

LSU AgCenter
Faculty Council Meeting
August 24, 2007
Sullivan Conference Room

Members Present: David Blouin, Miles Brashier, Denyse Cummins, Wayne Gauthier, Mike Hebert, James Hendrix, William Hogan, Collins Kimbeng, Joan King, Donnie Miller, Ken McMillin, Dale Pollet, Phillip Stouffer, Rich Vlosky, and Jerry Whatley.

Members Absent: Roberto Barbosa, Mary Grodner, Clayton Hollier, Donna Lee, Markaye Russell, and Cynthia Stephens.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Jerry Whatley, vice-chairperson, at 9:35 a.m.. Whatley explained that Rich Vlosky was at a doctor's appointment. Whatley also observed that our Ag Center Faculty Council functioned well relative to the other Councils of Faculty Advisers within higher education in Louisiana. Vlosky returned, assumed the duties of chairperson and invited Chancellor Richardson to make his remarks.

LSU AgCenter Update by Chancellor Richardson

1. Supplementary pay checks were sent out by Monday, August 20, 2007. The process of awarding raises was laborious because of the guidance that accompanied the distribution of those raises by sources of funds. The AgCenter added some funds into the pool for the raises. At the present time, there is no budget yet for the AgCenter. The LSU Board of Supervisors wants to give incoming President Lombardi input into the budgets for the various campuses in the LSU System. The Board isn't scheduled to meet again until October.
2. There was a \$2.0 million dollar line item in the state budget for the LSU AgCenter. The money is to be set aside for deferred maintenance and equipment. The interpretation of what constitutes maintenance and equipment is creating difficulties between AgCenter administrators and second tier administrators at the Board of Regents. Chancellor Richardson observed that 2007 has been the best budget year for higher education. However, it wasn't sufficient enough to recoup the losses experienced by higher education over the last 10 years.
3. The AgCenter is working with the Louisiana Bond Commission with respect to its capital outlay projects. It is a two stage process. In the first stage, the project gets legislative approval for inclusion in the annual capital outlay bill. In the second stage, the Louisiana Bond Commission gives its approval for the sale of the bonds that would pay for the project. The costs of the projects included in the capital outlay bill often exceed the value of the bonds approved for sale by the Louisiana

Bond Commission. As a consequence, capital outlay projects not approved by the Louisiana Bond Commission for funding remain stalled and must again compete for funding in the following year. In effect, this has been what has been happening to the Animal Sciences Complex project.

4. Chancellor Richardson met with incoming LSU President Lombardi. The reports being received on President Lombardi from individuals who have worked with him at the University of Florida and at the University of Massachusetts have been positive. Chancellor Richardson observed that there will be no mistake with Lombardi as to who's in charge. President Lombardi has been invited to speak at the LSU AgCenter's annual conference.
5. The August 22, 2007 article in the Wall Street Journal on Greg Henderson's work with vetiver grass and its termite-repellent features is a rare, but positive national promotion for the work being done in the AgCenter. The article was entitled "Found in the Weeds: Bug Scientist Touts Cure for Levee Leaks. Engineers Ponder Benefits of Fast-Growing Vetiver; Foe of Termites, Hangovers?"
6. The AgCenter lobbyist in the Louisiana legislature also works for the Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation.
7. Currently, the biggest issue in the AgCenter is the changeover in the Louisiana legislature as a consequence of the term limit statute. Although AgCenter personnel are to remain apolitical as a matter of law and policy, we need to share information with successful candidates and their supporters about the work being done by AgCenter employees on behalf of the people in the state of Louisiana.
8. Another positive development is the report that \$500 million dollars has been found for inclusion in next year's state budget.
9. If Bobby Jindal is elected governor, Louisiana will have a republican governor and a democratic legislature. There might be an attempt to give people tax breaks. If tax breaks become a reality, the reduction in state revenues is likely to create budgetary conflicts regarding investments in roads versus higher education. Because of the large percentage of dedicated monies in the state budget, the two areas for absorbing budget reductions are higher education and health and hospitals. Under conditions of revenue downfalls, it has proven easier politically to cut budgets than to raise taxes.
10. Hendrix spoke of the difficulties being encountered in the process of changing faculty identification cards.
11. Note was taken of the parking problems being created particularly for off-campus visitors as a consequence of the changes associated with the Easy Street project that seeks to convert LSU into a walking campus. Chancellor Richardson

indicated that the project is not satisfactory as it prevents vendors from being able to get on campus and it congests traffic on Highland road. He will continue to pursue alternatives for making it easier for off-campus employees of the AgCenter to access the campus.

