

## **LSU AgCenter Faculty Council Meeting Minutes for January 12, 2007**

Attendees: Joan M. King, David Blouin, Allen Hogan, Clayton Hollier, Denyse Cummins, Miles Brashier, Jerry , Dale Pollet, Wayne M. Gauthier, Markaye Russell, Rich Vlosky, Roberto Barbosa, Mike Hebert, James Hendrix, Phil Stouffer, Mary Grodner, Collins Kimbeng

Absent: Donnie Miller, Donna Lee, Ken McMillin, Cynthia Stephens

1. Call to order at 9:30 AM
2. Comments by Chancellor Richardson

The first 100 hours of the new United States Congress began with an expressed intent to eliminate all “earmarked” appropriation items (about 12,000). This would adversely impact the LSU AgCenter budget by approximately three million dollars and affect some important strategic programs including the Formosan Termite program, Master Farmer program and the Aquaculture Center. Administrators within the AgCenter are calling legislators to explain the importance of these programs. The congress is interested in transparency and accounting for budgetary expenditures. Under the proposed reform, money for earmarked programs would instead flow through the lead agency that handles the designated earmarked expenditure such as the USDA. Congressman Meloncon thinks that not only will there will be reform in the earmarking of appropriations, but that all earmarking may be eliminated. Chancellor Richardson agrees completely with transparency of disclosure and is hopeful the AgCenter will retain the earmarks it currently receives. The AgCenter’s paid lobbyist in Washington DC is monitoring the issue. The lobbyist follows federal rules and is paid with private money.

Wayne asked if LSU A&M also had lobbyists and Chancellor Richardson said yes but lobbyists on the other campuses may not be paid.

Allen said lobbyists are helpful with setting up meetings with legislators.

In the state budget, all of the AgCenter’s unfunded mandates are being put into the executive budget. There may be a pool of funds at the Board of Regents level that may be used for salary increases of perhaps 5%.

All the revenue estimate numbers show a surplus of \$2 billion or more, but there are still issues regarding how the money can or should be spent. In particular, there are issues with recurring items.

About one half of the Louisiana legislators will be term limited, but some will try to move to the other legislative body. For example, Daniel Cassidy moved from the House of Representatives to a run for a seat in the Louisiana Senate. That caused the term limit issue to be raised. The term limit rule is thought to mean just that, a legislative term limit

in general, such that people who have met their term limit in one legislative body, will not be able to move to the other legislative body to circumvent the limit.

The AgCenter will push for salary increases, but line item increases are not expected in the budget.

On February 21<sup>st</sup> there will be hearings on funding formulas for the group of institutions which have no students such as the AgCenter and the Southern University AgCenter. The commodity boards are also meeting with the legislature.

The search for a LSU System President is underway. Dr. Richardson is applying for the position.

A commission was appointed by the Board of Regents to look at the mission of each education campus in the state. The cost was being paid for by a private grant. The combining of campuses under the systems will be looked at by the commission. The Flagship University consisting of the LSU A&M campus, the LSU Law School and the LSU AgCenter will also be addressed. The commission will also look into whether the LSU System should continue to run the health care system or whether the state should handle it instead.

Allen asked whether, the Board of Regents Commission study would help the AgCenter relative to our financial difficulties. Chancellor Richardson said politics may be a bigger issue than the financial issues, i.e. do we really look better as a tri-campus flagship or a stand alone campus?

Jerry asked whether we would be better off as a separate campus from LSU A&M or together and the Chancellor stated emphatically that we are better off as a separate campus and that the current structure better serves the people of Louisiana.

Rich asked whether LSU A&M and the AgCenter could functionally be connected but organized separately. The Chancellor said it might work, but it depends on the Chancellors involved.

Jerry said that the functionality issue includes a lack of recognition of merit from an LSU A&M administration until legislative support is needed and the degrees of AgCenter employees. He said the AgCenter is far better off being separate.

Dr. Richardson said that other state universities are envious of the LSU AgCenter and use us as a model for what they would like to have.

Dr. Richardson again encouraged us to read the priority reports as the AgCenter is following them closely. There are a few items that will not be done, but 80-90% of them will be implemented. The AgCenter is selling the dairy herd at the Hill Farm. Only one person from outside the AgCenter called with concerns. The AgCenter is trying to streamline its units as best as possible.

Denyse asked if the Chancellor is still looking at the comments made by the Faculty Council about the priority reports and he said yes.

Allen asked if the US federal formula funds budget was still the same. The Chancellor said that other schools think they can still compete for the money if it is given out on a competitive basis. The AgCenter's concern is extension priorities. Earmarked monies are more of an issue. For example one earmarked AgCenter extension project was funded directly by a legislator for about \$380,000.

Allen stated that AgCenter priority reports were not prepared by the Faculty Council but were only reviewed by the council.

