

**LSU AGCENTER FACULTY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
November 20, 2009**

Members Present: Joan Almond, Wayne M. Gauthier, Dianne Glasgow, Mike Hebert, James Hendrix, Clayton Hollier, Natalie Hummel, Collins Kimbeng, Joan King, Donna Lee, Johnny Saichuk, Philip Stouffer, Ed Twidwell, Adrienne Vidrine, Jeff Hoy and Richard Vlosky.

Members Absent: Andrew Granger

Proxies: Joan King for Deniese Zeringue and David Blouin, Adrienne Vidrine for Mandy Armentor and Diane Sasser.

Guests: Chancellor William B. Richardson, Allen Hogan and Ann Coulon

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Financial Constraints Characterize LSUAC’S Future (2)**
- **A Milieu of Budget Cuts, Course Duplications and Absence of Political Will (3)**
- **Unfunded Mandates Have Same Effects as Budget Cuts (3)**
- **LSUAC Programs Can No Longer Be Driven By Random Retirement Events (4)**
- **Richardson to Contact Martin Re: Graduate Faculty Status of LSUAC Personnel (5)**
- **Document Forthcoming RE: Annual Evaluations of Unit Heads (6)**
- **Membership of Service Unit Committees Not Determined by Chancellor (7)**
- **TOPS is a Merit-Based Not Needs Based Program (8)**
- **Top Priority: LSUAC Core Mission Activities (9)**
- **Assembly of Internal Stakeholder to Identify LSUAC’s Core Mission (10)**
- **Recognition of LSUAC Faculty Council Members Completing Terms of Office (11)**
- **HRM Service Unit Advisory Committee Meets Following Hiatus (12)**
- **Proposed Changes to Civil Service Raise System Outlined by Ms. Coulon (13)**
- **Diversity, Wellness and Healthy Living Information Disseminated Together (14)**
- **Leveraging Identified as Incentive for Reducing Number of 403(b) Vendors (15)**
- **Employees Could be Represented by State Employees of Louisiana (SEAL) (16)**
- **Incoming LSUAC Council Members Identified (17)**
- **Council Adopts LSUAC Faculty Council Election Manual (18)**
- **Representation Impact of Promotion on Constituency (19)**
- **Noted Policy Changes to Service Unit and International Advisory Committees (20)**
- **ORP Resolution Forwarded to LSU President John Lombardi (21)**
- **Activities of ALFS (Association of Louisiana Faculty Senates) Identified (22)**
- **ALFS Addressing Low Completer Resolution (23)**
- **Highlights of Accounting Services Unit Advisory Committee Meeting (24)**

Call to Order

Chairperson King called the meeting to order at 09:33 a.m. in the Sullivan Room of the John M. Parker Coliseum

Approval of October 16, 2009 Minutes

Minutes of the October 16, 2009 were approved subject to any forthcoming corrections to comments provided by Chancellor Richardson and Commissioner Strain.

Chancellor William B. Richardson

1. Sentiments and a moment of silence were shared in memory of Troy Menard, a former member of the Council and an extension county agent from Bossier Parish.
2. Chancellor Richardson observed that there were no firm budget numbers, but that there is a possibility that the financial situation may not be as severe as last year. However, the expectation is that the future will continue to be characterized by financial constraints. The Governor wants to reduce state appropriations to higher education by \$146 million dollars. The LSUAC will comply with orders to reduce its vehicle fleet even as it continues to argue that there are legitimate reasons for vehicles on experiment stations to have low mileage readings.
3. The Tucker commission continues to talk about the four systems that govern higher education in Louisiana. Chancellor Richardson observed an absence of the political will necessary to make changes within those systems. The Tucker Commission is focused on eliminating the duplications in programs and courses within those systems. A \$146 million dollar reduction imposed upon higher education with the same methodology for distributing the earlier reductions would translate into a reduction of approximately six (6) million dollars for the LSUAC. The Chancellor also noted that unfunded mandates given to the LSUAC by the legislature have the same effect as a reduction in the budget; that is, a reduction in funds available to address current and future needs.
4. Fifty-eight (58) individuals filed the requisite paperwork to retire, but three or four exercised the option to not retire under the provisions of the Incentive Retirement Program. Thus, there was a net reduction of between 55 and 58 LSUAC employees due to retirements. The transactions cost of effecting this retirement program was approximately \$1.2 million dollars with a projected savings in the 2009-10 fiscal year of \$700,000. The Chancellor indicated that the incidences of reductions in the LSUAC's workforce created by a reduced budget were random events driven by individual choices. In the future, prudent management will require more targeted actions so that core activities defining the LSUAC's mission can be preserved. The Chancellor is necessarily waiting on the Revenue Estimating Committee's (REC) budget projections in December 2009 before formulating any budgetary strategic plans.