12. Hogan spoke of the serendipitous experience that provided him with his pay raise notification. Chancellor Richardson observed that there were problems with the notification process and implied that actions would be taken to prevent them in the future.

Frankie Gould. Director of Communications.

1. Eight years ago, the Office of Communications/ Public Relations (OCPR) was placed directly under the Office of the Chancellor. Ms. Gould provided all members of the AgCenter Faculty Policy Committee with a packet of materials and oriented her presentation around its contents. The materials in the packet included an organizational chart, a handout identifying the various duties and functions of the OCPR and the individuals with primary responsibilities for them, a marketing toolkit for branding the LSU AgCenter, and other sundry documents.
2. Organizationally, there are six functional divisions within the OCPR. Responsibility for three of the six divisions are assigned to specific individuals. Those divisions and individuals with specific responsibilities for each of them are as follows:
 - a. News & Media Relations (Linda Benedict)
 - b. Publications, Photography & Design (John Wozniak)
 - c. Marketing (Elma Sue McCallum)
 - d. Web
 - e. Public Relations
 - f. Training, Grants/Contracts
3. The avowed mission of the LSU AgCenter's OCPR is to deliver information created by LSU AgCenter experts in a form easily accessible to diverse audiences. Education is the context for their work. The focus of their work is to help Louisiana citizens learn about the quality and variety of services offered by the LSU AgCenter in furtherance of its mission of enhancing the quality of life for Louisiana residents.
4. Dissemination of information is done through print newspapers and magazines, video news releases and audio news releases. Tangibles such as newspaper clippings can be used to document their work such as the provision of 500 stories and 250 photographs in 2006 to news media. However, video releases are considered intangibles because one cannot easily document when any one of the ten TV stations receiving AgCenter materials actually use any of their video or audio releases. The office is staffed by full-time North, Central, Southwest and

Southeast area communicators who work with Louisiana's media markets to disseminate AgCenter materials.

5. Ms. Gould's presentation was punctuated by the following discussions:

a. A survey of web user satisfaction had a 49% return. The OCPR is trying to create a profile of the users of its information. Vlosky questioned the purpose of doing the survey.

b. Hogan noted that the people wanted to be provided with print (bulletin) materials. Gould acknowledged that radio and print materials work best since the majority of the users of AgCenter information are not computer literate. A discussion ensued suggesting that the creation of bulletin material for dissemination was not the priority it had once been. Today's priorities are on journal articles and grants. Gould raised the question of how to encourage faculty to participate in creating and disseminating materials. Whatley indicated that Louisiana Agriculture is now trying to get an outreach component incorporated into it. Two of its four issues feature general interest research topics. The other two issues focus on special interest topics such as Urban Entomology.

c. Whatley identified the need to get bulletins and other materials to people before the need exists for the information. He cited Hurricane Katrina as an example. Gould observed that hurricane related information needed to be put out in May of every year. A major difficulty in providing the general public with information is the absence of racks in establishments frequented by the public in which to place AgCenter bulletins and other materials. Whatley observed that businesses, while welcoming AgCenter materials, simply did not have the counter space for the materials.

d. Gould reported that Dr. Deborah Davis had done a survey of materials that are requested, but which they don't have in print. The majority of the requests is for lawn and garden information. She further observed that the "Vegetable Planting Guide" will be the first high end publication to be sold. Vlosky raised a question regarding the establishment of a pricing structure that is consistent with the mission of the AgCenter as a nonprofit center. Pollet suggested that insuring that the receipts from the sale of the materials go back to the unit generating the documents is important

e. Gould reported that although Information Technology (IT) is working on creating a shopping cart, the warehousing of the materials to be sold continues to be a problem. Hebert asked whether the OCPR advertises through newspaper. Gould said that they used the ADECK site for selling materials because it was free. McMillin indicated that the OCPR needed

to incorporate user-friendly prompts into their electronic system for identifying and ordering materials.

