

**LSU AgCenter
Faculty Council Meeting
March 18, 2011
Sullivan Conference Room
9:30 a.m.**



Members Present: Joan Almond, Sharman Charles, Quincy Cheek, Hallie Dozier, Wayne M. Gauthier, Dianne Glasgow, Allen Hogan, Clayton Hollier, Natalie Hummel, Joan King, Robin Landry, Nicole LeMaire, Ken McMillin, Guy Padgett, Ross Pruitt, Johnny Saichuk, Dianne Sasser, Ed Twidwell, Richard Vlosky, and John Westra.

Members Absent: Jeff Hoy

Proxies: Nicole LeMaire for Lisa Benoit

Guests: Dr. William B. Richardson, Chancellor, LSU Agricultural Center (LSUAC); Ms. Ann Coulon, Director, Human Resource Management; Dr. Patrick Colyer, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor and Associate Director of the Experiment Station; Dr. John Russin, Interim Vice Chancellor and Associate Director of the Experiment Station; Dr. Ron Sheffield, Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering

HIGHLIGHTS

- . **Chancellor Richardson: Only LSUAC Constant is Commitment to Preserve Its Core (1)**
- . **Criterion for Speaking “Off the Record” (2)**
- . **Colyer is an Active Interim Associate Director (3)**
- . **Colyer’s Predictions for Changes Within LSUAC (4)**
- . **Quality Programs Justify Requests for Higher Levels of LSUAC Support from Parishes (5)**
- . **Faculty Support of Research Associates to Increase from 35 to 50 Percent (%) (6)**
- . **Research Stations Experience Staffing as Well as Equipment Replacement & Acquisition Problems (6)**
- . **Executive Committee Exists to Address Budget Contingencies (7)**
- . **No Timetable for Initiation of a LAES Vice-Chancellor Search (8)**
- . **Chancellor Has Authority to Fill Positions by Appointments Without Searches (9)**
- . **Rates for Medical Insurance Unknown (10)**
- . **Boon-Chapman is Incoming Carrier for Medical Savings Accounts & Dependent Savings Accounts (10)**

- . **Confidential EAP Available to LSUAC Employees and Their Significant Others Free of Charge (11)**
- . **Updated Promotion & Tenure (P&T) Policy Scheduled to be Released (12)**
- . **Best Source of Updated Information on Employee Benefits is a Annual Enrollment Meeting (13)**
- . **LASERS Employee Retirement Contribution to Increase by Three Percent (3%) (14)**
- . **Does Paranoia Surround Department Head Evaluations? (15)**
- . **Russin: Inconsistency Among Mid-Level Administrators in Identifying Exceptional Service (16)**
- . **Criteria for Distinguishing Between Generalist and Potential Nationally Prominent Candidate for Promotion (16)**
- . **Collegiality Criterion for Promotion to be Addressed Through Mentoring (16)**
- . **Salary Increases Can Be Awarded for Retention Purposes as well as for Promotion (17)**
- . **Equipment & Salary Retention Pools of Money Currently Depleted (17)**
- . **Russin Following Boethel's Paradigm for Implementing Budget Reductions (18)**
- . **Proportionality of Budget Reductions Across Units Now History (18)**
- . **LAES is Broke and Dependent on Royalty and Self-Generated Income (18)**
- . **Difficult for LSUAC as a Land Grant Institution to Offer Nine Month Appointments (18)**
- . **Background and Updated Information on LAIS, Agronomic Research Tool (19)**
- . **Assessment of Likely Environmental Impacts of Burning Sugarcane Fields: An LAIS Application (20)**
- . **Vote to Retain LOUIS Not Taken (21)**
- . **Chancellor Favors Presence of Faculty Member's Presence on Service Unit Committees (22)**
- . **Speculative Contingency Thinking About Southern University's Agricultural Center (23)**
- . **Hogan Experiences LSU Board of Supervisors and Association of Louisiana Faculty Senate Meetings (24)**
- . **LSU Medical School Graduates Outscore Their National Peers (24)**
- . **Implications of Concerns Raised at ALFS Meeting Merit Further Faculty Attention (25)**
- . **Specific Matters Addressed at BOS Meeting of Interest to LSUAC (26)**

Call to Order

Chairman McMillin called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. on March 18, 2011 in the Sullivan Conference Room of the John M. Parker Agricultural Center.

