

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
Tuesday March 17, 2015
Student Senate Room, LSU Student Union



Attendance

Faculty Senate Executive Committee members present:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Kevin L. Cope (President, English) | 2. Ken McMillin (Vice-President, Animal Science) |
| 3. Joan King (Secretary, Food Science) | 4. Bill Daly (Past President, Chemistry) |
| 5. Mandi Lopez (Member-at-Large, Vet Science.) | 6. Fabio DelPiero (Member-at-Large, Pathbiol Sci) |

Parliamentarian: Louay Mohammed

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

1	Aghazadeh, Fereydoun (Mech Eng/Eng)	22	P	Dorian Dorado (Foreign Lan Lit/HSS)	44	Evgueni Nestrov (Chemistry/Sci)
2	X Fakhri Al-Bagdadi (Comp. Biomed Sci/Vet)	23	X	Susan Eades (Vet Clinical Sci/Vet)	45	Seth Orgel (Music/Music Dramatic Arts)
3	X Austin Allen (Landscape Arch./AD)	24	A	Kristin Gansle (Education/HSS)	46	Jim Ottea (Entomology/Agri)
4	Frank Anselmo (French/HSS)	25	X	Jeff Gillespie (Ag Econ/Ag)	47	X Steven Pomarico (Biological Sci/Sci)
5	A Reid Bates (SHWRED/HSE)	26	P	Angeletta Gourdine (English/HSS)	48	Suresh Rai (EE and Comp/Eng)
6	X Jennifer Baumgartner (Child Family/HSE)	27	X	Gundela Hachmann (Foreign Lang Lit./HHS)	49	Judith Rhodes (Social Work/HSE)
7	Emily Beasley (Kinesiology/HSE)	28		Jong Ham (Plant Path/Ag)	50	X Jeffrey Roland (Philos Rel Studies/HSS)
8	P Lillian Bridwell-Bowles (English/HSS)	29	X	Wes Harrison (AGEC/Ag)	51	P Christopher Rovee (English/HSS)
9	X Konstantin Busch (EE & Comp Sci/Eng)	30	P	Stuart Irvine (Philos Relig/HSS)	52	X Judith Schiebout (Geology/Science)
10	X John Caprio (Bio Sci/Sci)	31		Sherif Ishak (Civil Environ Eng/Eng)	53	Andrew Schwarz (Info Sys Dec Sci/Bus)
11	Joseph Clare (Political Sci/HSS)	32	X	Joan King (Food Sci/Ag)	54	A Stephen Shipman (Math/Science)
12	X Lauren Coates (Enlgish/HSS)	33	X	Mandi Lopez (Vet Clinical Sci/Vet)	55	Alan Sikes (Theater/Music Dramatic Arts)
13	X Kevin Cope (English/HSS)	34		Ron Malone (Civil Environ Eng/Eng)	56	X Linda Smith Griffin (Libraries/Lib)
14	X Jon Cogburn (Philosophy Rel Stud./HSS)	35	A	Kanchan Maiti	57	X Judith Sylvester (Mass Com/Mass Com)
15	Belinda Davis (Political Sci/HSS)	36		Kenneth Kip Matthews (Physics Astro/Sci)	58	X Sabrina Taylor (RNR/Ag)
16	X William Daly (Chemistry/Sci)	37	X	Andrew Maverick (Chemistry/Sci)	59	X David Terry (Comm Stud/HSS)
17	X Fabio Del Piero (Pathbiol Sci/Vet Med)	38	P	Alison McFarland (Music/Music and DA)	60	X Ramachandran Vaidyanathan (EEC/Eng)
18	A Charles Delzell (Math/Sci)	39		Jean McGuire (Management/Bus)	61	X Arend Van Gemmert (Kinesiology/HHS)
19	X Margaret Denny (Education/HSE)	40	X	Ken McMillin (Animal Sci/Ag)	62	Gregory Watson (Architecture/AD)
20	John DiTusa (Phys Astron/Sci)	41	A	Jacquelyn Sue Moffit (Acct/Business)	63	Yejun Wu (Library Information Sci/LHSE)
21	X David Donze (Biological Sciences/Sci)	42	X	Louay Mohammed (Civil Environ Eng/Eng)	64	Jun Zou (Interior Design/AD)
		43	X	Carl Motsenbocker (Horticult/Ag)		

Guests:

Ryan Landry	Brian Ainsworth	Robert Doolos	Jacob Phagan	Abbie Holley
Carrie Grace Henderson	Jane Cassidy	Adam Grashoff	Zach Faircloth	

Consideration of the Minutes from February 24, 2015

Motion by several, seconded by several.