Jerry asked the Chancellor if there are areas or topics he wants us to focus on this year. We currently bring up issues that faculty and other campuses bring up and we do not want to evolve into a forum for gripe sessions. The Chancellor said he wants to give thought to the issue, and that there are some issues he may want to bring up. He wants us to be better than a regular faculty senate. We can go through any of the policy statements we want to. Many changes have occurred from our input, but they were not agreed to by the administration. The Chancellor does not get involved in promotion and tenure recommendations unless there is an issue with other campuses or another issue.

### 3. Discussion with Dwight Landreneau, Associate Director for Extension

Mr. Landreneau was in extension for 20 years prior to leaving the LSU AgCenter. He was a 4-H agent in Opelousas, then worked in adult agriculture in St. Landry, then after his M.S. degree he worked on crawfish, catfish, ornamental and recreational pond fisheries for approximately 12 years, and then worked on tariff issues regarding crawfish. He then went to work for Lt. Governor Blanco in the State Parks Department for about 7 years, and then he went to the Wildlife and Fisheries Department when Blanco became governor. He was very happy to come back to the AgCenter. He said he is here to work with us and for us and asked us to call him if we want to help him with any issues.

Wayne asked about Mr. Landreneau's experience away from the AgCenter and how it will help the AgCenter. Mr. Landreneau said he helped make the state parks department better and it became a benchmark for other states. He implemented an interpretive program with a staff that was responsible for education. He understands what goes on behind the scenes in state government and his relationships with Wildlife and Fisheries people have already helped the AgCenter get a grant for Coastal Fisheries issues.

James asked how Wildlife and Fisheries viewed the AgCenter. Mr. Landreneau said he had to educate them, but the AgCenter became the "go to" agency for answers once they became involved with the AgCenter.

#### 4. HRM Updates and Issues with Ann Coulon

Ann asked for input into the tenure and promotion process. A few faculty on the faculty P&T review committee gave negative votes on a few people. Denyse said there needs to be comments for improvement given back to the person going up for review. Ann gave an example where one person received 10 positive votes and 1 negative vote. Jerry said in the past he wondered why the committee was even discussing those persons with a 100% recommendation for promotion by the department faculty. He suggested that only those candidates with issues raised by the department should be discussed. He said there is need to add a policy that if there is a majority negative vote, the committee needs to provide written comments why, so the candidate and the candidate's supervisor can address the deficiencies. Denyse added that there is no place for comments at the AgCenter committee level on the current AgCenter form.

Clayton stated that members of the review committee need to focus on positives not negatives if only one person votes negative. Reviewers should look at the packets, not just rubber stamp them to make sure that the process is being done properly by the department, region, etc.

Rich suggested that each negative vote all along the line needs a mandatory specific comment as to the reason for the negative vote. Clayton said there should be an appointed scribe to take meeting notes. Jerry said there is no accountability and committee members need to be accountable for their actions. If the group has to include comments together, there will be more thought going into the whole process.

Allen said that having the vote recorded and a summary statement included for each candidate would help. There is still variation in the quality of the submitted packets, but they are getting better with time. Some people's work is not well represented in their packets. If the person is not known by members of the committee then all they have to go on is their packet.

Ann said the committee should be a check and balance for both ways. She said the faculty committee vote goes up to the Board of Supervisors. She said faculty comments go back to the faculty member being put up for promotion and to the department so that the individual is provided with an opportunity to reply.

Rich made a motion that faculty members at all levels in the process should include both positive and negative comments for improvement and feedback to any person up for review. These comments would not go to the Board of Supervisors or be included in packet, but would go back to the individual candidate, the department head and the vice-chancellors.

Jerry said the comments need to be direct as to why a vote was made the way it was. Allen said comments should be anonymous. Mary said the reviewers need to say why or how the person may not be meeting the requirements for promotion and tenure in this case. Denyse raised a question as to whether the comments are going back to the persons

being evaluated for promotion. Ann said the votes go back to the person, but there are no AgCenter committee level comments included. At the department level, comments go back to the individual.

Faculty Council voted on Rich's motion and approved it unanimously.

Joan asked, "If the reviewers voted against the person for going up early, will that be what the comment states"? Ann said yes.

Miles stated that mentoring needs to be done and people supervising others need to look out for their people and help them complete the paperwork.

Ann said Faculty Council members and supervisors will get together as a committee for training on tenure and promotion reviews to get a different viewpoint.

Ann said some mentoring is not accepted by the individual.

Rich asked if there was a step in the process for reviewing the format and quality of the packets reviewed. Denyse suggested that a good example of a packet could be as a guide or template. Phil, Allen, Jerry and Rich will work on it. Allen asked Ann if they could get a guide to start with.

