

**Agriculture Faculty Council
9:30 am, September 25, 2015
Room 212, Efferson Hall**



In Attendance: Mandy Armentor (proxy Diane Sasser), Dorin Boldor, Margo Castro, Cynthia Clifton, Adriana Drusini (proxy Kori Myers), Bruce Garner, Kenneth Guidry, Joan King, Ken McMillin, Chuck Monlezun, Kori Myers, Ioan Negulescu, Charles Overstreet, Gerald Roberts, Diane Sasser, Mariah Simoneaux, Neely Walker, John Westra (guest)

Absent: Jeff Beasley, Jeff Davis, Thomas Dean, Kiki Fontenot, Andrew Granger, Kurt Guidry, David Picha, Hilton Waits

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Council Chair, Ken McMillin.

Vice President and Dean's Report – Dr. William Richardson

Dr. Richardson serves on LSU Vice President/Provost search committee. They have received over 30 applications and are still receiving more. Meetings are scheduled for early October. There are very viable applicants in the group. Dr. Richardson wants to make sure the potential applicants fully understand the mission of a land grant institution.

Regional meetings are scheduled across the state in October. Dr. Richardson will use these meetings to provide updates and dispel rumors. Meetings should last 30-40 minutes. Please try to attend.

The Board of Supervisors approved our retirement buyout. 44 employees initially signed up, however 4 withdrew their applications.

Dr. Richardson has met with gubernatorial candidates and staff. A questionnaire was sent to each candidate about supporting higher education, all responded positively. He has personally talked to 3 of the 4 candidates. After the first primary we will have a better idea of who will be elected. Half the state legislature running for reelection is unopposed.

Currently we are in a 700 million dollar deficit. If oil prices remain low we could be in a 800-900 million dollar deficit.

Feedback we have received is that higher education has already taken a lot of cuts. We will not know what kind of additional cut to expect until next year after the new governor takes office. We are positioning our self to deal with a high or low cut. We want to convey the message that investing in research and outreach are just as important as students.

Administration is working on capital outlay plan. Additional work to animal science buildings will not be considered new projects. However, this can all change in the middle of January with a new governor.

The Board of Supervisors met last week. In the past LSU AgCenter gas and oil revenues have been split 75%/25%, with 25% going to the university. Dr. King Alexander approved reallocating some of this money so that the LSU AgCenter will be able to use more than 75%.

Dr. Richardson is not planning on closing parish offices. They do not plan on replacing all vacant positions created by the retirement buyout. He is not sure all research stations will remain open, especially when the subject area they cover is not a priority. One research station has 19 employees and there is no research being done. (Where is this?)

What is the status of the potential move of faculty from food science and nutrition to Dalrymple Hall? Administration wants to keep all faculty together, they will continue to look at the situation. Food incubator now under direction of School of ?.

College of Agriculture received their 14th day numbers, there was a 3% increase in enrollment. Recruitment has increased, pursuing students with ACT scores of 33 and up. On October 16 there will be a scholarship gala at LA House to raise funds for incoming freshmen scholarships. Two 4-H'ers spoke at board of supervisors meeting last week. One of these 4-H members has committed to LSU, the other has not yet. LA Tech and McNeese are our biggest in state competitors. Texas A&M and Sam Houston State are our biggest competitors in Texas. Freshman enrollment for LSU is flat. 30% of graduate applications go un-responded to. Part of the problem may be international students that have to apply at least 8 months in advance. They need to have an assistantship in order to get a visa.

New Student fee, \$109.00 per student, will generate \$130,000 for College of Agriculture.

Executive Associate Dean, Dr. Burnett, spending time in AEEE Department. They will not hold a national search until budget straightens out. There have been two internal applicants thus far.

Dr. Allen Rutherford, will be named department head for experimental statistics today.

Dr. Richardson wrote letter to the Board of Supervisors that is now public record. The letter addresses the importance of the LSU AgCenter and the College of Agriculture.

There were not too many surprises with the retirement buyout. \$350,000 to cover expenses of the buyout. Will recoup 2.8 million next year. There is a shortfall of people in the field, can't hire many people, can't close offices? Will work as fast as they can to fill much needed positions. Built in 10% to hire back.

