

**Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, November 3, 2011**  
**Student Senate Room, LSU Student Union**



**Attendance**

*Faculty Senate Executive Committee members present:*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Kevin L. Cope (President, English)        | 2. Ken McMillin (Vice-President, Animal Science) |
| 3. Joan King (Member-at-large, Food Science) | 4. George Stanley (Secretary, Chemistry)         |
| 5. Bill Daly (Past-President, Chemistry)     | 6. Kenneth Fasching-Varner (New Member-at-large) |

Parliamentarian: Louay Mohammed (absent, represented by proxy)

*Senators present:*

1	✓	Sibel Ales (Oceanography/C&E)	23	✓	Kristopher Fletcher (Foreign Lang/HSS)	45	✓	Jeff Nunn (Geology/Sci)
2	A	Linda Allen (Chemistry/Sci)	24	✓	Joseph Francis (Compar BioMed/Vet)	46	✓	John Nyman (Renew Nat Res/Ag)
3	A	Gabriel Beavers (Music/M&FA)	25	✓	Juhan Frank (Physics/Sci)	47		Heather Ondercin (Polysci/HSS)
4	P	Melissa Beck (Psychology/HSS)	26	✓	Craig Freeman (Mass Comm/MassCom)	48	✓	Evelyn Orman (Music/Music & DA)
5	P	Dana Bickmore (Ed Theory Pol Pract/Ed)	27		Stephen Gaunt (Pathobiological Sci/Vet)	49	✓	Rebecca Owens (Curricular & Instruct/Ed)
6	✓	Graham Bodie (Comm Studies/HSS)	28		Wes Harrison (Ag Econ/Ag)	50		Rosemary Peters (French/HSS)
7	✓	William Boelhower (English/HSS)	29		Richard Holben (Drama/Music & DA)	51	✓	Suresh Rai (Elect & Comp/Eng)
8	✓	Dorin Boldor (Biol Eng/Ag-Eng)	30	✓	Dorothy Jacobsen (Kinesiology/Ed)	52	✓	Margaret Reams (Environ Studies/C&E)
9	✓	Stephanie Braunstein (LSU Libraries/Lib)	31	A	Jennifer Jolly (Ed Theory Pol Pract/Ed)	53	✓	Lawrence Rouse (Oceanography/C&E)
10	✓	Robb Brumbfield (Bio/Sci)	32		Rajgopal Kannan (Comp Sci/Sci)	54	✓	Bhaba Sarker (Const Manage & Ind/Eng)
11	P	Russell Carson (Kinesiology/Ed)	33	✓	Joan King (Food Sci/Ag)	55	✓	George Stanley (Chemistry/Sci)
12	✓	Paolo Chirumbolo (Foreign Lang/HSS)	34		Jeff Kuehny (Horticulture/Ag)	56		Suzanne Stauffer (Lib & Info Sci/SLIS)
13		Aaron Clopton (Kinesiology/Ed)	35		Michael Leitner (Geog & Anthro/HSS)	57	✓	William Stickle (Biological Sci/Sci)
14	✓	Kevin Cope (English/HSS)	36	✓	Vince LiCata (Biological Sci/Sci)	58	A	Padmanabhan Sundar (Math/Sci)
15	✓	Larry Crumbley (Accounting/BA)	37	✓	David Lindenfeld (History/HSS)	59		Gail Sutherland (Phil & Relig/HSS)
16	✓	William Daly (Chemistry/Sci)	38		Michelle Livermore (Social Work/SW)	60	✓	Carol Taylor (Chem/Sci)
17	✓	Jeffrey Davis (Entomology/Ag)	39	A	Mandi Lopez (Vet Clinical Sci/Vet)	61		Dianne Taylor (ELRC/Ed)
18	✓	Neila Donovan (Comm Sci Disord/HSS)	40		Kevin McCarter (Exp Stat/Ag)	62		Jeffrey Taylor (Geology/Sci)
19	A	Kerry Dooley (ChemE/Eng)	41	✓	Patrick McGee (English/HSS)	63		Phillip Tebbutt (Interior Design/A&D)
20	✓	Bruce Eilts (Vet Clinical Sci/Vet)	42	✓	Ken McMillin (Animal Sci/Ag)	64		Justin Walsh (Art/A&D)
21	P	Kenneth Fasching-Varner (Ed T Pol Pract/Ed)	43		Reem Meshal (Phil & Relig/HSS)	65		WanJun Wang (Mech Eng/Eng)
22		Guillermo Ferreyra (Math/Sci)	44	P	Louay Mohammed (C & Environ/Eng)	66	✓	Hsiao-Chun Wu (Elect & Comp/Eng)
						67		David Young (Physics/Sci)

