

**LSU AgCenter
Faculty Council Meeting
March 14, 2008
Sullivan Conference Room**

HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **LSUAC Disseminates Information to New Policy Makers (2)**
- **Strict Guidance Accompanies Deferred Maintenance Money (3)**
- **Roads Impact LSUAC Units (4, 5, 6)**
- **Hiring Freeze Lifted for 108 Positions, but Not for Ombudsperson (7, 23, 35)**
- **No Provisions in Governor's Budget for Raises (8)**
- **Capital Outlay is a Mess Delaying Animal Sciences Complex (9)**
- **Tuition Bill Will Be Supported by LSUAC (10)**
- **Jindal to Appoint Four BOS Members (12)**
- **Compensation for Academic Talent (13, 16, 17, 18)**
- **Commissioner Strain Supports LSUAC (14)**
- **President Lombardi Has Praise and Expectations for LSUAC (15)**
- **Possibility of a Combined LSUAC and LSU-BR IPO (16)**
- **Ethics Legislation No Real Problem for LSUAC (20)**
- **Update on Emeritus Chancellor Caffey (22)**
- **Wellness Program Participation Voluntary, but Encouraged (24)**
- **Evaluations Coming for LSUAC Vice-Chancellors, Directors & Heads (25)**
- **Cigna Replaces United Health Care as Third Party Contractor (26)**
- **Communications and IT Summit Presentations by LSUAC Employees (27)**
- **E-mail Approvals to Enhance Timeliness of Minutes to Faculty (28)**
- **Keim Assumes Barbosa's Responsibilities on Council (29)**
- **Synthesis of Survey into Actionable Items for Chancellor's Consideration (30)**
- **LSUAC Faculty Council Minutes Deemed To Not Be Public Records (31)**
- **Chancellor's Presentation to LA House Agriculture Committee on Intranet (32)**
- **e-Mails Encourage Council (34)**

Members Present: Mandy Armentor, David Blouin, Miles Brashier, Wayne M. Gauthier, Andrew Granger, Mary Grodner, Mike Hebert, James Hendrix, Collins Kimbeng, Richard Keim, Joan King, Donnie Miller, Dale Pollet, Diane Sasser, Phillip Stouffer, Adrienne Vidrine, Rich Vlosky, Jerry Whatley and Deniese Zeringue.

Members Absent: Donna Lee and Clayton Hollier

1. Chairman Vlosky called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. on March 14, 2008 and invited Chancellor Richardson to speak.

Chancellor Richardson

2. Chancellor Richardson recognized that the first special legislative session devoted exclusively to ethics had created some changes designed to positively enhance the state's image. Lobbyists still remain very powerful people particularly since term limit legislation has resulted in 65 freshmen legislators. These legislators are in the throes of getting situated and oriented to the workings of state government. The nature of gubernatorial and North – South Louisiana politics has resulted in some relatively inexperienced legislators chairing agriculture and appropriations committees very critical to the well-being of the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center (LSUAC). Lobbyists provide these people with useful information. The Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation (LFBF) is also sponsoring meetings throughout the state to provide these new legislators with information relative to the significant economic and cultural contributions that agriculture makes to the state's economy and culture. These meetings provide a forum for the LFBF to identify specific legislation that both hinders and supports agriculture. The LSUAC accepted the LFBF's invitation to participate in these meetings. Participation has proven to be a valuable forum allowing the LSUAC to articulate its mission, its needs, the scope of its work and the contributions of that work to the state, region, nation and the world. Thus far, four such meetings have been held and more are planned.
3. The second special session is devoted to the distribution of a \$1.2 billion dollar budget surplus. Of that sum, \$600 million was allocated to highways and the transportation infrastructure; \$100 million was allocated to reduce the state's unfunded obligations to its retirement systems and between \$75 and \$80 million was dedicated to address deferred maintenance at the state's institutions of higher learning. Very strict guidelines have been specified as to how the deferred maintenance monies are to be expended by the recipient institutions. At the present time, the LSUAC is scheduled to receive approximately \$6 million in deferred maintenance monies, a sum greater than that received over the last five years. The good news is that its expenditure can be spread out over more than one year.
4. Pinnacle, the new land-based casino, will border the Ben Hur research farm. The development in that area will increase traffic which is not conducive to the research being done at Ben Hur. The road that cuts through the Ben Hur research farm is a parish road and an earlier request to the mayor of Baton Rouge's office to abandon it has been denied. There are also private interests which would also be negatively impacted by a closure of Ben Hur road. Chancellor Richardson observed that the Horizon Plan, a document designed to guide the growth and development of East Baton Rouge Parish, provided for an extension of Kenilworth Parkway which would tie into the Ben Hur road. Such a development would intensify the traffic on Ben Hur road. There is a rumor regarding the extension of Staring Lane which, if it became a reality, would prove very helpful

in resolving some of the problems now facing the LSUAC with respect to the Ben Hur road.