Ann covered a draft of the Paid Time Off Policy (PTO). The AgCenter tried to get the legislature to allow an alternative leave system not exceeding what currently exists. The Board of Regents was charged with putting together a study committee to look at the issue. The new draft policy moves away from having separate sick leave and annual leave banks, but has PTO leave which can be used for any type of leave and an extended sick leave bank to be used only for family or personal illness. It allows people to use leave for a sick family member. The retirement system is out of sync with the leave policy. Retiring persons get no credit for huge banks of leave. In the PTO policy, people would get general leave, but no sick leave with a maximum of 300 hours per year. To cover long term illnesses the extended leave time would be used first for up to 120 days. Any excess accrued PTO goes into an Extended System Leave (ESL) bank. There must be 10 consecutive days of absence due to serious illness before the ESL kicks in. This policy would not apply to 9-month faculty. Retired persons currently will not get credit for sick leave towards retirement time. There is also an issue currently with having the person intending to retire be away for 2 years on leave and not being able to hire a person to replace them because the position is not vacant.

Mary said leave currently is accrued but a person retiring will not get all paid leave back. Rich asked what the current maximum of stored leave is now. Ann said up to 10 years of service a person gets 176 hours maximum accrual, but after 10 years the person can store up to 300 hours and get that paid back.

Rich reiterated that for sick leave a retiring person gets 200 hours back.

James asked if the 300 hours in PTO is maxed out and there is ESL time, can the ESL time be used first. Ann said yes.

Allen said there is no credit for resigning from your position, but if retiring, there is credit paid back partially.

Ann said we need to study the policy and give feedback to her and she would like a civil service level policy in the future also.

Ann stated that there would be a unit head evaluation by faculty policy coming up this year.

Rich in his role on the P&T review committee at the AgCenter level indicated that the committee evaluates both research and extension and suggested that the LSU A&M committee should evaluate only teaching, but noted that they also make comments about publications and grants and such. The AgCenter committee also makes comments on teaching. He asked if they should be separate or not. Ann said it is for the faculty to decide.

Allen said that a criterion for evaluation is covered, but each person uses their own judgment. People with good judgment should be on the review committee. Ann said the committee needs to have good representation from all areas and not too many from one area. The Chancellor looks at the Faculty Council recommendations the most. Faculty Council officers make recommendations on review committee members to administration using the administrators chosen list.

## 5. Faculty Council Officer Elections for 2007

### Chair Nominations:

Rich Vlosky was only person nominated and was elected by acclamation and approved by 100% vote.

### Vice-Chair Nominations:

Jerry Whatley was nominated and there were no other nominations. Jerry was approved by 100% of the Faculty Council by a vote.

### Recorder Nominations:

Wayne Gauthier was nominated and no other nominations came forth. Wayne was elected by 100% of the vote of the Faculty Council.

Executive Committee members stayed the same except for adding new officers as approved by council. The following make up the executive committee: Rich Vlosky,

Jerry Whatley, Wayne Gauthier, Joan King, Cynthia Stephens, Allen Hogan, and Markaye Russell and Clayton Hollier.

The Faculty Council expressed our deepest appreciation to Clayton Hollier for his service as both a committee member and Chair.

6. Minutes from the November 17, 2006 meeting were approved as amended.

7. Ombudsperson Issue

Mary said she used to be on a grievance committee at LSU A&M for such issues.

Clayton said that Faculty Council had the LSU A&M ombudsman visit our council and we never voted on whether we needed one and that we needed to vote on recommending that we create an ombudsman position.

Jerry made a motion that the Faculty Council send a recommendation to Chancellor Richardson to create an ombudsman position for the LSU AgCenter. Faculty council voted and the motion passed. Rich will draft a letter to send to Dr. Richardson.

8. Choosing Executive Committee Members for Faculty Council

Faculty Council Members agreed to keep the same persons on the executive committee as before as members-at-large and continuing Joan as a member of the executive committee as a member-at-large. There are now a total of 8 persons on the executive committee including officers, members-at-large and past-chair.

9. Board of Supervisors Meeting by Jerry Whatley

LSU A&M was asking other campuses for support for their changes in the LSU System exigency policy to make sure that AAUP guidelines were covered.

Financial exigency requires input from staff and employees, but force majeure does not and force majeure was what UNO and the Health Sciences Center followed.

The basic resolution from LSU A&M is to change the policy a little bit.

Allen said force majeure gives a unit carte blanche to make changes. Campuses said the process was abused to fire faculty. Jerry said the revised policy should follow AAUP guidelines. The AgCenter exigency plan followed AAUP guidelines.

## 10. Advisory Committee Reports

Allen covered HRM which discussed reports on new policies in the works, orientation being done quarterly and more in depth; and diversity being more about diverse audiences and employees. The diversity committee was absorbed into HRM.

Joan covered Facilities Planning and mentioned that an update was given on what the advisory committee covered. She mentioned that all work being done on facilities can be found on the intranet under facilities planning. The information covers buildings and money sources and stage of work. She also mentioned that the AgCenter was given money to build a large multipurpose warehouse-like facility to run. The facility would be used for a shelter in emergencies and there would be food and necessities stored onsite.

Rich will replace Paul Wilson on the IT advisory committee.

Other committees did not meet so there were no additional reports.

## 11. Meeting Dates

Meetings time will be 9:30 AM once each month, approximately every 4<sup>th</sup> Friday in the Sullivan Conference room. Next meetings: February 23, 2007 and March 23, 2007.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 PM.