

Minutes of the 20 August 2004 Faculty Council Meeting

Meeting was called to order at 10:15a by Steve Harrison

Members present: Bill Branch, Allen Hogan, Kurt Guidry, Krishna Paudel, Todd Shupe, Chris Clark, Don Boquet, Steve Harrison, Clayton Hollier, Troy Menard, Denyse Cummins, Jerry Whatley.

OLD BUSINESS

Organizational Assessment Survey – Valerie Maurice and Fred Enright gave an update on how and why the survey was conducted as it was and the progress (or lack of progress) in getting the results summarized.

The survey originally grew out of suggestions for the need for a survey at the annual diversity conference. The original purpose was to find out why we were not reaching diverse audiences so there was a need to find out what the faculty thought of diversity issues.

Twelve focus groups (10 people on each) comprised of AgCenter faculty and staff tested the tool and gave feedback. One constant of the focus groups that was brought out was fear of reprisal, so the survey was organized to assure anonymity and the survey committee agreed that the AgCenter would not analyze the data. The survey was one originally designed by Gordon, Swartz and Rowe of the American Institute for Managing Diversity. Because no money was budgeted for the survey, an agreement was reached with Steven Jaros and Company who was to analyze the data for free if they were allowed to add their own questions of interest to them, which turned out to be the loyalty questions on the survey.

Analysis of the survey was delayed for several reasons: Students initially cataloged the data incorrectly and it took some time to re-enter. Personal problems of the Jaros family further delayed analysis. They now say the data is ready to analyze.

A summary will be created. There is no intent to keep the results from the faculty. The survey committee will ask the Chancellor to present the results at the Annual Staff Conference. Fred Enright volunteered to send e-mail to the faculty informing them that the results will be made available.

Questions asked of Valerie Maurice and Fred Enright.

Is Dr. Leo Guidry still involved with the survey? Answer Fred Enright. Yes

How many of the survey forms were returned? Answer Valerie Maurice. Out of 1034 sent out, 800 were returned, 564 in the first round. The results will be summarized by classified and unclassified personnel.

What is Dr. Leo Guidry's role? Answer Fred Enright. He is part of the committee and volunteered to help. The focus groups thought he was trustworthy.

Todd Shupe commented that a number of faculty were upset because they felt they had been duped because letters were sent out saying there would be periodic updates and none were received.

Steve Harrison suggested that the results should be put on the Web.

Bill Branch and Allen Hogan noted that there is a history of lack of communication in the AgCenter and failure to publicize survey results seems to be part of that culture.

Todd Shupe stated that the survey summary needs to be a full report and not just a paragraph.

Fred Enright said that there were many written comments returned in the survey and these would be difficult to summarize and it had not been decided how these would be handled.

Krishna Paudel suggested that these be put into an appendix.

Fred commented that some of the comments were too personal and derogatory to published.

A list of the members on the focus groups was distributed to the Council by Valerie Maurice.

Support Services Survey: Kurt Guidry reviewed the summary of the discussions from the 23 July Council meeting that he had sent out to Council members by e-mail.

Steve Harrison asked that, given the just completed discussions related to the previous survey this morning, can the survey committee begin to draft the Support Services Survey? Kurt agreed that this could be done.

Steve Harrison pointed out that Chancellor Richardson had indicated major structural changes were planned for IROD and it should be left out of the survey as it may not exist much longer in its present form.

User Groups Oversight Committees: Steve Harrison reported Vice Chancellors Paul Coreil and David Boethel each provided 16 names and the Council provided 4 names for each committee with a request that at least one Council member be on each committee. The Council nominating committee included Steve Harrison, Bill Branch, Clayton Hollier and Kurt Guidry.

Chris Clark questioned whether there would be duplication between the Support Services Survey and the Oversight Committees? After discussion it was agreed that there was some overlap but the various Oversight Committees should benefit from the results of the survey.

Faculty Evaluation Forms: Discussion/action postponed until the next meeting.

