a class action law suit be lodged against TRSL, which perhaps might be more effective. These and more details on these figures can be found at www.lsu.edu/senate.

It was suggested that this issue be discussed with Staff Senate. The average loss to a ULM employee based on the \$60K annual salary, assuming a 4.5% average rate of return per year would be \$23,287. With 363 employees at ULM on the ORP, the dollar impact from ULM alone over this 20 year period would be \$8.453 million.

It was reported that that ORP has less disability coverage than the state retirement plan and that the unfunded liability will have to come from the employees. It was noted that of the TRSL Board of Directors, only one person is not from Baton Rouge. The fee structure needs to be reviewed, such as the management fee, or to examine how monies are being spent. If TRSL's practices are fraudulent, then a law suit would have grounds, and employees should push for state retirement. The option of state retirement was pushed for last year. Ideas will be written regarding the TRSL situation. Questions were raised as to whether or not all universities (and employees) would be required to participate in a class action suit and could individuals have an opt-in/opt-out option. It was suggested that the lawsuit would likely be civil.

A comment was made, unrelated to the ORP issue, that attachments sent out to the Senate, such as the LSU Faculty Senate resolution regarding ORP, should be included with the minutes on the FS website so that faculty will have access to pertinent documents.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Reid
Faculty Senate Secretary

* indicates excused absence;
Name/Name indicates Moved/Seconded