Approved unanimously with potential corrections.

President's Report

- Consolidation of various campuses is in process so we need a revision of PS-36 for promotion and tenure issues. Brooks Elward, a former AAUIP President is involved. Vice Provost Jane Cassidy will speak on the appeals process.
- PS-69 is being looked at, which covers academic dishonesty and related matters, but it does not have enough information about plagiarism. Faculty Senate Executive Committee will meet with the Office of Academic Affairs officers on the issue to get a handle on the issue and will most likely appoint a committee to work on that matter.
- The consideration and candidate evaluation process for the Vice Provost position vacated by Gill Reeves is underway by the committee. They hope to fill the position by the end of the year.
- The Student Government Association has made a resolution about the barge issue. Zach Faircloth stated that the resolution passed 100% in favor about the barge issue and they are hoping to get a conversation going with the Department of Environmental Quality. Kevin Cope has spoken to President Alexander about the issue and the President is investigating it.
- There was an appointment of Steven Moray as CEO of the LSU Foundation. The search was very quite as far as national searches go. It was something of a surprise and somewhat instrumental to a regime that has made life difficult at LSU. We have contacted Steven Moray, who has expressed an interest in meeting with Faculty Senate and the executive committee in May.

6. It has come to notice that there are deep inconsistencies with the PM-11 process. PM-11 is the form that governs outside income. Some people have noticed and some administrators have tried to enforce a stringent requirement that all income including winnings at the race track would be covered by PM-11. We have an agreement with the Office of Research and Economic Development to draft new language for PM-11 that attempts to solve some of those ambiguities. It is something requires volunteer work from you all as we put together the committee.
7. In regards to entrepreneurship we discussed with the Provost the mixed messages that are sent to faculty visa vi entrepreneurship, we do it freely with the spirit of intellectual enthusiasm or will you face a regulation, difficulty and possible sanctions.
8. Southern University Shreveport and Southern University Baton Rouge had a forum on higher education with a crowd of no less than 100. A video will be available shortly Also the forum sponsored by LSUnited on the budget will be available on video. The slides form one presentation is up on our site
9. Tomorrow the Conference on Louisiana Colleges and Universities will meet on the University of New Orleans campus. Commissioner Joseph Rallo will be speaking
10. Southeastern Louisiana University is having a forum like ours on April 16 at a Methodist church in Hammond.

Q&A Summary:

None.

Announcements and remarks from Senator Judith Sylvester concerning “Kick Butts Day” and other aspects of the smoke-free policy and program

Tomorrow is national kick butts day and LSU is sponsoring some events on campus to support our tobacco free campus and enforcement thereof. There will be information about e-cigarettes and other information. There is a crawfish boil for students at 4 PM at the 4-H Mini Barn. Students need to go to the wellness fair to get tickets for the crawfish boil. The theme is “I am not a replacement, I am...” We lose 7200 people to tobacco related diseases in Louisiana. The goal is for students not to be a replacement for those we lose. They can take selfies with them. First Campus and Facility services have combined to do a campus assessment. Tobacco free living analyzes and reports the data. The conclusion is that signage alone does not appear to be effective. Over 120 butts were found in front of the library. Staff were sighted smoking as well. There is a particular problem with students near the library. She had encounters with them and not good ones. They have moved to calling campus police. They recommend that you go up to them to politely tell them to go off campus and then ask for ids, then campus police. If you take pictures of their id have Dean K.C. White follow through on the issue. There probably still won't be any fine imposed, but she is getting to the point that that is the only thing to do. She emphasize that this is a community thing. We need to enforce it. This is not different from the barge issue.

Q&A Summary:

What if you observe a staff member?

Judith Sylvester

Tell Human Resources Management. Do everything you can to do it gently at first. Students tell her they see faculty and staff breaking rules. Faculty are role models whether you want to be or not.

Senator

Student Life and Enrollment is that under student accountability? His experience is there is not a lot of accountability.

Judith Sylvester

The police will not give tickets but they will go ask them to leave and they can get their ids, when none of the rest of us can get them. Students are defying policy and smoking right in front of the no smoking signs.

