COFA met on Friday, April 27, 2012. The meeting was called to order at 11:20 am.

The initial part of the meeting was Bob Rasmussen’s preview of the agenda for the afternoon meeting of the Board of Supervisors. He initiated the session with the quote, “May you live in interesting times.” The original agenda was relatively light with no controversy, no press, and the majority of the focus on LSUS and the new programs being developed. The merger of LSUS and Tech is still under consideration. Another focus would be a new program for LSUA. Rasmussen noted that this would be the last meeting for the current student member, Ryan Perkins, who is graduating from the LSU Health (LSUS Health Sciences Center) and returning to Mississippi. A new student member will be elected May 14 with all schools, except LSUS and LSU Health, being eligible to make nominations. Seven members, almost half, of the BOS have expiring terms. After June 1 Jindal is likely to act quickly to appoint replacements in time for the June 8 BOS meeting.

The amended agenda was more controversial. A last item, added to the Chairman’s Report, was “Presidential Succession Planning and Action(s).” The comments centered on the potential firing/stepping down of John Lombardi, President of LSU; the involvement of BOS members and the Flagship Coalition in the change; Lombardi’s interim replacement by Mike Jenkins; the appointment of a search committee; and potential candidates for his replacement. Kevin Cope, President of the LSU Faculty Senate and President of COFA, has asked to make public comment as has Sudhir Trivedi, President of the Southern University Baton Rouge Faculty Senate. Breaking news during the COFA meeting indicated that Lombardi had refused to step down and that a vote would be taken during the afternoon meeting. The discussion moved to the importance of having faculty representation on the search committee particularly in light of the report in The Daily Reveille that Bobby Jindal would appoint the new president. The members in attendance recommended that Cope would be an excellent representative of the organization on the search committee.

The remainder of the COFA meeting focused on:

1. Ongoing problems with the retirement system. Public forums have occurred with presentations by LSU and Louisiana Association of Educators. Meetings between Cope, Ken McMillin, Human Resource Management personnel, personnel in accounting are ongoing, and an attorney are ongoing A portfolio of materials on documentation of the changes, authorizations, and the route of money transfer have been promised by Derrick Angelloz and should arrive to Cope within 5 days. The possibility of a class action suit was mentioned.

2. Ongoing problems with pay raises. A suit may occur.

3. Ongoing intellectual properties problems in the UL System. A template for use within the System has been developed and will be adapted to fit the different units. There are many unanswered questions.

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Elisabeth Elder
COFA Secretary
April 30, 2012