

**Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, October 2, 2012**  
**Student Senate Room, LSU Student Union**



**Attendance**

*Faculty Senate Executive Committee members present:*

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| 1. Kevin L. Cope (President, English)          | 2. Joan King (Secretary, Food Science)                     |
| 3. Bill Daly (Past-President, Chemistry)       | 4. (Stephanie Braunstein (Member-at-Large, LSU Libraries)) |
| 5. Larry Rouse (Member-at-Large, Oceanography) |  |

Parliamentarian: Louay Mohammed

*Senators present (X = Present; A = Alternate; P = Proxy):*

1	X	Sibel Ales (Oceanography/C&E)	23	P	Bruce Eilts (Vet Clinical Sci/Vet)	44	X	Louay Mohammed (C & Environ/Eng)
2	X	Austin Allen (Landscape Arch./AD )	24	P	Kenneth Fasching-Varner (Ed T Pol Pract/Ed)	45	A	Carl Motsenbocker (Horticult/Ag)
3	X	Linda Allen (Chemistry/Sci)	25	P	Guillermo Ferreya (Math/Sci)	46	X	Jeff Nunn (Geology/Sci)
4	X	Melissa Beck (Psychology/HSS)	26		Joseph Francis (Compar BioMed/Vet)	47	X	John Nyman (Renew Nat Res/Ag)
5	X	David Bertolini (Architect/A&D)	27	X	Juhan Frank (Physics/Sci)	48	X	Evelyn Orman (Music/Music & DA)
6	X	Dana Bickmore (Ed Theory Pol Pract/Ed)	28	P	Stephen Gaunt (Pathobiological Sci/Vet)	49	X	Irvin Peckham (Eng/HHS)
7	P	Graham Bodie (Comm Studies/HSS)	29	X	Jeff Gillespie (Ag Econ/Ag)	50	X	Rosemary Peters (French/HSS)
8	P	William Boelhower (English/HSS)	30	X	Gundela Hachmann (Foreign Lang Lit/HHS)	51	X	Suresh Rai (Elect & Comp/Eng)
9	X	Dorin Boldor (Biol Eng/Ag-Eng)	31	X	Jong Ham (Plant Path/Ag)	52	X	Margaret Reams (Environ Studies/C&E)
10	X	Stephanie Braunstein (LSU Libraries/Lib)	32		Richard Holben (Drama/Music & DA)	53		Lawrence Rouse (Oceanography/C&E)
11	X	John Caprio (Bio Sci/Sci)	33	X	Stuart Irvine (Philos Relig/HHS)	54	P	Gary Sanger (Finance/BA)
12	P	Russell Carson (Kinesiology/Ed)	34	X	Dorothy Jacobsen (Kinesiology/Ed)	55	X	Andrew Schwarz (Info Sys Dec Sci/Bus)
13	X	Paolo Chirumbolo (Foreign Lang/HSS)	35	X	Jennifer Jolly (Ed Theory Pol Pract/Ed)	56	A	Bhaba Sarker (Const Manage & Ind/Eng)
14		Aaron Clopton (Kinesiology/Ed)	36		Carol Jurkiewicz (Public Admin/BA)	57		Suzanne Stauffer (Lib & Info Sci/SLIS)
15	X	Kevin Cope (English/HSS)	37	X	Joan King (Food Sci/Ag)	58	X	William Stickle (Biological Sci/Sci)
16	X	Larry Crumbley (Accounting/BA)	38	X	Vince LiCata (Biological Sci/Sci)	59	X	Judith Sylvester (Mass Com/Mass Com)
17		William Daly (Chemistry/Sci)	39	X	David Lindenfeld (History/HSS)	60	X	Padmanabhan Sundar (Math/Sci)
18		Jeffrey Davis (Entomology/Ag)	40	X	Mandi Lopez (Vet Clinical Sci/Vet)	61		Carol Taylor (Chem/Sci)
19	X	John DiTusa (Phys Astron/Sci)	41	X	Ken McMillin (Animal Sci/Ag)	62	P	WanJun Wang (Mech Eng/Eng)
20	X	Neila Donovan (Comm Sci Disord/HSS)	42		Reem Meshal (Phil & Relig/HSS)	63	X	Christopher Weber (Polysci/HSS)
21	P	Kerry Dooley (ChemE/Eng)	43	X	Kathryn Stamps Mitchell (Soc Work/HHS)	64		Hsiao-Chun Wu (Elect & Comp/Eng)
22	X	Dorian Dorado (Foreign Lang Lit/HHS)						

*Guests:*

Thomas Rodgers	Louis Day	Fakhri Al Bagdadi	Robert Doolas	Donna Love
Mike Russo	Seth Orgel	Koran Addo	Gil Reeve	

**Consideration of the Minutes from September 5, 2012**

Moved by Senator Irvine, 2nd by Lindenfeld and unanimously accepted conditionally

**President's Report**

- After several years of negotiation consultation with persons in IT and the Moodle Development committee we succeeded in creating a basic grading template for Moodle Gradebook. The new template can be found on the grade book page and will be almost as intuitive as Semester Book and Blackboard to enter grades unless a person has something very complicated. Thanks to Brian Nicole Pam Nicole and staff at IT services. There are still problems to be resolved such as the language Moodle uses.
- We have made arrangements to upgrade nighttime parking for faculty in various C lots around campus. Three years ago Faculty Senate spearheaded an initiative to create night time designated parking spaces in various C lots around campus. We have arranged for increased enforcement, so towing is now occurring. Gates had been going up to early but will now be kept down until 4:30 or 5 PM, so those who have paid for controlled parking will at least have that much of a benefit. Lot C5 will be designated as a faculty night time parking lot open to anyone with a C pass or B pass. C5 is along the side of the quadrangle, not the Indian Mounds lot, but the next one over that runs from Allen Hall to the College of Art and Design.
- Faculty Senate Executive Committee met with three leaders of the online initiative, Ed Holton, David Kurpius and Gil Reeve. We were assured that the company that has been contracted to help with the online push is only helping on a technical basis, providing necessary electronic infrastructure, not attempting to deal with course content. We are looking forward to more faculty input in the online issue. We still need to look at course content, eligibility and number of hours of credit in respect to federal standards for that.

