LSU Faculty Senate Meeting
3:00 P.M., October 11, 2006, Atchafalaya Room, LSU Union Building

Attendance

*Faculty Senate Executive Committee members present:*

1. William H. Daly (Senate President)
2. Kevin L. Cope (Vice President)
3. Lois J. Kuyper-Rushing (Secretary)
4. Judith Schiebout (Member-at-Large)
5. Claire Advokat (Ex Officio, Immed. Past Pres.)

Parliamentarian: Andrew King (present)

*Senators present:*

1. Helene Afeman
2. William W. Armstrong
3. Juan J. Barthelemy
4. Jim S Borck
5. Ruth L. Bowman
6. Hugh W. Buckingham
7. Andrew Christie
8. Kevin L. Cope
9. Hollis Utah Cox
10. Kerry M. Dooley
11. Dennis W. Duffield
12. Emily Elliot
13. Scott W. Harris
14. Joan L. King
15. Gerald Knapp
16. Richard L. Kurtz
17. Lois J. Kuyper-Rushing
18. Paul A. Larock
19. Yiping Lou
20. Suzanne Marchand
21. Douglas McMillin
22. Kenneth W. McMillin
23. Jorge F. Morales
24. Marcia E. Newcomer
25. Carol E. O’Neil
26. Su-Seng Pang
27. Robert Perlis
28. Dorothy Prowell
29. Dan B. Rinks
30. Patsy Scates
31. Frederick Sheldon
32. Mary J Sirridge
33. George Stanley
34. James R. Stoner Jr.
35. Beth N. Tope
36. Grover Waldrop
37. Maud Maureen Walsh
38. Rick Weil
39. Lisl Zach

*Proxies for absent Senators:*

Lois Kuyper-Rushing for Randall Hall
William H. Daly for Steve Hand, Heather McKillop, Denis Wu
George Stanley for Kevin Smith
Beth N. Tope for Ann Trousdale
Kerry M. Dooley for Warren Waggenspack
Joan M. King for Cathleen Williams

*Senators absent without proxies + (# of absences without proxies):*

Introduction of Guests
Visiting guests were introduced and urged to sign up on the attendance sheet.
Guests attending the October meeting included:
Prof. John E Chandler, Department of Dairy Science
Prof. Kevin L Cope, Department of English/Vice-President of Faculty Senate
Prof. Clayton A Hollier, Department of Plant Pathology
Prof. C Gregory Seab, Department of Physics, University of New Orleans/University Senate
Prof. Meredith Veldman, Department of History/Faculty Senate International Education Committee
LSU Faculty Senate Meeting
3:00 P.M October 11, 2006, Atchafalaya Room, LSU Union Building

Highlights

- Announcement of proxies and alternates
- Approval of Minutes from September 7, 2006
- President’s Report
- Presentation on promotion and sustaining an international campus
- Presentation by Professor Greg Seab, Former President of University of New Orleans (UNO) Faculty Senate, on effects of Force Majeure/Financial Exigency at UNO
- Presentation by Clayton Hollier, President of AgCenter Council, on effects of Financial Exigency on the AgCenter
- Old Business -- Consideration/Endorsement of Proposed Financial Exigency Policy for the LSU Campus.
- New Business – Discussion of problems with the proposed academic calendar, 2007-2008

MINUTES

President Daly opened the meeting at 3:00 P.M. with a reading of the proxies.
Joan King for Cathy Williams
Robin McCarley for Erwin Poliakoff
Andrew Christie for Nick Apostolou
George Stanley for Kevin Smith
Kerry Dooley for Warren Waggenspack
Beth Tope for Amy Trousdale
Paul La Rock for Mike Wascom
Lois J Kuyper-Rushing for Randall Hall

Approval of the Minutes from the September 7, 2006 meeting. Minutes were approved as circulated.

