

**LSU AgCenter
Faculty Council Meeting
April 18, 2008
Sullivan Conference Room**

Highlights

- **Chancellor Believes Widespread Salary Inequities Resolved at Earlier Time and No Longer Exists
Chancellor Willing to Review Individual Cases (4)**
- **Meritorious Work Prerequisite for Equity Pay and Raises Regardless of Tenure (5)**
- **Performance Reports Influence Raises (5)**
- **Recognition Needed at Both Departmental and AgCenter Levels (6)**
- **PI's Access to Indirect Funds Begins at the Department (7)**
- **Chancellor Needs More Information (7, 16)**
- **Chancellor Encourages Personal Retreading Initiative Sans Micromanagement (8)**
- **AgCenter Priorities Trump Personal Research & Extension Interests (8,11)**
- **Creating Trust: An On-Going and Personal Activity (9)**
- **Technology Necessitates Continuous In-Service Training (10)**
- **Research to Support Extension's Mission & Advance Basic Sciences (11)**
- **Articulating & Understanding Extension's Promotion Criteria (12)**
- **Faculty Can Vote, But LCES Director Controls Monies for Ext Positions (12)**
- **Vice-Chancellors & Regional Directors Need to Reach Out More Often (13,15)**
- **Teaching: Legitimate Function In Need of AgCenter's Appreciation (14)**
- **Faculty Council Minutes Merit Time & Attention of All Administrators (16)**
- **Name Change for "Service Units" Likely to be Forthcoming (17)**
- **All Administrators to be Subject to Performance Evaluations (18)**
- **Articulating & Revising AgCenter's Mission & Vision Statements (19)**
- **Inward Firing Evidences Need for Enhancing Outward Communications (20)**
- **Formal Mentoring Programs for New Faculty Hires Encouraged (21)**
- **Paper Minimization (22)**
- **Annual Conference: Either Eliminate or Make It the Best Ever (23)**
- **Tuition Exemptions: Not Up To Chancellor Richardson (24)**
- **Formula Funding & Performance Criteria: Implications for AgCenter (25)**
- **Tuition Increase Issues (26)**
- **Changes in Capital Outlay Process and Animal Sciences Complex (27)**
- **COA Dean Ken Koonce Underscores Dominance of Research (28,32)**
- **Fellow Faculty Are Most Demanding Group In P&T Process (29)**
- **Graduate and Undergraduate Student Numbers (30-32)**
- **COA Name Change Discussion Forecasted in 2009 (33)**
- **COA Housing Initiative To Enhance the Undergraduate Experience (34)**
- **Negotiating Departmental Budgets at Dean's Level (35)**
- **Volunteers Needed to Comply with Chancellor's Request (12,37)**

Members Present: Mandy Armentor, David Blouin, Wayne M. Gauthier, Andy Granger, Mary Grodner, Mike Hebert, Collins Kimbeng, Joan King, Donna Lee, Diane Sasser, Phillip Stouffer, Adrienne Vidrine, Rich Vlosky, and Deniese Zeringue, Jerry Whatley, Richard Keim.

Members Absent: Miles Brashier, James Hendrix, Clayton Hollier, Donnie Miller, Dale Pollet.

Guests: Chancellor William B. Richardson, Dean Ken Koonce

1. Chairman Vlosky called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. on April 18, 2008 in the Sullivan Conference room.
2. The minutes of the March 14, 2008 minutes were approved as distributed by both e-mail and paper copy.
3. Chairman Vlosky recognized Chancellor Richardson who had earlier been provided with a set of “Actionable Comments for Chancellor Richardson” as summarized from the 2007 LSU AgCenter Faculty Issues & Concerns Survey. Chancellor Richardson addressed each of the 21 actionable items as follows.
4. Item 1: “There is a perception by some respondents that there are inequities in pay between 1) gender, 2) within and between ranks, and 3) extension vs. research. Is this the case?” Chancellor Richardson replied that he didn’t see any glaring problems regarding salaries as it pertains to gender, academic ranks and extension versus research faculties. He is willing to look into individual cases. He observed that when salary increase monies do become available, generally as a pool of money with or without benefits, what been done is to hold back 2% for the directors to use in adjusting salaries. He further observed that when the specialists were put into the departments, salary inequities were addressed and they resulted in significant raises for extension personnel.
5. Item 2: “Salary increases for employees with long service records relative to pay for new hires. Equity (length of service), in addition to merit raises, should be considered.” Chancellor Richardson said he could agree provided the word “meritorious” was inserted before “length of service”. Merit raises are going to be retained. Performance evaluations are looked at very carefully and they are used in determining raises. This is why they are to be taken seriously. Chancellor Richardson claimed that his #1 priority in his interactions with the legislature is salary increases for AgCenter employees. He doesn’t expect too much concrete action to occur before the Revenue Estimating Committee meets in early May. There is a problem to the extent that some legislators do not have a full understanding and appreciation for the work that is done by AgCenter employees. President Lombardi is a strong supporter of the work done by the AgCenter.
6. Item 3: “Recognize faculty accomplishments in LCES and LAES newsletters. Many activities and contributions do not capture media attention but contribute to improve lives of Louisianans.” Chancellor Richardson indicated that recognition needs to occur at department level and there is a problem with AgCenter recognition in various media venues.

