

LSU Agriculture Faculty Council Meeting  
9:30 am, March 11, 2016  
Room 212, Efferson Hall



**In Attendance:**

Naveen Adusumilli (remote), Mandy Armentor, Dorin Boldor, Ed Bush, Margo Castro (remote), Chris Clark, Cynthia Clifton, Jeff Davis, Adriana Drusini (proxy Mandy Armentor), Kiki Fontenot, Bruce Garner (remote), Andrew Granger, Kenneth Guidry, Kurt Guidry, Joan King, Ken McMillin, Kori Myers, Ioan Negulescu, Diane Sasser, Gary Stockton (remote), John Westra.

**Absent:**

Denise Holston-West, Chuck Monlezun, Gerald Roberts

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Council Chair Ken McMillin at 9:30 am.

**Vice President and Dean's Report:** Dr. William B. Richardson

There are offices closed in north Louisiana and central Louisiana due to the flooding, no damages reported as of yet to crops or LSU AgCenter offices. The Legislative session has ended. LSU AgCenter Administration contacted the legislative office yesterday; the legislative office does not have budget numbers. The legislative office will release actual numbers when they have them. A shortfall to the budget between \$30 million and \$60 million is expected. The revenue estimating committees are still calculating exactly how much revenue was raised during the special session. The LSU AgCenter is developing plans and outlining budgets items to plan to meet this shortfall. A 30 million cut to high education could equal an \$800,000 cut to the LSU Ag Center. A 60 million cut to high education could equal 1, 800, 000 cut to the LSU AgCenter. Our administration is working to handle our cuts at any level. Our budget numbers are expected to come in Monday or Tuesday. Employees will be furloughed; they will prevent layoffs at all costs. Under the circumstances, our legislators did the best they could to reduce the budget shortfall. Our lobbyist at the capitol, Hamp Grunewald did an excellent job lobbying on our behalf at the capital during the session. The AgCenter has great support and legislators voted on taxes to save us.

The next legislative session begins on Monday and ends June 6<sup>th</sup>. The budget shortfall for the fiscal year of 2017 is estimated to be between \$800-900 million. We will not see serious budget work till late April or early May. They fully expect another special session after the regular session to address the budget shortfall for the coming year. Oil prices are coming back up, every time oil goes up or down \$1.00 a barrel, it equals \$12 million in state revenue. Once he gets the final numbers, he will have a special meeting to see how to deal with the numbers; representatives from Faculty Council will be a part of this meeting. We have been cut each year for 5 years. They hope to deal with cuts having no impact to us or our work. Legislators are not happy with what has occurred in the past 8 years. The new legislature wants to fix this. The legislature is serious about reforming our revenue, spending and tax structures. We currently have \$700 billion in tax exemptions in this state. It will take a constitutional convention to really reform the state government. Last time the constitution was revised was in 70's. Cuts to LSU are making it difficult to keep faculty and recruit students.

He will inform the faculty of the budget cuts as soon as possible. 5 research stations are still being studied for possibly closure. The stations are: Southwest, St Joseph, Hill Farm, Pecan Station and Iberia. The Pecan Station will close, but it unknown how soon. The Speaker of the House is from Iberia and does not want this station to close; however, there is only 1 scientist working at that location. They do not want to close parish offices but if the cuts are bad everything must be looked at. They do not like scare tactics; they don't want to scare people. Factual information will be sent out. Burden Research Station has been looked at as a possible location for the

new zoo. Burden is 110 acres currently. Burden has its own board and the board controls the Burden Center. They cannot do anything at the Burden Station without board approval. The AgCenter does not support any part of Burden being turned into the Baton Rouge Zoo. Even if the Burden land is sold, no sale funds come to the AgCenter, we don't own it. St Gabriel has a piece of river front property; they are getting close to leasing this property if we can keep the revenue. The Attorney General is in favor of this and we want to be able to use the funds as needed. We also have 22 acres that if sold would generate 1.2 million dollars, but it is feared the legislature would reduce our budget by that same amount.

They are developing a plan for the \$800 million cut predicted for fiscal year 2017. It will be early June before we know about next year's budget. They can reform the budget but they cannot raise revenue in the regular legislative session. The budget shortfall for TOPS is not yet solved. They only have funded \$60 million in TOPS for next year. They are \$230 million short on TOPS for the next year. They will use this crisis to tweak the TOPS program. Changes discussed to the TOPS program are requiring a higher ACT score, a higher GPA, etc. The cut to the TOPS program mid-year is right at \$10 million. TOPS is a great program but we do not want AgCenter to have to pay for this program since we receive no benefit from it.