President’s Report
President Daly asked the senators to look at the Staff Senate Resolution 06-01 which supports the Flagship Information Technology Strategy. This is the counterpart to the Faculty Senate Resolution 06-11. The Staff Senate Resolution 06-02 supports the freshman residency requirement being considered for LSU.
President Daly reported that Constitution Day was a success. An excellent panel was assembled, moderated by Gene Policinski, Executive Director of the First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University. The panel and speaker provided a stimulating discussion for an audience of approximately 300 students, faculty, staff, and local citizens to consider actions individuals and groups might take to unite the community based upon the seven principles of LSU’s Commitment to Community. We need to renew our endorsement of the Commitment to Community statement, initially endorsed by the Senate on March 14, 1995. The Commitment to Community should also be considered in light of our Flagship Agenda to improve the quality of life on campus. If you have ideas for Constitution Day next year, let President Daly know.
Some questions have been raised with regard to the availability and quality of service at the Faculty Club. It appears that most general service has been shifted to the back dining room, which does not have the ambiance of the main dining room. Lunch in the main dining room impresses our visitors immensely and it would be unfortunate if this were lost to faculty on campus.

Presentation on Internationalizing the Campus
Meredith Veldman, representing the Faculty Senate International Education Committee, came to alert the senate to the problems the committee uncovered in LSU’s international education program during the last year. A year and a half ago the committee began to investigate what was offered in terms of international education and how it compares to other institutions. The results were disturbing. Despite the China Initiative and the Global Studies Residential College, we don’t do well in promoting or sustaining an international campus. The Flagship Agenda
hardly mentions international education. To attract the best students, we need to provide a truly international education. Currently we send 1% of our students abroad, and most of those are in summer programs, some only lasting two weeks, and this puts us behind almost all of our peer institutions. Five to six percent of our student body comes from abroad, but that also lags behind peers. There are three basic weaknesses in our program. First, there is a lack of communication and coordination; secondly, the committee found a chronic lack of funding and staffing of the offices that support international education; and thirdly, there is a critical lack of faculty input and oversight. The report provided by the committee lists obstacles to studying abroad. The committee will spend the next year developing strategies for improving the program. The hope is that the Faculty Senate will lead LSU into moving international education to a central spot in the Flagship Agenda.

Questions: Hugh Buckingham stated that the floundering of English Language Orientation Program is a perfect example of the problems seen in international education. He has seen benign neglect of this program over the last twenty-five years. Veldman will add this to the committee’s agenda. Claire Advokat asked about the students’ perception that trying to study abroad was very difficult to accomplish. Is it an accurate perception? Veldman answered that it is confusing and difficult for a student to study abroad from many standpoints including the determination of equivalent credit hours earned to registration problems. The students feel punished for going abroad. President Daly asked if the committee has been working with the Office of International Student organizations. Bill remarked that the international students he has sponsored have helped him with questions he has had. Veldman reported that there are international students on her committee. Andrew Christie reported that when the students go abroad, the courses they thought were available (by looking at the catalog) are often NOT available. Veldman explained that it is impossible for students to know exactly what courses they will take before they depart for their selected foreign institution. They often must select courses quickly, and can run into problems with credit transferal when they return to LSU. The Committee is working with the Admissions Office to develop a data base of frequently taken courses at institutions abroad; we hope this database will streamline the process for many students. It is not feasible to develop a database covering ALL possible courses to be taken at ALL possible institutions, but the vast majority of our students who study abroad for a semester or a year do so at a small number of institutions. To do this we need staffing, funding and a commitment from the administration to international education.

Presentation by Professor Greg Seab, Former Chair of the UNO University Senate on effects of Force Majeure/Financial Exigency at UNO

Greg Seab was president of the UNO University Senate for three years; he provided this account of the events following Hurricane Katrina.