4. There is now a fingerprinting check on new employees. This is the least invasive method to use due to security leaks at some police departments. There have been problems with false positives according to HRM at our campus.
5. FSEC has begun dialog about numerous executive searches with the academic affairs office. In regards to format of the procedures we are satisfied that there is good cooperation with faculty by Academic Affairs.
6. Faculty credentials used to be in the catalog before, but they have been removed in the recent past. Faculty credentials included where a faculty member graduated from and what field. This is now relegated to accreditation areas, but it is unfortunate as it diminishes glory that people see when they look at LSU information. We have asked Gil Reeve to post them in some assessable area. There is a new interest in providing a directory of retired and emeritus faculty.
7. We might re-arrange or limit the number of commencements. Having so many commencements and processing so many special events tends to drain resources and overall thins the quality of very important events that help bring the community together. If anyone has input in this area send it to Kevin Cope or a member of the FSEC.
8. The athletic department will transfer money to the university on a regular basis. This produced abundant publicity for the university around the nation and for once the athletic department will be heralded for forward thinking actions rather than a scandal. A faculty driven committee examining the finances of the athletic department has shown that it is well managed financially. There is caution about interpretation of this agreement. Of the \$7.2 million that is transferred each year, \$5 million of the money is transferred for services rendered. This money helps the university at a certain magnitude, but do not conclude that this funding will solve all of the university's problems.
9. We read in the newspaper that BOS consolidation of President and Chancellor is a done deal. None of this happened so far. Supervisors are beginning to break into factions or subgroups. Supervisors have new interest in faculty world and had breakfast with faculty from all LSY system campuses, 18 people. This Thursday one supervisor will meet with the LSU A&M faculty group. Another group of supervisors have asked for a faculty guided tour of the campus.
10. Some campuses are allowing gratis teaching by retired faculty. This is good in that it takes into account expertise of retired faculty, but bad in that it is used to compensate for inadequate staffing in especially in general education courses as in the case of the LSU Shreveport campus. We have registered in a number of venues that gratis teaching is not the best option for the long term staffing of the university. Although we would like to see advantage taken of the expertise of our long serving LSU and LSU system citizens, this may not be the only way to go about it and may even set a bad precedent.
11. This past Saturday a group met in Alexandria to discuss the dilemma of faculty statewide that set a record attendance level. Thirty two people came out from almost every campus in the state and from all four higher education managements systems. News from the meeting will be reported in next months Faculty Senate newsletter. There are two big news items emerging. A statewide commission was set up to study faculty compensation in a discipline fashion. One of the problems with comparing faculty compensation around the state since each system has a multiplicity of campuses that serve a multiplicity of missions and are compared to a multiplicity of markets and peer groups. A group of seven people from four different higher education systems have been delegated to come up with some discipline plan to figure out what the situation is really is in regard to faculty compensation in the state and in comparison comparable states. A press relations committee of the Louisiana Association of Faculty Senates has been set up to put out a series of press releases of information on faculty views on a variety of issues.

***Q&A Summary:***

None

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**Presentation by Lee Griffin, CEO, LSU Foundation (and Foundation colleagues)**

Kevin Cope

One of mystery areas of the university is fundraising in part that it is a highly technical field, in part because the offices of fund raising tend to be off campus, and in part because the function of a foundation is to a degree to keep things private, so we can have a private source of support not beleaguered by watch dogs from around the state. The abundance of privacy and expertise required sometimes raises suspicion amongst the faculty. There has been faculty outreach to three funding organizations on campus, the LSU Foundation, the Tiger Athletic Foundation, and the Alumni Foundation. There are many others with smaller scopes as well. There was a three hour briefing to FSEC a few weeks ago by the LSU Foundation.

Lee Griffin, President and CEO

The LSU Foundation raises money for the academic side of university and has nothing to do with athletics. The LSU Foundation was founded in 1960 by Dr. Troy Middleton, former President of LSU and now has \$520 to \$530 million in assets. They advise the university on investment of its daily cash flow. The LSU Foundation is managing, investing or advising on funds of about \$1 billion of donor money. Gifts received are either endowed by the donor (only spend income, not principle) or non endowed (spend down type donations), for example the Business Education complex, with matched private and other dollars raised, that were meant to be spent down.

There are many development officers who are all are out in college units working with deans and dept heads and the LSU Foundation to raise money. None are housed in the LSU Foundation office.

LSU Foundation raises funds for the LSU system, LSU Law Center, LSU AgCenter and LSU A&M. Money is raised for faculty support, research programs, and facilities. Since the state allocation has gone down in recent years the LSU Foundation needs to do everything they can to improve what they bring in on an annual basis.

The LSU Foundation lives by certain values and must have integrity and let donors know that their money is invested wisely, accounted for precisely and money in accounts spent in accordance with wishes and desires of the donor. The LSU Foundation is audited every year and in the last audit there were no exceptions about how money was spent in accordance with donor wishes.

