HIGHLIGHTS FROM FACULTY SENATE MEETING

September 7, 2001

Comments by Chancellor Mark Emmert

- Thanks to faculty for a smooth start for the semester despite record enrollments, a shortage of classes in some areas, and no increase in faculty.
- Student profiles and retention rates continue to improve.

Comments by Executive Vice-Chancellor and Provost Fogel

- Successful legislative session included a statewide initiative for higher education, earmarking more than $22 million for information technology (IT) investments at Louisiana universities of which LSU will receive nearly $7 million and approximately $9 million to match endowed professorships at of which LSU now has 143.
- LSU’s six-year graduation rate rose by more than 2%, up to 56%.
- Faculty pay raises were the highest percentage in the region.
- Increased funding for graduate student stipends is a priority.
- Faculty comments are solicited on the University Planning Document, version 2.0.
- Chancellor’s Honor Roll has been established to recognize full-time undergraduate students completing at least 12 hours in the semester with a 4.0 semester average and no "I" grades.
- A committee reviewed and revised course scheduling policies and protocols.

Comments by Faculty Senate President Neil Kestner

- SGA is working on a system to post teacher evaluations on the LSU PAWS page.
- Plans are underway to increase the employer’s contribution to Group Benefits.
- Issues to be addressed in Faculty Senate this year include a review of policies on graduate faculty status (SR 01-13) and reports from the Ad Hoc Committee of Collective Bargaining, the ASH Committee, and the Committee revising PS 36.

Old Business: none.
New Business:

- Nicholas Apostolou, Accounting, was elected to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.
- Kevin Smith, Vice Chancellor of Research and Dean of the Graduate School, and Kevin Price, Dean of Students were introduced to Senators.
- In Committee reports, Kelly Blessinger, Chair of Committee on Committees, announced that membership of the 17 Faculty Senate Standing Committees are listed on the web page; David Madden, Chair of FS Public Relations Committee, described a campus-wide seminar September 28, on dealing with the media and getting publicity for departmental activities.
- SR 02-01, requesting that a letter of acknowledgment and thanks be sent to the Governor and members of the Louisiana Legislature for support of higher education in the last legislative session was introduced and will be revised for consideration at the next meeting.
- Senators are encouraged to check the FS Web Page regularly for pending minutes, agendas, resolutions, and other information.

Faculty Senate Minutes

September 7, 2001

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m. Invited guests included Chancellor Mark Emmert, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Daniel Fogel, Vice-Chancellor of Research and Dean of the Graduate School Kevin Smith, Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs Neil Mathews, and Dean of Students Kevin Price.

Proxies were announced. May 4 minutes were approved as corrected.

Comments by Chancellor Emmert: Chancellor Emmert spoke briefly, thanking faculty members for their efforts in a smooth start for the semester despite record enrollments and a shortage of classes in some areas. He acknowledged that we have more students than our budget can support, yet we continue to handle the overload without increases in funding or number of faculty members. Student profiles and retention rates continue to improve. Although the latest US News & World Report ranking still lists LSU among the third tier of doctoral universities, our ratings rose on nearly every variable.

Comments by Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Fogel: Provost Fogel also thanked faculty members for handling increased enrollment. He noted the Chancellor’s “incredible job” in the recent legislative session during which Gov. Mike Foster and the Louisiana Legislature created a statewide initiative for higher education, earmarking a little more than $22 million this year for information technology (IT) investments at Louisiana universities. LSU is slated to receive the largest amount, nearly $7 million, which will translate into roughly 50 faculty positions. As a result of IT investments, the University has established the LSU Center for Applied Information Technology and Learning (LSU CAPITAL). The Provost hopes this level of success can be repeated next
year for biotechnology and for the humanities the following year. As a result of other legislative action, approximately $9 million was allocated to match endowed professorships of which we now have 143.

In other good news, Provost Fogel pointed out that LSU’s six-year graduation rate rose by more than 2%, up to 56%, with the goal of 63% by 2008. He noted that faculty pay raises this year were the highest percentage in the region. He commented on a productive leadership retreat in June at which Deans, Faculty Senate Officers, Vice Chancellors, and Board members set priorities for the coming year, including securing funding for competitive stipends for graduate students, in addition to the $2 million in enhanced funds already allocated.

The Provost invited Senators’ input on the University Planning Document, version 2.0. Members of the campus community are invited to attend public forms (Thursday, September 13, from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. and Monday, September 17, from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m., in the Vieux Carre Room) or to email comments to UPC@listserv.lsu.edu. Provost Fogel hopes to release a revised version by Oct. 15. After that, the IT Master Plan will be circulated for comments, with a final draft to follow in December. The IT Master Plan addresses LSU’s research and teaching agendas, whereas the IT Initiative is concerned with research capacities and academic programs related to economic developments in Louisiana.