*Guests present:*

Don Chance	Mike Russo	Chad Seifried	Josh Naguin
Felecia Jones	Blake Windell	Fred Aghazadeh	Mark Davidson

**Consideration of Minutes**

*Moved and Accepted Conditionally.*

**President's Report**

- Career services is setting up an Internship Council that will include a number of faculty members.
- We met with Gary Graham about a number of parking issues. Matters discussed and include: speeding on university streets, expanded parking for commuter students at Kirby-Smith Hall, and problems with visitors getting through the staffed gate entrances (new procedures discussed).
- We have committees looking at revisions and updates for PS-48, PS-104/109, and PS-1.
- We discussed a Student Senate resolution to allow students to use technology in classrooms (i.e., notebook computers) regardless of what a faculty member wants.
- We are looking at a new problem concerning out-of-state tuition charged to Fellowship students.
- [tape]
- We have received comments/complaints about the LSU Union concerning food and cultural activities. We are meeting with Eric Monday and others about improvements.

- The Faculty Senate at our medical campuses have addressed an issue concerning teaching recordings and releasing them when they might be out of date.
- The north LA restructuring drive to merge LA Tech, LSU Sheveport Medical Center, and LSU-Shreveport has run into some well-deserved problems. This has been put on hold for now.

**Q&A Summary:**

Stephanie Braunstein: What was that about the merging of north LA campuses?

Kevin provides more details [see recording or November Faculty Senate Newsletter for more details]

Stephanie: Why were they doing this?

Kevin & Bill Daly: To setup another “flagship” school and combined medical center.

Larry Crumbly: Would this result in a cost savings?

Kevin: That has yet to be determined. The north LA group has hired a consulting firm to investigate this.

**Update on Tobacco-Free Campus Task Force (Stephanie Braunstein & Michael Russo)**

We have generated an 83 page report, which I will not read. LSU is falling short of educating students on the negative health impacts of tobacco use and the second-hand effects on people with sensitivity to smoke. There are differing statements in LSU documents about distances from building entrances from which smoking is allowed. The Athletic Department, for example, has banned smoking in Tiger Stadium and the PMAC. Nichols State has gone tobacco free and 10 other institutions are considering following suite. We, therefore, recommend that LSU implements a tobacco free policy for our campus. This can be modeled on what other universities and colleges have done.

**Q&A Summary:**

Stephanie: For technical reasons our group was not a “task force”, but rather a committee.

Kevin: Do you want the Faculty Senate to appoint a “task” force to push this through?

Stephanie: Yes.

Larry: Who should appoint the task force?

Stephanie: I think the Faculty Senate should do that.

Juhan Frank: What about during football games?

Stephanie: Tiger stadium is smoke-free. But enforcing a smoke-free environment for all the visitors and tailgaters is another matter.

**Old Business**

Second and final reading:

**Faculty Senate Resolution 11–03**

**“Adjustment of Fall Semester Start Date to Allow for a Week-long Thanksgiving Holiday”**

Sponsored by Senator Joshua Detre

*WHEREAS*, the current University calendar has the Thanksgiving holiday beginning at 12:30 pm on the Wednesday preceding Thanksgiving Thursday; and

*WHEREAS*, the Ascension Parish Schools, Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, Central Community School System, East Baton Rouge Parish School System, Livingston Parish Public Schools, West Baton Rouge Parish Schools, and Zachary Community Schools have for many years scheduled their Thanksgiving Break beginning with the Monday preceding Thanksgiving Thursday; and