Campus-Wide Promotion and Tenure Committee: Steve Harrison reported that changes and additions suggested by the Council had been agreed to and made by Ann Coulon. These included having faculty members only and no administrators on the committee and one faculty/one vote (faculty members who vote at the unit level on a candidate cannot vote a second time at the committee level).

Grievance Procedures Policy Statement: Clayton Hollier reported on suggested changes to the PS and distributed a PS handout with the proposed changes that will be voted on at the next Council meeting. Clayton Hollier and Paul Wilson were appointed to serve on the AgCenter committee to develop the AgCenter-wide Grievance Procedures Policy Statement.

Continuing Education Committee Update: Krishna Paudel distributed a handout and gave an update on the proposed Policy Statement. The policy would allow faculty with terminal degrees to take up to 6 hours of courses per academic year with tuition waivers.

Allen Hogan asked if this policy could also apply to field agents without terminal degrees? It was pointed out that Agents now have to pay tuition but Research Associates can take courses without paying tuition. This is one of the benefits of being a RA.

Steve Harrison suggested modifying the RA policy to include faculty rather than having a new policy.

Allen Hogan suggested the policy apply only to those of full rank.

Kurt Guidry noted that the whole LSU system would have to approve because the AgCenter will not fund the policy.

The committee will revise the proposed Continuing Education PS and send it out to the Council members.

Cross Campus Tuition Waiver for Faculty and Dependents: Steve Harrison reported that a letter was sent to the Chancellors, who have not proposed any action as of this date.

Jerry Whatley noted that other universities in Louisiana already allow faculty and dependents tuition free education but the cost is unknown.

Allen Hogan thought there was no cost involved because faculty will not attend classes if there is no waiver.

Troy Menard stated that most dependents who qualify for attending LSU also qualify for Tops, which will reduce the cost of waivers.

Jerry Whatley suggested that we may want to go directly to the Board of Supervisors if the Chancellors do not want to go forward with the proposal.

Denyse Cummins suggested that the Council ask Chancellor Richardson if he has discussed the waivers with the other chancellors and if not, we respectfully request that he do so.

Steve Harrison said the waivers should include only tuition and not fees, which would be asking too much. The proposed policy statement will be e-mailed to the Council before the next meeting and will be voted on at the next meeting.

Recommendations on the IT Strategic Plan: Bill Branch reported that the Recommendation Committee thought the plan was excellent and considered AgCenter needs as a priority, which was commendable and should be the goal for all service units. The committee will have a report at the next Council meeting.

Intellectual Property and Distribution of Royalties (PS 22): Steve Harrison – The LSU System policy is that 40% goes to the inventor. Larry Rogers some years ago added a clause for plant varieties that established Royalty Levels 1, 2 and 3. The new PS eliminates that exception, treating varieties the same as other inventions. After discussion, Clayton Hollier moved that Version 2 of the Policy Statement be approved by the Council. Allen Hogan seconded. The motion passed.

Policy Statement on Policy Statements: Todd Shupe distributed a proposed PS on the mechanics of developing and approving policy statements. This policy would give the Council the right to approve policy statements. Jerry Whatley moved to approve the PS as revised. Seconded by Clayton Hollier. The revised PS was approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Troy Menard proposed the AgCenter have a policy on orientation for new employees, especially field agents, that ensures new employees have access to information on where to find information on timelines for raises, promotion, and other important events.

Jerry Whatley agreed that new employees need to have access to clearly defined criteria for advancement.

Allen Hogan said that there is no handbook now available for employees. The Council should recommend that HRM be responsible for making information available.

Denyse Cummins said HRM should notify employees of upcoming deadlines automatically and tell where information can be found and what needs to be done.

Allen Hogan volunteered to visit with Ann Coulon and explain the problem. The Council will decide how to proceed after hearing from Allen.

Todd Shupe inquired whether the Council has received a response from Chuck Wilson on voting privileges/dual citizenship? Steve Harrison replied that we have received nothing (no acknowledgement of the letter) from Campus. The Campus Faculty Senate will take up the issue. Jerry Whatley stated that we should follow up with a letter inquiring about the first letter and

copy to President Jenkins. Steve Harrison volunteered to follow up with the Faculty Senate and Vice Chancellor Coreil before sending another letter to Wilson.

