

## Minutes of the 26 August 2005 Faculty Council Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Steve Harrison at 10:00a.

Members present: Don Boquet, Bill Branch, Denyse Cummins, Kurt Guidry, Steve Harrison, Allen Hogan, Clayton Hollier, Linda Hooper-Bui, Becky Kelly, Joan King, Brian Leblanc, Ken McMillan, Troy Menard, Krishna, Paudel, Markaye Russell, Cynthia Stephens, Todd Shupe, Jerry Whatley, Paul Wilson.

Members absent: Debbie Melvin.

### **Chancellor Richardson's update on current state of the AgCenter**

The legislature will probably have a special session in January with an emphasis on salaries for teachers. The AgCenter administration is working to ensure the faculty is included in pay raises. However, the state will have large health care concerns to deal with also.

The library and science budget for 2005-06 is the same as last year – maybe a small increase. Capital outlay is still in planning stages.

The AgCenter has hired a lobbying firm using private money to deal with capital outlay and other needs. The AgCenter also has a lobbyist in Washington D.C.

The AgCenter administration will put its full attention to the salary issue after capital outlay is completed.

Jerry Whatley asked when the bond commission on capital outlay will meet?

A. The commission is meeting today.

Joan King asked about payments for the costs of energy from the Baton Rouge campus?

A. We have been renegotiating and saved \$200,000.00 so far this year.

Steve Harrison asked if the AgCenter and faculty are paying double for parking privileges on the Baton Rouge campus?

A. This is part of our discussion with the campus.

Prioritization reports are still being looked at. Prioritization involves difficult personnel and political decisions. Administration is also looking at CREES Reviews, Department reviews, and suggestions in emails.

The AgCenter will increase fees or initiate fees for services – soils, forage analyses and diagnostics. We cannot continue services for free.

Reorganization will occur. We will look at research stations that have critical mass problems and are difficult to defend economically. We will move personnel around where needed to improve critical mass and economics. A couple of stations are politically sensitive.

Paul Wilson asked about reorganization at Calhoun. Two faculty members were moved to other locations but now two are being added and the proposed lab may duplicate Callegari?

A. This is a joint effort with Louisiana Tech and federal funds are available specifically for that program expansion.

We are looking at programs to eliminate. Departments on campus will need lots of discussion. We are looking at how to prioritize Food Science and Forestry and Renewable Resources and how federal funds can be used there.

Dairy Science is being pulled out at Homer but poultry research may be increased there.

We will take plans to the Board of Supervisors this fall. The Board now seems to take more of a business approach and will read what we send to them. Prioritization is active and ongoing. The Faculty Council will have input in the planning and there will be no surprises.

The Baton Rouge campus is proceeding with the agenda for Flagship status with a major fund raising campaign beginning in early 2006

Steve Harrison asked if the Prioritization Committees would be re-constituted?

A. We need feedback but may not call whole committees back. There are different opinions among faculty members on the effectiveness of these committees.

Jerry Whatley asked how raises will be allocated or positions filled?

A. The vice chancellors will have maximum latitude on which positions to fill and some positions will be filled.

Allen Hogan noted that several positions have been filled with an 800% increase over 2004.

Paul Wilson questioned if there was a way for faculty to have input on filling positions. The Horticulture ACE Group knew nothing about the hirings to fill positions at the Sweetpotato Station.

A. Mike Cannon's position is a unique one. I am not sure how this was done. I will find out and report back to the Faculty Council.

Jerry Whatley commented that this points out the need to have communication in prioritization efforts. Allen Hogan noted that sometimes the ACE recommendations to administration are followed up on as was done with forages.

Jerry Whatley stated that Faculty Council and ACE leadership recommendations on the Annual Conference were not followed in planning conference activities. Steve Harrison agreed that cross discipline activities in larger time blocks were recommended but not adopted by the planning committee.

A. Chancellor Richard asked to get together with Steve Harrison after the Council today to discuss these issues.

Joan King commented that research associate hard money funding was a large part of the budget?