LSU Foundation has a board of directors, nominated and elected to the board through nominating committee. The board has people from various industries and spheres of influence, people who know finance, law and marketing, people from all around the state. They want people with connections to people with strong financial capability. There are 25 directors currently.

Over the last 10 years \$249 million were spent out of the LSU Foundation account towards university needs. The LSU Foundation is there to help support university accomplishments and serve the university.

George Moss, the Chief investment officer was introduced. Mr. Lee continued speaking.

On the endowments of about \$330 million or so of which only the income can be spent for specific purposes, the principle must be protected and grown. They do asset allocation and are careful about how they invest the dollars and have to protect the principal against inflation. Their endowment management return target is 8.25%. There has been volatility due to the stock market drop. They spend 4% that goes to the departments. For example, for an endowment 4% is sent to the department; there is an operating fee of 1.25% to cover people, technology, advisors, consultants and other necessary functions; they need to cover the long-term inflation expectation of 3%; so they want a 8.25% return on investment.

An indication as to what foundation has been able to do, year ends on June 30 compared to Vision 2020 universities group. The return on investment was second only to Vanderbilt. Gena Dugas, Chief Financial Officer was introduced to speak.

#### Gena Dugas, Chief Financial Officer

She spoke about the operating budget. The LSU Foundation is unusual in comparison to peers as their operating budget is not partially funded directly by the university. They are self sufficient which is unusual compared to their peers. Of the budget 6% is unrestricted gifts, the bulk of which is derived from the foundation membership. The other 94% of budget comes from 4 key areas, including endowed and non-endowed funds under management by the investment committee and LSU Foundation office. Earnings come from non-endowed funds with a few exceptions such as capital project accounts that would earn interest, otherwise earnings feed into the budget and account for 40% of the budget. Services fees on the endowed funds makes up about another 40% of the operating budget. Earning from the Foundation's own endowment is used for operating services and investment management support for the campus.

For fiscal year ending 2012, 82% of the budget was used for foundation operations, 63% of operating dollars is salary and benefits support, mainly development staff at all campuses served. The bulk of money goes back to the development side. Of the budget 19.2% is used for auditing, investment consulting fees, technology and other needs. A call center is manned by students from which funds fall back to campuses, called the call center subsidy. Discretionary support money to each campus represents 17% of the budget.

Jeff McClain, VP of Development introduced to speak. Lee said the LSU Foundation is private so donations are tax deductible. Their staff have had no raises for staff in four years.

#### Jeff McClain, Vice President (Development)

The Forever LSU Campaign was the first big one that included the Tiger Athletic Foundation (\$256 million mainly for athletic facilities of non-endowed money) and Alumni Foundation (\$27 million) as well as the LSU Foundation (\$334 million, a 1 to 2 split between endowed and non-endowed). They want to develop public private partnerships. They also included gifts directly to LSU A&M and the LSU AgCenter. The Tradition Fund is a contribution to university for athletic tickets. There were an additional \$34 million in matching funds for professorships and chairs. They came in at \$800 million, just over the goal, through all issues like hurricanes, economic downturn, and BP oil spill.

Billy Davis, who is working on advancement services and strategic planning and who is from health care businesses was introduced to speak. Lee Griffin said that in February they started strategic planning and meet with other foundations around the country to determine best management practices to raise funds.

#### Billy Davis, Director (Information Services)

The Foundation embarked on their strategic plan in February 2012. There was a big effort to complete the Forever LSU campaign, as they did not have a lot of resources for that campaign. They wanted to look at themselves and see what they had done and try to figure out how they can do more for the university. They want to expand the reach and depth, want to increase number of donors, dollar per donor, and raise more money overall for university. They did a data analysis of successful factors of the Forever LSU campaign. They looked at ten years of giving history attribute looking for commonalities in donors. They compared themselves to other fundraising organizations in the country. Engaged Eduventures to assist in information gathering and how to structure compared to other foundations. They did site visits to UFL and TAMU to see how they operate their foundations. They wanted to determine how to find new donors, and raise more money from existing donors. They wanted to know how to invest resources going forward and how to engage campus leaders. They are reaching out to faculty senate, staff senate and campus administration about these issues. Their new strategic plan is called "Road to 2016". The past ten years they

averaged \$30 million a year. They decided that they want to double that amount. They are looking at fundraising growth and endowment growth. They want to relay to the donors the values of giving to the university.

Kevin Cope expressed gratitude from the faculty to the foundation for the service of foundation, their stability and the work they do.

***Q&A Summary:***

Senator

What happens if you don't make 8.5%?

Lee Griffin

We will have to reduce the spending. We need to protect principle and maintain operating expense.

Senator

Will the presentation be made available?

Kevin Cope said that the presentation will be made available on the Faculty Senate website.

Senator

How can the faculty access the Foundation for research funding?

Lee Griffin

Money is raised from donors for specific purposes like that. Jill Rusho is the development officer contact for the Humanities and Social Sciences college. She should contact her development officer to explain what she needs and why and see if they can find donors for it.

Kevin Cope

Donors like to give to science and engineering related fields. He asked Lee to talk about breath of fund raising.

Lee Griffin

The Foundation has people in every college. Donors decide where to give money to.

Senator Hachmann

What is the relationship of the LSU Foundation to the LSU Alumni Association?

Lee Griffin

They are housed together in same building. The Alumni Association has 120 alumni chapters, of which their primary responsibility is to keep alumni in touch with university. They raise small scholarship money but are not after large donors like LSU Foundation.