5. A second Baton Rouge highway issue that would negatively impact the LSUAC if it were to become a reality entails a Baton Rouge Loop proposal that would have negative impacts upon the St. Gabriel research station if the loop were to run through Spanish Lake.
6. A meeting to discuss the proposal for an interstate loop in the Shreveport area that would destroy the Pecan Research Station was cancelled, but has been rescheduled for April 24, 2008. The mayor of Shreveport, a former 4-H member, is sympathetic to the LSUAC's concern about the loss of an irreplaceable pecan grove. The Red River Port Commission, however, favors the proposed loop because it would create access to a road leading directly to the Red River. There is an alternative which would site the loop farther to the South which would not completely destroy the Pecan Station. Chancellor Richardson hopes to convince the authorities to situate the road even a little further to the South so as to preserve the Pecan Station.
7. Chancellor Richardson observed that the hiring freeze had been lifted for 108 positions within the LSUAC. These were prioritized critical positions especially in the area of grants and contracts. Although it did not include the ombudsperson position, it remains a priority.
8. Chancellor Richardson observed that provisions for raises were not in the Governor's executive state budget which has been submitted to the legislature. Raises, however, are both a LSU Systems and higher education issue. Therefore, the Regents for Higher Education will be the lead agency in addressing raises for higher education during the regular session.
9. Capital outlay. By law, there is an annual \$200 million dollar cap on capital outlay expenditures. Capital outlay legislation totaling one billion dollars creates a \$800 million dollar shortfall. Legislation providing that 80% of capital outlay expenditures be dedicated to state projects and 20% to local projects was amended to provide for 60% state and 40% local project dedications in the last year of the Blanco administration. The effect of this change in the rules was to delay funding for the Animal Sciences Complex for another year. Capital outlay projects are assigned non-cash lines of credit. A major problem is that there is no money to implement the majority of the local projects. As a consequence, Chancellor Richardson expects the 2008 legislative session to be contentious.
10. One of the issues likely to come before the legislature is a tuition bill which would generate revenue for the teaching institutions of higher education. Even though such legislation will not help the LSUAC, its passage will need assistance from the LSUAC. However, such assistance can no longer be extended gratuitously.

11. It has recently come to light that the University of Louisiana-Lafayette is currently under-funded by \$7 million dollars and that their peer institutions are the University of Alabama and Georgia Tech.
12. Chancellor Richardson observed that Governor Jindal will have an opportunity to make four appointments or re-appointments to the LSU Board of Supervisors (BOS). The hope is that the appointed individuals will have knowledge and appreciation of agriculture and the work of the LSUAC.
13. Chancellor Richardson observed that the competition for talent within the LSU Agricultural Center is intense and that, unlike other state agencies, the major cost of filling a position is not the person's salary, but the start-up costs for a new hire. It is difficult to fully convey that concept to administrators not familiar with the culture of higher education.
14. LDAF Commissioner Mike Strain goes out of his way to praise the work of the LSUAC. He is also scheduled to deliver the keynote address at the Gamma Sigma Delta meeting on April 10th.
15. President Lombardi has been making comments very favorable to the LSUAC. The LSUAC used to receive scant attention because the emphasis was on health care and issues associated with the LSU-Baton Rouge (LSU-BR) campus. One of President Lombardi's major initiatives will be on increasing enrollments on the various campuses within the LSU System. Lombardi wants to raise enrollment to 33,000 at LSU-BR. President Lombardi has brought in Mike Gargano as the LSU System vice president for student and academic support services. Gargano's responsibilities include enrollment management throughout the entire LSU System. President Lombardi greatly respects what the LSUAC does for publicity. Outside East Baton Rouge Parish and the accomplishments of the LSU football team, people know very little about LSU except for what is being done by the LSUAC. The metrics that President Lombardi will probably use in assessing the LSUAC are likely to include outreach, private fund raising, grants and contracts. President Lombardi is focused on activities with financial implications because of a philosophy that says with money, things can get done which will go undone in the absence of money. The University of New Orleans (LSU-NO) gets 24,000 applications per year when, given the area, they should have 50,000 applicants. Six deanships are presently open on the LSU-BR campus.
16. The LSUAC has a well developed International Programs Office (IPO). Discussions are presently underway with LSU-BR to combine their office with the LSUAC's IPO with Lakshman Velupillai as Director. Chancellor Richardson will support the combining of the two IPO provided it can be done without diluting the LSUAC's IPO and resources. Chancellor Richardson has been to Honduras, where the Pan-American School of Agriculture for all of

Latin America is located, and Romania. He has visited with potential graduate students who would come to LSU if the financial support were made available and the permits from Homeland Security were granted. The LSUAC now funds foreign graduate students, but Chancellor Richardson does not and will not get involved in admittance decisions. Those decisions rest with the academic departments. A combined IPO will necessarily have to seek monetary support from foundations and other private organization to supplement institutional support if it is to achieve its potential.