Kevin Cope

We had a delegation from Student Advocacy and Accountability here about three or four months ago. It was an intense meeting. It is in the video archive and you can look at the minutes.

Briefing by Vice-Provost Jane Cassidy concerning proposed adjustments of PS-36 (per campus consolidation and restructuring and prior to the full revision of the PS-36 policies)

There is a realignment going on in the Board of Supervisors and LSU campus. What used to be the system office is now combining with the campus. Many administrative units that we had duplicates of are now combining. Finance and Administrative Services and Communications groups are far along and both have Vice Presidents to lead those areas. We are now embarking on the combination of the System Office Academic Affairs and the campus Office of Academic Affairs that will be led by Stuart Bell who is now Executive Vice President and Provost. There are a number of policy items that need to be changed because they refer to certain items of business that go forward through a campus review, a chancellor review and system review process and we no longer have that. They are looking at Policy Statements and Policy Memorandums to see what needs to be changed due to the new configuration. One is PS-69, which has to do with research misconduct is a policy on this campus. PM-69 is at the system level that allows the President and the Board of Supervisors to delegate signing authority for certain personnel items. Starting July 1, 2015 promotion and tenure will have final approval by the chancellor at each

campus. LSU A&M delayed the process to July 1 since our promotion and tenure process had already started, the Chancellor and President signing off for this time around. We need to change the PS-36 policy statement so it does not conflict with PM-69. She covered all of the steps of what is current and what will need changes. They are asking for a review and recommendation by the dean which currently happens, but they want the faculty to meet with the dean to see their report and give the faculty a chance to give a response. The next change is that the candidate response is sent to the dean and put in the review file. Another change will be after review and recommendation by the Provost with a letter from the Provost will be sent instead of the chancellor. The last change is the President will notify the candidate of the final outcome. They are leaving the appeal process exactly the same at the end.

Q&A Summary:

Senator

Does this change when an Associate Professor comes into effect? Will promotions be appointed early since they are not going through Board of Supervisors?

Jane Cassidy

The appointment process will stay at the same time in August.

Jane Cassidy

She covered X.D. Stage 3.2 Consideration of Additional Administrative Levels in PS-36 to show new wording. They re-wrote the part with the strikeout.

Senator

There is also a process for departments. Are we still following that process?

Jane Cassidy

That is in there in the exact same way. We are only adding the dean response.

Kenny Fasching-Varner

Based on the blue language the candidate will meet with dean or may meet with the dean or not?

Jane Cassidy

Good point. If candidate did not want to meet with the dean we did not want to require them to. Any other thoughts on that?

Fakhri Al-Bagdadi

Will the old and the new versions be accessible and this exact slide be available to the faculty?

Jane Cassidy

The corrected policy online will only have the final changed version online. You can download the old one now.

Senator

After the letter to the dean, is faculty not involved after that process?

Jane Cassidy

No, not unless there is an appeal then it goes back to the faculty.

Kenny Fasching-Varner

If the faculty member chooses to meet with dean is that conversation recorded?

Jane Cassidy

The requirement is only the dean's letter. It is silent as to notes. The faculty would receive the dean's letter.

Arend Van Gemmert

It says no more than 7 calendars days or no more than 10 days for the meeting.

Jane Cassidy

We modeled it after what it says about the department chair. We are not requiring that they meet with the dean. The faculty member has 10 days to file a response.

Arend Van Gemmert

If meeting at 11 days then your 10 days have expired.

Jane Cassidy

Ten days is the longest you have to file a response so we can keep the process moving. If that is not clear then we have to go back and look at the language.

Gundela Hachmann

Is there any backup if a faculty member is out of town for a meeting or other issues?

Jane Cassidy

These meetings can be over Skype or a phone.

Fakhri Al-Bagdadi

If the faculty meets with the dean will the written response go forward with the packet?

Jane Cassidy

The written response will go forward with the file. That is what the policy had been silent on until this point and we wanted to put it in writing.

Jane Cassidy

Covered change in X.D. Stage 3. Consideration of Additional Administrative Levels related to the President's letter, instead the Provost will send a letter to the President who will notify the faculty member.

Fakhri Al-Bagdadi

How many appeals do faculty members have?

Jane Cassidy

They only have one which is at the end which is how it has always been. A letter is added at the Deans level, but the appeal happens at the same place as before at the Presidents level.