He is working on our request with Ann Coulon from last month and Ann will be in touch with Ken McMillin on this requests. The WorkDay program is coming online July 1<sup>st</sup>. The finance and Human Resources will be integrated, but it is not a happy integration at this point. They will work to get the staff trained. The Vice President has meetings this week on this and will address the training. Our staff that get the job done every day need to be trained; AgCenter has not been as involved as they needed to be on this process. He requested Faculty Council review the current graduation process for LSU and provide him with recommendations to simplify this.

Faculty Council wants administration to release exit strategies now for members, we want the facts and future outlook to be released to all AgCenter employees. Faculty Council requested that information be sent to employees as soon as possible. People are worried about their jobs; they want information on will they will pay for leave, early retirement, how much notice, etc.

#### **Business:**

**Minutes Approval:** The minutes from our February 19, 2016 meeting with minor changes were approved. Ioan Negulescu made the motion for approval, motion was seconded by Chris Clark, motion was approved.

#### **Reports:**

**Board of Supervisors Meeting, next meeting March 18-** The agenda will post sometime today. Ken will forward us an agenda for this meeting.

**Council of Faculty Advisors, next meeting March 18**

**Association of Louisiana Faculty Senates, next meeting April 23-** no agenda at this point, Jay Dardenne is scheduled to be there. Ken will forward us information as he receives it.

**Louisiana Statewide Colleagues Collaborative Summit Meeting (Alexandria) next meeting April 23**

#### **Announcements:**

**Ag Faculty Council Agricultural and Extension Education and Evaluation associate/full representative-** Ken will contact Dr. Melissa Cater this week to see if she is willing to serve. Diane is working with Melissa on other projects.

**Service Unit Advisory Committees-** Ken has requested from Ann Coulon a current list of committee members. We want to get these committees back on track. If there are cuts to these areas, we want to be a part in addressing any cuts for these areas.

#### **Discussion Items:**

**Graduate Council Agriculture Representative**

Joan King was self-nominated. Joan has the time to devote to serving on the Graduate Council. The motion was made by Andrew Granger and seconded by Mandy Armentor to accept Joan's nomination. Motion passed. We will forward Joan's name to Dr. Richardson for approval as the Graduate Council Agriculture Representative. They are making changes in the Graduate school but they are slow and cosmetic in coming. Every Friday afternoon the Graduate School Dean holds a meeting but there is no record if recommendations or issues are being addressed. Joan will be a good representative to voice needed changes for our graduate students.

**Ad-Hoc Mentoring Committee** - Kiki Fontenot (checklist template), Jeff Davis (previous presentation), Kurt Guidry (Ag Econ process), [Becky White] (ODE advisory committee information)

A FAQ document for new employees has been developed. It focuses on these roles: research associates, professors and ag agents. They would like recommendations on this document. Ken requested we go through this individually and report back to Kiki with changes before our next meeting. Kiki will forward electronically to Kori, Kori will send to the Council and Council needs to send changes to Kiki. We will review an updated document at our next meeting. Diane is working on a similar document for FCS.

**Unit Head Evaluation Committee** – Ken McMillin, Diane Sasser, [Mariah Simoneaux], Ioan Negulescu, Kori Myers, Gerald Roberts, [Dave Picha], Kevin Brady, Christopher Green, Vinny Moreira, Lanette Hebert, Ann Coulon. It would be beneficial to have these after faculty evaluations are conducted. Ken will follow up on this.

**Council representation review – Adriana Drusini, Mandy Armentor-** They will present recommendations at the April meeting. They will use our current by laws to make recommendations. If you have a recommendation for them please send to them via email, copy Ken on these email. Ken will look at the bylaws and make recommendations on by law changes for our April meeting. Ken will ask for an updated list of employees to help us with this process.

**P&T and PS-42 review- [Jennifer Duhon], Kurt Guidry, Adriana Drusini, Mandy Armentor-** we will request of administration when the committee meeting will be held or do we need as Faculty Council to take on this role. We have lots of information for PS-42 that needs to be clarified for new hires. Ken will make the request.

**Ag Center Awards Program-**we will hold on further discussion on this, Dr. Richardson is aware of our concerns regarding this.

#### **Additional Items Discussed:**

**Promotion & Tenure notices:** No promotion and tenure notices have been sent out as of today. The Ag Center or Main Campus has not sent any notices to date. Ken will address Kevin Brady on this matter. Decisions were made in mid-January but no notices have gone out.

**Work Day Program:** Ken will meet to see what is going on; staff concerns are that everything will be by name and not budget codes. We are unsure of the secrets and lack in training for this. This program will be implemented July 1.