West Carrol Parish is down to one person in the office. How do you explain to school board that is paying money to support a nonexistent 4-H agent?

Is there or will there be an updated staff directory? Employees need to know who is left to contact when they have a question. Program leaders are working around the clock to develop solutions to vacant positions. Dr. Richardson knows there are issues on the parish level, and issues with certain employees.

We will not go back to police juries right now to ask for more funding on the local level, there needs to be a staffing plan first. We need to know what we can provide to parishes.

15% is taken from certain monetary donations by the developmental office and foundation. This is a foundation policy, it is a few years old, not common at other institutions.

Patrick Tuck executive director of 4-H Foundation.

A 1,000 acre farm was donated to LSU AgCenter. The LSU Foundation would not accept the donation, but the university did. Will use the farm as a forestry teaching facility, there may also be mineral rights. A rice dryer was donated, we can sell and use cash. This new foundation will take anything besides cash.

Business

Minutes of the August Agriculture Faculty Council Meeting were approved with minor corrections after the motion made by Ioan Negulescu and second by Dorin Boldor.

Reports

Board of Supervisors Meeting: Ken McMillin reported that the LSU capital outlay plan had been approved and sent to Board of Regents. LSU AgCenter and COA projects included: Burden Welcome Center, Animal Science buildings, Plant Pathology, Emerging Technology Center at Parker Coliseum, greenhouse, Biological Engineering building, solid waste, Rice Research Station, Bossier Parish distance education, and the Baton Rouge 4-H Educational Center.

The board approved the LSU AgCenter, COA retirement buyout. 40 employees took the incentive. We will ask Anne Coulon for an updated staff directory.

Ken reminded the council that Dr. Richardson did say that faculty groups will be consulted when they make final decisions. Faculty helped with the last transition.

Council of Faculty of Advisors Meeting: As we move to one LSU, we will have to make faculty governance decisions. Agents are not currently counted in faculty senate count. Agriculture Faculty Council will continue to invite College of Agriculture representatives to our meetings. Today John Westra is here as a guest. Agriculture has had and continue to have a strong presence of Faculty of Advisors.

Association of LA Faculty Senates Meeting: This meeting will be held tomorrow at LSUA. The meeting agenda was made available to council members. A discussion will be held about LSU running more like a business. The question was asked, is the value of LSU AgCenter services is being recognized by the campus?

Community and Technical Colleges have banded together to create a stronger presence.

No Louisiana university system has a good directory or means to contact all faculty. They are trying to resolve this situation with a state-wide faculty directory.

The new Commissioner of Higher Education, Dr. Rollo, has been to each summit meeting since being named to this position.

Discussion Items

COA Faculty Senate elections were held. Four new senators were elected. Seven total from COA now serve on the faculty senate.

P&T Advisory Committee list was sent to Dr. Richardson and Anne Coulon. The entire P&T process will now stop with Dr. Richardson, this includes appeals. The change still hasn't been made to align our P&T times with the Universities.

Becky White (AEEE Full Professor) is retiring October 31. However, her term will end in December. We will need to replace this position so that AEEE has representation on the council. The suggestion was made to invite a department member as a guest to the remaining meetings. However, guests cannot vote.

Agriculture Faculty Council Meetings should be made public knowledge. **Should we place meeting dates on LSU AgCenter calendar of events? Who can take charge of this?**

College of Agriculture Name Change Committee hasn't met since July. A survey of seven proposed choices was sent to faculty in the last ten days. The survey choices are as follows: College of Agricultural Science & Natural Resources, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, College of Agriculture Sciences, College of Agriculture, Consumer, and Natural Resources, College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences, College of Applied Agricultural Science, and College of Agriculture.

P&T and PS-42 Review Committee will need new chairperson since Jennifer Duhon is no longer with the LSU AgCenter.

The question was raised, how does the council's mentoring program fit in with the AgCenter's mentoring program? Kiki Fontenot, who could not be at the meeting, provided council members with a new employee checklist for Assistant Professor (extension role), Count Agent (ANR), and Extension Associate. **If you have comments or ideas to add please send them to Ken and Kiki.** It was suggested that a yearly calendar be added to the checklist.