7. Item 4: “Ensure that indirect funds due to be placed in control of the PI are actually transferred to an accessible account.” Chancellor Richardson indicated that he doesn’t understand the problem and that he needs to be advised as to what the problem might be. He indicated that the problem was not with central administration and that checks needed to begin at the department level.

8. Item 5: “Encourage long-term experienced employees to turn their attention to current needs of audiences rather than continuing their work in a topic, issue, project that is no longer relevant to or an AgCenter priority. Teaming them up with the employees doing work aligned with AgCenter priorities may serve as an incentive toward making them successful employees.” Chancellor Richardson indicated that while he fully agrees with item 5, it is a tightrope as it invites “micromanagement”. He further observed that the AgCenter cannot continue to let people do what they continue to be doing if their activities are not consistent with AgCenter priorities.

9. Item 6: “A theme was a sense of a lack of trust in the administration. Look into management techniques to build trust in organizations. All administrative levels should receive employee relations management training. This issue may be tied to a theme of low morale consistently found in the comments section.” Chancellor Richardson indicated that he agrees and that changes are made as necessary in leadership positions. He indicated that building trust is a continuous activity, but that it (trust) comes down to personal interactions between people.

10. Item 7: “Offer in-service training for specialists and professors”. Richardson observed that in-service training is important to maximize the benefits of technology. There was a suggestion that support (funds) be provided for specialists and professors to simply go see how things are being done in other places and areas. Functional foods and biotechnology was cited as an example of where AgCenter specialist and professors could benefit from such visits. Another type of training that would benefit many faculty members would be a refresher workshop on various aspects of statistics such as experimental design, univariate statistics and multivariate analyses.

11. Item 8: “Interaction of Research and Extension has improved. However, an effort should be made to improve the connection between research and useful recommendations and information provided to Louisiana citizens.” Chancellor Richardson indicated that he works with Dean Koonce to address the question of what should be the role, scope and mission of the AgCenter and the College of Agriculture (COA). He indicated that the response to that question needs to recognize the country’s need for the basic sciences in the future.

12. Item 9: “Provide information to Research and Teaching faculty members and department heads so they can better understand Extension P&T-related activities and overall contributions. The greatest problem is that many research people want to change extension positions to research positions. Extension needs to hire its own people or it will disappear from departments and with it the support from the field and clientele. We need people to be committed to doing demonstrations and outreach programs and not be used to fill gaps in the needs of research and teaching programs.” Chancellor Richardson stated that he remains out of the promotion and tenure process until the candidate’s package comes to him for review and action. The biggest challenge is to articulate what the promotion criteria is for extension faculty. The AgCenter promotion & tenure committee seems to be working well. Grodner indicated that the problem is with vacancies. In the majority of the departments, the number of research faculty outnumbers the number of extension faculty and the vote is generally to fill a research position.

Chancellor Richardson indicated that this is the reason why the LSUAC leaves control of money to the respective directors of the extension service and experiment stations. It is not that way at all institutions. Whatley observed that it is not the structure, but the guidelines for promotion and tenure that are being ignored. Whatley offered to put a small group together to advise tenure and promotion committees as well as extension personnel as to the promotion and tenure process. Any way to improve communications is actively sought after. Gauthier observed that young faculty, in particular, regardless of their research or extension appointments, want to keep their options open and that requires a publication record.

13. Item 10: “Communication from Efferson Hall needs to be enhanced beyond E-Directions and occasional talking points from the Chancellor’s office. Some researchers feel uninformed or disconnected. The recent update from Dr. Boethel was timely and should be continued.” Dr. Richardson agreed. It was suggested that the timely updates on incoming people could be accompanied with a picture and biographical sketch.