*WHEREAS*, this has created an annual problem for LSU faculty and staff with school-aged children as they must deal with child care issues during that period; and

*WHEREAS*, faculty members often observe poor classroom attendance on the Monday - Wednesday preceding Thanksgiving Thursday; and

*WHEREAS*, students who attend classes on the Monday - Wednesday preceding Thanksgiving Thursday often voice their displeasure and frustration and/or appear disinterested in the material being covered; and

*WHEREAS*, LSU, in order to meet the total number of class days required in a semester could start the fall semester on a Thursday as opposed to a Monday; and

*WHEREAS*, this start date would provide benefits to students and faculty as it makes more efficient use of limited class time at both the beginning of the semester and before the Thanksgiving holiday break;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the LSU Faculty Senate, affirms its support for the Thanksgiving holiday to begin, with the Monday and Tuesday preceding Thanksgiving Thursday, coupled with the start of classes in the

fall semester to begin on a Thursday to compensate for the instruction days lost because of the lengthening of the Thanksgiving holiday.

***Q&A Summary (see video recording for more details & discussion):***

Josh Detre: I'm sorry this has taken so long but I've been in talks with a number of groups about this including food services, housing, and Robert Doolos. This turns out to be a rather complex issue.

Rebecca Owens: I do not consider that final exam time constitutes instruction time. So if we are already below the minimum number of hours per semester and your proposal will make it worse, I'm opposed to that. I also think that the benefit to staff members is not significant since they need to be in working anyway.

Jeff Nunn: I polled my department and they were unanimously against this since many of us do field work over the summer and this could negatively impact that.

Staff representative: We are in favor of this since staff could take a leave of absence to spend time with their school-age children.

Cody Wells (SGA president): We are in favor of this and would prefer starting class a week earlier.

Bill Daly: I'm going to present Robert Doolos's opinion on this. Robert is opposed to this due to a number of issues. First is the time needed to run the first day report which gives us very little leeway in case of computer problems. The other problem is Freshman Orientation and timing that with an earlier start of the semester. There is the earlier moving into dorms problem which would not occur on a weekend. There is also a problem with MWF class hours with this proposal. Robert polled other institutions and only a few (Mississippi State and U. of Mississippi) have week-long Thanksgiving breaks. Mississippi State combines its Fall Break with Thanksgiving break to give a week.

Hsiao-Chun Wu: Can we cancel Fall Break and combine it with Thanksgiving Break like Mississippi State?

Kevin: You can make another resolution about this proposal.

Vince LiCatta: I respect Robert Doolos's opinion highly and if he has problems with this so do I.

Josh: I've discussed this in detail with Robert and admit that there are some problems.

George Stanley: I have a question for Cody Wells: would the students be in favor of dropping Fall Break and rolling that into a week-long Thanksgiving break?

Cody: No, I think students would prefer to start a week earlier, have Fall Break, and a week-long Thanksgiving Break.

George: Then I think we should consider starting a week earlier which does solve some the Robert's problems, but raises others about serious overlaps with orientation and intersessions.

Patrick McGee: I'm in favor of ditching Fall Break if we want to go with a week-long Thanksgiving break. We are also a research university and I need as much summer time as possible for my research program. So I'm not in favor of starting classes a week earlier.

Rebecca Owens: I do not know of any data that Fall Break's promote any retention of students.

Suresh Rai: Getting rid of Fall Break does not solve the shortage of hours since the half day associated with Thanksgiving still counts as a full day. So we would still be short of a day.

Question is called.

