Special Recognition

Mr. Martin Nyberg, a member of the LSU Swim Team, was recognized as an outstanding student athlete.

President's Report

- Legislative update—Governor proposing to raise faculty salaries to SREB average
- Announced that all colleges should be holding elections to replace retiring senators
- Explained the operation of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee over the summer term
- Itemized significant accomplishments of the Faculty Senate during the last two years

Reports

- Associate Vice Chancellor Laura Lindsay presented an update on the status of the articulation agreements among institutions within the LSU system as well as institutions in other systems.

Old Business

- Revision of PS-36—Amendment offered to more clearly define collegiality. The amendment passed and the amended version of PS-36 was approved
- Policy Statement on Student Evaluation of Instruction approved by Senate
- Proposed Procedures for Dealing with Financial Exigency approved by Senate

New Business

- Introduced Resolution 95-06—Requests each academic unit or college to determine what is appropriate to meet General Education computer literacy requirements

Faculty Senate Meeting
May 6, 1996

The meeting was called to order by President Strain at 3:05 pm. Proxies were announced. Guests present included Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs William Jenkins, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Laura Lindsay, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Dan Fogel, Tommy Karam, Director of the Academic Center for Athletics, Mary Boudreaux from the Staff Senate, Paul Estes, SGA President, Jayme Marler (LSU Today) and Michael Pitts, chair of the General Education Committee. Minutes of the April 9th meeting were moved and approved.

Special Recognition

Dr. Tommy Karam, Director of the Academic Center for Athletics, introduced for recognition as an outstanding student athlete, Martin Nyberg. Mr. Nyberg is an All-American swimmer who has maintained a 4.0 GPA in physics. Karam indicated that Martin was able to blend athletic excellence with academic excellence, while active in numerous other activities of the University—such as being recently elected president of ODK and memberships in Phi Kappa Phi and other organizations. Mr. Nyberg recently received two prestigious awards: (1) male scholar-athlete for this region (Texas, Arkansas, Mississippi & Louisiana) and (2)Southeast Conference Scholar-Athlete of the Year. Martin was the second LSU scholar-athlete in the past 2 years to receive this prestigious award which provides a $10,000 scholarship for graduate study. Karam emphasized that LSU was really proud of the overall example that Mr. Nyberg set in both his academic and athletic activities.
President's Report

President Strain began his report with a legislative update. Governor Foster proposed to raise faculty salaries in all Louisiana schools to the SREB average in this year’s operating budget. This would require approximately $58M of funding. Foster is also proposing significant funds for campus repair and renovation projects. Strain cautioned, however, that all of these promises are contingent on the legislature renewing the one cent sales tax. Senators were encouraged to contact their respective representatives and state senators to urge them to vote for this renewal. Telephone and fax numbers for legislators are available on the Faculty Senate home page that can be accessed from the LSU home page. President Stain added that he would be writing on behalf of the Senate and asked Senators not to procrastinate with their letters.

Provost Jenkins responded to a question concerning how large an increase was needed to bring LSU to the average. Jenkins noted that there was considerable variation among universities in Louisiana regarding their position relative to the SREB average. This disparity is due, in part, to some universities recently changing classification. The range for all universities is from 23% to about 6% below the SREB average. LSU is approximately 15% below the SREB average, but he hopes LSU can get a 12% increase in salaries.

In response to concern expressed about how the raises would be implemented, President Strain responded that there are a lot of details that still need to be worked out. However, traditionally when there have been raises like this, each college has been assigned the responsibility to review the salary structure for all the people in their units and, if someone is particularly out of line, they usually get a larger increase.

Provost Jenkins added that their recommendation was a 4% increase across the board with merit increases on top of that to bring salaries somewhere close to the desired percent increase. Jenkins reiterated that this proposed salary increase for faculty was contingent on the renewal of the four cent sales tax, but that the $34M for deferred maintenance was fairly safe.

President Strain said that the various colleges should be holding elections to replace their retiring (outgoing) senators during the month of May. Strain also noted that there would be a reception sponsored by the Alumni Association following the meeting and invited Senators to attend. Then President Strain presented certificates of appreciation to those senators completing their term of service.

Strain announced that the Admissions Standards and Honors Committee is still looking at issues of how to deal with withdrawals and will report on the withdrawal policy at the first meeting in the fall.

President Strain explained that over the summer, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) is expanded to include officers for the current year as well as those elected for the next academic year. This enlarged committee serves as a sort of acting Senate on any issues that need immediate action. If something really significant or problematic develops, a special called meeting of the Senate would be held. President Strain noted that the FSEC would soon be meeting with SGA President Paul Estes to learn some of the things he’d like to get accomplished.