- f. A related problem outlined by Hendrix was that people visiting AgCenter county offices requesting information that was available on the internet ,but not in print, were going to be provided with that information. However, it comes at a cost to AgCenter resources at the parish level in the form of secretarial time, ink cartridges and paper materials required to custom download and print it for them. Hendrix observed a need for the development of a strategy in producing materials such that reproduction could be done at minimum costs to AgCenter resources.
- g. Gould indicated that the OCPR speaks for the LSU AgCenter. To that end, it works closely with all media in the state. The OCPR is involved in providing materials to members of the Agricultural Committees at all levels of the state and federal government. They also liaison with other state agencies such as the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry and the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries as well as with other land grant institutions. It sponsors an annual legislative fete and AG Magic as these activities provide a venue for promoting the agricultural research and extension work being done by the LSU Agricultural Center. Over time, promotion and advertising have been increased. By law, up to ten percent of the OCPR's budget can be spent on advertising.
- h. The OCPR has also evolved into a crisis communications unit. In recent times, it has done more new employee training and has provided training on Violence in the Workplace, SCOOPS (Safety and Continuity of Operations Plan) and crisis management. Evaluations are handed out at the end of training sessions.
- i. The OCPR is presently working with IT on copyright laws. The LSU AgCenter's logo is now a federal trademark.

6. Gould indicated that there is a need for the OCPR to have a strategic plan with emphasis on it future direction. It is now into pod casting. There is a need to evaluate how our video news releases are being used since there are no clipping services for TV equivalent to that for newspapers. Its public service announcements (PSA's) such as "Get it Growing" need to be assessed.

7. Vlosky asked about actionable items that might have resulted as a consequence of the unit surveys. Vlosky cited the need for editors and the absence of any replacements for either Gayle Smith or Jane Honeycutt. Gould responded that they needed more help in the design group and that they have done some outsourcing with grant monies.

8. Hogan suggested that a useful topic for improving annual conference would be a presentation by the OCPD entitled “Writing for the Web”.

9. Ms. Gould took note of an “After the Storm” tabloid.

Break

Approval of Minutes of July 27, 2007 Meeting

Hogan moved to accept the July 27, 2007 minutes. The motion was seconded by Whatley and passed on voice vote.

Old Business

1. Vlosky reported that Vice-Chancellor and Director Coreil had approved both the Council’s recommendation regarding faculty participation in the selection of the recipients for the Floyd S. Edmiston, Denver T. and Ferne Loupe Extension Award and the Extension Excellence Award as well as the suggested set of four faculty council member to participate in the selection process.
2. Vlosky distributed a draft set of Accomplishments of the LSU AgCenter Faculty Council from 2002 – Present.

New Business

1. Whatley: Board of Supervisors Report
 - a. The August 2007 meeting of the LSU Board of Supervisors (BOS) was the last meeting that President William L. Jenkins, Chairman Rod West and LSU-A Chancellor Robert Cavanaugh were attending in their present positions.
 - b. The Council of Faculty Advisers (CFA) identified plans and goals for the CFA to work on this year. The CFA has a concern, with PM-35 particularly, as it has to do with termination of faculty, tuition exemptions for faculty, and force majeure issues. The CFA is looking at faculty senates relative to how they are functioning. On some campuses, the chancellors don’t come to the meetings of their senates and, on other campuses, some senates don’t want the chancellors to be at their meetings. Thus, the CFA is seeking to introduce more uniformity and structure into the working of the faculty senates throughout the LSU system.
 - c. Mr. James P. Roy was elected President of the LSU Board of Supervisors.
 - d. The speculation is that the five terminated tenured faculty members at LSU-NO have jobs and that the purpose of their refusal to resign is to call attention to the

need for guidelines to be followed by their supervisors. The Health Sciences Center may very well still be operating under force majeure conditions.

