The Council of Faculty Advisors (COFA) met on Friday, March 16, 2012. The meeting was called to order at 11:30 am.

The initial portion of the meeting was Bob Rasmussen’s preview of the agenda for the afternoon’s Board of Supervisors meeting. He predicted the meeting would be relatively short. No changes had been made to the agenda items from the Health Care and Medical Education Committee; the Academic and Student Affairs, Achievement and Distinction Committee; the Finance, Infrastructure, and Core Development Committee; and the Property and Facilities Committee. Rasmussen commented that the Audit Committee would meet and review the Audit Report. For the portion of the BOS meeting following the committee reports, Rasmussen noted item 4 which dealt with the election of a Chairman-Elect for 2012-2013; item 10A which dealt with endowed professorships; and item 10C which dealt with a posthumous degree. The remainder of Rasmussen’s comments covered the potential merger of LSUS/LA Tech, and Bossier City Community College which the BOS opposes but the Board of Regents (BOR) supports plus the changes ongoing in the retirement system. The discussion of the retirement system brought a question on from Scott Rubin on the input from the System lawyer. The response included mention of a working group from LSU including Human Resource Management personnel, A. G. Monaco, and Cope. They are reviewing the extent and the problem; cost; impact on faculty; and the potential withdrawal from the Teachers Retirement System (TRS). This discussion brought another question from Scott Rubin on the potential return of the System to participation in Social Security. This question was followed by a discussion of the input from the State legislature, LSUnited, and LAE on the ongoing problems with the retirement system; money problems is higher education; the efficacy of LAE; and problems encountered in pursuing membership in LSUnited. The remainder of the meeting with Rasmussen dealt with the ongoing intellectual properties problem in the University of Louisiana System which has been written up in the Chronicle of Higher Education.

After Rasmussen left the meeting the topics turned to:

A. Ongoing problems with patent submissions and development of companies by LSU System faculty at several institutions. Fees involved and ways to expedite the processes were discussed.
B. Ongoing administrative turnover and replacement at several institutions. The need to be vigilant in the search and hiring processes plus the need for a formal policy on each campus were discussed.
C. Lombardi’s proposals to block the rearrangement of the educational institutions in the northern part of the State.
D. Lifting of the freeze on raises with raises possible with review on a case-by-case basis, in cases of retention, and in cases of salary equity. Departments have been using money from open positions to fund raises.
John Lombardi joined the meeting briefly. Jim Robinson asked Lombardi about the possibility for faculty, as well as family members of System employees, to take classes without paying tuition. Lombardi suggested pursuit of this suggestion through the development of a formal proposal.

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elisabeth Elder, Secretary
April 23, 2012