In his last regular Senate meeting as president Strain reviewed the significant accomplishments of the Senate for the past two years:

- A successfully operating Faculty Advisory Council to the Board of Regents has been established.
- A Council of Faculty Advisors to the LSU Board of Supervisors has been established.
- Updated the General Education requirements and initiated reviews of the success of these requirements.
- The Faculty Senate asserted our responsibility and authority to review new and revised University policy statements that relate to academic policy.
- The Faculty Senate approved, on a pilot basis, an LSU Access Program to give applicants not meeting all admissions requirements an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to handle LSU course work.
- We called on the administration to increase funding to the LSU Library to try to restore its previous national ranking.
- We convinced Chancellor Davis to donate the raise given him by the Board of Supervisors as a symbol of the high importance of securing adequate pay for faculty.
- We commended Jim Richardson for adhering to high standards in his position on the Louisiana State Revenue Estimating Conference in the face of extreme pressure from former Governor Edwards.
- We initiated reviews of University policies on repeats, withdrawals, pass/fail, and academic advising, some of which is still pending.
- We endorsed Governor Foster’s efforts to protect and enhance higher education funding.
- We endorsed a voluntary Writing Across the Curriculum policy to enhance the writing skills of our students.
- There are certainly many more accomplishments, but perhaps most importantly, we have established and strengthened a strong rapport with the University administration that enables us to inform, communicate, and initiate change in a non-confrontational basis that continues to produce tangible and intangible improvements to our small part of the world.

President Strain concluded by saying that the Faculty Senate has been an effective and powerful voice for the faculty of this University and, further, it is his hope that this body never relinquish that important role. He has enjoyed his small part in it.
Reports

Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Laura Lindsay presented an update on the status of the articulation agreements among institutions in the LSU System as well as with the two other systems overseen by the Board of Regents. Lindsay began by noting that approximately 20-25 bills and/or resolutions were introduced in the legislature dealing with articulation. These ranged from mandating a common course numbering system across universities to specifying that certain general education courses be accepted in all institutions. The Board of Regents asked that these matters be referred to them so they could work with the various institutions in developing articulation among schools.

LSU was and is ahead of other schools in the state in the area of articulation. As an example of this leadership, Lindsay pointed to the Guidelines for Undergraduate College Transfer Students. This booklet answers a number of questions commonly asked by transfer students. The booklet also contains college requirements along with a list of college contact individuals. A copy of the booklet was distributed to all Senators earlier.

Next Dr. Lindsay distributed a handout on the articulation “crosswalk” developed in collaboration with each school in the system. Lindsay said LSU was the first system to have a “crosswalk” since the other state systems have not finalized their “crosswalks.” The handout included tables showing equivalent courses that not only come to LSU but will transfer to any of the schools in the LSU System. Dr. Lindsay indicated that agreements with Bossier, Nunez, and Delgado will also be in the next edition of the LSU Articulation Guidelines. Lindsay also indicated that LSU is currently working on articulation with Southern University.

Dr. Lindsay concluded by indicating that she expects continued pressure on all of higher education in the state regarding articulation. In response to a question, Lindsay indicated that LSU has begun work to ensure articulation with the new community college. She also indicated that there are plans to make the articulation guidelines available electronically or on-line.

Old Business

The first item of old business was consideration of PS-36 (Appointment, Promotion, Tenure) introduced at the April meeting. Copies of the revised PS-36 were mailed to the Senators prior to the May meeting. The motion to approve this revision was placed on the floor for discussion.

Senator Stockbauer moved to amend PS-36 by leaving off the last sentence of paragraph #3 in Section 2 and replacing it with the words: “Non-cooperative, disruptive, or combative behavior of a candidate which significantly interferes with the mission of the unit and can be documented should also be considered. Likewise, superlative contributions in the above areas should be documented and considered.” The amendment was seconded by Senator Hammond.

Discussion of the proposed amendment centered on who determines or evaluates collegiality. President Strain responded that the departmental committee will be the initial body to assess documentation of collegiality. He further indicated that this amendment was an effort to provide a more explicit expression of what should be considered to constitute ‘non-collegiality.’ The Grievance Committee in particular expressed concern about it because they felt that if it were not more explicit, they would have a difficult time dealing with grievances where this was a factor. In response to a question about whether or not this inhibited academic freedom, Stockbauer replied that the committee had considered the fact that this was a negative statement, but it is an attempt to better define collegiality. He also indicated that the wording ‘significantly interferes with the mission of the unit’ is critical to this statement and that’s how this has to be judged. A vote was called on the amendment and the amendment passed.

