

LSU Agriculture Faculty Council Meeting Minutes

9:30 am, May 20, 2016

Room 212, Efferson Hall



**Members In attendance:** Naveen Adusumilli, Mandy Armentor (proxy Adriana Drusini), Dorin Boldor, Ed Bush, Margo Castro (proxy Kori Myers), Joe Chang, Chris Clark, Cynthia Clifton, Jeff Davis, Adriana Drusini, Kiki Fontenot, Bruce Garner (proxy Carol Pinnell-Alison), Kenneth Guidry (proxy Kori Myers), Kurt Guidry, Denise Holston-West, Joan King (proxy Ken McMillin), Ken McMillin, Kori Myers, Ioan Negulescu, Carol Pinnell-Alison, Diane Sasser (proxy Ken McMillian) and Gary Stockton.

**Members not in Attendance:** Andrew Granger and, Chuck Monlezun.

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

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

**Guests** – Ms. Ann Coulon, Associate Vice Chancellor for Administration

Dr. Richardson and Ms. Coulon were attending the State Senate Finance meeting and cannot be in attendance. They will be present at our June meeting.

**Business**

The minutes from our April 15, 2016 meeting minutes were approved by the council with minor spelling revisions. The motion for approval was made by Ioan Negulescu and seconded by Gary Stockton. Kori Myers will email amended copy to Ken for his records.

**Reports**

**Board of Supervisors meeting May 6; next meeting June 24**

The Board of Supervisors met on May 6<sup>th</sup>. At this meeting, the Vice Chancellor for Human Resources for LSU Main Campus discussed the LSU First System and the difficulties with the plan. When the legislature voted to let the LSU system establish their own health plan (LSU First), they put the stipulation that other state employees not employed by LSU could join LSU First. In the last 2 years, the LSU First members who are not LSU employees are costing the highest payout as of now, which is a great cost to the plan borne by all LSU First members. Those of us on LSU First appreciate the benefits we receive for the cost we pay and do not want our plan to change or go away due to the cost of non-LSU employees. The affordable care acts are also in the predicament as LSU First. Due to the rising costs, LSU First premiums will increase by 5% sometime this year. LSU First did negotiate a new rate of 46% for doctors and pharmaceuticals. This is the reduced rate paid by LSU First members. (ex: a regular patient will pay 100%; an LSU First member only pays 46%). The benefits for our LSU First plan are remaining the same. Members are concerned as to why our deductible and premiums are so different at times. Web TPA is the company that oversees the LSU First accounts, but the company is not very responsive and does not keep customers up to date. Ken McMillin will follow up with Human Resources on this issue.

The Board of Supervisors also discussed amending the board of supervisor's regulations for the 3rd time this year. The LSU System president wants more autonomy to make decisions regarding contracts and so forth. They have asked the president for more information before making a decision regarding changing the regulations.

LSU Main Campus has established scholarship programs. The Board voted to use auxiliary reserve funds for this year to make up the shortfall for TOPS this budget year. The legislature still has two weeks in this session to figure out what will happen with TOPS for the coming years.

Complaints have been received regarding the architectural design of the series of buildings on Nicholson Drive and it is hoped that Facilities Planning will address these complaints.

The LSU School of Veterinary Medicine will have multimillion dollar remodel to the vet school this year using dollars the school has saved. The LSU Ag Center did request for the Southeast Research Farm be allowed to house a solar farm. About 530 acres would be devoted for the solar farm and remaining 280 acres will be used for the dairy herd. Approximately 120 Holstein cows will still reside at the station. The LSU Ag Center also requested a utility company right of way at the Sweet Potato Station. Four seats are becoming vacant on the Board of Supervisors. Requests have been sent to the governor's office to fill these seats with individuals who have higher education experience. The current Board of Supervisors primarily consists of business personal and politicians.

#### Council of Faculty Advisors May 6; next meeting June 24

Susan Sullivan from LSUA gave faculty report at the Board meeting. LSU-A asked for a raise last year and included in their budget, they were told no. LSU-A has put a raise in their budget again this year. They have an increase in out of state students which is helping to cover the cost of this raise. LSU-A is still awaiting approval and several faculty spoke in the public comment portion of the Board meeting. LSUE is requesting the same raise as LSUA for their faculty members. The LSU Ag Center is trying to include a raise for Ag Center employees as well. The universities are keeping a close eye on the Board of Supervisors until a decision regarding these raises is made. There appear to be a lot of human resource actions targeting main campus faculty members at the present time. This fall main campus will be finalizing several rules and policies. Ken is also dealing with more and more faculty in regards to various offices not following current policies. LSU departments with few faculty are held to the same minimum numbers for completion of graduate students as departments with lots of faculty, which makes it difficult for smaller departments to keep their graduate programs. The combining of some departments has not proved efficient or useful thus far. We currently have a \$2.2 million horticulture industry in the state and we don't have a horticulture department within any of the university systems in Louisiana.