Kevin Cope

He suggested that they put a tab on their website for faculty that takes them to suggestions on how faculty can interact with them.

Lee Griffin

We can put on site. They must maintain confidentiality of donors records. This is why the university cannot support the Foundation in any way so donor information does not become public.

Ken McMillin

Obviously it is better to have stocks, bonds or cash, but what about tangible goods, like a facility in operation or horses.

Lee Griffin

They have had real estate, art, and gift acceptance.

The Veterinary school gets horses all the time. They have a gift acceptance committee. They are careful about what real estate they accept. They can accept large software packages which can also be a gift in kind. They have received appreciated stock, cash and land. Their gift acceptance policy is on their website.

Fred Aghazadeh

What are your staff numbers?

Lee Griffin

70 or 80 people

Vincent LiCata

How do you decide where to give unrestricted gifts?

Lee Griffin

They receive very little in unrestricted gifts, 99.99% of gifts are restricted. Non endowed gifts are usually restricted. There are rare cases of unrestricted gifts that are placed in the fund to help university with items, for example the south campus purchase.

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## Old Business

### Second and Final Reading, Resolution 11-20, “A Plus Minus Grading System for LSU”

Read by Don Chance

**Faculty Senate Resolution 11-20**  
**“A Plus and Minus Grading System for LSU”**  
*Introduced at the request of Professor Don Chance*

Whereas the appended background paper presents compelling arguments for the introduction of a plus and minus grading system as a means to increase the accuracy of the evaluation of students,

Therefore be it resolved that Louisiana State University shall adopt the plus and minus grading system proposed in the document below.

### Background

LSU currently uses the grading system of A, B, C, D, and F, which provide for 4, 3, 2, 1, and 0 points, respectively. This proposal recommends that LSU convert to a system that permits the faculty member to assign + (plus) and minus (-) grades. The proposed system would allow for grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D- and F.

The number of quality points for a given letter grade is obviously an important question. To provide some guidance, a survey was conducted of about 80 schools, which include LSU’s peers as specified in the updated Flagship agenda program and essentially all of the most prestigious public and private research schools in the United States.

### Alternative Systems

Quite a few systems were identified. Some, such as MIT’s five-point system, Brown’s no-grade system, Maryland’s system of awarding plus/minus grades but not reflecting these variations in the grade point average calculation, and Wisconsin’s A, AB, B, BC system are quite unconventional and were disregarded. Of the remaining schools, 69 use some variant of the plus/minus system while thirteen use the traditional system.

The variants of the plus/minus system include

- (1) A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, B+ = 3.3, B = 3.0, etc. (39 schools)
- (2) A = 4.0, A- = 3.67, B+ = 3.33, B = 3.0, etc. (14 schools)
- (3) A = 4.0, A- = 3.75, B+ = 3.25, B = 3.0, etc. (1 school)
- (4) A = 4.0, A- = 3.667, B+ = 3.333, B = 3.0, etc. (3 schools)
- (5) A = 4.0, A- = 3.666, B+ = 3.333, B = 3.0 (1 school)

Some schools give A+. The following such systems were identified:

- (6) A+ = 4.33, A = 4.0, A- = 3.67, etc. (9 schools)
- (7) A+ = 4.3, A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, etc. (2 schools)

Some schools allow the awarding of an A+ or an A with both worth 4.0 points, although B+ is worth more than a B. This system is still treated as a plus/minus system.

Along with LSU, the schools that use the traditional system are Auburn, Georgia Tech, Carnegie Mellon, Ohio State, Texas A&M, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, West Virginia, Arizona, Kansas State, Nebraska, and Oregon.

The schools that use a variant of the plus/minus system are Clemson, Duke, Emory, Indiana, Johns Hopkins, Mississippi State, New York University, Northwestern, Oregon State, Princeton, UCLA, and the Universities of Alaska at Fairbanks, California at Berkeley, Chicago, Colorado at Boulder, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii at Manoa, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Miami (Florida), Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada at Reno, North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Rochester, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, Vanderbilt, Virginia Tech, Washington University at St. Louis, Dartmouth, Georgetown, Harvard, Penn State, Buffalo, Florida, Illinois, Maine, Montana at Missoula, New Hampshire, Texas, Vermont, Yale, Arizona State, Columbia, Michigan State, North Carolina State, Alabama, Iowa, New Mexico, William & Mary, Stanford, Minnesota, Delaware, Florida State, Tulane, Southern California, Boston College, Cornell, Cal Tech, and Notre Dame.

### Proposal

It is recommended that LSU adopt the most-widely used system, which would provide for the following grade points:

A 4.0, A- 3.7, B+ 3.3, B 3.0, B- 2.7, C+ 2.3, C 2.0, C- 1.7, D+ 1.3, D 1.0, D- 0.7, F 0.0

### Benefits and Costs

Clearly such a change is not without cost to the university. Registrar software would need reprogramming, and it is likely that some forms would need to be re-designed. Some re-indoctrination of faculty and students would be required, although the change is not particularly complex and most everyone should catch on quickly. Another subtle cost, however, is that by having more grade cutoffs, there will be more students who will be close to the next highest grade. With quality points on the line, appeals could potentially be more frequent. On the other hand, as an example, some students who might ordinarily have gotten a B might now get a B+ and will benefit.

Indeed the main advantage would be that it would provide more flexibility to the faculty member, which should be particularly valuable in graduate classes, where there is a tremendous difference in the highest and lowest A's and highest and lowest B's. It also seems likely that some graduate student grades that might have been B's will be B- or C+ or A's might become A- or B+.

Because the old system is subsumed within the new system, any faculty member could continue to use the old system.