Chancellor's Report

1. Chancellor Richardson discussed a variety of issues associated with the budget of the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center (LSUAC). He could not identify any specifics because of the infinite numbers of scenarios and

uncertainties surrounding it between now and June 30, 2011. Regardless, he expects changes to occur within the LSUAC. These changes are consequences of adjustments in budgets at local, state and national levels. The adjustment process is dynamic and all options are on the table. The objective of preserving the core is probably the only constant.

Dr. Pat Colyer, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor and Associate Director of the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station (LAES)

2. Dr. Colyer was advised of the LSU Agricultural Center Faculty Council's (Council) policy which allows guests to declare that their comments be "off the record". However, if they don't declare specific sets of comments to be off the record, those comments may well be in the records and will remain there subject to corrections for errors in reporting.
3. Dr. Colyer reported that he liked his research as a plant pathologist and he also liked being the Northwest Regional director which he described as being a facilitator with the faculty. Those likes led him to apply for the Interim Vice-Chancellor position. Interim doesn't mean not being active and engaged. It is interim. One needs to be aggressive. Dr. Russin believes in the team concept and is open and receptive to ideas and initiatives. Dr. Colyer reports that he is still the Northwest Louisiana Regional Director and that is his first loyalty. Colyer observed that being a Regional Director provided him with a unique set of experiences from both the Research and Extension perspectives which helps him understand both sides better.
4. Dr. Colyer believes it was a good idea to have a faculty council. Things are changing rapidly in the LSUAC. He enjoys dealing with change. Dr. Colyer expects closures of some research stations with consequent layoffs. What might happen to the faculty currently assigned to those stations will be on a case-by-case basis rather than all scientists being reassigned to a LSUAC unit in Baton Rouge or to another research station. He fully expects there to be some staffing problems with some areas not being able to be addressed due to the absence of resources. He urges LSUAC faculty and staff to remain cognizant of the clientele. Dr. Colyer also expects there to be more split research/extension appointments.
5. Dr. Colyer acknowledged the dilemma inherent in the reality of requesting the parishes to pay a larger percentage of the support for staffing and maintaining their county agent offices while, at the same time, experiencing a downsizing in those offices and the laying off of teachers in their local schools. He emphasized the need to point out to those local leaders that they are necessarily paying for programs. The requested level of parish support is being raised to twenty percent (20%). Dr. Colyer expects the problems associated with this request to be state-wide. In the interim and going forward, all employees have to be focused on providing quality programs.

6. Dr. Colyer spoke about the necessity of maintaining sound relationships between the main campus and the research stations. He indicated that the faculty on the research stations should be closely associated with their disciplinary departments. Another change is that faculty support of their research associates is expected to increase from 35% to 50%. In some locales, the expectation is that graduate students will replace research associates. In addition to the staffing issues with research stations, there is the problem of funding replacements for worn out and technically obsolete equipment. There is also a need of being able to employ people with requisite skills to operate the equipment.
7. Budget cuts make it difficult to operate twenty (20) research stations. The current budget will not support the present infrastructure and the anticipated reductions funding will exacerbate the problem. There is an Executive Committee comprised of department heads, station directors, and vice-chancellors who have formulated plans to address budget contingencies, but there is nothing definite. For the time being, the best individual and cumulative course of action is to keep one's options open and to do one's best.
8. Dr. Colyer indicated he didn't have a sense of when the search for a permanent Vice-Chancellor and Director of the Louisiana Experiment Station would commence. Very likely, there is no timetable. He indicated that we had to first get through the budget situation and that the Chancellor was treading very carefully.

Ms. Ann Coulon, Director, Human Resources Management, LSUAC

9. The response to the question of whether searches to fill positions necessarily had to be conducted or whether people could just be appointed to those positions was that the Chancellor has the authority to appoint people to positions without the need to conduct formal searches. However, this is rarely done. Almost all appointments, including interim appointments, are based on a search.
10. Ms. Coulon reported that the Blue Cross - Humana situation is still not settled. At this time, she doesn't know anything about rates. There will be a different carrier (Boon-Chapman) for Medical Saving Accounts and Dependents Savings Accounts.
11. Ms. Coulon reported that the LSUAC sponsors an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for its employees. Under this optional and confidential program, an employee is entitled to three free visits/ episode to a health care provider or other professional for assistance in addressing their concerns. The provider reports that the LSUAC is a difficult employer to provide this service to because it is a statewide organization. The service is being expanded to include people living in an employee's household. The current annual cost of the EAP is \$18,000 and it is being fully funded by the LSUAC. Ms. Coulon indicated that it has been a mutually beneficial program for the employees and the LSUAC as it has enhanced employee and unit productivity and minimized legal fees. A feature of