#### Joint Association of Louisiana Faculty Senates (ALFS) meeting and Louisiana Statewide Colleagues Collaborative Summit meeting in Alexandria on April 23; next meeting July 9

Commissioner of Higher Education Joe Rallo discussed budget and where higher education is going. They are trying to change their strategic plan to include objectives. The Board of Regents (BoR) would like to have stable budget amounts from the legislature each year so universities can plan their budgets accordingly. They are taking a look at graduate programs around the state. However with some new economic growth across the state, they are evaluating how our university graduate programs can meet these needs. The current BoR rule for a campus department to continue to offer a graduate program they must average graduating 5 master's students and or 2 PhD students each year. If a department drops below these numbers, they are then in Jeopardy of losing that graduate program. Research is being doing to see if some current graduate programs are even needed. The BoR staff makes look at the graduation rates on a yearly based instead of the current rolling 3 year basis.

The faculty at Grambling University has expressed no confidence in their President Willie Larkin who has not fulfilled the promises he made when he was hired. Grambling still is facing the turmoil that occurred with the former president brought in lots of faculty from South Carolina State University and Larkin had promised to remedy this turmoil. Southern at Shreveport and LSU at Shreveport are looking for more help in developing their programs. LSU Medical School at Shreveport is still working to ensure the best teaching and research of med students since the hospital was privatized. Dr. Darlene Nemeth was a guest speaker on faculty anxiety in the current academic climate. A survey of individuals before and after the presentation indicated that some of the attendees were more anxious and some less anxious following the presentation, which will be posted on the ALFS website (<http://web.lsu.edu/alfs/>). Ken will let us know when.

## **Announcements**

### **Graduate Council Agriculture representative-**

The Council recommendation of Joan King was made and additional names were also requested. After being informed that Clayton Hollier of Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology was selected to be the College of Agriculture (CoA) representative, Clayton was told that he could not serve because he does not have a CoA budget appointment. Wes Harrison, Department of Agribusiness and Ag Economics, has now been selected as the CoA Graduate Council representative. Ken will have a follow up meeting with Dr. Richardson and Dr. Brunnnett who is our liaison to the graduate school regarding this. The questions the faculty council would like answers to include: 1) who made the final decision regarding the CoA representative 2) what rules are in place regarding the selection process and 3) if we can only select full graduate council members this will create more discrepancies in the future. Currently the representatives are appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School. We would like to see a formal election process for these members. We are currently in a transition phase with going from appointed people to elected people. Ken will also follow up as to why no Graduate Faculty meeting was held this spring, which is a Board of Supervisors regulation for campus colleges.

### **Ag Faculty Council Agricultural and Extension Education and Evaluation associate/full representative**

Ken is still working with this department to select a representative. They are all overworked, all assistant professors and at this point no one wants extra responsibility. Ken will work with them and the interim head Dr. Burnett to determine representation for these faculty members.

### **Service Unit Advisory Committees**

IT- did meet and sent their report to Ken. This committee and Director of IT, Fred Piazza is in sync on their duties and responsibilities. They are working on problems on the new CMS systems. The CMS system is still missing links or has broken links. If you have a problem, they are very responsive. If you want the content to be searchable, then the content needs to be posted directly on the webpage and not in an attached pdf document.

The new CMS system was promised to be simple and it is not. If you need training on the new CMS system, then you can use the out dated module training that is online. Some training is being done around the state. Also faculty can turn off your clutter folder within Microsoft Outlook by obtaining the instructions from IT.

International programs-has apparently not met.

Facilities Planning -has apparently not met.

Accounting- did meet and will be sending a report to Ken.

Human Resource Management- Ken did request a report from Kevin Brady. Faculty Council members were present at this meeting. The new Workday system is coming out on July 1<sup>st</sup>. They will have trainings since the launch of the new system will mean many changes. Some accounting procedures we do within the LSU AgCenter don't fit into the work day program. Some LSU Ag Center staff was trained this week. Everyone will have to work through this transition as best as possible with the new system. The system is not favorable to funds that extend beyond one calendar year. These include federal funds, Smith Lever funds, grants etc. Some units have revenue generating accounts that carry over and are questioning how these funds will carry over. Workday was created on a corporate model and so may not be customized to meet our needs. The current legacy computer system has been specifically programmed to meet our needs. The bidding process that resulted in the selection of Workday did not have faculty representation.

Ken will follow up with Ann on the Service Unit Advisory committees and ensure that all are meeting.

