HIGHLIGHTS FROM FACULTY SENATE MEETING

October 7, 1997

Provost’s Comments, Resolution 97-02, ASH Committee report

Provost Fogel gave an update on the status of the search committees for the upper administrative positions. Resolution 97-02 (LSU Foundation Accounts) creating three Foundation accounts supporting faculty travel and grant enhancement as part of the Capital Fund Drive was passed unanimously. The ASH Committee introduced a Resolution to improve admissions standards.

MINUTES

Faculty Senate Meeting

October 7, 1997

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 pm. Invited guests included Kathy Sciacchetano (Student Aid), Lisa Harris (Undergraduate Admissions), George Strain, Todd Pourciau (Staff Senate liaison), Helen Foley (LSU Foundation), Charles Graham, Laura Lindsey, Mary Jones (LSU Today). Christy Witt was introduced as the new office secretary for Faculty Senate. The September minutes were approved as read.

Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost’s Report

Provost Fogel gave an update on the search committees for upper administrative positions, as follows:

1. Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Studies--Committee has been appointed with Boyd Professor Tom Klei as chair. The search committee is reviewing a job description. Discussions have centered around combining the chief research officer and graduate deanship. The job description states that the Graduate School will report to the VC for Research and Graduate Studies. A search firm will assist the search committee. Suggestions to the search committee from the faculty regarding appropriate candidates were welcomed. The goal is to have a strong pool of applicants by late spring 1998 with appointment thereafter.

2. Vice Provost for Academic Affairs--Committee has been appointed with Dean Karl Roider as chair. An internal search is planned. The goal is to fill the position by the end of fall semester.
3. Assistant Vice Chancellor for Campus Diversity. Provost Fogel noted that he is on the verge of appointing this committee.
4. Vice Chancellor for Student Services. An interim will be appointed in January.
5. Executive Direction of International Development. The committee has not yet been formed. Ken Carpenter is serving as interim director.

President’s Report

1) University Planning Council (UPC). Plans are to distribute a draft copy laying out strategic initiatives for the university by October 15th. The planning process will occur in an iterative fashion.

2) ASH Committee report. The rate of growth of enrollment has become problematic (28,000+). As a result, the UPC and ASH are presently discussing methods to improve admissions standards for incoming freshmen and transfer students. A resolution will be proposed to the Faculty Senate for consideration.

Capital Fund Drive.

Helen Foley and Liz Wilson presented a 3-page memo outlining the drive. They encouraged faculty participation. Three new Foundation accounts have been established to accommodate faculty contributions:

a) Faculty Development Fund. To participate in activities to broaden faculty members expertise.

b) Faculty Travel Fund. To participate in professional meetings in faculty members area of expertise.

c) Faculty Research Matching Fund. To increase the probability of faculty members receiving grants.

Approximately $90 million is anticipated by the end of the year. Questions and discussion followed. To summarize, Helen Foley noted that the faculty participation rate so far has not been determined. President Collier noted that whether the funds will be endowed or expenditure funds has not yet been determined. Helen Foley further added that a $10,000 minimum is required for creating an endowment; people can continue to offer gifts after the campaign is over; and memorials can be gifted to LSU. She also noted that it is appropriate to give to a particular department; if an account for the designated department does not exist, one can be created.

Resolution 97-02 (re: LSU Foundation Accounts)

(see below for complete text). Presented by Malcolm Richardson. Senator Richardson noted that the dispersing of funds would be administered through the Faculty Senate. Questions and discussion followed. To summarize, President Collier reiterated that
Faculty Senate will administer the funds; the Faculty Senate will decide later if we need to reassign who will handle expenditures (e.g., another option would be to handle the funds through the Office of Research). President Collier noted that the Faculty Senate president would approve requests for funds within guidelines that will be developed by full Faculty Senate. Guidelines for expenditures will be discussed in another Faculty Senate meeting. Helen Foley added that the LSU Foundation would give a full accounting of how the funds are managed each year. Unanimous approval of Resolution 97-02 (see attached).

**ASH Committee Report and Resolution**

Senator Michael Cherry noted that ASH has been asked to recommend changes to improve admissions standards. Senator Cherry noted the difficulties with predicting enrollment, but noted that it is likely to go up. Senator Wharton noted that in the 1980's, a great deal of political energy was expended to raise the admission standards. He noted that raising the standard is essential to guard against admitting students who have not had the level of preparation necessary to achieve academic success. He further noted that while raising standards has been touted as a form of "elitism," this practice is necessary to reinforce hard work and preparation prior to applying to LSU.

Senator Cherry introduced Resolution 97-01, but it was not voted on. Questions and discussion followed. To summarize, Senator Cherry noted that ASH hopes to present the specific GPA/ACT numbers in the next Faculty Senate meeting. Senator Yannitell commented that the community college in East Baton Rouge Parish should help the "elitist" problem, insofar as it will help students get the skills they need prior to coming to LSU. The issue of timing and when to change the guidelines was discussed. Senator Cherry described some options which included instituting an early admission; summer admission for some; and changing the standards for fall enrollment. Senator Cherry also noted some concerns about the graduation rate: only 18% graduate after 4 years; 40% after 5 years, and 46% after 6 years. He also noted that the admissions office may need more resources and help to manage the TOPS program case by case load.

**Faculty Expertise Database.**

Presented by Senator Jerry Draayer. The database, LaGENIUS, allows LSU to list our expertise nationally. It is free of charge and web searchable. LaSMARTS is an electronic funding opportunity service. It allows users to create an interest profile and provides updates about funding opportunities that match your interest profile. Charles Graham noted that the Office of Sponsored Research would hold a tutorial on the database (note: both are funded by the Louisiana NSF EPSCoR grant through the Board of Regents).