It was also suggested that there be a tactful way to address tough questions. Such as, young professors should seek advice from multiple members of their department.

Job descriptions are not consistent. Some are very vague, while other are very detailed. If it's not in the job description, a faculty member shouldn't be held responsible for it. If what a faculty member is doing doesn't match the job description, something needs to change. **Someone should review and update job descriptions each year. Who is responsible is this?**

Mentors should be in close proximity. How can you learn from someone that is across the state? Mentors should take their job seriously. A job description should be provided to the mentor, and expectations provided to mentors and mentees.

How do regional directors, regional coordinators, and program leaders fit into the mentoring program? What are their roles?

Dorin suggested that the council suspend the rule that a full faculty member represent AEEE so that an assistant faculty member could attend meetings in Becky White's absence. The council would reevaluate the situation one year from now. Ken will visit with Dr. Rutherford about how to handle this particular dilemma before the council makes a final decision.

The council members and the employees they represent would like more answers about the future plan of the COA and LSU AgCenter.

Guest – Anne Coulon

Anne forwarded message from Ken from our July meeting to service unit advisory committee heads. She advised all units should meet before the end of November.

Administration is pleased with the result of the retirement buyout. The downside is a loss of expertise. Dolores Nehlig did a phenomenal job advising employees. 40 in the final number of employees who took the incentive. It is a mix of field and campus employees at all ranks. Some regions lost more employees than others. The retirement buyout was a budgetary decision. It will save Agriculture a lot of money next year, but not a lot this year. This year's budget is using true, one time money.

There is hope higher education and the economy will turn around. The retirement buyout was a positive way to downsize. Most of those who took the buyout will retire by the end of October, a few will remain until November to finish certain projects.

It was asked, will a list of those retiring will be made public? Those of us who are left worry about duties and questions going unanswered. The list will be sent to unit heads and distributed from there.

It was asked, what is plan to assign vacant positions? There is no final plan. They have been meeting with program leaders and regional directors. They will revisit what we are doing, spread things around, a few retirees may come back to fill in gaps. Mentoring needs to be done.

It was suggested to Anne that we need weekly update through a newsletter or website to keep every updated on what is going on. It is hard to keep up with new hires, part time employees, position changes, etc. Anne mentioned that they are working on a new directory.

Administrations has met with regional directors to determine where the gaps are going to be. They will meet again in October and come back with ideas. Program leaders and Dr. Richardson will welcome any ideas from anyone. If you have idea email your Regional Director.

Work Day is the brain of the university computer system. We are renting space on their software server. There is less flexibility with this type of system, but also less updating. Administration hasn't publicized this new system yet, but we will start to hear more about it. Travel and leave can be completed on your phone. July 1 of 2016 is the tentative release date.

Annual enrollment is coming up. Pay attention to the plans. If spouses are employed it may be cheaper to file separately. It is unknown if there will be an increase in insurance premiums.

Administration is looking at Work Day to be used for Unit Head Evaluations. It should already have a program to do this. However right now we can't pull anyone from IT. For this year's evaluations we will have to use old system. The process is confidential, not even IT can tell who writes a specific comment. Unit head evaluations cover department heads, regional directors and up. It was asked, can Regional Coordinators be added? Anne suggested adding comments to Regional Coordinator's evaluation. Can an email be sent with the evaluation including information on who can see results, how to write unanimous comments, how to evaluate regional coordinators, parish chairs.

The state made the decision that GPS's will be placed in all state vehicles. GPS will complete vehicle log for the driver. It is an additional cost. We have asked for an exemption for vehicles that don't leave the unit and have less than 2,500 miles per year.

The P&T process is being looked at. Now that Dr. Richardson has the final say, the process won't drag out as long. Positive and negative comments given at each stage. Suggested that those serving on committees should care and review documents prior to group meetings. If they don't they shouldn't be on the committee.

As we become one LSU who should Agriculture Faculty Council work with in Human Resources to get a breakdown of where employees are located and what their rank is? Sharon Salzer will be able to provide this information.

The new CMS system should be launched by the end of this year. Anne meets with Fred Piazza at the end of next week.

A motion to adjourn was made by Gerald Roberts. Seconded by Charles Overstreet and unanimously approved.