Todd Shupe asked what the status of the new policy on indirect costs was. Steve Harrison answered that the policy has been completed and we heard a report from David Boethel at a recent meeting.

Report from Chancellor Richardson

The budgets have officially been approved by the Board of Regents. The final outcome for the AgCenter was a ½ million dollar shortfall. Mandates were fully funded. The universities were allowed to increase tuition 3% and operational fees assessments 4%.

The number 1 priority is now salary increases. The increases will average 2 to 3%, which will require about 2 million dollars. Vacant positions provide about 3.2 million but units want flexibility to fill some positions. The Campus is looking at 2 to 3% increases starting August-September, but maybe not until October. There will be no July raises for certain.

Capital outlay is in a bind. We have architects working on designs but no money. The Chancellors will get together and ask for a bond issue for higher education, which will also be a job creation project. Money will be available and there will be no competition among universities for money because money would be available for all projects.

The present budget has allowed more time for deliberation in prioritization and a broader approach including where to put money for salaries. Prioritization has slowed down. I will come to the Faculty Council when issues are addressed.

Questions and Discussion:

Todd Shupe. What services are paid for to the main campus?

Chancellor. Building maintenance is paid for by the square foot based on percentage of each used by the AgCenter. Other services paid for are IT, purchasing and HRM. We could do some purchasing ourselves and are looking at that.

Steve Harrison. Are there any plans to remove deadwood from the system?

Chancellor. This is difficulty to deal with without financial exigency.

Jerry Whatley. If we want to have more efficiency and more pay, decisions have to be made.

Chancellor. The Budget will not get better in coming years. We have met with Jim Richardson (state budget) and identified some possible revenue streams -- state wide property taxes, removing tax exemptions from agriculture, local taxes for AgCenter. We need Farm Bureau support or there is no point in going forward.

Chancellor. Segregation issues with Southern will come up again around Thanksgiving. Southern want their own research station. We don't want our money or programs to move to Southern. The total investment is agriculture between LSU and Southern in thought to be adequate by the Commissioner of Administration.

Allen Hogan. I am opposed to a 3% across the board pay raises.

Chancellor. Raises will not be across the board. They will be 0 to 6%, unit heads will have to justify more than 6%. Directors will have an additional ½ % for equity adjustments. Retirement incentives will be looked at again.

Chancellor. Plans are being made to revamp IROD. Legislative auditors noted some problems and we will have to hire people with different expertise.

Steve Harrison. Why not put other units under HRM, such as diversity?

Chancellor. We plan to continue to highlight diversity, so it will remain under my office. Some units may be put under Accounting or HRM or Paul Coreil's Office but not Diversity.

Chancellor. The new Technology Center will be available to faculty, not for individual faculty, but for faculty inventions that are being commercialized by a company. Professional management has been hired to help capitalize companies.

Steve Harrison. The Service Unit Survey is being drafted. There will be some costs. Will the Chancellor's Office help with funding the survey?

Chancellor. Yes.

Jerry Whatley. How can we get the tuition waiver for faculty and dependents before the Board?

Chancellor. My first question would be, Are they are going to pass the charges back to the AgCenter. But, I will check on it.

Jerry Whatley. This would have to be done on a system-wide basis.

Chancellor. The biggest challenge is who will pay for it?

Steve Harrison. Have we heard anything on the dual citizenship issue?

Chancellor. No, there had been no feedback from Chuck Wilson.

Denyse Cummins. Some regional directors are not working out. Will those positions be advertised?

Chancellor. Yes, just as was done the first time. The number of regions may be reduced.

Steve Harrison. What is the status of the Indirect Cost Policy?

Chancellor. It is now on my desk. I will send it to the Faculty Council.

Bill Branch moved for adjournment. Seconded by Clayton Hollier. The Council adjourned at 2:00p.