After reading the resolution, Don Chance gave a presentation on reasons to have a plus/minus grading system.

1. It provides greater resolution of grades. Studies testing the same instructor teaching the same course at the same school, did not affect grades.
2. 80% of research universities use plus/minus grading. Many elite schools are included on the list. Nine SEC schools are using plus/minus system.
3. There was no difference in overall grade point average with instructor comparison.
4. Faculty members do not need to use it, since the current system fits into the plus/minus system. The plus/minus was more accurate from his own experience.
5. In regards to appeal issues. There are 0.3 and 0.4 points separating grades, except for D it is 0.7
6. There will be more opportunities for students to pull up their GPA and improve grades. Those students with a 3.7 will gain an advantage due to A-.
7. It would reduce "blowing off the final" by students.

#### Concerns

Are there inconsistencies if one faculty member uses it and one does not? Different faculty teach the same course differently.

With this system a student can replace a B with B+ which will help the students.

This system will not put LSU students at disadvantage.

From his experience, there were no more appeals than usual.

It may be a little bit more work to use and the pull down menu will be a bit longer to use the system, but faculty do not have to use it.

If some instructors can't make the grade distinctions they do not have to use it. It may not work for every course.

Using this system will not affect certification.

As far as costs go it will be low if in a few years from now we are going to new system online so we can fit it in then.

The system is not for raising standards. The mindset could be that a 90 is still an A.

Plus/minus system

A = 90 = 4.0

A- = 3.7

B+ = 3.3

B = 3.0

The current system is antiquated; it is used by less than 20% of universities. Give new incentives to students. If you don't like it don't use it but let the rest of us use it.

#### Mandy Lopez, Chair of Plus/Minus Grading Task Force

The task force report was included in the packet. Mandy listed members of the Task force. The task force addressed four fundamental questions: 1) determine standards set by other state and national institutions; 2) determine if there is an effect on GPA for incoming students or those going on to other degrees, 3) address affects on credentialing issues, and 4) address costs for labor hours and dollars to implement system. She covered the summary in report. The majority of evaluated universities use the system. There is a minimal effect on GPA. There is a small cost to implement into the new system. Most of the current students would have graduated prior to implementation.

#### Fakhri Al Bagdadi, a representative from Admissions Standards and Honors committee

Gerry Knapp had a prior commitment and could not be at the meeting.

ASH committee vote was three in favor and two opposed. Issues raised and discussed were presented to the faculty senate in a report. He covered the impact on athletics and the issue with student athlete eligibility.

Kevin Cope stated that at the request by various sources other reports were included in the agenda attachments including a study in Educational Quarterly. He asked Don Chance to return to the podium for questions, but also mentioned that others could answered questions.

#### **Q&A Summary:**

Senator

Was there student input on this resolution?

Student government representative

There were concerns due to lack of information. Students were concerned about GPA requirements to get into senior colleges; they believe that more students will land in UCAC which will result in longer wait times for counseling in UCAC.

They were also concerned with how it will affect the comprehensive academic tracking system and certain GPA benchmarks and requirement to change a major. Another issue was with it being an option for faculty. University tools would show which classes use regular grading,

there will be a rush for students to faculty who do or do not use it. There are concerns with external persons looking at the grades to compare students. This related to issues with faculty raising standards while other faculty members do not. They looked at peer institutions and found 77% of them use a plus/minus system, but they do not have a performance based system for retention rates like we do. They were concerned with the effects of performance indicators for graduation rates. There may be students losing scholarships due to lower grades. The students want input to help assure a smooth process for implementation.

Dorian Dorado

We cannot have faculty choose not to use it. There would be inconsistency added to whole LSU program. The new system is a great system, because there is a huge difference between students who make a 90 and 98 percent. She graduated from UFL who uses the system and she said it works great.

Kevin Cope

We are voting on a recommendation to Academic Affairs. We could propose that we develop committee to address implementation that would include students and other stakeholders.

Melissa Beck

Where does the C- fall in grading? The proposed system lists a C as a 2.0. How would it affect other schools? Our admissions office takes a C- from another university as a 2.0. For her students who received Cs last semester, would they be in the C- to C+ area now?

Don Chance

It is up to the faculty how they grade. A C would be a 2.0. If you get a C- as a 1.7 it would have been a D in the existing system.

William Stickle

The biology department poll showed that 78% opposed the change. Their survey of schools found that 52% of universities have the plus/minus system, they found appeals will double, if a student receives a 1.7 as a C- then the student would not pass the course and would have to retake it.

Don Chance

It may not work for some courses. There is not problem with some faculty using it and other not. He did not agree with the 52% number that biology found. The student government representative said that 77% of peer institutions from Vision 2020 have the plus/minus system.

Neila Donovan

In the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, doesn't someone on a 1.7 get put on probation? What does that have to do with retention and loss of students?

Don Chance

The students and faculty know that a minimum GPA is a 2.0 for overall. You cannot make an assumption that someone getting Cs is all of a sudden going to have some sliced off at C- without having some sliced off at C+.

Judith Sylvester

In Mass Communications the minimum GPA is a 3.0 to get in, so would a B- GPA not allow students in? Why not use A+ for 4.0? How much will it cost? Will there be rounding off issues? Will there be more attempts to get a higher grade for students within 0.1% of a letter grade?

Don Chance

Most schools do not use an A+. There will be several more years to put this in place and he would not support putting it into place until the new records system comes into place.