Provost Jenkins then spoke in favor of the amendment. He indicated that while he had no problem with the amendment, this was a very difficult issue to deal with. Further, this revision still has to be reviewed and approved by the university’s legal counsel.

After some additional discussion regarding terms of initial appointment and subsequent reviews and reappointments, there was a call for a vote. The motion to approve PS-36 as amended passed.

The next item of old business was a proposed policy statement on Student Evaluation of Instruction. This proposal was prepared by an ad hoc committee chaired by President Strain in response to recommendations from the SACS Reaccreditation Review requiring student evaluation of instruction in all undergraduate and graduate courses. The motion to approve this proposed policy was placed on the floor for discussion.

Discussion of the motion included a question of how to ensure that everyone is conducting the evaluations. In response, President Strain said that this was a detail that had to be worked out with Academic Affairs. It was also noted that transcribing and typing written comments seemed to be a significant investment of a department’s staff resources. At least one department addressed this problem by letting students take the evaluations home and turn them the next day so they have access to computers for typing the information.

President Strain noted that this is a very controversial issue. Some people believe it’s simply a popularity indicator while others derive real benefit from the evaluations. Strain added that there were likely to be problems with any evaluation system, but this is clearly something that the SACS team felt was important. Strain noted that there are probably a number of ways to accomplish the evaluation, but the key point is that a policy needs to be established mandating this in order for LSU to be in compliance with the SACS reaccreditation recommendation.

A vote was called on the motion and the motion passed.
The last item of old business, the Proposed Procedures for Dealing with Financial Exigency, was placed on the floor for discussion. In response to a question concerning the time allowed for response, President Strain indicated that if financial exigency circumstance arises, it is probable that there will be a very short time in which to react. Strain added that the University’s drive to develop a stable database with all kinds of information will help expedite implementation of the exigency document. Strain also indicated that another piece of the puzzle was the Cyclic Program Review Document approved earlier by the Senate.

The vote was taken and the motion to approve the Procedures for Dealing with Financial Exigency passed.

New Business

Resolution 95-06 was introduced. This resolution requests that each unit or college on campus determine what is appropriate for students to meet the computer literacy requirements in their individual units. President Strain explained that when LSU established general education requirements computer literacy was not included. Subsequently, the Regents developed general education requirements for all universities in the state, computer literacy was included. The General Education Committee recommends this resolution to bring LSU into compliance with the Board of Regents requirement.

Dr. Micheal Pitts, Chairman of the General Education Committee responded to questions concerning the resolution. He indicated that the computer courses should come from the individual departments, because it is the committee’s feeling that individual departments should determine what they consider appropriate computer skills for their respective disciplines.

Resolution 95-06 will be considered for a vote at the first senate meeting in the fall. A copy of the resolution is attached to these minutes.

In response to a call for other new business, Senator Frank DeCaro suggested that early next year, an appropriate administrator be invited to come and answer questions concerning the faculty of the new community college. DeCaro indicated he would like to know about such things as: (1) are provisions being made for tenure and academic freedom; (2) will provisions be made for their having a Faculty Senate; and (3) will there be a commitment made to provide the faculty there a living wage as opposed to relying on ill-paid part-time labor.

President Strain responded that he thought Dr. Marion Bonaparte, the new Chancellor of the Community College, would be the proper person to whom the Senate should address such issues.

There being no additional business, President Strain adjourned the meeting at 4:15 p.m. and invited the Senators to enjoy the reception sponsored by the LSU Alumni Association.

Respectfully Submitted

Kenneth W. Paxton
Secretary

SENATE RESOLUTION 95-06

Whereas, the Louisiana Board of Regents in 1983 mandated that all universities under its governance implement requirements in General Education, and

Whereas, the Louisiana State University is not currently in compliance with the requirement involving computer literacy, and

Whereas, the Faculty Senate General Education Committee, after study of the requirement, believes that computer literacy means much more than word processing and should be discipline specific, and

Whereas, computer literacy in various disciplines involves different kinds of knowledge or skills so as to make computer competency specific to particular disciplines, and

Whereas, the committee endorses the addition of the requirement,

Therefore be it resolved that the Faculty Senate add the General Education requirement that students be able to demonstrate computer literacy at the school or college level through the designation of one or more approved courses as meeting the requirement of computer literacy in fulfilling his or her General Education Requirements.

Be it further resolved that the Faculty Senate General Education Committee be responsible for approval and oversight as a part of its authority over the General Education Requirements.