A. We are way beyond research associates being a right. At some universities (Clemson) scientists get a salary and office and that is it. We need to look at how we invest our budget.

Joan King asked what 910X money is?

A. I don't know but will look into it and get back to you.

End of Session with Chancellor Richardson

## **Old Business**

### **Faculty Senate Report – Paul Wilson.**

Parking was discussed. Students will have to pay for parking up front and have limited access to gated streets.

Brian Voss is the new IT director for the Baton Rouge campus. He said he will not change things without faculty input. AgCenter IT should follow his example.

The Faculty Discussion Board is now up and running. Only faculty can access it.

The Senate discussed PM35 (Post Tenure Review). The requirements for removal of tenured faculty is a 3-year process.

There was a decrease of 500 students in undergraduate enrollment, which was expected with the new entrance requirements. There was a decrease of 300 students in graduate enrollment, which was not expected.

Joan King commented this may be due to difficulty in foreign students getting visas.

The Graduate Council will be expanded to 16 members, which should mean that COA will always have membership. This has not happened yet.

### **Board of Supervisors report – Jerry Whatley and Steve Harrison.**

The Board is looking into state income taxes on retirement income. Income from Teachers Retirement is not subject to Louisiana state income tax. There are questions as to whether optional retirement benefits should be taxable.

The Board will change the way it operates. A board member has asked that the Board have a detailed plan of business that is submitted weeks before meetings so members can analyze the agenda items and make more informed decisions. This will be a change in the way the board operates, whether for the better is yet to be seen.

There will be 5-6 new members on the Board. Ronnie Anderson is going off. This will be a Blanco Board from now on.

### **Outside Employment Committee Report -- Ken McMillan.**

Ken distributed a report by the committee for discussion.

Don Boquet said it would not be possible to make significant changes in PS26 that would be beneficial to AgCenter faculty because PM11 defined outside employment, set limitations and

specified the reporting of all outside employment. Changes to PS 26 would still have to be in agreement with PM11.

Jerry Whatley stated that it would be easy to get the Board of Supervisors to address this issue because there are large differences among campuses in what is reported as outside employment. Paul Wilson said that some campuses completely ignore PM11, especially the Medical School.

Ken McMillan said the committee will continue to work on this.

### **ACE Committees at the Annual Conference**

Steve Harrison recommended that a questionnaire be distributed at the ACE meetings this fall with three questions to help develop agendas for the 2006 Annual Conference.

Ken McMillan suggested doing it now and sending the survey to all faculty members to help with the 2005 Annual Conference.

Allen Hogan said such a survey should be sent out by the Chancellor's Office.

Jerry Whatley suggested recommending that 2 to 3 Super ACE meetings be held. Steve Harrison questioned whether this would be perceived as and end run around the planning committee.

Allen Hogan noted that such a recommendation would be perceived just like administration forcing something on the faculty and therefore the survey requesting input would be a better way of setting an agenda. Joan King stated we needed to ask the faculty. Ken McMillan thought we would be better off politically to survey to find out what the faculty wanted.

Steve Harrison withdrew the original motion that a questionnaire be distributed at the ACE meetings this fall.

Jerry Whatley moved the Council recommend to the Chancellor to send by email three questions to survey faculty to get opinions on what should be done with the ACE Group meetings at the 2005 Annual Conference.

After discussion, Steve Harrison appointed a committee to draft three questions to survey faculty. The committee members are Joan King (chair), Allen Hogan and Don Boquet. The questions will be sent to Jerry Whatley to forward to Chancellor Richardson.

### **Session with Ann Coulon.**

Ann reported that 34 faculty members had requested to be considered for promotion. Six were informed that they may not meet eligibility requirements. This leaves 27 to 29 who will go forward. – 16 are tenure track, 15 are agents. A campus-wide Promotion and Tenure Committee will be established 16 September to evaluate the candidates.

Joan King asked if the committee changes membership each year.

A. Yes, it does to some extent.

Steve Harrison pointed out that the Promotion and Tenure Committee members are selected by the vice chancellors in consultation with the officers of the Faculty Council.