5. Chancellor Richardson indicated that he plans to visit with LSU-BR Chancellor Martin regarding the report that individuals with LSUAC appointments were not to be granted Graduate Faculty status.
6. Dr. Richardson advised the Faculty Council that a document is being drafted to provide for unit head evaluation on an annual basis.
7. Chancellor Richardson reiterated earlier comments that he doesn't want to be involved in the naming of individuals to service unit advisory council committees.
8. Chancellor Richardson observed that TOPS is very favorable with the legislature and is a merit-based and not a needs-based program.
9. Other than the one call reported last month, the Chancellor has not had any calls from the clientele regarding the vacancies that have been created as a consequence of the early retirement incentive program. There are two phenomena that apparently are at work. One is that current LSUAC employees are taking up the slack created by the vacancies and the second is that it takes time for the impacts of cuts to be realized within the community being served by the now retired employees. As a consequence, there is a concern with "burn-out" as employees stretch to provide basic services. The Chancellor emphasized that it is important that the basic core mission of the LSUAC continue to be addressed.
10. The need for the LSUAC to address its core mission has resulted in invitations to be issued to approximately 40 current LSUAC employees to participate in an internal stakeholder assembly meeting. The purpose of this assembly will be for these LSUAC employees to work with a private firm which has been contracted by the LSUAC using private monies to review and define the core values and mission of the LSUAC within budget constraints.
11. The Chancellor joined Chairperson King in recognizing and thanking those council members whose terms of service on the LSUAC Faculty Council were expiring. These members included Mike Hebert; James Hendrix; Donna Lee; Collins Kimberg; and Phil Stoufer. Chairperson King indicated that she would be providing certificates to the absent David Blouin and to the retired Mary Grodner.

HRM Service Unit Advisory Committee Chair and Unit Head

12. Allen Hogan, chair of the HRM Service Unit Advisory Committee, reported that the Human Resources Management (HRM) committee had met on September 2, 2009 for the first time this year (2009). A number of committee members were no longer available so others were drafted into service. Good updates and recommendations were received including the recommendation to reduce the number of Council members who serve in an ex-officio capacity from two to one.
13. Ms. Coulon outlined and led a general discussion on the merits of changes to the civil service merit raise system. Regardless of the system that gets adopted, individuals

supervising civil service employees will have to undergo some general training. At the present time, civil service employees either received a zero or four percent merit raise. There was no tangible recognition of differences in the performance of duties between employees. Consideration is being given to creating a multilayer raise system that would recognize differences in the quantity and quality of work performed as well as recognition of such attributes as dependability. Under such a system, an employee receiving a rating of 1 or 2 would not receive a raise. A rating of 3 would receive a 3% raise whereas a 4 or 5 rating would receive a 4 to 5% raise. The cost to the state of awarding raises could not exceed that which was being paid out under the 0 to 4% current system. If adopted, the LSUAC will need to provide more training. The idea was to let state agencies have greater flexibility in managing their work force. The proposed multilayered system was to go into effect in 2010. Two significant concerns in the redesign of a raise system include the desire to protect employees' raises and to promote uniformity between state agencies. A 3-4-5 rating is a safer way to go. Merit raises would not go into effect until 2011. Planning sessions would be in July 2010. There is an argument for evaluating all employees at the same time as opposed to the current system of evaluating an employee on their anniversary date of employment. The desire for a different system is coming from managers who want to reward their truly outstanding employees. Ms. Coulon indicated that it was important for LSUAC employees to recognize that, outside of higher education, all state employees are classified employees. A public hearing on the merits of changes to the civil service raise system is scheduled for December 8, 2009.

14. Resources for the Wellness Program are essentially frozen. Kristen and Kathy are trying to address issues associated with diversity, wellness, and healthy living in a common wellness activity rather than in multiple activities.
15. The number of vendors that LSU system employees could use to establish a 403(b) plan was reduced forcing employees with other than the four select vendors with no choice except to establish a plan with a "Legacy" vendor or cease participating in a 403(b) plan. The employee who made that decision has retired from the systems office. The purpose of reducing the number of vendors of 403(b) accounts was to allow LSU to achieve some "leveraging access" with those vendors. Leveraging access means that LSU is able to negotiate more favorable terms for its employees with a smaller subset of vendors because LSU can offer select vendors a larger mathematical pool of subscribers. Ms. Coulon suggested that Ms. Kathy Loyd was the appropriate person to speak with regarding legacy vendors.
16. State employees are limited by law from advocating for their rights or benefits with state government. SEAL, a State Employees Association of Louisiana, is a fledging organization created for that purpose. Its operation would be funded by a \$1/ employee contribution annually. SEAL could speak for employees on various issues such as ORP, the Optional Retirement Program.

Old Business.

