

**LSU AgCenter
Faculty Council Meeting
March 19, 2010
Sullivan Conference Room
9:30 a.m.**



Members Present: Mandy Armentor, Wayne M. Gauthier, Andrew Granger, Clayton Hollier, Natalie Hummel, Joan King, Nicole LeMaire, Guy Padgett, Ross Pruitt, Johnny Saichuk, Diane Sasser, Ed Twidwell, Adrienne Vidrine, Lisa Benoit, Hallie Dozier, and Deniese Zeringue

Members Absent: None

Proxies: Sasser for Joan Almond; King for Dianne Glasgow and Richard Vlosky; and Hollier for Jeff Hoy.

Guests: Dr. William B. Richardson, Chancellor, LSU Agricultural Center (LSUAC); Mr. Ronnie Anderson, President, Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation (LFBF) and Member, LSU Board of Supervisors (BOS); Mr. Jim Monroe, Assistant to the President, Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation; Ms. Ann Coulon, Director, Human Resources, LSUAC

Call to Order

Chairperson King called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. on March 19, 2010 in the Sullivan Room of the John M. Parker Coliseum.

The minutes of the February 5, 2010 meeting were approved on a voice vote by members of LSU Agricultural Center Faculty Council (Council).

Highlights

- . **Chancellor's Assessment of End of Year Budget Cut (1-2)**
- . **Governor's FY 2011 Executive Budget Proposes No Budget Cuts to HE (3)**
- . **Chancellor Notes That A Standstill Budget Is a Reduced Budget (3)**
- . **Eighty-Five Percent (85%) of LSUAC's Budget is in Personnel (4)**
- . **Uncertainty Clouds Decision-Making Context & Fosters Overreactions (4)**
- . **LSUAC & LFBF Are Mutually Supportive Institutions for LA. Agriculture (5)**
- . **Mr. Anderson Reports That BOS Is Highly Supportive of the LSUAC (5)**
- . **Mr. Anderson Sketches History & Organizational Structure of LFBF (6-8)**
- . **Prediction of Political Difficulty For "Cap & Trade" Legislation (9)**

- . **Identification of Political Issues of Present Concern to Farm Bureau (10)**
- . **Monroe Cites Significance of Infrastructure to A Nation's Agriculture (11)**
- . **Board of Regent's Derivation of Low Completer Numbers Unknown (12)**
- . **Speculation As To Why No Faculty Representative on BOS (13)**
- . **Civil Service Merit Raises Suspended for 2011 FY (14)**
- . **Unit Head Evaluation Process Outlined (15)**
- . **Details of LSUAC's Second Early Retirement Incentive Program (16, 20)**
- . **Annual Enrollment Features Plan Changes & Long Term Care Option (17)**
- . **Council Meetings Remain Closed to Public But Minutes Available (18)**
- . **IP Rights Within Sponsored Programs Advisory Committee Domain (19)**
- . **Initiating PI Decides Whether to Publicize Grant Application (20)**
- . **Mechanism to Establish Multi-Disciplinary Teams for RFA Approved (20)**
- . **Motion For Faculty Access to Grants & Contracts Database Approved (21)**
- . **BOS Concerns With Changes in Degree Program Requirements (22)**
- . **4-H Students & Leader's Presentation Well Received at BOS Meeting (23)**

Dr. William B. Richardson, Chancellor, LSUAC

1. Chancellor Richardson said that the end of the year budget cut was attributable to a \$200 to \$400 million dollar shortfall in state revenues. By law, the state is prohibited from deficit spending which means that it must reduce its spending in line with its revenues before June 30, 2010. Chancellor Richardson reported that, thus far, there has been no official guidance for addressing the deficit problem from the LSU System. Richardson further observed that most state budget income streams were down and that the administration is trying to avoid passing the reductions in funding down to state agencies. President Lombardi is scheduled to appear before state agencies on Tuesday, February 23, 2010. Lombardi's message will likely be generic indicating that cuts will hurt the institution. It is too early to identify the exact nature of the cuts. The Revenue Estimating Committee (REC) is the only group who can tell the Governor how much money is available for expenditures. There is some speculation that the administration may be trying to get the Legislature to go back into its rainy day funds to alleviate the situation.
2. Dr. Richardson indicated that there were other issues that the LSUAC necessarily has to address, but that the budget situation necessarily needs to be addressed between now and July 1, 2010.
3. Governor Jindal, in his submission of the 2010-2011 executive budget, recommended to the legislature that there be no cuts in funding for higher education (HE). Chancellor Richardson observed that even without a reduction in the budget, the legislature would still be passing through to the LSUAC a \$3.1 to \$3.2 million dollar budget reduction in the form of mandated unfunded obligations for health insurance, civil service raises, and other employer costs. In addition, the LSUAC realizes supplementary revenues from the cigarette tax, but the revenue from that tax is down because people are using fewer tobacco

products. Thus, for the LSUAC, a standstill budget represents an overall three to four million dollar cut. The Chancellor urges all employees to not pay attention to the hosts of rumors that are expected to surface between now and July 1. Chancellor Richardson acknowledged that he didn't know the source of current rumors associated with the \$200 to \$400 million dollar shortfall in the current state budget and the projected impact of an \$84 million dollar reduction for higher education funding between now and June 30, 2010.