Ann said there was some concern on funding the coursework policy. Vice chancellors Boethel and Coreil have some suggestions for changes. Ann will get with the committee on these. The AgCenter may be able to use state money if justified.

Todd Shupe asked if a faculty member would have to pay to attend a class taught by an AgCenter faculty member?

A. Yes, because it would be taught on the Campus and not by the AgCenter.

Joan King questioned if it might not be better to just sit in and audit the course.

Steve Harrison said this would not be legal.

On the question of Grievance Procedures, Ann said she wanted to meet with the Faculty Council committee. Civil Service is in the process of changing their policy and these may be incorporated into one Policy Statement for all employees.

On the question of flexible work hours, Ann said she will address this with the unit heads and parish chairs at a meeting in September.

Brian Leblanc asked if this will be a formal policy that will be communicated to all unit heads, parish chairs and faculty.

A. Yes, but will not be mandated. We have talked with unit heads about the need to use discretion to make this work.

Ann reported that the LSU Baton Rouge campus will replace SSN with ID numbers to protect students and faculty from identity theft, so the AgCenter is doing the same. The ID numbers will be different from ISO numbers, which are international financial IDs.

Paul Wilson asked how many students have had a problem?

A. This action is more to prevent problems than solve existing problems. Also, federal and state regulations are coming that will require ID numbers.

Allen Hogan said he and several other AgCenter employees have had ID theft problems.

Job descriptions are being looking at carefully before being approved by the vice chancellors. Some are being revised. They want to avoid excessively going back and forth with faculty to incorporate changes.

Steve Harrison indicated job descriptions will go out with Evaluation forms.

Ann said they also will be included in Promotion and Tenure packets.

Joan King commented that the Research Associate Task Force had suggested that RA positions should be on hard money only if they are supporting units or multiple programs rather than individual scientist's programs.

Steve Harrison pointed out this is sometimes hard to determine.

Don Boquet said that RAs who are assigned to individuals also perform service functions to AgCenter clientele such as variety testing.

Ann noted that there will probably be a pool of money to help startup programs of new faculty members, or to transition between grants.

Todd Shupe asked about payment of annual leave when soft money appointments resign? Now the cost is being kicked back to the department, then to the project leader. What happened to the 29% fringe?

A. This is being looked at by Mark Legendre and David Boethel. Fringe is used to cover other things, is not kept separate and is in one large pool of money. The fringe rate does not include termination pay.

Todd – One solution would be to make the person take leave before resigning.

A. This is not possible and there are regulations governing how much leave can be taken.

Linda Hooper-Bui said the grant money should be there for the payments because it is earmarked for the position.

Steve asked about graduate student stipends, which are not competitive with main campus or other universities?

A. If someone is paid \$18-20,000 for ½ effort, they are being paid more than full-time RA salaries, which would not be acceptable.

End of session with Ann Coulon

### **New Business**

#### **AgCenter Business Cards -- Krishna Paudel**

Krishna reported to the Council that the Communication Unit does not allow faculty members to put additional information such as the department web site address on AgCenter business cards? Steve Harrison agreed that this should be allowed as long as it is a professional site.

Ken McMillan said Communications also did not allow him to put certifications on his cards.

After discussion, Steve Harrison appointed a committee of Krishna Paudel and himself to write a motion with recommendations for more flexibility in the type of information that can be printed on AgCenter business cards to present to the Council at the next meeting.

#### **Research Associate Task Force – Joan King**

Joan distributed handouts with the goals of the Task Force and statistics on research associate locations and sources of funding. The goal of the Task Force is to come up with alternative funding for RAs to move RAs off of hard money. The Force has had one meeting thus far.

Linda Hooper-Bui noted that Administration does not appear dedicated to improving RA positions to career type jobs that retain quality employees.

Steve Harrison stated that he would like to see the RA position to be a career from which someone could retire. It takes four years to train an RA.