**PS 36 and PS 36NT-** Jane Cassidy is chairing a committee that will address PS-36 then address PS-36NT for main campus. PS-36 should address post tenure reviews every few years to ensure they are doing their job and they are on track. A post tenure review help keep faculty inline and on track.

**PS 104 and PS 109-** Ken serves on this committee. PS 104 and PS 109- dismissal policies- are they clear, do they account for every situation, can they address all issues that arises. These policies need to be clear and do they address all concerns.

**CMS System-** Public clientele are complaining, we have serious problems with the system and our clientele cannot find what they need. It took 2 years to develop an unorganized website that is a mess. We need to address the problems. We cannot locate the Ag Center Faculty Council website. We will ask the Director of IT to come speak at our April meeting to address these concerns. Questions on who is responsible with each department website and why the website was launched before it were complete. The new system needs to come down be fixed and the old system needs to be re loaded for the time being. When things are loaded, it should be uploaded within 24 hours. Dwight Landreau is still listed as the Associate Vice Chancellor for the AgCenter. He has not been employed with the AgCenter for quite some time.

**Retiree emails:** campus policy with Microsoft- if a professor has emeritus status they can keep their emails, they must provide a letter to prove it to IT so they can keep their email. Ken has it in writing from the Director of IT that is the current policy but there are exceptions to this because we have professors who weren't allowed to keep their email. If professors are allowed to keep their emails, their support of the AgCenter would continue as well. The AgCenter and Main Campus are AgCenter and main campus are doing two different things. They can keep .lsu email but not keep ag center email. It will be requested to the Director of IT when he comes to speak to address this and have consistency between the main campus and the AgCenter. These questions were raised through our discussion: how does HRM keep in touch with retirees regarding benefits when they no longer do AgCenter email? Can people with a PhD be exempt from having their email deleted with their retired? What system is the alumni association on???? How do we do the same for the AgCenter?? We have less people working for the AgCenter than ever before. LSU emails work the AgCenter emails don't.

**Review of Policies:** Policies review will help develop clear diagrams for department. The clarification of the 4% raise and the stipend are needed in the Promotion and Tenure policy. It currently states 4% of the salary as of June 30<sup>th</sup> of the previous year plus the stipend is the current policy. It has depended on the department if merit increases were given the same year as promotion. Merit increase year and promotion year are handled on an individual basis. Faculty members may not receive merit raises the same year and promotion and tenure raises based on our current policies. We have not had consistent raises over the years and we have lost good people. It costs a great deal of money each time someone leaves. We are asking for examples if we keep faculty happy and they don't leave, it becomes more cost efficient for the AgCenter. We will work to calculate some figures to show this. In tight times are we benefited if people leave or retire? Positions are open and have been advertised; only those with offers will be hired. Everything else will be delayed. If people are leave or retire and new ones are hired we don't save money because we are paying the new people more. Deflation of current employees and inflation of new hires coming in are causing a problem to our budget.

**Meeting Representatives:** Dr. Richardson requested at least 3 people be present at the special meeting he will call regarding the budget once he receives his budget cut numbers. Ken requested at least 4 or 5

people be present. The council was all in agreement to allow the Executive Committee members attend this meeting. The Executive Committee members are Ken McMillian, Diane Sasser, Kori Myers, Ioan Negulescu, Joan King and Cynthia Clifton. The Executive Committee needs to be available for this meeting and report back to the council immediately after.

**Required Courses:** Job offers need to be direct and formal and detailed regarding this. This policy on these needs to be readdressed and we need to evaluate why we make new hires take classes. The majority of people with a majority extension appointment must take classes. Field faculty must also take the required courses. State extension faculty members are looked at a case by case basis. Questions were asked regarding this discussion: Are the required courses in a current policy?? Are extension courses clearly outlined? Are new hires made clearly aware of this policy? These classes were designed to teach employees of what extension is and how to work for extension. Dr. Melissa Cater is currently teaching these classes. The two courses have been combined since we have hired so few people in last few years. Diane will check on the current policy for required courses we will revisit this policy at next meeting.

**Exit Strategies:** Ken will follow up on exit strategies and stay on top of it, because people are asking and it needs to make aware to everyone. We don't want people leaving when they have a chance to stay. We need these options in an official document. If employees get another offer and ask for more money to stay, should they be given a raise to stay? Should they give the AgCenter an alternative?

**Adjournment:**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Dorin Boldor. Ioan Negulescu seconded the motion. Motion was approved. Meeting was adjourned at 11:35am.