14. Item 11: “Greater understanding and appreciation of teaching in the AgCenter; many duties among teaching, research and service are interconnected and synergistic resulting in some responsibilities being overlooked as they apply to employee evaluations.” Chancellor Richardson observed that he had served as Dean of the COA and that he understands and appreciates this recommendation.

15. Item 12: “Encourage more contact between regional directors and individual extension employees in their regions”. Chancellor Richardson indicated that he needed more specifics before he could comment.

16. Item 13: “Faculty council minutes should be shared by Chancellor at meetings with Vice-Chancellors, Regional Directors, then at the Regional Directors meetings with Parish Chairperson, finally being discussed at the staff meetings.” Chancellor Richardson advised the committee to designate someone to come see him.

17. Item 14: Eliminate the designation “service units” as many members hold faculty status. There is an issue as to which employees are really classified as faculty. (e.g. service unit employees and research associates.) Chancellor Richardson said that he agrees completely and will seek a more appropriate name by working through the advisory council.

18. Item 15: “Conduct performance evaluations for all administrators including those in Efferson Hall”. Chancellor Richardson indicated that more is to be done in that area and that unit head evaluations are to be taken seriously.

19. Item 16: “Articulate the vision for the AgCenter. Re-evaluate AgCenter mission and vision statements to determine if they are still valid and meaningful.” Chancellor Richardson indicated that he is working on that now and will be bringing a draft of that mission statement to the Council within the next one or two months.

20. Item 17: “Set priorities, develop and communicate visions for Extension agriculture, 4-H, FCS, as well as Research”. Chancellor Richardson indicated that a better job of communicating needed to be done within and between these units. There have been a number of changes within the 4-H program.

However, there is a challenge regarding how to communicate better outside the organization. There is too much circling of the wagons and firing inwards. The Chancellor observed that much change had occurred in the last few years.

21. Item 18: “Coordinate a formal mentoring program for all new/junior faculty members. Each new faculty member should be assigned a mentor before their first day on the job. There are some who feel they are left disconnected and bewildered as new employees in the AgCenter.” Chancellor Richardson observed that formal mentoring programs have been successful in other places and this initiative will be pursued.

22. Item 19: “Provide storage space or digitize information that needs to be archived such as departmental records.” Chancellor Richardson indicated that he desires to make the AgCenter a paperless organization as quickly as possible.

23. Item 20: “Revisit the goals, structure and effectiveness of Annual Conference. This was listed as one of the least valuable activities by survey respondents”. Chancellor Richardson indicated that there were two choices regarding annual conference (1) to have it or (2) to not have it. If we are to have it, it needs to be the best possible.

24. Item 21: “Actively push for fee/tuition waivers for employees/dependents”. Chancellor Richardson wishes that he could implement tuition waivers. President Lombardi has no problem with granting tuition wavers for employees, but needs to address questions regarding compensation for faculty without children. Another question is how do the campuses receiving tuition monies makeup for the lost revenue? There is also the question of compensating all the other campuses. Tuition waivers are used as incentives to recruit faculty. Richardson observed that not all of AgCenter employees live in Baton Rouge. Another observation by Richardson is that tuition waivers are faculty benefits for which they will have to pay taxes.

25. Chancellor Richardson offered additional comments. He noted that the AgCenter can’t fully benefit by arguing that it supports students. Formula funding of higher education is now being interpreted by a new administration. The governor is arguing that performance criteria be used in combination with formula funding in the allocation of monies to the institutions of higher education. He has visited with Representative Fannin, the chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, regarding the five percent (5%) budget cut. As a consequence, Representative Fannin introduced a supplementary increase request as an offset for the AgCenter which does not receive any tuition money.

26. The difficulty is in how to get enough people to vote for a particular initiative such as a tuition increase. Governor Jindal has more support in the House of Representatives than in the Senate. There is some support for tuition increases if it is done for all the campuses in the state. Do you decouple from getting legislative approval and what happens to TOPS when the incentive is TOPS neutral? Governor Jindal indicates that he will support a tuition increase if the students vote for it.

27. The Legislature is trying to revise the current capital outlay process which allows legislators to input requests for a billion dollars of capital outlay projects when the reality is that only a small fraction of them can ever realistically be funded. Legislators have been allowed to input their capital outlay requests so that they can report to their constituents that local projects are in the state’s capital outlay program.

Legislators have been pulling money from other places to fund capital outlay projects. Chancellor Richardson doesn't know yet just how the Animal Sciences Complex will fare under a revised capital outlay program. Governor Jindal is trying to implement a "do over" of the capital outlay process.