2. Cummins reported that the International Programs (IP) Committee had met and conveyed the Council's request that they (IP) make opportunities for international work known to all faculty. This led to a suggestion to develop a data base of people with skills that could be used for targeting prospective IP workers. If a Request for Proposal (RP) comes across a faculty member's desk, can it be mailed to IP?

Cummins reported that Laskman is understaffed. Laskmann had requested that the Faculty Council support his request for support with service units. McMillin moved that IP and OCPD develop a public database, compiled from faculty input, identifying areas of faculty expertise. The motion was seconded by Whatley. There was discussion as to whether listings in the database would be voluntary. The motion carried by majority vote.

3. Hogan reported that the Human Resource Management (HRM) Committee had met on Monday, August 20, 2007. Ms. Coulon did not attend. There was a discussion about putting together a panel discussion at annual conference addressing the use of technology by users. Regarding LSU AgCenter policies and procedures, Hogan noted that old time employees don't know what the policies are or where to find them. Administrators need to be exposed to this material as well. Hogan suggested that HRM should, every quarter, send out a broadcast e-mail identifying policy changes.

4. Miles said the communications committee was scheduled to meet but the meeting date was changed.

5. Hogan outlined the process for conducting elections for membership on the LSU AgCenter Faculty Council

- a. Nominations are to take place during the first two weeks in October. It starts with Ann Coulon in HRM contacting Fred Piazza in Information Technology (IT). Their joint responsibility is to develop a list of eligible candidates for the LSU AgCenter Faculty Council. They are to insure that no eligible person is left off the list and that people are properly categorized by rank and group.
- b. The call for nominations is issued by the Chancellor who identifies a two-week period for nominations. People nominated can accept or decline. The election is conducted during the last two weeks in October.
- c. Newly elected members are invited to attend the November meeting as observers.
- d. Whatley volunteered to call Coulon with the request to initiate the process by October 1, 2007. An apparent problem exists with respect to the

nomination of people who are presently on the council as taking them off the eligibility list prohibits them from voting. Hogan will work with Whatley to minimize the problem.

6. Vlosky reported that the attendance at Faculty Council meeting ranges from 55 to 100 percent (%). There is a need to be concerned with the existence of a legitimate quorum for voting. Whatley indicated that there were two options: First, the use of proxies or secondly, resignation and having the individual receiving the second largest number of votes assume the office of the resigning member. The issue regarding attendance that has not been satisfactorily addressed is identification of the point in time at which the elected person is no longer fulfilling their responsibilities. Whatley moved that a committee be appointed to create a policy recommendation for addressing the issues associated with attendance such as the appointment of proxies. The motion was seconded by McMillin and passed on a voice vote.

7. Vlosky indicated that a Faculty Issues Survey to determine the issues the faculty wants the Faculty Council to address would be appended to the Chancellor's identification of Faculty Council Accomplishments.

8. In response to Gauthier's inquiry regarding the Ombudsperson position, Vlosky indicated that the job description, the make-up of the selection committee, and other relevant information had been sent to Ann Coulon. Ms. Coulon necessarily had to first take care of matters associated with distribution of the raises. Since that task is now complete, she can now turn her attention to filling the ombudsperson position.

9. King questioned whether we should revisit the mission, goals, and related matters relevant to the LSU AgCenter at annual conference. She observed that it had been eight years since they had been established. It was noted that we need to wait ten years.

10. Denyse Cummins, William Hogan and Jerry Whatley were identified as term limited members of the LSU AgCenter Council. Cummins and Hogan's terms are up in December, 2007. Whatley's term is up in December 2008.

11. King moved for adjournment which occurred at 1:10 p.m. on August 24, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne M. Gauthier
Secretary