**Other Committee Reports.**

None
Old Business.

None

New Business.

None

Meeting Adjourned at 4:40 pm

Respectfully submitted

Katie Cherry
Secretary

Senate Resolution 97-02 (Foundation Accounts)

Whereas the LSU Faculty Senate strongly supports the LSU Campaign and wishes to encourage maximum faculty participation; and

Whereas many donors may wish to contribute especially to certain professional development areas which have been underfunded in recent years and for which no LSU Foundation accounts currently exist;

Be it resolved that the LSU Faculty Senate

1. Recommends the creation of three LSU Foundation accounts administered by the Faculty Senate and dedicated as follows:

   a. Faculty Development Funds, to provide support for faculty members to participate in activities to broaden their expertise;
   b. Faculty Travel Funds, to provide support for faculty members to participate in professional meetings;
   c. Faculty Research Matching Funds, to provide matching funds to increase a faculty member's capability to attract grants.

1. Recommends expenditures from these accounts only after senate approval of guidelines for their administration.
Draft resolution for the Faculty Senate, Oct. 7, 1997

When LSU added a GPA criterion to its admissions decisions for the class entering in 1990, and raised the nominal high school GPA requirement to 2.3 for the class entering in 1995, the stated intention was to raise our admissions standards again after a few years.

We have now had the opportunity to see the effect of those raised standards. The data show that, as our students' high school grade point averages and standardized test scores increase, their success at LSU improves as well: Retention rates from one year to the next, graduation rates, and LSU grade point averages all correlate with high school GPA and test scores, and all are improving steadily.

At the same time as our students have gotten better, their number has increased as well. Not including those students admitted under the ACCESS program, the number of entering freshmen increased by approximately 600 students from fall 1996 to fall 1997. Based on the 14-day statistics, we had an entering freshman class this fall of 4324 students. We can be pleased that so many Louisiana students are choosing to come to LSU, and it is not unreasonable to assume that our upgraded admissions standards have played a role in making LSU an increasingly attractive place to come for an education. Nevertheless, we need to be concerned that we can provide the services and the facilities and the teaching that our students deserve. As the size of our undergraduate student body increases, there will be increasing demands on our teaching staff, our classroom and laboratory capacity, and our overall ability to provide first rate services to our students. The unexpectedly large number of students this fall caused problems in several departments that had to increase teaching staff and find new classroom space on short notice.

For fall 1998, the State Legislature has instituted the TOPS (Tuition Opportunity Program for Students) program which will provide free tuition for any new freshman entering LSU with a high school GPA of 2.5 or higher, 16.5 hours of core units, and an ACT score at least equal to the maximum of the previous year's state average or 19. Students with better entering credentials may qualify for additional awards. This innovative state program holds the promise that it may make the state's flagship university a good deal more attractive for our top Louisiana high school graduates, who might otherwise choose to attend out-of-state schools. It also holds the risk, however, that the number of qualified students coming to LSU next year may rise significantly, further stressing our already burdened capacity. It is difficult at this point to predict how serious a problem this may be next fall, but there is a clear need to be planning now for potential problems caused by another increase in enrollment.
Last spring, Chancellor Jenkins requested that the Faculty Senate look at the possibility of increasing our admissions standards again. The Senate's Admissions, Standards, and Honors Committee has been meeting to study the issue, and will plan to have a detailed report to present to the Senate in November. Nevertheless, although ASH is not yet ready to present detailed or final recommendations, we note that the issues of enrollment management in particular provide some time urgency. If we intend to put any substantive changes into effect for Fall 1998, we need to inform high school students and their counselors very soon. We therefore propose the following resolution to be discussed initially at the Senate meeting in October, and improved and finalized in November.

Resolution 97-01

Whereas LSU, Louisiana's flagship university, should strive to attract the state's best and most promising high school graduates, and provide them with the best training and finest quality education possible, and

Whereas our statistics show that higher admissions standards translate into better student performance and enhanced student success at LSU, and furthermore appear to be correlated with increased numbers of high school students considering LSU to be an attractive university to attend, and therefore with rising numbers of entering freshmen and rising year-to-year retention rates, and

Whereas Fall 1997 enrollments have already made it necessary to increase instructional staff and find additional classroom space on short notice, and

Whereas the State has instituted the innovative and exciting TOPS scholarship program, which may lead to further increases in the number of students wanting to attend LSU, and

Whereas LSU applauds the State Legislature's efforts to "raise the bar" for high school students across the state, and should play its part in this effort to raise academic standards as well,

Therefore be it resolved that the Admissions, Standards, and Honors Committee present to the Faculty Senate a plan to:

1. Continue the process of increasing our admissions standards for entering students. Specifically, ASH will consider the advisability of:

   a) raising the guaranteed admissions requirements (high school GPA and ACT score).

   b) placing students who apply but do not qualify under a) into a secondary pool. The records of all such students would be reviewed on an individual basis. In these cases, the Undergraduate Admissions Committee would consider grade point average, standardized test scores, class rank, pattern and quality of courses, grade trends, educational objectives, extracurricular activities, leadership abilities, school recommendations, special talents, significant life and career experiences, or membership in groups
underrepresented in the student body. Students from this secondary pool would be admitted in parallel with applicants admitted under item a).

2. Implement as much as possible of a new admissions plan in time to manage the Fall 1998 enrollment rationally and sensibly, and in a manner that utilizes the University's resources efficiently in order to provide high quality services to both continuing and entering students. At the same time, any new plan should recognize the University's commitment to current high school seniors who have prepared in good faith for the current published admissions standards.