

**LSU AgCenter
Faculty Council Meeting
October 26, 2007, 2007
Sullivan Conference Room**

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

Members Absent: Clayton Hollier and Markaye Russell.

Activities and Highlights:

Guest Comments from Kevin Cope, President LSU-BR Faculty Council President (II 1-10)

Vice-Chancellors Want More Than a Portfolio (II 12)

No Connectivity Between Service Units, Faculty & Administrators (II 13)

Council Acting to Insure Representation (II 16)

Satisfaction & Issues Survey Coming (II 18)

Election Results (II 19)

LaCarte & Personal Responsibility (II 20)

Call to Order

Chairman Vlosky called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. on October 26, 2007 in the Sullivan Conference Room.

Minutes of September 23, 2007

Hogan's motion to accept the minutes of September 23, 2007 was seconded by Whatley, and passed on a voice vote.

Dr. Kevin Cope, President of the LSU-BR Faculty Senate

Dr. Kevin Cope, President of the LSU-Baton Rouge Faculty Senate was introduced and invited to speak. After extending thanks and recognizing present and past members of the LSU faculty senate who also serve on the AgCenter Faculty Policy Council (Council), Dr. Cope made the following observations regarding the LSU Faculty Senate (Senate).

1. There is a need to improve the faculty governance process. Specifically, there is a need to enhance communications which is now hindered by tangled web sites. There is a formal resolution to revamp the committee structures within the Senate. It is "hide-bound" and obsolete. There is a need to invoke a bylaw adjustment to get rid of obsolete committees. At present, every committee has representatives tied to any number of constituents.

2. There is a need to reinstitute regular meetings between the executive committee of the Senate and the administration. The earlier practice of biweekly meetings became dormant under Provost Risa Palm. The executive council did meet with Donna Torres, Associate Vice-Chancellor for Accounting Services.
3. Dr. Cope assessed Provost Astrid Merget as forthcoming, punctual and adept. He also observes less tangible action from her leadership to date. A registered complaint gets passed on to a subordinate who provides a response. Dr. Cope also observes some uncertainty within her administration.
4. Dr. Cope observes a pattern of opportunistic power grabbing emerging. Some committees are working in good faith. He observes that the executive committees such as the Deans' Committees are relinquishing responsibilities to the Provost and that it is creating an instructional vacuum. He took particular note of activities within the Sequential Centennial Committee and the Educational Policy Committee. There is an active committee studying the whistle blower regulation for Louisiana as well as a committee regarding enforcement of PS 11, "Use of University Funds for Entertainment".
5. There is a need to re-staff the senate and to increase the number of senators participating from 52 to 67. Deans need to be contacted with a request to conduct elections and send senators to represent their colleges to the monthly meetings of the Senate.
6. Dr. Cope observed that the role and scope of the Senate is only advisory. There are two sources of power associated with the Senate. The LSU Board of Supervisors (BOS) has delegated the determination of educational policy for the University to the Senate. While the Senate cannot meddle, it can look into related issues. The Senate is apparently the strongest amongst all the faculty councils in the LSU System. The administration is concerned at the public relations level. In an ideal world, LSU-BR is a second tier institution. There is too much image cultivation. The power of public embarrassment exists. McMillin observed that the growth of so many mid-level positions within the administration can be attributed to the absence of faculty senate work at an earlier time.
7. The Senate's efforts to get a faculty member on the BOS and establishing good communications with other campuses has stalled for reasons of exigency and the search for a President of the LSU System.
8. Dr. Cope observed that, for all practical purposes, there is "no faculty senate, just an executive committee". Dr. Cope is trying to figure out what the Senate can do to be effective within a system that is top-down. It is easy to get to a position where "faculty gets sold out" by its leadership. The Senate faces significant resource constraints. Its budget is limited to an assistant and a telephone. Senators

are uninformed as to how to introduce legislation. It used to be competitive among faculty members to be a faculty senator.

9. Faculty has no legal representation. Administrators mired in legality. University attorneys are outsourcing a lot of their work. Benefits committee is looking into the provision of legal benefits.
10. Whatley observed that if the faculty is going to make the system better, it has got to get past the attitude that it is at war with the administration. We represent the educational elite of the state.

Ann Coulon, Director, Human Resources Management (HRM)

