1. Officers thought that a quorum was present, but after the meeting, the attendance record showed only 34 senators present, one short of a quorum. No one challenged the presence of a quorum.

2. Consideration of the minutes of the February 17, 2005 Senate meeting was deferred, due to concerns that Senator Delzell’s February 17 report on the FSEC’s February 15 meeting with LSU System Vice-President for Academic Affairs Carolyn Hargrave about PM-35 (pages 4-5 of the February 17 minutes) had been critical of the LSU System Office.

3. The minutes of the March 15, 2005 Senate meeting were approved.

4. Remarks by Chancellor Sean O’Keefe. He reported that LSU’s higher admission standards had been followed by higher enrollment. He said that, at 31,000 students, LSU is as large as it can get. He said that LSU needs to increase the percentage (now 17%) of graduate students in the student population. He discussed the recent invitation to all departments to apply for Foundation of Excellence status, and the fact that the University Planning Council (with no input from the Chancellor’s Office) had been reviewing the applications submitted by various departments. He said that it is important that the criteria for and process of selection of the Foundations of Excellence be understandable to everyone. He expressed the desire that the Foundation of Excellence competition become more frequent than it has been. He discussed the new office of Vice-Chancellor for Research and Economic Development that he was creating; he said that this new research position will be separate from the administration of graduate education. Kevin Carman (Dean of the College of Basic Sciences) will chair the search committee for this new VC position. He discussed the new Office of Vice-Chancellor for Communications and University Relations that he was creating. He described LSU’s $300 million endowment as “anemic,” and discussed fundraising. He discussed LSU’s 2005-2006 budget, and various unfunded costs of advancing the National Flagship Agenda. He discussed the Board of Regents’ proposal (April/May 2005) to change the requirement of a 2/3 vote of the legislature in order to raise tuition. This tuition proposal, if enacted by the legislature, would enable LSU to pursue the Flagship Agenda. [The proposal was not enacted.] He discussed the problem of providing health insurance for graduate students, and electronic journal subscription support for the library. When asked whether a security system like that in the Vet School could be put in the life sciences building, he indicated that he was opposed.

5. Senator Randall Hall was elected to the second member-at-large position on the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

6. Senate President’s report: President Advokat announced that the McGehee Award Fund (see Resolution 05-05, December 8, 2004; http://senate.lsu.edu/Resolutions.html), had been established. She announced that a PM-35 Committee had been established to continue negotiations with the LSU System to replace PM-35 in accordance with Senate Resolution 04-10 (http://senate.lsu.edu/Resolutions.html). She announced that the new academic calendar that the Office of Academic Affairs had recently proposed for the 2006-2007 academic year had
been withdrawn; some of the better-received proposals for calendar changes will be considered for later years. She announced that the Administrative Service Committee Report would be posted on the Faculty Senate website (http://senate.lsu.edu; click on “Pertinent Reports”). She reported on the ongoing struggle to create an Ombuds position at LSU, referring to a 1997 report recommending the creation of such a position [http://senate.lsu.edu; click on “Pertinent Reports”].

7. Professor Michael Cherry, Chair of the Educational Policy Committee (EPC), reported on the activities of the EPC in its first year of existence. He said that the EPC was disappointed that the Committee on Admissions, Standards, and Honors (ASH) had decided not to seek an increase in admission standards this year; ASH wanted to wait a year or so to see the impact of the latest standards; ASH might consider an increase next year. He said that he and the EPC would encourage ASH and the Senate to address admission standards in the next academic year. He reported that the EPC discussed linking courses together in learning communities; required versus optional final exams; and questions involving class attendance and excused absences. The EPC also discussed graduation rates and students’ progress toward degrees. He said that the Provost had set up a Graduation Task Force consisting of deans (with John Hamilton as Chair). Professor Cherry said that LSU’s 6-year graduation rate is low; this year neither the EPC nor the Graduation Task Force offer specific suggestions to improve the retention and graduation rates; but next year they plan to make some suggestions.

8. Senate President-Elect William Daly presented a plaque to Claire Advokat, in appreciation of her distinguished service as President of the Faculty Senate, 2004-2005.