***Resolution FAILS on voice vote with only a few "yea" votes.***

Second and Final reading of:

**FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION 11-17**

"Elections for Members of the LSU Graduate Council"

*Sponsored by Ken McMillin*

*Whereas* the LSU Board of Supervisors Bylaws and Regulations 1-2.7. on the establishment of the Graduate Council on each campus offering graduate work states that each campus shall formulate a policy regarding the operation of the Graduate Council, including membership, length of terms, and function to advise the Dean of the Graduate School in the administration of the academic affairs and policies of the Graduate School; and

*Whereas* Board of Supervisors Bylaws and Regulations 1-2.2b. grants authority to the faculty to generally determine educational policy, subject to the authority of the Board; and

*Whereas* Faculty Senate Resolution 10-03 "Replacing the Current System of Appointments with a New System of Elections for Members of the Graduate Council" that recommended the election of all members, other than ex officio members, of the Graduate Council and reaffirmed its commitment to and responsibility for shared

governance in establishing curricula, fixing standards of instruction, and determining requirements for graduate degree programs was adopted March 15, 2010; and

*Whereas* Faculty Senate Resolution 10-03 recommended that a policy on Graduate Council members on the LSU campus be sent to the LSU System that called for elections within each College or School by the Graduate School to provide membership representing the breadth of disciplines on the LSU campus, and

*Whereas* it has been 18 months without any activity from the Graduate School to hold elections for Graduate Council membership,

*Therefore be it resolved* that the LSU Faculty Senate again calls upon the Graduate School to hold elections for Graduate Council membership, and

*Therefore be it further resolved* that the LSU Faculty Senate Executive Committee will begin the process of elections on January 31, 2012 for Graduate Council membership within each College or School according to the allocation plan proposed in Faculty Senate Resolution 10-03 if the election process has not been initiated by the Graduate School by January 31, 2012.

(Faculty Senate Resolution 10-03 adopted March 15, 2010 and the allocation plan is attached for reference)

#### Graduate Council Membership

The Graduate Council is composed of faculty who consider policy matters related to the Graduate School and who advise the Dean of the Graduate School in the administration of academic affairs and policies of the Graduate School. To provide membership representing the breadth of disciplines on the LSU campus, each College or School overseen by a dean and that offers a graduate program of study at LSU are represented on the Graduate Council such that units that award less than 9% of graduate degrees are allocated one member on the Graduate Council whereas units that award more than 9% of the graduate degrees are allocated two members on the Graduate Council. Allocations will be recalculated each decade; allocations for 2010 through 2019 are based on degrees awarded from 1999-2000 through 2008-2009 as reported by the LSU Office of Budget and Planning. Members will be graduate faculty with outstanding records of scholarly and creative activities, who do not currently hold administrative positions, who are full Professors, and who are full Members of the Graduate Faculty. The overall membership of the Council will represent the diversity of faculty and students. Members will serve a term of five years, with membership end dates staggered to provide for continuity of the Council Activities. The Graduate School will hold elections within each College or School as needed to fill positions; all Graduate Faculty within those Colleges or Schools are eligible to nominate and vote. Members of the Graduate Council will elect from themselves a Chair who will serve a one-year term. The Dean of the Graduate School and the Associate Dean of the Graduate School are ex officio members with the same rights as other members except that they may not serve as chair of the Graduate Council or chair of subcommittees of the Graduate Council.

Allocating the members of the Graduate Council among the colleges and schools overseen by a dean and that offer a graduate program of study in a manner that represents the diversity of faculty and students.

unit	departments	M.S. programs	Ph.D. programs	M.S. degrees <sup>b</sup>	Ph.D. degrees <sup>b</sup>	total degrees <sup>b</sup>	% of degrees	membership allocation
Ourso College of Business Administration	3	5	6	2,521	157	2,678	18.2	2
College of Arts and Sciences	11	17	11	1,503	911	2,414	16.4	2
College of Education	2	3	3	1,458	354	1,812	12.3	2
College of Engineering <sup>a</sup>	6	7	6	1,147	382	1,529	10.4	2
College of Agriculture <sup>a</sup>	12	15	11	983	527	1,510	10.3	2
College of Basic Sciences	7	9	7	778	643	1,421	9.7	2
School of Social Work	1	1	1	995	20	1,015	6.9	1
School of Library and Information Science	1	1		717		717	4.9	1
School of Music and Dramatic Arts	2	2	3	377	210	587	4.0	1
School of Art and Design	3	4		387		387	2.6	1
School of the Coast and Environment	2	2	1	226	93	319	2.2	1
Manship School of Mass Communication	1	1	1	151	20	171	1.2	1
School of Veterinary Medicine	3	3	3	68	97	165	1.1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>11,349</b>	<b>3,414</b>	<b>14,763</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>19</b>

<sup>a</sup> These data were not adjusted to reflect that M.S. degrees with a major in Biological and Agricultural Engineering are awarded by the College of Agriculture but are reported by the Office of Planning and Budget as in the College of Engineering.