Vincent LiCata

There were comments in emails for biology of which a majority said there is no hard statistical evidence that it affects the GPA and we are just following what other schools do. There are no hard numbers of how many schools there are with the plus/minus system. Biology saw that the only compelling reason to implement the plus/minus system was because other schools are using it and also that the other schools using it may not be in a large majority as stated.

Don Chance

For research universities it is higher than 74%. Mandi Lopez said number in the report was accurate.

Vincent LiCata

Ohio State had a survey that said in the Big 10, 55% of the schools were using it.

Stuart Irvine

I don't see that we have to have more students on probation. If we are not in the business of raising standards and we want C- work to be acceptable, just change probation level to 1.7.

Don Chance

If you think 70% is acceptable for the lowest C you would give, then that 70% still ought to get a C. If you think that would be bumped down to a C- then you are trying to use the scale to raise the standards and it is not the purpose of the change here.

David Bertolini

Currently faculty can use a plus/minus system in grading coursework now. The advantages apply to motivating students to do better within a course and the concern of student government had to do with what happens to the GPA as it is presented to other bodies.

Senator

Grades are reports to the outside world and we would want precision in grade report.

Suresh Rai

The report does not cover grade inflation. In the College of Engineering a 2.0 is really important and if one student gets a C- the student will have to repeat the course, so there are disadvantages to the plus/minus system.

Don Chance

If the study says it does not affect grades, it probably cannot affect grade inflation.

Juhan Frank

In physics and astronomy the new grading system is supported 7 to 1. One reason is that it will eliminate a compelling need to give an A to students. The second reason is in practice the C grade is broadest in numbers of students in classes. Some low Cs do not understand the material at a level needed for science majors. They will get a C minus and fail to meet minimum of colleges requirements and so be it.

Doran Bolder

He polled the department in Biological Engineering and most are against the new system. The GPA does not reflect the performance of students since right now they can drop D, W and F. If look at body of work of one student, if student gets 91% in all classes will get 4.0, may get B grades, so GPA would drop some. Poor students will not be helped much in regards to C or C-. C students will not be A students and will not motivate them. The A- will hurt our good students. Individual faculty can adjust the scale in their own course as to what constitutes an A. Some students in engineering make 58 on a test and that is considered an A.

Don Chance

Do not look at this as raising the standards. It might not help students, but will give incentives, but will they take advantage of it? Can make some B- grades instead of C+ grades for instance.

Padmanabhan Sundar

The poll in math was 50/50. There was criticism that the system calls for 12 different grades in place of five now. Tests and exams must be fine tuned for the categories to judge students. Must there be 12 categories? Can we take away the minus grades? There could be misjudging of students ability if different faculty use different scales.

Don Chance

He did not want to use a rarer system. Faculty do not have to use the system, there is academic freedom on how to grade. We cannot enforce use of the system. There could be differences between grading methods of faculty teaching the same course now.

Fred Aghazadeh

What % of the schools using it have a mandatory plus/minus system? Why did Ohio State go back to old system?

Don Chance Answer

It is not reported by the schools. In his own experience he did not use it for a while and then he did.

Senator

What happens to those students who get C or C- and go on probation? They are more likely to drop out which is in conflict with trying to reduce drop out rates and the flagship agenda. Was there any study examining retention rate differences between each system?

Faculty would be free to use either system. There may be coercion by students for higher grades. Students see moodle grades so those that see what they get may be issue. He would expect an increase in grade protests. Is there going to be a rider on this motion so new system is not going to be put in place until the new system is put into place? What is the cost?

Don Chance

He reiterated that he does not want it implemented until the new system is put into place. Kevin Cope answered that there is no forced implementation timing. He does not expect faculty demand for immediate implementation.

Senator

What is the % of universities that have plus/minus and are not requiring faculty to use it?

Don Chance

Academic freedom allows faculty to use whatever grading they want.



Juhan Frank

Consistency may be desirable in practice, but it does not occur on the campus. Some programs require a 90 for an A and some require a 70 for an A. He adjusts the cut-offs for his class depending on the class performance and hardness of the test.

Don Chance

It will take a few more minutes to adjust the grades.

Linda Allen

She has a concern with flexibility. Transcript has definition on grades so outside agency or school knows what the grade was based on. Outside people would not see a choice. The outside place assumes the whole school operates that way, that every faculty used that same scale. People tend to think you are trying to raise the standards. A C- is less than a 2.0 so it must have been a 68%. You are introducing several shades of gray, which is opposite of seeing a clear cutoff line for grades.

Don Chance

People cannot use this to raise standards. Does what we see from other schools on transcripts cause us to look at them differently if they have pluses and minuses? If someone got a 79 and another an 80 and they were treated as a same grade it bothers him. He looks at overall GPA and what they make in certain courses and does not agonize over whether they used a plus/minus system or not and what that grade was specifically. At other schools there is no way it can be required to be used.

Robert Doolos

There will be a cost of faculty time. University colleges would have to determine how this new policy would affect admission requirements. He appreciates the comments regarding transcripts and agrees with issue of inconsistency.

Senator

When students come back from abroad and have taken courses that should satisfy a prerequisite for one of our division courses, but there is no direct correlation to work here and work done abroad, so we already have to evaluate students' grades. If we have more stratified grading it may make this issue larger. Regarding the issue of trajectory of students in a course, when a student has gone from being an 80 student to an 87 student over the course she can reward the student with a B+. Currently there is no way to reward improvement.

Senator

Call the question.

Kevin Cope asked parliamentarian Louay Mohammed for a ruling on voting from colleagues in transit. Vote ruled eligible. Another faculty wanted to vote from abroad who could not find an alternate representative. Vote ruled eligible. Judith Sylvester and Stephanie Braunstein were asked to count the vote by hands.