The flooding caused by the hurricane was devastating. His one consolation throughout this crisis was “at least I have a job,” but even this would be in jeopardy the year following the hurricane. In looking for our new system president, we need to ask the candidates a few philosophical questions. Do you want shared governance (i.e., the faculty are the university) or the business model (chancellor, etc., govern like corporate CEOs and hire faculty as employees) for the university? In actuality, the governance has to be a cross between the two. The present trend is away from the shared governance model and toward the business model. If we want a shared governance model, then the faculty has to have responsibility in times of crisis. So if there is a hurricane that devastates LSU, the faculty themselves will have to look at their colleagues as candidates for dismissal. There is a part of me that is glad the administration did that at UNO, but in shared governance, the faculty member will have to be able to participate. At the time of the hurricane last fall, there was a financial exigency policy in force at UNO, but no one could find it since no one was on campus. Then the LSU System invented force majeure which pays no attention AAUP guidelines or past procedures for financial exigency, pays little attention to faculty and no attention to tenure. The UNO administrator, Chancellor Tim Ryan, at first assumed that this document was absolutely binding, however, he also assumed that UNO was already in a state of financial exigency, not realizing that the Board of Supervisors has to declare a state of financial exigency in order for it to be in effect. Nevertheless, the administration started working toward a declaration of financial exigency following the force majeure guidelines. Months after the storm, the Board of Supervisors declared financial exigency for UNO in May of 2006, applicable to the current fiscal year (beginning July 1, 2006) that would last one year or until canceled by the Board of Supervisors. One rationale presented by the administration for ignoring AAUP guidelines is that some of them are “illegal.” They explain this by saying there is a state law saying, “you can’t pay someone who is not working,” therefore you can’t pay someone for a year before dismissing them (as the AAUP guidelines say), and you can’t offer retirement incentive packages. There was secrecy in developing the financial exigency plans and no faculty members were involved in developing the plans. The upper administrators made up the plans, including the financial cuts. None of the senior administrators, Vice Chancellors, or Deans were cut, except for the graduate dean whose entire position was
eliminated. There was “consultation” with the faculty in the sense that the Chancellor met and talked with faculty; explaining carefully the need for financial exigency but not sharing details of the plans for dealing with it. The administration’s secret plan was leaked, including the departments and salaries of the people on the cut list which allowed them to be identified. Seventy-nine people were on this cut list. Administration said the leaked version was not accurate, that it was changing continuously. In the end, only sixteen people were actually involuntarily furloughed, but this does not account for the people who left, retired, or found other jobs, because they found themselves on that cut list. Seab credits Tim Ryan for opening the university on October 10, with mostly online classes. If he had not done this, UNO would have lost more faculty. Seab believes they did need to declare financial exigency, in fact, UNO is still in financial difficulty. In Seab’s department of fourteen faculty (two of whom are shared with a research institute), three tenured faculty were cut, all of whom were on the verge of retirement. Two chose to retire (they get summer pay if they retire as opposed to being furloughed). The third was retained, Seab was able to “trade” this third person’s job for another faculty member who got a job elsewhere. Then a fourth left. His department is down from fourteen to ten faculty members, so it is difficult to cover all the classes. What if the faculty had been asked to participate in the furlough decisions? He’s pretty sure the people who were cut would still have retired or left but there wouldn’t be the rancor and low morale and the fear of “who is next?” The administration didn’t realize how many faculty were looking for jobs elsewhere and intending to leave, so some departments have lost over half their faculty. The outcome would have been better if the faculty had been involved in the process.

**Questions:** James Stoner asked “You spoke as any employee group would speak. Is there anything in a university that makes faculty input different from a business model? Was it the most able faculty who left?” Seab responded that he has anecdotal evidence that it was highly regarded faculty (and those who were vocal) who left, and they left voluntarily. This has an impact on the budget because the university loses its grant overhead money. The administration position was that they had been in the process of identifying the strongest and weakest programs before the hurricane, so administration says they used that data to cut programs and faculty after the hurricane.

**Presentation by Clayton Hollier, President of AgCenter Council on effects of Financial Exigency in the AgCenter**

When the AgCenter administration considered financial exigency they called together a faculty advisory committee from on and off campus faculty. Ten people met weekly and listened to AgCenter administration explain what was meant by “financial exigency.” Why are we in need of exigency? Did the administration want a “yes” vote on financial exigency? There was a lot of disagreement among the committee members. The committee questioned the administration repeatedly, asking, Is there another way? Seeing the budget midyear last year, the AgCenter had to give back 6%. When the 2006-2007 projection came, they were given 92% of the amended budget from the year before. Things were very tight already, and it seemed that financial exigency was the only way to go. In January through February, 2006, this faculty advisory committee was discussing financial exigency, including when was the best time to declare exigency. In initial meetings they discussed proposals that were submitted for how to handle the financial situations. The state of financial exigency for the AgCenter ends July 1, 2007, but the sense of the group is that it will be ended much sooner than that. The majority of the advisory group wants to get out of exigency as soon as possible even though they are $2,000,000 short. The AgCenter got salary money and the mandates were funded, so it doesn’t look good to continue in exigency. The changes occurred at the AgCenter could have happened without exigency (departmental mergers and shifting of assignments). However, now suddenly the faculty feels vulnerable. Faculty and graduate student recruitment is going forward, but if those students look at the faculty exigency factor, will they still come? Some faculty left when all this happened. The situation is not as bad as UNO had it.