Joan King noted that RAs are never included in the budget for pay raises. Steve Harrison said that RAs are considered to be faculty. Ken McMillan replied there is an AgCenter RA policy

that says they are not faculty. He added that, by and large, we don't have an excess number of RAs, and the ones we have are needed.

Joan said she will send the minutes of the Task Force meeting to the Council members.

Lind Hooper-Bui asked Joan to relay to the committee that some faculty members need RAs as career employees.

### **Graduate Students Stipends -- Dan Thomas**

Dan Thomas from Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department gave a summary of problems recruiting graduate students. The competition for grad students is national. Compensation in current AgCenter guidelines limits stipends to a maximum of \$14,000.00-\$16,000.00, which is much too low. Some assistantships on the Baton Rouge campus are \$25,000.00.

Steve Harrison noted that this was equal to a salary of \$50,000.00.

Ken McMillan asked Dan Thomas what he wanted the Council to do?

A. He said he would like for the AgCenter guidelines to be revised to give assistantship ranges for disciplines that are not so restrictive.

Joan King stated that project leaders could solve the problem by putting higher stipend amounts into grants.

Linda Hooper-Bui replied that Sponsored Programs would lower the amount to what is in the guidelines.

Krishna Paudel thought the graduate assistants could be called something else that would justify a higher stipend.

Denyse Cummins thought part of the graduate student recruitment problem was that LSU was not listed among the top 200 research universities. Krishna Paudel said this was because the rankings included only the main campus.

Linda Hooper-Bui asked if the grad students could be put on full time pay during the summer?

Steve Harrison replied this was not possible because, to qualify for a stipend, they had to be a full time student and take some courses in the summer.

Allen Hogan stated that the stipend guidelines were probably written by HRM and therefore could be revised by HRM. Steve Harrison said every department should look into the stipend issue once a year.

The discussion ended with Steve Harrison appointing Allen Hogan and Denyse Cummins to research the present AgCenter policy/guidelines and report to the Council possible recommendations for revisions.

### **CMS – Steve Harrison**

Steve reported that IT was getting ready to shut down the old servers with all of the current publications without informing the faculty. This would result in the loss of considerable information that clientele rely upon. Upon being informed of the situation, the Chancellor has temporarily delayed shutting down the servers with the old publications to allow some time for planning and discussion.

Ken McMillan inquired if existing files could be transferred before shutdown of servers?

Steve Harrison answered that the current formats are not transferable and each faculty member has to redo the tables in the new format and then put the files on the new CMS.

### **Elections of new members to Faculty Council – Bill Branch**

Bill reported that only Mike Carl in IT has experience from previous elections. Fred Piazza, Director of IT, has said he will find someone to put the nomination and election information on the web.

Members whose terms on the Faculty Council will expire at the end of 2005 are: Don Boquet, Bill Branch, Jerry Whatley, Kurt Guidry, Becky Kelly, and Krishna Paudel.

### **Updates on Service Unit Advisory Committee activities**

Sponsored Programs – Brian Leblanc  
Communications -- Kurt Guidry  
International Programs -- Krishna Paudel  
Facilities Planning -- Don Boquet  
HRM – Allen Hogan and Denyse Cummins  
Diversity – Clayton Hollier

Steve Harrison commented that HRM should have someone on staff to assist faculty members with retirement planning and this could be recommended by the Advisory committee. Bill Branch said Teachers Retirement has someone that does retirement workshops. Allen Hogan commented there will be a retirement workshop for federal extension employees this fall.

Steve Harrison asked if it would be beneficial for the Council to invite one of the service unit heads to give an update and answer questions at meetings of the Council as is now done regularly with HRM. This would mean that each unit head would be invited to appear before the Council about one time per year based on the history of having about eight meetings per year. Jerry Whatley agreed that this would be useful and could begin with an update on unit responses to the survey and how the Advisory Committee is helping the unit. The Council agreed this was appropriate and this will be done for future meetings. Steve Harrison volunteered to write letters to the unit heads to invite them to participate in updates to the Council.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30p.