Arend Van Gemmert

If the Board of Supervisors doesn't like the decision of the President, is it still final?

Jane Cassidy

That is why the appeal process happens at the final word and it goes through the whole process again.

Arend Van Gemmert

What if the Board of Supervisors overturns what the President says?

Jane Cassidy

If the Board of Supervisors says yes then it is yes. It will happen at the Presidents level because the Board of Supervisors will no longer be involved.

Fakhri Al-Bagdadi

If an administrator violates PS-36 where do you go?

Jane Cassidy

It goes to the faculty grievance committee.

Jane Cassidy

The only other change is related to changing Chancellor to President for LSU A&M.

Kevin Cope

It is possible to formulate a simple resolution to vote up or done, or have a faculty committee look at it, or have the Faculty Senate Executive Committee look at it again.

Kenny Fasching-Varner

Moved to accept these changes with friendly amendments to wording changes. Seconded by Arend Van Gemmert

Moved and seconded into discussion.

Unanimously approved.

Vote on resolution 15-07 on changes to wording in PS-36 regarding candidate responses, letters from administrators and wording of chancellor to President.

Vote on Resolution

Approved unanimously.

Report of the Nominating Committee

Jeff Gillespie said that the committee suggests the following slate of officers, President Kevin Cope, Vice President Ken McMillin, Joan King, Secretary, and an election for Member-at-Large with Mandi Lopez, Fabio Del Piero and Suresh Rai. No supplemental nominations were given from the floor.

Old Business

Second and Final reading, Resolution 15–02, “Rationalization of the Spring Holiday”, Sponsored by William H. Daly

Read by Bill Daly

LSU FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION 15–02
Rationalization of the Spring Holiday
Sponsored by William H. Daly

Whereas the final week of the Spring semester is now the first week of May to allow a Spring intersession,

Whereas the breaks in the Spring semester are governed currently by the ecclesiastic calendar, which varies according to a lunar calendar,

Whereas the Mardi Gras is accepted as the first two day holiday of the Spring semester,

Whereas, the second Spring Break is set to include the Easter holiday,

Whereas the date for Easter is set by the first Sunday after the Paschal Full moon, (the first full moon following the spring equinox) which can vary from March 25th to April 25th,

Whereas, in selected years, the Spring Break occurs in April, which limits the number of classes that can meet prior to the finals week,

Whereas a break late in the semester is not pedagogically advantageous,

Whereas a survey of fifteen peer institutions confirmed that all of them scheduled their Spring Breaks in March regardless of the Easter holiday,

Whereas, Good Friday is a state holiday, so the Easter holiday would be three days,

Therefore, the time set for the Spring Break should not be governed by the ecclesiastic calendar.

Therefore, the Spring Break should be set prior to March 31 to allow sufficient classes to properly complete the semester after the break.

Comments by Bill Daly

Every year we get an email from the Registrar’s Office saying that this is the proposed schedule for a few years out. The schedule for 2016 had Spring break on April 14 with the last class day as April 29. That only gives two weeks to deal with finals, laboratories and other things to finish the semester and that is not adequate time. He received an email from the student government that said they passed a resolution unanimously in their Academic Affairs committee, but it failed to pass the overall senate with 23 nays, 21 yeses and 4 abstentions. Is to distribute the Spring holidays over a time period that he thinks is more rational. Because of restrictions we have to do other campus events we have to start before Martin Luther King Day, so in January we will have MLK Day off, in February we will have Mardis Gras, in March we will have Spring holiday and in April we will have Good Friday. That will give us more holidays than any other university he looked at. Students have adequate holidays, but he prefers a better distribution of holidays and a preferred period of time after Spring break to allow at least two or three weeks of classes especially for students completing laboratory work before finals.

Q&A Summary:

Robert Doolos

The concern is having time to meet the minimum 42 class periods in a semester for Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays. He is not opposed to the resolution at all.

Kevin Cope

He thanked Robert Doolos for attending the Faculty Senate meetings. If we lost one day no one would send a posse from the Board of Supervisor. He did not mention the Bayou Country Music Fest issue. We have asked for an accounting about the benefit to the university. We are guardedly hopeful to gain a day to alleviate the problem.

Gundela Hachmann

How is LSU Spring break going to be coordinated with Spring break at the local schools? Colleagues have to bring children to offices. If we do not follow a strict schedule of Easter holiday then we could have Spring break being random, then there will be no way to coordinate this with schools.

