

**LSU AgCenter
Faculty Council Meeting
August 20, 2010
Sullivan Conference Room
9:30 a.m.**



Members Present: Mandy Armentor, Hallie Dozier, Clayton Hollier, Wayne M. Gauthier, Andrew Granger, Jeff Hoy, Natalie Hummel, Joan King, Nicole LeMaire, Ross Pruitt, Johnny Saichuk, Dianne Sasser, and Adrienne Vidrine.

Members Absent: Lisa Benoit, Guy Padgett, Ed Twidwell, Richard Vlosky.

Proxies: Joan King for Dianne Glasgow, Joan Almond, and Deniese Zeringue.

Guests: Dr. William B. Richardson, Chancellor, LSU Agricultural Center (LSUAC); and Dr. John Russin, Associate Vice Chancellor and Director, Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station, LSUAC

Highlights

- **LSUAC's Request for Financial Exigency Denied (1)**
- **LSUAC's FY 2011 (July 1, 2010-June 30, 2011) Budget Precariously Balanced (1)**
- **Uncertainty: Mid-Year FY 2011 Budget Cut and Magnitude of FY 2012 Cut (1)**
- **Procedural Steps for Financial Exigency In Place (1)**
- **Council Requested to ID Individual(s) for Financial Exigency Committee (2, 10)**
- **Russin Seeks Fuller Realization of ACE Groups' Potential (3-4, 7)**
- **Russin Identifies Fruits of Effective ACE Groups (3)**
- **Russin Requests Members for ACE Group Enhancement Committee (4, 11)**
- **Russin on AFRI Grant Problems & Resolutions Through Reviewer Services (5)**
- **Collaborators Enhance Energy Center's Ability to Compete for Grants (6)**
- **ID of Current Limitations to Creation of Commercial Biofuels in LA (6)**
- **Need for Implementation of "Violence in the Workplace" Policy (8)**
- **Council Not Ready for LAE (9)**
- **Representation at BOR Meetings Not Considered Good Use of Time (12)**
- **Minutes of LSUAC's Advisory Committee Meetings Available on Web (14)**

Minutes of the June 16, 2010 meeting were approved on a voice vote.

Dr. William B. Richardson, Chancellor, LSUAC

1. Chancellor Richardson reviewed and updated members of the Council on matters pertinent to the Louisiana State University (LSUAC)'s budget since July 16, 2010. On that date, the plan ordered by LSU System President Lombardi to cope with a 23% reduction in the budget was presented to the LSU Board of Supervisors (BOS) detailing the number of positions that would be lost to the LSUAC. The expectation was that Dr. Lombardi was going to request a system-wide declaration of financial exigency at the August 2010 meeting of the BOS. However, that declaration is not likely to be forthcoming in the immediate future. Units in the LSU System that can charge tuition are apparently going to use authorized increases in tuition to cope with their budget reductions and increased costs. The LSUAC, however, has no alternative but to resort to use of one-time monies and other practices that render it increasingly vulnerable to further economic adversity. Chancellor Richardson indicates that a reduction of as little as one dollar will necessitate the elimination of a program. Because of this dire financial situation, Chancellor Richardson requested that the LSUAC be allowed to seek a declaration of financial exigency. That request was denied. The outlook suggests that Dr. Richardson will have no option but to renew his request for financial exigency on a monthly basis or even sooner if financial conditions become more adverse. Chancellor Richardson emphasized that the budget for FY 2011 (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2010) is balanced even though it contains a four million dollar deficit as of July 16, 2010. His request for financial exigency today is to enable him to position the LSUAC to cope with expectations of a reduction in revenues as a consequence of state revenue shortfall of \$1.6 billion expected to materialize in FY 2012 (July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012). Every month's delay in securing a declaration of financial exigency probably intensifies the magnitude of adjustments that will necessarily have to be made in the latter months of FY 2011 and in FY 2012 if the projected shortfall of \$1.6 billion becomes reality. The LSUAC's ability to protect its programs and personnel is hampered by an absence of clarity regarding (a) a mid-year budget cut in FY 2011 and (b) the magnitude of the expected cut to the LSUAC in FY 2012. The Revenue Estimating Committee (REC) is scheduled to meet in September but Chancellor Richardson doesn't expect any actions from their estimate of the state's fiscal situation until after their December 2010 meeting. Chancellor Richardson has taken and will be taking procedural steps necessary to the implementation of financial exigency once it is authorized.
2. Chancellor Richardson observed that the LSUAC will comply with the exercise requirement levied on the LSUAC on August 18, 2010 to detail the impacts of a 38% budget reduction. He requested that the Council identify individuals to serve on a financial exigency committee.