4. In response to questions, Chancellor Richardson indicated that, without a firm number, he did not know how to deal with a current reduction to the budget. He observed that budget reductions could impact an employee's ability to travel. He noted how limited one's options are when the budget contains an 85% commitment to personnel. Richardson explained that he can't promise anything now. He advised the Council that he expects people to overreact and that overreaction will cause more harm than good. For that reason, he advises people to refrain from overreacting to information.

Mr. Ronnie Anderson, President, LFBF and Member, LSU BOS

5. Prior to introducing Mr. Ronnie Anderson, the President of the Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation (LFBF) and a member of the LSU Board of Supervisors (BOS), Chancellor Richardson noted the positive symbiotic and supportive relationships between the LSUAC and the LFBF. Mr. Anderson explained that there is some "shock value" to problems before a legislature convenes. He argued further that legislators want to protect their turfs. The consequence is that HE and the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) bear disproportionate shares of any budget reductions because they, unlike other entities of state government, are not constitutionally protected from budget reductions. He indicated that the LSUAC enjoys the support of the BOS and that support is now as high as ever.
6. Mr. Anderson spoke about varied facets of the LFBF. He indicated that many people think of it erroneously as a government agency or an insurance company. He indicated that it originated and grew out of the needs of farmers and rural areas. The organization was formed over 90 years ago to create markets for agricultural products, to lobby legislatures to build roads and to bring electricity to rural areas. The American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) has organizations in every state and in two territories. It maintains an office in Washington, D.C. It has lobbyists in every state to both protect and enhance the interests of its membership. It was recently ranked among the Top Ten lobbying groups in Washington. In Louisiana, 150,000 families belong to the LFBF which represents about 750,000 people. The LFBF has a network within the state consisting of sixty (60) entities. In combination with the tools of modern technology, the LFBF has ready access to local representatives.

7. Sixty (60) years ago the decision was made to provide insurance in rural area. The LFBF started as a property insurance company. Today, it is part of a ten (10) state life company and a six (6) state car insurance company. These insurance companies are owned by the people they serve. Through the insurance company, membership and service fees are generated that underwrite the costs of research and extension programs such as Agriculture in the Classroom and the Young Farmer and Rancher Program. There are 250 agents selling farm bureau insurance in Louisiana.
8. The LFBF interacts with Louisiana farmers through its commodity directors. In broad characterizations, Mr. Anderson indicated that Ron Harrell has responsibility for working with producers of “anything that moves; Kyle McCann with producers of grain crops; and Brian Breaux with cotton and sugarcane. The LFBF operates with an eighteen (18) person board of directors. Five (5) of its members are at large, there is a young farmer and rancher representative, a women’s committee representative; and the other twelve (12) members are chosen from designated areas of the state. Initiatives addressed by the LFBF first begin at the parish level and are advanced through a district level prior to being considered at the state level.
9. Mr. Anderson spoke about the national AFBF annual meeting which had the theme of “Do Not Cap our Future”. He described the set of accommodations that were undertaken to facilitate the meetings that occurred between AFBF leadership and two opposing sets of national representatives regarding the Cap and Trade issue. Mr. Anderson speculated that it is going to be tougher to pass Cap and Trade legislation than health care legislation. He indicated that the LFBF Delegation was split on the health care issue. He indicated that health care was important to the LFBF because of the age of producers in agriculture. He referred specifically to the mandates to tax “Cadillac” health plans. In response to a question, he speculated that individual farm operators have their private health plans, but that he just didn’t know whether the majority of agricultural workers had any private health plans.
10. Mr. Anderson identified a varied set of issues impacting farmers that necessarily entail legislative actions. These issues included:
 - a. Inheritance taxes and their impact of farmers and their heirs. Mr. Anderson observed that, in general, people in agriculture don’t have retirement plans. Instead they accumulate land which serves as a capital investment critical to the generation of an income from their farming operation and then it represents a source of revenue to sustain them in retirement. Finally, it represents a legacy to their heirs. High inheritance tax erodes that legacy.
 - b. Environmental issues are of concern because they can impose a tax that can effectively prohibit or inhibit agricultural production. As an example, Mr. Anderson recalled the concerns associated with the pollution of the Tangipahoa

River and the subsequent need for Louisiana dairy farmers to build oxidation ponds in order to capture the runoff from the dairy operation. The investment in those ponds didn't contribute to milk production only to its costs. At the present time, there is talk of levying a tax per head on livestock to restrict methane production.

- c. Creation of farmland trusts which would compensate people for leaving their land in trust to be used only for agricultural related purposes as contrasted to selling it for development purposes.
 - d. Significance of China to the economic well-being of U.S. agriculture. Mr. Anderson referred to a document compiled by a AFBF economist which identified the implications for the U.S. of a number of issues associated with China.
11. Mr. Monroe spoke about his travels to Brazil and the extent of that country's agriculture. He also observed how Brazil's absence of a viable infrastructure was hampering their technical and economic efficiencies.
 12. Mr. Anderson indicated that he was not sure as to how the Board of Regents goes about compiling its low completer program numbers. The concern of LSUAC council members is for the implications of those numbers for programs within the College of Agriculture.
 13. In response to a question as to why there might not be any faculty representative on the LSU BOS although there is a student member, Mr. Anderson speculated that the objective was probably to "keep the politics out of it" as positions taken by the BOS might prove untenable for a faculty representative from time to time.