Bill Daly

Some school systems cooperate and some do not. We do not always have all schools at the same time. He prefers we be the leader here to set Spring break.

Robert Doolos

In a survey in the past the East Baton Rouge school system could not tell us when to set a time, sometimes their break was before Easter Sunday sometimes after.

Kenny Fasching-Varner

He wants to be sensitive to the impact to families. Maybe we can work around Mardis Gras and work around Easter.

Jeff Roland

Is it the case now that it lines up with parochial schools? Public schools are a crap shoot.

Senators

No they are not lined up.

Kenny Fasching-Varner

He proposed having a week off at Mardis Gras instead of Good Friday to try to have the least impact on families.

Jeff Roland

Mardis Gras seems too early to have the week off.

Jeff Gillespie

The public schools only have two days or three days off at Mardis Gras.

Kenny Fasching-Varner

Moving Spring break to a random date in March will not help anyone.

Bill Daly

They are scheduling a specific date that will not change.

Zach Faircloth

The College of Engineering students were for this. Students out of state had a problem with plane tickets for two holidays. People liked the six week separation between breaks for Mardis Gras and Easter.

Senator

Fall break is often determined by the football schedule. The ecclesial calendar is part of the culture we live in and is part of a large population of the students served.

Bill Daly

Instead of a week for Easter they still will receive that Friday off and it will be a long weekend.

Steven Pomarico

This adds a problem for those teaching Monday, Wednesday and Friday and Tuesday and Thursday classes. If we add another Friday off it creates a little bit more of a headache keeping classes synchronized.

Louay Mohammed

This year Friday is off, you are talking about a week.

Judith Sylvester

How would this impacts mid-terms which are always in March?

Bill Daly

We can work around that.

Robert Doolos

Mid terms come 8 weeks into class. If the break falls wherever it falls we can take that into account.

Judith Sylvester

I wouldn't want to be off the whole week before mid-terms so that would force it to be the week after mid-terms making it closer to April and Easter.

Bill Daly

We have the entire month of March, so we can work around that.

Arend Van Gemmert

Easter Monday is not a holiday in the USA, but some people do follow that as a holiday.

Senator

If it were done at a specific time why not have Spring break right after mid-terms?

Bill Daly

Seems like a reasonable proposal.

Ken McMillin

There will be some years where the registrar cannot get in all of our required days so he has a friendly amendment to last Therefore. Change to the Office of Academic Affairs will be able to allot the number of days for Spring Break to less than five days to meet the requirements.

Motion seconded.

Jon Cogburn

Students would hate that.

Ken McMillin

Would they rather cut out a day or start in the middle of a week earlier?

John Cogburn

The ones that have to travel get to visit their families for a whole week, but if you make them come back, you are cutting off days from their vacation.

Ken McMillin

The registrar needs some flexibility.

Ramachandran Vaidyanathan

Any punctuation of the week with a half day means students may not attend the one day.

Wes Harrison

The issue that has brought this about is due to problems with Spring break being late? Is it occurring before or after Easter when spring break is late?

Bill Daly

After Easter.

Arend Van Gemmert

He asked Robert Doolos if he needs flexibility.

Robert Doolos

Any flexibility is welcomed.

Senator

Can we the start semester one day earlier?

Senator

We would have to start it two days early.

Robert Doolos

We are already starting before Martin Luther King Day and it is hard to get everything done registrar wise. It is not possible to move it up. He would have to speak to the other offices like the Office of Admissions due to orientation, transfer of courses and other issues.

Kevin Cope

We expressed concern to the Office of Academic Affairs due to the country music festival causing a hindrance.

Amendment Vote: Failed.

Gundela Hachmann

The issue of how to best schedule Spring break really is more complicated than how resolution looks. It is easy and clear cut if one has no children or has one parent stay home, but that is not the case for a lot of people. The resolution does not take this into account. The interests of the students are not taken into account. Can we find a better compromise with dialogue with the school system and student government? More interests need to be met instead of just ours.

Ramachandran Vaidyanathan

What is the student body's opinion with the last two weeks of classes being all of a sudden? Would they prefer to have it earlier?

Zach Faircloth

Faculty will try to get information in in the last two weeks before Spring break and finals anyway. Students are for keeping it one week before Spring break and finals.