<sup>b</sup> The number of graduate degrees were determined from data available on the website of the LSU Office of Budget and Planning for the years 1999-2000 through 2008-2009. These numbers were modified to remove degrees credited to the Graduate School, which is a practice that ended in 2000-2001.

#### Q&A Summary:

Kevin: Would you accept a friendly amendment to change the current October dates?

Ken: Yes, and I would suggest a January date due to the Holidays. Furthermore, since we are searching for a new Dean of the Graduate School I would also be willing to give the new Dean the option of doing the elections via normal procedures.

Friendly Amendment passes unanimously

Question is called.

**Passes unanimously on voice vote.**

Second and Final reading of:

**Faculty Senate Resolution 11-18**

**Scheduling Class Start Time on the Hour and Half Past the Hour**

*Introduced at the request of Professor Fereydoun Aghazadeh*

*Whereas*, classes at LSU start either 10 or 40 minutes past the hour;

*Whereas*, most meetings at LSU are scheduled to start either on the hour or half past the hour;

*Whereas*, classes at Tulane, Southern University, BRCC, Louisiana Tech, and many other neighboring universities such as University of Houston, University of Texas, University of Mississippi, Rice University start either on the hour or half past the hour;

*Whereas*, this skewed class start time at LSU creates confusion and results in inefficient use of time due to frequent late start of meetings;

*Therefore be it resolved* that the LSU Faculty Senate hereby recommends to the LSU Office of the Registrar to change the class times for fall and spring classes to start either on the hour or half past the hour.

**Q&A Summary:**

Fred: Based on comments from the last meeting, I've modified the resolution to make it effective for only the Fall and Spring semesters due to the variability of class times during summer and intersessions.

Stephanie Braunstein: Will this work with our computer scheduling system?

Kevin: We met with Robert and he said that this was doable.

George Stanley: Robert said that he would like a year to implement it.

Juhan Frank: I think the current system is OK. I also don't have any problems with your proposed system. I just don't understand the confusion about the current system.

Fred: For example, I had class today that started at 1:40 and ended at 3 PM. So I was about 10 mins late for this meeting.

David Lindenfeld: Will this affect traffic?

Kevin: No.

Suresh Rai: I find it easier to end lecture on the hour or half hour. I think it will be more confusing to end at 10 mins before the hour or half hour.

Question is called. *Passes on a voice vote with some dissenting votes.*

**New Business**

First reading (note that this is the modified resolution based on suggested changes):

**Faculty Senate Resolution 11-19**

**Call for an Audit of the Budget and Procedures of Southern University with the Prospect of Censure**

*Introduced at the request of the Southern University Faculty Senate President*

*Whereas* good governance of universities requires careful financial and other planning that involves all stakeholders: faculty, staff, students, and administrators;

*Whereas* preparation for financial emergencies requires systematic and extended consultation along with the open exchange of information;

*Whereas* national educational and professional organizations as well as local and state universities offer widely-recognized template procedures for the management of financial crises;

*Whereas* both the Southern University System administration and the Southern University administration have followed no published procedures, have engaged in only superficial consultation with campus stakeholders, and have set out no plan of consultation prior to the recent declaration of financial exigency at Southern University;

*Whereas* the published budget of Southern University lacks adequate detail and resolution to develop a plan or to allow for public scrutiny;

*Whereas* the Southern University has increased its subsidy to its athletic program by one million dollars and whereas the total athletic subsidy exceeds the alleged deficit to be recovered from faculty furloughs;

*Whereas* universities in Louisiana share many common interests insofar as they are regulated by a common Board of Regents and insofar as policies imposed on one higher education system often migrate to others;

*Whereas* Chancellor James Llorens as well as Commissioner of Higher Education Jim Purcell demonstrated astounding callousness in referring to the declaration of exigency and with that the dismissal of faculty as a “bold” and admirable move that will begin the process of realigning all of higher education;