Ms. Ann Coulon, Director, Human Resource Manager, LSUAC

14. Ms. Coulon reported that the Civil Service Commission voted to suspend merit raises for 2010-11.
15. Ms. Coulon reported that she had met with the unit heads regarding the design and implementation of an evaluation instrument for unit heads, directors of service units and assistant directors of the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station (LAES) and the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service (LCES). A standardized electronic system for conducting the evaluation appears to be the most efficient. The process would begin with individual faculty members rendering their individual inputs on the leader being evaluated. The individual inputs from various faculty members who either report to that leader and/or interact with that leader would be submitted to a committee whose members would be chosen from within each unit. That committee would summarize all comments and submit the summaries to the unit heads and vice chancellors.

There would be a summary from the faculty who reports to the leader being evaluated and there would be a separate summary from those individuals who interact with that leader. Ms. Coulon ventured that the implementation couldn't be undertaken until May and then on an-every-other- year basis. Ms. Coulon reported that there is an annual process for evaluating heads now that has been used. The procedure under discussion is a supplement to the one now being used. There was agreement that a summary evaluation of every leader's performance should be shared with both faculty and classified employees. The Group Annual Evaluation has a formal format. There was discussion as to the need for unit heads to articulate their vision and its correlation with their job descriptions. The purpose for that vision and articulation is to create, over time, a set of benchmarks by which performance could be objectively assessed relative to expectations of the incumbents and their faculties. It was argued that there should be a shared vision between the leader and the people being led. The need for anonymity in rendering these assessments by faculty and classified staff is tied to the observation that earlier evaluations of superiors yielded only a 29% response rate.

16. Ms. Coulon reported that the second LSUAC retirement incentive plan within the last eight months had been approved by President Lombardi. The LSUAC administration estimates participation from about thirty (30) employees. The plan features a buyout based on 32% of an employee's salary up to a \$20,000 maximum. Sign-up for the plan will probably terminate around May 15, 2010 with an effective implementation date not later than July 1, 2010.
17. Annual enrollment will begin April 1, 2010 and end April 30, 2010. More options are being offered in the coming year consisting of new dental and vision plans. Group Benefits has a new medical plan in its offering. There will be a long term care plan with open enrollment for employees. Blue Cross will be the service provider replacing Humana effective July 1, 2010.
18. Council members agreed to maintain the current practice of making the minutes of its meetings available through the intranet rather than opening their meetings to the public.
19. The latest Sponsored Programs Advisory Committee minutes were distributed to members of the Council. Following that meeting, Chancellor Richardson rendered a decision that the issue of Intellectual Property rights are within the domain of the Sponsored Programs Advisory Committee.
20. The director of Sponsored Programs had asked its advisory council members whether all LSUAC faculty members shouldn't be made aware of which LSUAC faculty might be applying for money. The reason for creating such awareness was to allow other individuals to contribute to their efforts and possibly enhance the set of LSUAC proposals. The set of objections identified as to why individuals submitting proposals might not be open to the

dissemination of such information included intellectual property claims and internal competition concerns. There was a sense of general agreement that enhancing awareness would be a positive action but that there should be some mechanism for letting an initiating principal investigator indicate whether or not they wanted it advertised that they were applying for a grant (money). The motion “For the Faculty Council to support Sponsored Programs and their service unit Advisory Committee to establish a mechanism to facilitate establishment of multi-disciplinary teams for RFA (Request For Application) competitions” was approved.

21. A motion for “All LSUAC faculty to have access to the grants and contract database was seconded and passed on voice vote”.
22. Diane Sasser made the BOS report. It included passage of the Early Out Retirement Incentive Program. Portability or non-portability of retirement programs was brought to the attention of the BOS by LSU-BR Faculty Senate President Kevin Cope. In his presentation, Cope recognized that only the Louisiana legislature could modify those provisions. There was still discussion among board members of the effects of lowering the number of credit hours required for graduation, the transferability of hours from one institutions to another and a question about the overall fairness to students in the end of admitting transfer students into programs for which that may have inadequate preparation.
23. Sasser reported that the presentations made by the 4-H students and a faculty member regarding the sweet potato station were very well received by members of the LSU BOS. That observation had also been rendered by Mr. Anderson. Sasser reiterated Dr. Richardson’s comments on the AgCenter’s request to the Board of Supervisors to offer early retirements to AgCenter faculty and staff again this state fiscal year. Faculty Council recognized the detail to which the AgCenter administration and staff prepared that request, the plan for implementation, and the cost savings. This preparation or “homework” is something all LSU AgCenter personnel can feel pride in, and show the LSU AgCenter as having “all their ducks in a row.”

Chairperson King adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m. on March 19, 2010 in accordance with passage of a second to a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne M. Gauthier, Secretary