Senator

Isn't it two weeks?

Bill Daly

I was looking at just a pedagogical slant. There are many people involved here there are some people without school children. If there are only two weeks left after Spring break we are not going to cover lot in that time.

Jeff Roland

It is not clear that this bill would make this any worse or better for parents. It shouldn't interfere with students' education by having a longer time.

Arend Van Gemmert

The problem seems to be Mardi Gras. We should cut it.

Vote on Resolution: 19 for and 11 against

Resolution passes.

Second and final reading, Resolution 15–03, “Improvements for Graduate Students and Graduate Education at LSU”, Sponsored by the LSU Faculty Senate Executive Committee

FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION 15–03
Improvements for Graduate Students and Graduate Education at LSU
Sponsored by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee

Whereas the education of graduate students, which provides for the continuity of knowledge by creating new faculty members and which fills the ranks of the professions with educated citizens, is a grand and indeed definitive service of a major research university;

Whereas the percentage of Louisiana citizens holding advanced degrees is low by national standards;

Whereas efforts to promote graduate education in Louisiana have been hampered by inadequate funding and by a lack of support for promotional campaigns;

Whereas approximately one-third of all graduate applications to LSU receive no response from the University;

Whereas the international outreach efforts of a university are also enhanced by a thriving graduate program and by the legions of skilled workers and creative thinkers that such a program sends into the world;

Whereas the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, which together hold responsibility for guiding both curriculum and educational policy, have recommended an assortment of changes in the organization and the supervision of graduate education at LSU;

Whereas some aspects of the organization of the Graduate School, including the creation of a graduate faculty and of a mechanism to regulate that graduate faculty, have not been updated since the 1970s;

Whereas one specific recommendation, that for the election of the membership of the Graduate Council (Resolution 10–03), has been repeatedly compromised;

Whereas a plan for the improvement of the Graduate School that was collaboratively developed by faculty and administrative representatives has never been fully or consistently implemented;

Whereas complaints concerning the services of the Graduate School are not uncommon;

Whereas graduate education is, first and foremost, an academic endeavor and responsibility;

Whereas protocols and procedures pertaining to important aspects of graduate education such as the scheduling general examinations and dissertation defenses are obtuse and not easy to find;

Whereas the economic support for our graduate students has diminished to the point that campus activists have created a charity “food pantry” so as to prevent the starvation of Louisiana’s most promising and industrious students;

Whereas the University has not discovered or formulated alternatives for graduate students who are struggling with large increases in the cost of health insurance;

Whereas the Office of Research and Economic Development, where the Graduate School is currently housed, is already overloaded with duties pertinent of its primary mission;

Therefore be it resolved that the LSU A&M Graduate School should be realigned with the Office of Academic Affairs; and

Therefore be it further resolved that the Office of Academic Affairs, along with the LSU System administration, should immediately begin a study, in collaboration with the Faculty Senate, of ways in which to advance graduate education in Louisiana and of ways in which to improve the functioning, the performance, and the student recruitment program of the LSU A&M Graduate School.

Moved to postpone resolution and seconded.

Vote: Approved unanimously to postpone for one or two months.

Ken McMillin

He asked for feedback as a committee member on the search committee for the Graduate School dean.

Kenny Fasching-Varner

There is no structure for graduate students for long term study abroad. Given support that the Office of Academic Affairs has given to study abroad it is unfair that they can only do short term study abroad.

Kevin Cope

You can offer a solution. Carl Motsenbocker is chairing the committee on internationalization.

Kenny Fasching-Varner

I am on that committee.

Kevin Cope

Please include that information in your report.

Kenny Fasching-Varner

The Graduate Students Association is also working on wording from their group.

Second and final reading, Resolution 15–05, “Overcoming AAUP Censure: A New Strategy for a New LSU”, Sponsored by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee

Read by Kevin Cope

FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION 15–05
Overcoming AAUP Censure: A New
Strategy for a New LSU
Sponsored by the LSU Faculty Senate Executive Committee

Whereas LSU President King Alexander has questioned whether raw rankings or other “metrics” are the proper measure of a quality institution;

Whereas the esteem in which a university is held by competent and honored members of the learned vocations that it supports and represents is one such measure;

Whereas the American Association of University Professors (“AAUP”) has held a continuous position of high esteem among American scientists, intellectuals, cultural advocates, and educational leaders since its founding one-hundred years ago;