Provost Fogel also followed up on two things the Faculty Senate asked upper administration to address last year: (1) A Chancellor’s Honor Roll has been established to recognize full-time undergraduate students completing at least 12 hours in the semester with a semester average of 4.00 and no "I" grades. (2) A committee reviewed and revised course scheduling policies and protocols. The changes made should help unpack the schedule for students, with 55% of the classes during prime time and 45% of the classes out of prime time.

During the question and answer session following Provost Fogel’s remarks, three issues were addressed:

1) Senator Di Maio sought clarification whether and when a committee had reviewed course scheduling policies (answer: yes, over the summer), and Senator Harrison asked if evening school hours were included in the 45% of classes out of prime time since some schools do not offer evening classes (answer: they are).

2) Senator Cutrera asked the Provost to address the low pay ($2500 per session) for Evening School classes, as compared to the average pay per section for instructors of regular classes. He agreed that the salary is low but explained that with 600 sections taught through Evening School, to raise salary $1000 per section would cost about the amount needed for a staff raise. He also identified increased graduate stipends as a higher in priority. He noted that if we were better funded, compensation for teaching Evening School classes could be increased.
3) Senator Bell asked the Provost about University support for www.universitytools.com which posts anonymous teacher evaluations. The Provost explained that LSU funded the site ($10,000) to provide scheduling services to students not provided by PAWS, making REGGIE easier to use. LSU did not ask for online evaluations of faculty members nor does it encourage this activity, but, according to the Provost, the organization is within its constitutional rights to post them. The administration cannot censor the site.

Comments by President Kestner: President Kestner introduced the Faculty Senate Executive Committee: Vice-president Laurie Anderson, Secretary Sarah Liggett, Past President Katie Cherry, and Members-at-Large Fran Lawrence and Carruth McGehee. Andy King serves as parliamentarian; Tushar Vijay Apshankar is our graduate assistant. VP Anderson is now the Faculty Senate representative to the Board of Supervisors meetings and has been elected to chair the Board of Supervisors Council of Faculty Advisors; Pres. Kestner now sits on the University Planning Council.

Pres. Kestner explained that the SGA intends to post student evaluations of teachers on the LSU PAWS page, as an alternative to sites such as www.universitytools.com or www.pickaprof.com. He informed the faculty that plans are underway to increase the employer’s contribution to Group Benefits to 75% over the next few years. Also Forest Benedict is working with Mark Drennen to see if LSU can set up its own benefits program. LSU retirees may continue to get routine blood tests at the LSU Health Center at minimal costs.

In items related to last year’s resolutions, Kevin Smith will review SR 01-13 on policies concerning graduate faculty status. Items on the agenda for this year’s Faculty Senate meetings include reports by the Ad Hoc Committee of Collective Bargaining, by the ASH Committee on higher admission standards for 2004, by Gene Wittkopf as chair of the Committee revising PS 36 (Promotion/Tenure Procedures), and by others on the IT Master Plan and the newly formed Undergraduate Council.

Old Business: none.

New Business:

Nicholas G. Apostolou, Accounting, was elected from among the group of new senators to serve on the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. John E. Chandler was also nominated.

Two new campus administrators were introduced to the Senate. Kevin Smith, Vice Chancellor of Research and Dean of the Graduate School, called his office “a service unit”, operating to ensure faculty can carry out their research projects effectively. An increase in graduate student stipends is one of his main goals. Kevin Price, Dean of Students, identified one of his projects to be a revision of the Code of Student Conduct.
Committee Reports were made by Kelly Blessinger, Chair of Committee on Committees, who encouraged Senators to check the web page for membership lists of the 17 Faculty Senate Standing Committees. She announced plans to survey faculty members next spring to learn on which committees they may wish to serve. David Madden, Chair of FS Public Relations Committee, announced plans for a campus-wide seminar September 28, on dealing with the media and getting publicity for departmental activities. To register, call 8-6572.

SR 02-01, requesting that a letter of acknowledgment and thanks be sent to the Governor and members of the Louisiana Legislature for support of higher education in the last legislative session was introduced by Fran Lawrence. Senator McGehee suggested that the resolution be revised to identify specific accomplishments of the legislative session which impact higher education. Senators are invited to send suggestions for revision to members the Faculty Senate Executive Committee who will return with a revised version in October.

Laurie Anderson explained how Senators can locate FS communications on the LSU web page by going to “Faculty Senate” under the LSU A-Z Directory. There Senators will find links to agendas, minutes (pending and approved), resolutions, and standing committee reports as well as an archive of past correspondence. Senators are asked for suggestions to improve the site. Senator Snider requested that minutes be posted pending approval so that all faculty members can be informed of pending resolutions. Currently only approved minutes are distributed to the entire faculty. The FS Executive Committee is seeking ways to use electronic communications and postings to save the expense of paper copies.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sarah Liggett, Secretary

*http://unix1.sncc.lsu.edu/guests/senate/public_html/index.htm*