17. Chairperson King identified the individuals elected to the following LSUAC Faculty Council positions: Assistant Off-Campus: Nicole Lemaire; Assistant On-Campus: J. Ross Pruitt; Associate On-Campus: Hallie Dozier; Associate Off-Campus: Lisa Benoit; Full Off-Campus: Guy Padgett; and Full On-Campus: Clayton Hollier and Richard Vlosky.
18. Chairperson King distributed a handout entitled the LSU AgCenter Faculty Council Election Manual. This document outlines procedural steps for conducting the annual election of Faculty Council Members to replace those members whose terms will be expiring on December 31 of each year. It was moved, seconded and approved by voice vote that the LSU AgCenter Faculty Council Election Manual be placed on the LSUAC website.
19. Additional clarity was added to address the conditions surrounding the phenomenon of a person who gets promoted. That person will continue to represent the individuals in the rank for which s/he was elected.
20. Members of the Council reviewed the “Service Unit and International Programs Advisory Committee Policy” with the following changes and results:
 - a. In lieu of the two current AgCenter Faculty Council members specified in paragraph 7, item 1, it was moved, second and passed by majority vote that one of the three members appointed by the AgCenter Faculty Council serving on a service unit or on the international program advisory committee be a current AgCenter Faculty Council member.
 - b. The Council approved the motion that six members serving on an advisory committee would be chosen by the Council. (Paragraph 7, items 2 and 3).
 - c. The Council voted to delete “In the initial year, the Faculty council will assign year terms of 3, 2 or 1 year within each of the groups listed above. Each year thereafter, one faculty member will be replaced from each group.” (Paragraph 7)
 - d. The Council voted to delete paragraph 9 “Administrative representation will be appointed by the Chancellor”.
 - e. The Council voted to delete “... the Staff Council and the Chancellor” from the second sentence in paragraph such that it now reads “Service units heads will make their appointments and submit the names to the AgCenter Faculty Council prior to its February meeting.”
21. The Council reviewed and then approved a motion to send the Faculty Council resolution “Reduction of employer contribution to the ORP” that was drafted in support of the similar LSU A&M resolution to LSU System President Lombardi.
22. Adrienne Vidrine reported on the Board of Supervisors Meeting and on activities of the Association of Louisiana Faculty Senates (ALFS). That report included information relevant to a two-year extension of President Lombardi’s contract, the Chenier house and the definition of a full time equivalent (FTE) position.

23. Vidrine reported that the ALFS was addressing a resolution authored by LSU Faculty Senate President Cope regarding low completer programs. The individual to contact is state Senator Ben Nevers. The Tucker Commission's deliberations are on line through the Louisiana legislative website.
24. Gauthier gave the following highlights regarding the meeting of the Accounting Services Unit Advisory Committee.
 - a. Minutes of the Accounting Services Advisory Committee and its membership are given on their website.
 - b. Three sections in Accounting Services: (1) Purchasing, (2) Accounts Payable and (3) Post-Award Accounting have three vacancies. The vacancies are most likely to cause problems with travel because there are no back-up employees in Accounting Services. Post-award accounting duties are now being handled by the LSU-BR Sponsored Program Accounting office.
 - c. LaCarte Use Changes:
 - i. Approval must come from at least one level above the user's level and from a management level;
 - ii. Unit head approval can come from Danielle Bayham or Donna Hanney for V-Chancellors. Legendre can approve for Chancellor. Users are to approve their own entries before upper level approval can be granted.
 - iii. PayPal. Need supervisor's signed approval prior to a PayPal purchase on a form developed by the LSU-BR campus.
 - d. Online Ledgers. Manual ledgers are now gone. Alternatives include (1) use the GLS system online; (2) use LSUAC's Account Report Manager System; and (3) use the LSU-BR campus Reporting Tool System accessible through PAWS.
 - e. Travel Reimbursement. A new policy becomes effective January 1, 2010. The new policy allows for the LaCarte card to be used for all travel expenses except meals. It is now being piloted. The department head will designate the individuals who have the authority to charge travel expenses on their LaCarte cards. There will be a \$5,000 single transaction limit for travel expenditures. The alternatives to LaCarte are the corporate travel card and/or CBA. The travel voucher is being revised and its use will become mandatory on January 1, 2010.
 - f. The new Online Travel Reservation System is GET THERE. It takes 45 minutes to an hour to set up one's profile in order to use GET THERE. An individual doesn't have to use GET THERE to use the LaCarte card.
 - g. LSUAC employees using the LaCarte card or paying with a university check are exempt from state and parish sales taxes. If an LSUAC employee pays with their personal funds, they will need to pay the taxes. There is a specific tax exemption form to use for lodging. The form requires the department head's signature. The employee needs to tell vendors that they are exempt from these taxes but the employee will need to provide the vendors with the proper codes.
 - h. The trade-in of equipment requires approval from the Division of Administration. It also requires justification. If equipment is not traded, it must be turned into state surplus. A unit cannot sell surplus or unused property. It can sell scrap metal to a junkyard. It cannot order any new vehicles currently.

Chairperson King indicated that there would be no regularly scheduled December 18 meeting of the Council. If necessary, a meeting of the Council would be called to address urgent matters.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne M. Gauthier
Secretary