the EAP is that its benefits extend for 90 days into the post-employment period. The Council recommended that the EAP be added to the Faculty Council Page and that greater awareness of its existence be disseminated throughout the LSUAC. It is a strictly confidential program whose confidentiality is achieved using an 800 number. It can also be used for supervisory issues. Now three visits /episode versus three visits/year.

12. An updated Promotion & Tenure (P&T) policy is scheduled to be released. It features no significant changes. The Vice-Chancellors will be trying to better quantify the requirements for achieving P&T. The document seeks to provide better guidance. There is a need to formalize mentor responsibilities. The P&T committee wants the mentor to be a fairly recent candidate at associate or full rank because many aspects in the P&T process change over time. There is a need for flexibility to address those situations where mentors leave the organization. There is also a need for experienced people to be mentored when their responsibilities shift. There is a need for explicit guidance to be provided on early promotion. A faculty member always has the option to choose “to go up early”. This is the reason why people are asked to identify whether they wish to be considered for P&T by July 1 each year. Note was taken of the need for all faculty to maintain their dossiers throughout the year.
13. According to Ms. Coulon, an annual enrollment meeting is the best place to get updated information on the set of benefit packages.
14. There is a proposal for LASERS employees’ contributions towards retirement to increase by three percent (3%). This will be decided during the legislative session.
15. Department Head evaluation is done every other year. It is next scheduled to be done in 2012. Members of the Council reported that some paranoia exists about these evaluations. The employees feel that the evaluations of department heads are not as confidential as they are claimed to be. Ms. Coulon assured the Council that the preservation of confidential was a paramount feature of the evaluation process.

Dr. John Russin, Interim Vice-Chancellor and Director, Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station

16. Dr. Russin was an unexpected, but welcome, guest who arrived during the course of Ms. Coulon’s presentation. Dr. Russin indicated there are “soft spots” within the LAES. Other than publication in peer reviewed publications, there is an inconsistent understanding among administrators as to what constitutes exceptional service. Promotions from associate to full professor depend not only upon a candidate’s number of publications, but upon the distribution of topics addressed in those publications. Those criteria of number and variety of topics

addressed identify the candidate either as a generalist or as potential researcher of national prominence in their discipline. The role of collegiality is not defined, but is something that can be addressed through an effective mentoring system.

16. Dr. Russin indicated that the LSUAC is not restricted to giving salary increases just for promotions. Salary increases can be awarded for retention purposes as well. A current goal is to re-establish currently depleted discretionary pools of money for both equipment acquisitions and salary retentions.
17. Dr. Russin is adhering to Dr. Boethel's paradigm for identifying individuals/programs in rendering decisions necessary to achieve ordered reductions under various budget adjustment scenarios. When the cumulative reduction in the budget reached eleven (11) million dollars, plans had to be revived. It is now no longer possible for each unit to take a proportionate share of any reduction in the budget. Unless told otherwise, consider the LAES broke and \$1.3 million dollars short in meeting its obligations. The LAES is now functioning on royalty dollars and self-generated incomes. There is no money for raises. An additional constraint is that there is no mechanism to pay individuals for taking on an additional workload. The nine month salary option in which the individual is paid the regular twelve month salary with the option of generating additional monies during the three months of summer is difficult for land grant systems to implement because of the nature of the subject matters that they address. However, this has been done at other land grant institutions.