Kevin Cope clarified who can vote, alternates or proxies. Proxies represent another ones presence and are a member of the senate and cannot hold more than two votes at the same time. All that a proxy can do is indicate attendance. Alternate representatives are faculty who are not a senator who are appointed to appear instead of.

Suresh Rai asked if he could vote for the person for which he is proxy because they had to be at another committee meeting and told him specifically how he would vote. Not allowed due to the vote not being provided ahead of time to the executive committee, since there is already a faculty senate resolution that there cannot be more than one vote. Proxies do not vote, but alternates do.

Vote: 26 for, 14 opposed, 4 abstentions.

Kevin Cope said that at the next FSEC meeting with the Provost we will discuss the implementation process.

LSU Faculty Senate Resolution 12-9 "Graduate Faculty Membership for Faculty with 100% LSU AgCenter Appointments"

This resolution was deferred until the November senate meeting.

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**New Business**

First Reading, Resolution 12-10, "In Support of a Pay Raise for the Faculty"

Read by Michael Russo

FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION 12-10  
IN SUPPORT OF A PAY RAISE FOR FACULTY

*Sponsored by Michael Russo*

*Co-sponsored by LSUnited, the Library Faculty Policy Committee, and the LSU Chapter of the American Association of University Professors*

WHEREAS faculty salaries have been frozen since the 2009/2010 budget cycle, and  
WHEREAS the cost of goods and services as measured by the southern urban average of the Consumer Price Index has increased annually over this same span of time, and

WHEREAS insurance premiums for some faculty have risen, while salaries have not, and  
 WHEREAS the compensation of LSU faculty has lagged behind that of several peer institutions, and will continue to fall,<sup>3</sup> and  
 WHEREAS the failure to adequately compensate faculty has damaging and depressing effects on faculty retirement,<sup>4</sup> and  
 WHEREAS the number of full-time teaching faculty has declined during the current program of austerity,<sup>5</sup> and  
 WHEREAS this decline has resulted in a rise in the ratio of students to teachers, which has, in turn, been a factor in LSU's demotion in rank among top-tier universities,<sup>6</sup> and  
 WHEREAS the above trends are inconsistent with all Flagship 2020 goals<sup>7</sup> and are detrimental to the state's future, and  
 WHEREAS the faculty of LSU that remains has shown steadfast dedication to the state's flagship university,  
 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this body directs the university administration to submit to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee no later than April 10, 2013, a credible plan for increasing the salaries of LSU faculty members, and  
 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this increase shall reflect parity with LSU's peer institutions or the cost of living index, whichever is higher.

#### Notes

- 1 The Consumer Price Index, averaged for southern urban areas, was 209 in August of 2009. In August of 2010, the average was 211.308; in 2011 220.471; and in 2012 223.919. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index for southern urban areas [http://data.bls.gov/pdq/SurveyOutputServlet?data\\_tool=dropmap&series\\_id=CUUR0300SA0,CUUS0300SA0](http://data.bls.gov/pdq/SurveyOutputServlet?data_tool=dropmap&series_id=CUUR0300SA0,CUUS0300SA0).)
- 2 In 2009/2010, nine-month employees paid \$579.57 per month for family coverage for LSU First (Cigna) coverage for Option 1 and \$508.85 for Option 2. In 2013, those employee payments will increase to \$652.69 and \$572.45, respectively. The employee share of premium payments will increase for other health insurance plans by varying amounts. ("Monthly Medical Insurance Premiums for Active Employees" [http://appl003.lsu.edu/hrm/benefitsweb.nsf/\\$Content/Comparison+of+Medical+Plans/\\$file/Medical%20Premiums%20for%20Active%20EEs%20August%202012.pdf](http://appl003.lsu.edu/hrm/benefitsweb.nsf/$Content/Comparison+of+Medical+Plans/$file/Medical%20Premiums%20for%20Active%20EEs%20August%202012.pdf).)
- 3 In 2010, the last year for which complete data are available, the average salary of a full professor at LSU was \$108,027. This average compensation was surpassed by Iowa State University (\$112,021), North Carolina State University (\$116,057), University of Illinois (\$130,045), University of Maryland (\$134,424), University of Tennessee (\$109,521), Virginia Tech (\$116,753), Texas A & M (\$119,759), and University of Nebraska—Lincoln (\$111,130). LSU's salaries for the ranks of Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, and Instructor lagged similarly. If it is assumed that all these peer institutions have frozen their salaries, then LSU certainly continues to lag. If these institutions have not frozen the salaries of their professors, then LSU has fallen even further behind. (National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS Data Center <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/>.)
- 4 Retirement for faculty in the Teachers Retirement System is calculated based on a percentage of the average of the employee's salary for the highest-paid three or five years of consecutive employment, depending on date of hire. A stagnant salary flattens that calculation. (TRSL Member Handbook <http://trsl.org/uploads/File/Brochures/memberhandbook.pdf>.) The same flattening applies to faculty in the Optional Retirement Plan, which is based on a defined contribution of 8% of salary. (Memo of 1/14/2010 from A. Stuart Cagle, Deputy Director of TRSL [http://appl003.lsu.edu/hrm/benefitsweb.nsf/\\$Content/Summary+of+Retirement+Benefits/\\$file/2010%202011%20Contributions.pdf](http://appl003.lsu.edu/hrm/benefitsweb.nsf/$Content/Summary+of+Retirement+Benefits/$file/2010%202011%20Contributions.pdf).)
- 5 In the academic year beginning in August 2008, the year before salaries were frozen, there was a total of 1,262 full-time faculty. By 2011, there were 1,106, a decline of 156. (LSU Office of Budget and Planning, Trend data: Personnel, Headcount <http://www.bgtplan.lsu.edu/TREND/personnel/headcount/facbyrank.pdf>.)
- 6 In 2008, LSU was ranked 130th, with a student-to-faculty ratio of 20:1. (Bill Barrow. "Top-tier ranking boost for LSU - Big strides on campus reflected, provost says." *Times-Picayune, The (New Orleans, LA)* 22 Aug. 2008, NATIONAL: 03. *NewsBank*. Web. 10 Oct. 2012.) The latest rankings place LSU in a four-way tie for 134th among top-tier universities, with a student-to-faculty ratio of 23:1. (U. S. News & World Report Best Colleges <http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges>.)
- 7 Every goal in each of the four categories (Discover, Learning, Diversity, Engagement) relies heavily on faculty for its achievement. Without a faculty that feels it is valued, these goals will be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. Comparison "latitudinally in rankings among our peers," as alluded to in the list of goals, will continue gradually to suffer under the present austerity regime. (LSU Flagship 2020: Goals, <http://www.lsu.edu/flagshipagenda/goals2020.shtml>.)