*Whereas* neither Southern University nor the Southern University System have any plan, either just or unjust, with regard to the development of an exigency procedure;

*Whereas* dismissals of faculty at three University of Louisiana schools have demonstrated that firing of faculty for purported financial reasons bring opprobrium to all of Louisiana higher education;

*Whereas* the unjustified declaration of financial exigency needlessly stigmatizes all colleges and universities in Louisiana;

*Therefore* be it resolved that the LSU Faculty Senate affirms its commitment to the welfare of the Southern University faculty, staff, and students and urges those concerned in the management of Southern University to retract their rash decision;

*Therefore be it further resolved* that the LSU Faculty Senate calls for a forensic audit of the budget of Southern University and of the Southern University System as well as for a review of the governance procedures of these institutions, audits and reviews to be conducted by appropriately qualified persons who are not members of either the Southern University or Southern University System administrations;

*Therefore be it further resolved* that the LSU Faculty Senate joins with Faculty Senates around Louisiana in urging Southern University and the Southern University System to create a panel with substantial faculty representation as well as with two or more qualified academic professionals who are not Southern University employees to develop solutions for budget problems and for improving governance procedures;

*Therefore be it further resolved* that, if the foregoing measures are not initiated within one month of the passage of this resolution, the LSU Faculty Senate censures the Southern University administration, Southern University Chancellor James Llorens, the Southern University System Board of Supervisors, and Southern University System President Ronald Mason.

#### **Accepted into debate.**

**Statement by Sudhir Trivedi – Faculty Senate President at Southern University:** Do not think of this as an isolated incident. The Commissioner of Higher Education and the Head of the Board of Regents congratulated Chancellor Llorens on the declaration of exigency and that Southern could be a model for other schools in the state. We are looking to hire a lawyer to pursue this case legally and would appreciate any suggestions that you have.

#### ***Q&A Summary (see video recording for more details, especially in regards to the many friendly amendment changes):***

Larry Crumbly: I have a friendly amendment to include Forensic Audit, which is a “fraud” audit.

#### ***Passed unanimously***

Graham Bodie: This is not a vote against being able to declare exigency?

Kevin: No.

Graham: What does it mean when you say “censure”. Is that the Faculty Senate or LSU? Also with regards to putting a moratorium on cooperative programs, does the Faculty Senate have any authority over that?

Kevin: This is a Faculty Senate resolution, not an official LSU action. The Faculty Senate does have the ability to affect cooperative programs.

Stephanie Braunstein: Will such a moratorium negatively impact others than the administration at Southern?

Kevin: Possibly, but it will keep Southern administrators from benefiting from such programs.

Bill Daly: I have a friendly amendment to drop the part of Chancellor Llorens having only 4 months of experience.

#### ***Passes unanimously.***

Another Friendly amendment about changing the moratorium from current program to initiating new programs.

#### ***Passes unanimously.***

Joan King: I’d like to drop the moratorium paragraph because I do not want to hurt any faculty or students at Southern.

Kevin: I disagree.

Juhan Frank: Physics has collaborative programs with Southern and this could hurt them for future cooperative programs.

Bill Daly: This could also stop faculty at LSU and Southern from submitting joint grant proposals.

Sudhir: I see the points being made and am OK with dropping this section of the resolution.

Kevin: I’ll now accept this as a friendly amendment.

***Friendly amendment passes with some dissenting votes.***

Larry: I suggest changing the language about the audit in the last paragraph from “accomplish” to “initiate.” A forensic audit takes more than a month.

***Friendly amendment passes unanimously.***

Joan: Change “implementation” with “development” in the one Whereas.

Kevin: I’m OK with that.

***Friendly amendment passes with a few dissenting votes.***

Bill Daly: I have another friendly amendment to change the language in the first Therefore, to include “faculty, staff, and students”.

Kevin: I accept that.

***Friendly amendment passes unanimously.***

Kevin moves to suspend the rules and hold a final vote.