Dr. John Russin, Associate Vice-Chancellor and Director, LAES

3. Dr. Russin noted that the information about the ACE groups on the web is informative and accurate. The on-going challenge is for the members of the ACE groups to meet and discharge their responsibilities. Dr. Russin observed that the benefits of membership in ACE groups are realized in funded multi-disciplinary grants and in interactions among scientists that define and resolve problems.
4. The formats governing the meetings of all ACE groups should be similar. The reality, however, is that they are not and the consequence is that these groups are not realizing their full potential. There was a sentiment that discussion sessions which elicit participation from ACE group participants are more useful than presentation sessions to passive participants. Dr. Russin requested that the Council identify individuals to serve on a committee to create more productive ACE groups.
5. Dr. Russin observed that a successful application for a AFRI grant requires evidence of multi-disciplinary involvement. ACE Groups represent an effective mechanism through which AgCenter faculty can partner effectively across disciplines to build required multi-disciplinary frameworks. Dr. Russin also underscored the critical necessity of LAES's scientists volunteering to serve as reviewers of grants. This would provide greater exposure to operations and priorities of these review panels.
6. Likely three major national grants will be awarded for doing work in alternative energy. One of those grants likely will be in the South where the focus will be on the use of energy cane and sweet sorghum as energy feedstock. Louisiana is in competition with 12 other states in competing for these grants. The LSUAC's Biofuels Institute may be somewhat unique in competing for these grants in that it can identify six (6) collaborating corporate sponsors. Those sponsors offer a unique infrastructure that can convert a raw cellulosic input into an energy intermediate output suitable for further value-added processing and distribution. Dr. Russin observed that Louisiana doesn't have current capacity to produce a volume of energy feedstock that could satisfy supply requirements of an active processing facility. The land from which to grow such a large requirement of feedstock is already in use and considerations of levels and stabilities of current price relatives aren't likely to bring about a switch in that use.
7. Dr. Russin contends that the ACE Group leadership is critical to a group's ultimate effectiveness. As a consequence, all ACE Groups efforts will be lead by representatives from both LAES and LCES who will share and rotate responsibilities.

Old Business

8. There was a general sense of a need for greater awareness regarding the “Violence in the Workplace” policy. There was a sentiment to have department heads incorporate information about “Violence in the Workplace” into safety training. It was observed that Ms. Ann Coulon had made an effective presentation through MAP. There is a need to know what effective actions an individual who, upon observing an individual behaving in a manner that might lead to violence, could take.

New Business

9. Sasser reported on meetings of the LSU Board of Supervisors and of the Association of Louisiana Faculty Senates (ALFS). Sasser observed that Kevin Cope, President of the LSU Faculty Senate, is concerned that the faculty is not being effectively represented on the campus. Sasser noted that Cope had invited Michael Walker-Jones and Linda Guidry, representatives of the Louisiana Association of Educators (LAE), to the campus. The purpose of that invitation was to assess whether there might be some means available through an organized group such as the LAE to enhance faculty representation in addressing issues impacting the faculty. Cope enumerated a number of both historical and current issues with negative implications for the faculty. These included the lack of faculty representation on the BOS and Board of Regents (BOR), information flows, unfunded mandates, under funded retirement systems, faculty morale, layoffs/furloughs, lack of raises and performance requirements associated with the GRAD Act. Subsequent discussion by the Council indicated that more specific information would be needed before the Council could consider inviting the faculty to consider the benefits of membership in an organization such as the LAE.
10. A former member of the 2006 LSUAC Financial Exigency Committee indicated that the committee had only defined programs without naming people in the process of discerning how the LSUAC could best minimize the negative impacts of downsizing. They engaged in the process of identifying interdependencies that existed between programs. Chairperson King invited individuals interested in serving on the 2010 Faculty Exigency Committee to let her know by e-mail.
11. Clayton Hollier, Mike Blazier, & Mandy Armentor were nominated as potential members to work with Dr. Russin to make the ACE groups more effective by evaluating their meeting formats and processes for selecting chairs. It was observed that field extension staff had really been excluded from the RAC (Research Advisory Committees), the forerunner to the ACE groups. The essence of the difficulty was that the RAC groups informed the agents as opposed to the agents informing the RAC groups of the problems being faced by the people of the state. Creation of the ACE groups was designed to resolve that difficulty.

12. There was a question as to whether the Council should send a representative to the BOR meetings. A Council member who had attended BOR meetings on behalf of the Council thought it was a waste of time since much of the BOR's work is done by its subgroups in private meetings prior to the meeting of the full BOR meeting.

Service Unit Advisory Committee Reports

13. It was reported that William "Wade" Baumgartner had assumed the responsibilities of Lyda Gatewood in Sponsored Programs.
14. Council representatives to the International Programs (Pruitt) and Accounting (Gauthier) advisory groups made brief reports. Chairperson King advised that the minutes of the various advisory committees were posted on the Faculty Council's website.

The meeting of the LSUAC Faculty Council was adjourned on a voice vote at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne M. Gauthier
Secretary