#### Q&A Summary:

Stephanie Braunstein

Can you add that premiums on the LSU First plan will be raised so those in the plan will see smaller pay checks.

Judith Sylvester

She said parking may have been increased, but Michael Russo says it was not.

Senator

Insurance information is out now.

Ken McMillin

The university cannot increase compensation, the Board of Supervisors has to do it after a recommendation. He moves that we change it to show us a positive plan not later than the end of this semester on how they will increase our compensation.

Gundela Hachmann

The claims are general in nature, can they be made more specific i.e. damaging effects on faculty, decline in teaching staff. Any way to consolidate and bring in more substantial facts.

Michael Russo

All assertions are backed up with data, he did not want resolution to get bogged down. Kevin Cope said maybe a sampler of issues could be added as an attachment to provide a snapshot.

Senator

He wants the resolution to be taken seriously. Is the amendment to resolution going to damage it buy requesting an answer by end of semester?

Kevin Cope

Upper administration suggests that there may be productivity recognition before end of year. The Board of Supervisors intends to continue the stop on merit increases. Maybe there can be a productivity enhancement with innovation.

Senator

Recognition for productivity is not the same as a raise. It is a one time recognition that work has been completed rather than recognition that the faculty is actually worth spending money on at this university.

Kevin Cope

Kevin had talked to Mike Martin about this issue. Some other language needs to be found to allow a raise in some way. Anything this year would likely be annualized, but any boost now is better than none at all.

Senator

Should the words “steadfast dedication” be in the resolution? Delete that entry and retain the financial argument.

Michael Russo

He is not sure that he agrees with that suggestion.

Senator

We need specific numbers on how many faculty have left for higher salaries and speak of people who stayed due to dedication and loyalty.

Louay Mohammed

The resolution is noble in content. Where is money coming from? We hear about budget cuts at faculty meetings and faced with budget cuts every day.

Michael Russo

He has no idea where the money will come from, but the state finds money somewhere, for example the new hire in state administration who is receiving a double salary.

First Reading, Resolution 12-11, “A Task Force to Consider and Compare Anti-Plagiarism Services”

Read by Gundela Hachmann

Louay Mohammed and Stephanie Braunstein motioned and seconded to move the resolution into discussion.

FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION 12–11  
“A Task Force to Consider and Compare  
Anti-Plagiarism Services”  
*Sponsored by Gundela Hachmann*

Whereas it is the responsibility of every faculty member and teaching assistant at LSU to educate students towards abstaining from any form of academic dishonesty and to proceed against violations of the LSU Code of Student Conduct; and  
Whereas specialized internet services as well as a growing number of original works that are available for electronic download have significantly increased the opportunities for plagiarism and the accessibility of intellectual property; and  
Whereas faculty members and teaching assistants often face insurmountable challenges when trying to ensure that all their students always adhere to principles of academic conduct; and  
Whereas comparable institutions such as the University of Florida in Gainesville, Indiana University, Pennsylvania State University, and the University of Maryland subscribe to the anti-plagiarism service TurnItIn.com; and  
Whereas TurnItIn.com promises to help faculty members and teaching assistants to scan student submissions quickly and effectively for plagiarized content,

Therefore, be it resolved that the LSU Faculty Senate appoint a task force to compare the products offered by anti-plagiarism service providers and to study the feasibility, costs, and effectiveness of purchasing an institutional subscription to an anti-plagiarism service at LSU.

***Q&A Summary:***

Gundela Hachmann

There is a particular problem in English due to the number of essays available online.

Judith Sylvester

It says compare services, but only one is mentioned. I suggest deleting the turnitin.com and be more general or use it as an example. Maybe say plagiarism software instead.

Gundela Hachmann

I would want the task force to look into it and get a price comparison.

Senator

Wants to make a recommendation for foreign languages. Turnitin.com does not work for foreign languages. Wants what we adapt to be useable for all programs.

Stephanie Braunstein

She suggests that we actually specify that people from diverse disciplines be on the task force for these types of issues on choosing a program

Senator

Would this task force cover the scope of testing for online courses and other issues of plagiarism?

Gundela Hachmann

The program only covers essays. It might be wiser to limit the task force's focus.

Senator

We need to limit it to this focus.

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Joan King moved to adjourn and it was seconded by Louay Mohammed.

Adjournment at 5:39 PM