17. More money must be committed to graduate assistantships if the Flagship agenda is to be realized as any academic institution's reputation results from the work of its faculty and their graduate students. Faculty doing "leading edge" research need the support of committed, gifted, talented and ambitious graduate students to maximize their present work and extend it beyond their lifetimes. Every major academic institution seeks such faculty and graduate students who respond positively to the highest bidders. It will be necessary to raise graduate assistantship stipends, but without increases in the total appropriations for graduate student, the effect will be to limit the number of graduate student assistantships. The LSUAC needs to become more competitive in terms of its salaries and compensation packages for graduate students, research associates, support staff and faculty.
18. President Lombardi is not opposed to the provision of tuition breaks for LSU employees. President Lombardi, however, recognizes tuition breaks to be benefits for employees with children. He then asks the question of what comparable benefits do you provide to employees without children?
19. Chancellor Richardson observed that before TOPS, LSU BOS scholarships were awarded to undergraduates. Now, those scholarships are awarded to students in the professional schools.
20. The recently passed ethics legislation shouldn't have any noticeable impact upon the LSUAC as it pertains to its interactions with lobbyists. Chancellor Richardson advises full and complete disclosure of such interactions and to seek guidance from higher authority if confronted with questionable situations.
21. It was observed that Dr. Sally Clausen will be assuming duties as the new Commissioner of Higher Education in Louisiana effective July 1, 2008.
22. Chancellor Richardson reported that Chancellor Emeritus Caffey was scheduled to be moved into an assisted living facility directly across the street from Cabrini Hospital in Alexandria. Employees passing through Alexandria were encouraged to stop by and visit with him for a few minutes.

Ann Coulon, Director of Human Resource Management

23. Ms. Coulon explained how the number of positions exempted from the hiring freeze increased from 68 in February, 2008 to 108 in March, 2008.
24. Ms. Coulon spoke about the introduction of the Wellness Program throughout the LSUAC as an effort to enhance the quality of life for its employees while making our employees more fit, overall, to serve the people of Louisiana. Ms. Coulon spoke of the various dimensions of the Wellness Program. These range from nutrition awareness, physical fitness, mental stability and financial soundness. Employees are not required, but invited to participate in any or all of these programs. In a very real way, a physically fit, well-adjusted LSUAC employee is a living demonstration of the power of applied knowledge and a better insurance risk. Live demonstrations have been a key to the success of the land grant system since its inception in 1860.
25. Employees can expect to receive evaluation forms on the Vice-Chancellors, regional directors and department heads during the week of March 24-28, 2008. The committee to summarize the anonymous comments recorded on those evaluation forms will be formed during the summer.
26. Cigna will become the third party contractor in the administration of the LSU Health Care System Program. The prior provider was United Health Care. At an earlier time, United Health Care was Definity.

Mr. Fred Piazza, Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Information Officer

27. Mr. Piazza introduced Ms. Tammy Ruffin, the individual responsible for providing information technology (IT) training throughout the LSUAC. A 27 question survey on LSUAC communications and IT was conducted to determine which communication practices and IT tools were of greatest interest to LSUAC employees. One of the reasons for the survey is to conduct a summit-style conference for all LSUAC personnel. The purpose of the summit is to train LSUAC faculty and staff on high-interest topics related to Communications and IT that can increase efficiency, provide added service to clientele, and streamline the efforts of employees. The plan is to have the presentations at the summit delivered by those LSUAC personnel who have achieved high levels of competence in communication practices and in the use of various IT tools. The suggestion to put the training provided at the summit on DVDs so that it can be preserved for review and in training new employees was met with approval. It was observed that on-campus departments can have a second website hosted by LSU A&M that will be supported by LSU A&M, but not by the LSU Ag Center.

Rich Vlosky, Chairman

28. The minutes of the February 15, 2008 meeting were approved by voice vote. The motion to have council member accept or reject the minutes of the faculty council meetings by e-mail with the proviso that no reply within 48 hours constitutes acceptance was also passed on a voice vote. The purpose of the motion was to allow the chairman to send out the agenda of the forthcoming meeting along with a set of approved minutes of the most recent meeting. The ultimate objective is to speed up the timeliness of communications between members of the Council and their faculty representatives.
29. Vlosky introduced Dr. Richard Keim, an assistant professor in the School of Renewable Natural Resources, as the replacement for Dr. Roberto Barbosa.
30. Vlosky led the members of the Council through an extended discussion of 26 actionable comments for Chancellor Richardson's review and consideration that emerged as a summary of comments from the 2007 Faculty Issues and Concerns Survey. Those 26 actionable comments were summarized into 20 comments that will be submitted to Chancellor Richardson for his review and use.
31. A discussion ensued in response to an e-mail inquiry as to why the LSUAC Faculty Council minutes aren't made public. The outcome of that discussion was that the clients of the Council are LSUAC faculty and not the public. Therefore, its minutes are not to be posted on the website.
32. Chairman Vlosky indicated that Chancellor Richardson's presentation to the Louisiana House Agriculture Committee will be posted on the intranet.
33. Chairman Vlosky indicated that there is a need for a current list of advisory service committee members.
34. Chairman Vlosky reported that he had received ten e-mails from faculty members acknowledging receipt of the minutes of the February 15, 2008 meeting of the LSUAC Faculty Council. Those e-mails were interpreted as a positive indicator that the Council's efforts to enhance communications were paying off and needed to be continued.
35. Hendrix's motion to adjourn was seconded and approved by voice vote at 1:20 p.m. on March 14, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne M. Gauthier
Secretary