Whereas AAUP specifications for working conditions, for academic freedom, for institutional governance, and for the general conduct of the academic profession are recognized as the “gold standard” by academic leaders, university professionals, accreditation agencies, labor organizations, and courts of law;

Whereas LSU A&M has suffered reputation damage and nationwide opprobrium owing to its presence, since 2012, on the AAUP list of censured institutions;

Whereas not a single member of LSU’s list of official peer or aspirational institutions nor any AAU (Association of American Universities) institutions are on the AAUP censure list;

Whereas LSU A&M occupies an awkward leadership position in a state higher education system that has received five institutional censures since 2008, nearly ten percent of all AAUP censures in the last fifty years, a record vastly out of proportion to the size of the Louisiana higher education enterprise;

Whereas continued presence on the AAUP censure list impairs the ability of LSU A&M to recruit and retain the best and most innovative faculty;

Whereas LSU A&M has already invested a significant effort in the attempt to end the censure, including sending of a top-level delegation to the Washington AAUP office;

Whereas LSU System President King Alexander issued a letter on January 27th, 2015 informing the AAUP that “LSU does not plan to pursue any further action regarding removal of censure” despite repeated and strong expressions of concern about the censure by LSU A&M faculty leadership to the LSU A&M Provost;

Whereas President Alexander’s letter to the AAUP was written and sent without faculty consultation or faculty leadership notification, although that letter alludes to collaboration with faculty members and with the Faculty Senate leadership concerning the revision of those hiring and promotion procedures that attracted adverse AAUP concern;

Whereas President Alexander’s letter to the AAUP omits the fact that LSU A&M faculty leadership never regarded nor gave the impression that recent, nominal improvements in employment conditions so as to enhance academic freedom for contingent faculty would be adequate to restore LSU A&M into compliance with AAUP standards;

Whereas the continued presence of Murray State University on the AAUP censure list during President Alexander’s tenure as President of that institution suggests a need for President Alexander to collaborate with the AAUP and with faculty;

Whereas the emergence of a new LSU through the consolidation of the A&M campus and its administration with several system campuses provides an opportunity for the new LSU to set an example of leadership in all matters of academic policy and practice;

Whereas the AAUP showed good will by granting a special dispensation to LSU A&M, a dispensation whereby AAUP Committee A, which deals with academic freedom issues, could have released LSU A&M from censure without waiting for the national AAUP meeting if LSU A&M could show adequate progress in promoting the academic freedom of long-term contingent faculty;

Whereas the AAUP has invited LSU A&M to resume negotiations;

Therefore be it resolved that the LSU A&M Faculty Senate calls on President Alexander to collaborate with the LSU Faculty Senate on the development of a realistic plan for removing LSU A&M and its allied campuses from the AAUP censure list;

And therefore be it further resolved that the LSU Faculty Senate will establish, in cooperation with President Alexander, an ad hoc University committee that will include one or more designees from the LSU President’s office, the purpose of that committee being collaboration with the national AAUP office regarding the removal of LSU from the AAUP censure list and of bringing LSU into compliance with AAUP standards regarding academic freedom and employment practices.

Kevin Cope comments

We did try to solve this in a meeting with the Office of Academic Affairs, but the administration does not see this as important and sees the AAUP as meddling in local affairs.

Q&A Summary:

Senator

Please explain why we are under censure.

Kevin Cope

Academic freedom violations, one on Katrina storm management comments by faculty, another removal of faculty from teaching in classroom, and another for working conditions for contingent appointments. A person should have due process, if there is a change in the field and they no longer need their services. We have a new rank or designation for instructors, but they can be dismissed as well. AAUP says that is an academic freedom issue because if a person is in fear of dismissal they cannot express free speech.

Gundela Hachmann

Do we know any more about the reasons that President Alexander had for sending this letter?

Kevin Cope

We did not find out from President Alexander. The AAUP contacted Kevin about the reason and it is the usual flexibility argument. This was used at Nichols State recently followed by a significant reduction in the size of the faculty and the ULL system in 2008. Their Board of Supervisors moved tenure from the system and university to a department.

Senator

Sorry it has fallen on deaf ears. Thanks the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for work on this issue.

Vote on Resolution: Approved, with one abstention.

Senators moved to adjourn, many seconded.

Adjourned at 4:33 pm