**Questions:** Andrew King asked, “We’ve been hearing that agents in the experimental stations haven’t been secure in their jobs, and there was no transparency in the process. Why?” Hollier explained that there are plans that were proposed that weren’t put into place, and some that still may be put into place, but none were going to be implemented until the current budget was revealed. Following Hollier’s presentations, Seab added that he has mixed feelings toward UNO administration, they did good and bad things for the university, but he has no mixed feelings about the role of the state. There was almost no help from the state even when they had a huge surplus this year. They chose to withhold aid for a major state university in a crisis.
Consideration/Endorsement of Proposed Financial Exigency Policy for our Campus, sponsored by Kevin Cope.

President Daly introduced a financial exigency plan for LSU by saying that now is the time to develop a solid plan. There are two parts to this plan, the first part is a plan for the campus, and the second part is a proposal to be presented to the Board for changes in the Board regulations. President Daly has asked other campuses to look at the proposed Board plan, hoping they will endorse these changes. We are considering the campus plan today. President Daly asked Kevin Cope to discuss this plan.

Cope reported that his committee met many times. He summarized the campus plan, saying that it included a statement concerning the deleterious effect a declaration of financial exigency would have on the campus. The plan calls for an outside consultant to verify that financial exigency is actually needed. The plan addresses the need for transparency as well as recommending input from the Faculty Senate. Emphasis was put on contracts and obligations. Financial exigency shouldn’t be used to move the university in a different direction. The plan suggests that compassionate action should be taken for faculty who are dismissed. If trimming happens, it should happen in administration as well.

Comments: Robert Perlis said: I have three questions: First, are financial exigency and force majeure synonymous? President Daly: No, force majeure is used after a crisis. Financial exigency can be predicted and anticipated. Secondly, Perlis continued, this is a recommendation, but is it a resolution? President Daly says no, what we’re asking for is an endorsement, then that endorsed document will go to the administration for consideration. Thirdly, Perlis read from page three of the document, “financial exigency is an imminent bona fide financial crisis that is fortuitous and not foreseen” so he wonders how it can be called “predictable”? President Daly said that was one way of getting into financial exigency and Perlis responded that this document offers it as the only path toward financial exigency, as no others are offered. Cope replied that although a critical event can’t be foreseen, the process that follows can be foreseen. Perlis wondered whether non-critical events could lead to financial exigency (e.g., the price of oil or bad management) but these are not addressed in this document. Cope answered by saying that the committee wanted to emphasize using financial exigency in a crisis situation rather than as a tool for the administration to get rid of a declining program. Gerald Knapp asked about the availability of earlier documents upon which these new ones are based. Cope answered that both the 1995 LSU document (upon which the current document is based) the State Regulation 513 are available. Both documents are on the web. Knapp wanted to see the first document to compare it to the new one and asked that both original documents be sent to all of the Faculty Senate. Knapp asked if the administration is involved at all. Cope replied that one administrator was there but didn’t participate much. Harold Silverman said that LSU took every action to avoid financial exigency. He explained that recruitment and reputation are affected negatively regardless of what new plan is implemented. Silverman mentioned that UNO was different, they didn’t have a choice and the state didn’t help.

Andrew Christie moved that we vote in favor of endorsement, Richard Kurtz seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in favor of endorsing the document.

Consideration/Endorsement of Proposed Changes in LSU Board of Supervisors Regulations Regarding Financial Exigency.

Cope explained that this is a much shorter document, although the tenor is the same. The original document was wildly out of compliance with AAUP guidelines. The proposed guidelines define financial exigency and perhaps soften the crush of such a declaration by introducing some protections for faculty. George Stanley moved to endorse the document, Marcia Newcomer seconded, the vote was unanimous in favor of endorsement.

New Business

Beth Tope stated that commencement 2007 is on December 21, and this is too late, it is not consistent with efforts to increase diversity because international students do not have time to return home for the holidays. Cope asked if this is a resolution and Tope answered that she merely wanted to bring this issue to the attention of the Senate. Advokat asked what could be proposed to propose to fix the problem, and Tope explained that if the semester started earlier, it would end earlier. George Stanley mentioned that most SEC schools start earlier than we do, and even this year, commencement is late, falling on December 19. Knapp wondered if the calendar was affected by intersession classes. President Daly said a resolution that suggested at least a week’s time before Christmas would be an answer to the problem. Tope agreed to write such a resolution.

Meeting adjourned at 4:30.