***Suspend the rules vote passes unanimously.***

***Resolution passes unanimously on a voice vote.***

First Reading of:

## **Faculty Senate Resolution 11-20 “A Plus and Minus Grading System for LSU”**

*Introduced at the request of Professor Don Chance*

***Whereas*** the appended background paper presents compelling arguments for the introduction of a plus and minus grading system as a means to increase the accuracy of the evaluation of students,

***Therefore be it resolved*** that Louisiana State University shall adopt the plus and minus grading system proposed in the document below.

### **Background**

LSU currently uses the grading system of A, B, C, D, and F, which provide for 4, 3, 2, 1, and 0 points, respectively. This proposal recommends that LSU convert to a system that permits the faculty member to assign + (plus) and minus (-) grades. The proposed system would allow for grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D- and F.

The number of quality points for a given letter grade is obviously an important question. To provide some guidance, a survey was conducted of about 80 schools, which include LSU’s peers as specified in the updated Flagship agenda program and essentially all of the most prestigious public and private research schools in the United States.

### **Alternative Systems**

Quite a few systems were identified. Some, such as MIT’s five-point system, Brown’s no-grade system, Maryland’s system of awarding plus/minus grades but not reflecting these variations in the grade point average calculation, and Wisconsin’s A, AB, B, BC system are quite unconventional and were disregarded. Of the remaining schools, 69 use some variant of the plus/minus system while thirteen use the traditional system.

The variants of the plus/minus system include

- (1) A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, B+ = 3.3, B = 3.0, etc. (39 schools)
- (2) A = 4.0, A- = 3.67, B+ = 3.33, B = 3.0, etc. (14 schools)
- (3) A = 4.0, A- = 3.75, B+ = 3.25, B = 3.0, etc. (1 school)
- (4) A = 4.0, A- = 3.667, B+ = 3.333, B = 3.0, etc. (3 schools)
- (5) A = 4.0, A- = 3.666, B+ = 3.333, B = 3.0 (1 school)

Some schools give A+. The following such systems were identified:

- (6) A+ = 4.33, A = 4.0, A- = 3.67, etc. (9 schools)
- (7) A+ = 4.3, A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, etc. (2 schools)

Some schools allow the awarding of an A+ or an A with both worth 4.0 points, although B+ is worth more than a B. This system is still treated as a plus/minus system.

Along with LSU, the schools that use the traditional system are Auburn, Georgia Tech, Carnegie Mellon, Ohio State, Texas A&M, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, West Virginia, Arizona, Kansas State, Nebraska, and Oregon.

The schools that use a variant of the plus/minus system are Clemson, Duke, Emory, Indiana, Johns Hopkins, Mississippi State, New York University, Northwestern, Oregon State, Princeton, UCLA, and the Universities of Alaska at Fairbanks, California at Berkeley, Chicago, Colorado at Boulder, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii at Manoa, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Miami (Florida), Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada at Reno, North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Rochester, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, Vanderbilt, Virginia Tech, Washington University at St. Louis, Dartmouth,

Georgetown, Harvard, Penn State, Buffalo, Florida, Illinois, Maine, Montana at Missoula, New Hampshire, Texas, Vermont, Yale, Arizona State, Columbia, Michigan State, North Carolina State, Alabama, Iowa, New Mexico, William & Mary, Stanford, Minnesota, Delaware, Florida State, Tulane, Southern California, Boston College, Cornell, Cal Tech, and Notre Dame.

#### **Proposal**

It is recommended that LSU adopt the most-widely used system, which would provide for the following grade points:

A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
D-	0.7
F	0.0

#### **Benefits and Costs**

Clearly such a change is not without cost to the university. Registrar software would need reprogramming, and it is likely that some forms would need to be re-designed. Some re-indoctrination of faculty and students would be required, although the change is not particularly complex and most everyone should catch on quickly. Another subtle cost, however, is that by having more grade cutoffs, there will be more students who will be close to the next highest grade. With quality points on the line, appeals could potentially be more frequent. On the other hand, as an example, some students who might ordinarily have gotten a B might now get a B+ and will benefit.