28. Vlosky recognized Dr. Ken Koonce, Dean, College of Agriculture (COA) and invited him to address members of the Council. Dean Koonce observed that the issue of research versus extension discussed earlier in the meeting reminds him of the issue of research versus teaching. There is a criterion for promotion and tenure that requires outstanding performance by the candidate in two of the three teaching, research and service functions. Dean Koonce noted that faculty recognition across the country comes down to research. No department goes out to recruit an outstanding teacher. The department recruits based on the candidate's potential to develop a productive research program. As a consequence, the issues associated with promotion and tenure are not going to be resolved until teaching and extension are equated to research. Dean Koonce recognizes that there is a problem inherent in the question of who is a peer in deciding who gets to assess the quality of another faculty member's work. Whatley observed that prior to the merger of research and extension, two letters of recommendations would generally suffice to merit promotion within the LCES. Someone observed that it is difficult to look at a candidate's extension activity and say whether they are worthwhile or not.

29. Dean Koonce observed that the promotion and tenure process is a dual route that starts at the faculty level with the faculty's promotion and tenure committee. He also observed that the faculty is the hardest group to satisfy. A vote is required on each candidate. At the university level, there is a Graduate Faculty and Tenure Committee that has proved to be a "stumbling block" for the majority of AgCenter faculty members. Dean Koonce observed that it is the documentation that is all important.

30. Dean Koonce reported that the COA graduated 44 Ph.D.s in 2007. Of these, six (6) found employment with other universities. Three (3) went to universities in Louisiana. The majority of the graduate faculty in the COA holds joint appointments with the AgCenter. Thus, the COA has a tremendous dependence on the AgCenter to provide the teachers for both its undergraduate and graduate programs and to fund the majority of the research. The AgCenter provides over one million dollars annually in support of the COA's graduate programs. Dean Koonce stated that there aren't enough graduate assistants and that the COA also funds graduate students.

31. Dean Koonce stated that there are 2,100 undergraduate students enrolled in the COA. Of that number, 700 are majoring in School of Human Ecology which includes the departments of textile and apparel merchandising, nutrition, family consumer sciences and early childhood development. The School of Animal Sciences has an enrollment of 350, the majority hoping to get into the School of Veterinarian Medicine.

32. Dean Koonce wants to graduate a larger number of students with higher grade point averages. He also wants to send 20 Ph.D. graduates to land grant institutions annually. Of the 15 graduating in 2008, 12 are going to post-doc positions and 4 are in the job market. LSU's new provost is trying to make the budget process more transparent. There is not a lot of one-time money from LSU-BR directed to the COA. He repeated his earlier observation that the bottom line is research because it is the source of the institution's reputation. He also added that money is not the only thing needed to build and maintain a reputation. The need is for high profile researchers to be members of the departmental faculties. Whatley

observed that “all have a role to play. Fiscal responsibility should always be foremost in an administrator’s mind.”

33. Dean Koonce indicated that sometime in 2009, discussion regarding a name change for the COA would be forthcoming. This discussion is necessitated by the fact that the current focus on the word “agriculture” obscures the other areas of activity in which the COA is engaged. Dean Koonce observed that he doesn’t want the initiative of reconsidering a name change for the COA defeated before it even gets launched.

34. Whatley made reference to the support that the COA provides to its students relative to other colleges. He observed that the COA makes it possible for kids to get their feet on the ground in the COA in a way that allows them to move on in a way that they couldn’t do in another college. Dean Koonce elaborated on the initiative to house potential COA students together in a new dorm (Gates Hall). Through this arrangement, these students will be in contact with kids who share common concerns and who may even be undecided about what they are going to do with their lives. Through this arrangement, it will be possible to introduce these students to members of the faculty who might be able to help them address that issue. It will also provide them with access to people with potential kindred interests and concerns, which through planned and unplanned activities, can support them in adapting and adjusting to life as a university student.

35. King asked Dean Koonce as to how he went about negotiating budgets between departments. Dean Koonce responded that negotiating does not take place. In addition, in recent years, there has been no increase in funding for the College.

36. Human Resources Update. Ms. Coulon was not available to present a report.

37. Old Business

Based on the Chancellor’s reply to issue #9 regarding the provision of information to research and teaching faculty members regarding extension activities, a committee of three needs to be formed to create and provide for the dissemination of that information.

38. New Business

Gauthier reported that the Accounting Advisory Committee would be meeting on April 21, 2008.

39. Following a voice vote, Vlosky adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne M. Gauthier
Secretary