11. Rich Vlosky, Donna Lee, and James Hendrix volunteered to work with HRM to identify topics and issues to be addressed through the Best Practices Series (BPS) to be inaugurated in the near future. It was observed that the BPS committee needed to start now because of the logistics of inaugurating the BPS.
12. Ms. Coulon reported that the vice-chancellors were willing to use a nominee's portfolio as supplementary material in the annual competition for the varied AgCenter annual awards. They were not open to basing the awards using only the portfolio because the portfolio only reflects the most recent year of a nominee's work and accomplishments. The awards are designed to reflect an employee's work and its contributions over longer periods of time. Whatley observed that newspapers articles, as indicators of people's work, had declined in significance. Unlike an earlier time, today you have to kill somebody to get your name in the paper.
13. It was observed that there is an absence of connectivity between the service units, faculty and administration. The absence of connectivity was identified as both a technology issue and a structural issue. There is also a misinterpretation regarding professional courtesy as people do not want to tell people how to do their jobs.
14. Ms. Coulon reported that Louisiana had been designated as one of fourteen (14) change-agent states. As a member of the consortium, her office is required to periodically respond to a survey to which they can add items, but to which they can't delete items. Apparently, Louisiana has not responded to the survey because of concern with the diversity issue and they may petition to be dropped from the consortium. Mike Hebert asked how indebted might an AgCenter employee be to complete surveys for individuals associated with non-Louisiana agencies.
15. Ms. Coulon reported that there were no new developments to be reported with respect to the ombudsperson position. However, it remains a viable initiative and action item.

Vlosky:

16. Chairman Vlosky briefly reiterated the actions taken to create additions to the Council's bylaws for minimizing two related problems attributable to (1) an excessive number of absences of elected council members from scheduled meetings and (2) failure to provide for proxies in the event of absences. McMillin and Grodner presented two amendments to the Council's bylaws to minimize these two problems at the September 23, 2007 meeting. There was a favorable voice vote to adopt the two amendments. Vlosky explained the need to vote on adoption of the Council's bylaws with the amendments regarding attendance and proxies and the related procedures for notifying the chairman and the process for securing excusal from the Council. Question was called by Hogan to vote on the motion to adopt the Council's bylaws as amended. The motion was seconded by Whatley. Both of the amendments recorded in the September 23, 2007 meeting were passed on voice votes. The passage of these two amendments means that a request now needs to be made to Sarah Johnson requesting that the two amendments and their October 26, 2007 dates of passage be incorporated into the Council's bylaws.
17. Whatley moved that a letter of commendation be sent to Sarah Johnson for her work. Vlosky volunteered to perform that task.
18. Vlosky reported that the satisfaction and issues survey of AgCenter employees would be conducted before the end of 2007 and the replies to it would be maintained in the strictest of confidence. One of the purposes of the survey was to identify major issues negatively impacting the lives of faculty members. Some of the observations made in conjunction with Vlosky's discussion of the upcoming survey included the following:
 - a. Accounting Services. Why do they continue to make it more difficult to set up meetings? Hotel now has to be set up as a vendor. Regarding the conduct of the livestock show, you now have to be able to account for every penny and be in compliance with every legal law. There is a problem with securing timely and understanding responses from accounting services.
 - b. It was suggested that people mail their input to Rich regarding the issues to be incorporated into the survey.
 - c. Mike Hebert suggested that the survey identify each specific service unit and ask the survey respondents how many times have they made use of the services offered by that unit.
19. Hogan reported that 135 of the 466 people eligible to vote in the AgCenter Faculty Council Election did so for a twenty-nine percent (29%) participation rate. Sixteen (16) of the twenty-six (26) nominated for office agreed to have

their names placed on the ballot. A runoff election was necessary between the candidates for the Assistant – Off Campus and the Associate – Off Campus representatives. The following people were elected to represent their colleagues in the following ranks for the next three years:

Mandy Armentor from Vermillion Parish. Assistant – Off Campus.
Deniese Zeringue from St. Charles Parish. Associate – Off Campus.
Joan King. Food Science Department. Associate – On Campus.
Andrew Granger. Vermillion Parish. Full – Off Campus.
Adrienne Vidrine. Acadia Parish. Full – Off Campus.
Diane Sasser. School of Human Ecology. Full – On Campus.

Hogan suggested that more notifications of the nominations and of the voting process and dates be provided as a means of enhancing voter participation. More instructions on how to vote need to be provided along with links under the Chancellor's note.

Hogan suggested that the newly elected members of the Council be invited to the November meeting. Request Dr. Linda Benedict to put a blurb on the internet regarding the election.

20. Reports were received from the Accounting Services and Information Technology (IT) committees. McMillin reported on behalf of the Accounting Services committee that Accounting Services is concerned with the budgets and that they are working with IT so that eventually, the individual faculty member will be able to access their grant and experiment station accounts and track the status. When the transition to the LaCarte System is completed, the faculty member will become responsible for scanning their own receipts. Accounting Services is seeking to achieve that disclosure balance inherent in LSU's existence as a public institution where the public has a right to access public records against the individual's rights to privacy.

The IT Committee of Vlosky & Whatley indicated that the individuals in IT were revamping the web site, transitioning to electronic forms so as to minimize the use of paper, and trying to make it possible for individuals to be able to function with one password for LSU AC. Vlosky plans to ask Gould about satisfaction survey regarding the AgCenter web site.

21. The following were identified as committees that have yet to meet: Sponsored Programs, Facilities Planning, Communications and International Programs. International Programs, however, is scheduled to meet on November 2, 2007.

The motion to adjourn was seconded and passed on a voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne M. Gauthier, Secretary
LSU AgCenter Faculty Council