Indeed the main advantage would be that it would provide more flexibility to the faculty member, which should be particularly valuable in graduate classes, where there is a tremendous difference in the highest and lowest A's and highest and lowest B's. It also seems likely that some graduate student grades that might have been B's will be B- or C+ or A's might become A- or B+. Because the old system is subsumed within the new system, any faculty member could continue to use the old system.

#### **Accepted into debate.**

#### ***Q&A Summary:***

George Stanley: I'm all in favor of this.

Patrick McGee: I also like this and believe it is more fair. I also believe that it will reduce student grade meetings.

William Boelhower: I like this as well and concur that it is more fair.

Dorin Boldor: I like the idea of an A+ grade since it can raise a student's GPA.

Don: I don't like that since I want this system to fit in better with our current system.

Vince LiCatta: I also like this proposal.

Juhan Frank: This could help students with enhancements that require a certain GPA.

First Reading of:

#### **Faculty Senate Resolution 11-21**

#### **Excluding Existing Gift Accounts Including LSU Foundation Accounts, Expired Fixed Price Accounts, Rebate Accounts, and Tech Transfer Accounts from Being Charged Tuition Remission Recovery and Fringe Benefits for Graduate Assistant Tuition.**

*Proposed by Senator John Andrew Nyman*

*Whereas* a tuition exemption has been provided by LSU to all full-time graduate assistants since fall of 2005 and a health insurance program, since the fall of 2007,

*Whereas* the majority of funding for the graduate assistant tuition remission has come from the Facilities and Administrative cost recover (F&A) administered by the Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED),

*Whereas* the over 25% of the currently available F&A is used to pay tuition exemption and health insurance for Graduate Assistants and costs are expected to increase as tuition increases,

*Whereas* the University has decided to implement a new policy such that beginning with proposals submitted after 1 January, 2012, a tuition remission rate of 31% and a fringe benefit rate of 3% will be included in grant application budgets for all graduate students to be funded by the grant,

*Whereas* the University has decided to implement a new policy such that effective 1 July, 2012, tuition remission recover and fringe benefits rates for graduate assistant will also apply to existing gift accounts including LSU Foundation accounts, expired fixed price accounts, rebate accounts and tech transfer accounts,

*Whereas* existing gift accounts including LSU Foundation accounts, expired fixed price accounts, rebate accounts and tech transfer accounts lack any avenue for securing additional funds from the sponsor,

*Whereas* a 34% increase in costs for existing graduate assistants likely will have the effect of eliminating funding for a third of all existing graduate assistants,

*Whereas* graduate assistants are unlikely to complete their degrees without funding,

*Whereas* an increase in the number of graduate students failing to complete their degree programs will adversely affect metrics used to rank universities,

*Therefore* be it resolved that the Faculty Senate supports the new policy such that beginning with proposals submitted after 1 January, 2012, a tuition remission rate of 31% and a fringe benefit rate of 3% will be included in grant application budgets for all graduate students to be funded by the grant,

*Therefore* be it resolved that the Faculty Senate opposes the new policy such that effective 1 July 2012, tuition remission recover and fringe benefits rates for graduate assistants will also apply to existing gift accounts including LSU Foundation accounts, expired fixed price accounts, rebate accounts and tech transfer accounts,

*Therefore* be it resolved that the Faculty Senate recommends that University cease adding funds to existing gift accounts including LSU Foundation accounts, expired fixed price accounts, rebate accounts and tech transfer accounts, but continue to use those funds to support graduate assistants whose tuition remission and insurance are provided by F&A.

***Accepted into debate.***

***Q&A Summary:***

Larry Rouse: Can you explain the last paragraph.

John: I'm not tied to the language in that paragraph. It is too hard to track the grants and funding sources that support students from F&A and those that don't. We either need to exclude the accounts listed in this last Therefore from tuition charges or end them and put these kind of funds into accounts that do not have to pay tuition. [*Secretary's note: after listening to the video several times, I believe that what I put down above reflects the intent of what John was saying.*]

George Stanley: I thought that this only affected new grants?

John: No, the letter from the Office of Research states that these existing gift accounts will be affected by the new rules.

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Adjournment at 5:04 PM