Dr. Sheffield, Biological and Agricultural Engineering, LAIS Director

22. Dr. Sheffield had been given responsibility for the Louisiana Agricultural Information System (LAIS) by Dr. Boethel. Dr. Sheffield identified LAIS as a tool for agronomic research. It also facilitates work in micrometeorology and provides the U.S. Corps of Engineers with data useful for flood mapping. The tool allows for gathering data on wind speed and direction as well as soil temperature. There has been an evolution in servers and a reorganization now positions LAIS on the campus. There is a new look and feel to the website. It is now GIS-referenced to a specific site on the ground. LAIS now provides for two simple tools providing for (1) vegetable chill hours and (2) an evaporation tool to help people with their irrigation schedules. LAIS consists of 23 stations. One of those stations is at the LITGO observatory. LAIS is fifteen (15) years old, its towers are rusting, its data loggers are malfunctioning, and it hasn't been able to perform sense recalculations for the past two years. It is not at research grade. To make LAIS functional would require an investment of \$288,000. The Chancellor's office approved a plan for \$150,000 which will allow for an upgrading of ten (10) stations. The sites for those ten stations are situated on row crop sites. There is no coverage of forestry areas. There is a need to solicit funds for creating sites in the sugar cane area; that is, Jeanerette; Houma; and St. Gabriel. The upgrade process begins with the removal and cannibalization of the 13 stations not selected for upgrading. The expectation is that the first station will

be raised by June 1, 2011. With soft money or other outside money, LAIS would have the capability to bring on fifty (50) stations. A twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) commitment must be made available for the first five years for LAIS to initiate a new site.

23. At the present time, the data gathered from the towers is sound, but is not cutting-edge. There is a smoke plume model for use in assessing the feasibility of burning sugarcane. This model uses present data and compares it against weather patterns and smoke profiles to identify potential risks associated with the burning of sugarcane. There was a recommendation to disseminate information about LAIS throughout the LSUAC.

Ken McMillin, Council Chairperson

24. The length of the meeting resulted in a lost quorum. As a consequence, there was no opportunity to vote on whether the Council wished to vote on sending a petition to the Board of Regents urging the retention of LOUIS, a critical library resource that allows for accessing research materials from around the world.
25. McMillin reported that Chancellor Richardson supports the idea of having a faculty member serve as a member on only one service unit advisory committee.
26. There was a question as to how many institutions were required to qualify their governing institution as a system. If the number should be five and the institution, Southern University – New Orleans (SUNO), were to be merged into the University of Louisiana or other system, then the Southern University Agricultural Center would no longer be associated with a system. Under these conditions, the Council should be thinking about recommendation(s) it might wish to present to Chancellor Richardson regarding the Southern University Agricultural Center.
27. Allen Hogan was the Council's representative at the latest meetings of the LSU Board of Supervisor (BOS) and of the Association of Louisiana Faculty Senates (ALFS). Allen indicated that the members of the Board were presented with a 256 page document containing institutional metric data from each institution in the LSU System addressing various aspects of their operations. That data is available on the LSUAC website. Hogan indicated that one of the complaints voiced at that meeting had to do with the methodology used in determining graduation rates. The majority of the system's institutional graduation rates were below national averages. However, the graduation rates of LSU's professional schools were 95%. Particularly impressive was the assessment of the performance of LSU's medical school graduates. These medical school graduates had scored below the national average upon their entry into medical school, but their performance scores at the end of their studies was above the national average. Hogan reported that only half of the BOS members were present for these summaries.

28. The meeting of the ALFS was concerned with a proposed change to the tenure policy within the University of Louisiana System. The proposed change would allow a department head to terminate a faculty member within a ninety (90) day period. Kevin Cope, President of the LSU-BR Faculty Senate, has requested more information. Another concern of the ALFS is with the question of whether it is the university or the presenter of a lecture that owns the rights to a presentation if it is recorded or put into a format through which it could be disseminated. A committee has been appointed to assess information technology (IT) policies at Louisiana's institutions of higher education. Observations about a union for faculty members were made without further comment. Concern was expressed about the University's contributions to the retirement system. The next meeting of the ALFS has been set for April 16, 2011.

29. Matters of particular significance occurring during the LSU's Board of Supervisors' meeting included the budgets for the various institutions in the system; the creation of scholarships funded by \$60,000 contributions from G&H Seed and Lucien and Peggy Laborde; renewal of the Louisiana Center for Rural Initiatives; the announcement that Jim Purcell was assuming responsibility as Commissioner of the Board of Regents; the identification of seven College of Agriculture (COA) degree programs as low completers; and the identification of retained degree programs.

The meeting of the Council was adjourned at 1:27 p.m. on March 18, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne M. Gauthier, Secretary