## **Discussion Items**

### **Council representation report – Adriana Drusini, Mandy Armentor**

Currently we have a split system with each campus department getting one representative, similar to states having a set number of Senators regardless of population or size. Off campus representatives are selected more like House of Representatives to represent a select population. We need to decide if we want to keep

the same structure or change the structure before our next election this fall. The majority of agriculture faculty is off campus in field. Currently our faculty is made up of about 53% extension, 35% on campus and 12% research. We have about 450 total agriculture faculty. We need to consider if we want to add members, do we have equal representation, and do we change voting process or change our structure totally. Some members feel we do not need to change our structure. A proposed new structure was suggested to be:

12 departments-1 member from each department for a total of 12

5 regional- 2 from each region- 1 associate and 1 full for a total of 10

Research Stations- 1 member to represent all the research stations

At large- 2 members

This would bring our council to a total membership of 25 members.

We will discuss this further at our next meetings and make a decision. If we need a new IT system for faculty council elections, then we need to make a decision soon on the new structure so an election system can be developed. It was generally decided that the Survey Monkey process used in 2015 worked pretty well, with about the same election response by faculty members as in previous years.

#### Ad-Hoc Orientation Committee

Kiki Fontenot (checklist template), Jeff Davis (previous presentation), Kurt Guidry (Ag Econ process), [Becky White] (ODE advisory committee information) - They will continue to work on this to have a process in place by the next orientation for new employees.

#### Unit Head Evaluation Committee

This committee will be convened to begin developing the series of evaluation questions for this. Ann has requested we wait till August to complete these evaluations due to the technology problems we are currently experiencing. The faculty may develop our own evaluation system for this.

#### P&T and PS-42 review

There seemed to be a lot of inconsistency in the review process this year. Ken will visit with Ann Coulon and Kevin Brady regarding the problems and inconsistency. The promotion and tenure meeting for the LSU AgCenter was held on May 9<sup>th</sup>. Individuals who could not attend the meeting have been discouraged from applying for promotion, but faculty who could not attend the meeting cannot be kept from applying. The cover page is due to HRM by June 13<sup>th</sup>. Packets are due to regional directors on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. Packets must go through unit review by September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Agents only received a month's notice as to the due date of packets. The June 23<sup>rd</sup> deadline falls in the middle of 4-H University which affects faculty both on and off campus who are applying for promotion. Agents should have been given more notice on the promotion packet deadline. At the May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, Ann Coulon stated that all letters had been sent out to faculty regarding promotion. These letters were sent via email and some faculty did not receive them till this week and some haven't received them yet. Dr. Richardson waited to send our official promotion notices until the jointly appointed individuals were notified by main campus. Faculty Council members feel a formal letter (not an email) should be sent to all faculty about the promotion for their records. Each faculty member whether their promotion is granted or not granted should receive a letter from the Vice President and Dean. Faculty Council also feels that each faculty member should receive a letter on an annual basis letting them know their appointment is being continued. We do not operate on a formal contract basis so faculty members need to receive notice that their appointments are being continued. We need consistency in the promotion process and agents need feedback in each step of the process. Ken will research why some faculty did not receive communication along the process and why some faculty have not received any notices as of yet.

#### Ag Center Awards Program

More organization and recognition is needed for this and we need to work on this as a faculty since we are the ones being recognized. A Faculty Council committee could conduct the program, if needed.

#### **Additional Items:**

Ag Center Budget and Master Plan

If the Ag Center doesn't get the budget support needed, something will be done regarding extension agents. We cannot go to a regional basis only and meet the needs of our clientele. We may have to consolidate some parish offices. The proposed plan is 1 agriculture agent and 1 4-H agent per parish. If a parish has 2 4-H agents, 100% local support is needed for the second agent. The master plan does indicate how nutrition agents or ANR agents will be supported. We have 239 agents currently, which are more than 128 (2 agents per parish). Faculty Council feels agents should be involved this decision making process.

#### Faculty 360

LSU Main Campus HRM has contracted with Digital Measures to develop a new reporting system called Faculty 360 to create a common academic online platform for the faculty evaluation and promotion and tenure process. The new system is the much the same as our current evaluation system in requiring much inputting of data. A concern is that you can't control how a report from the system will be generated. The data from previous years will have to be inputted manually and simply cannot be just transferred to the new system. The main campus solution to having the data inputted in to the new system is to hire a bank of students to input the data. Student workers require lots of supervision and so the current plan is to have them input the first year's data and see how well that goes. This system is not designed to input data and customize it. We have submitted our complaints regarding this system. No faculty members were involved in the bids or final decision to select the system. Faculty 360 is envisioned to be more programmable in generating reports. It is believed that Ag Center faculty will also be using the Faculty 360 system and Fred Piazza already knows there will be problems with reporting by extension personnel. Faculty will have to physically enter the date and cannot copy or paste into the system. At this point we do not know if data from Dynamics can be transferred into Faculty 360.

#### Program Leader for Nutrition

Our program leader for Nutrition was recognized as a new board member for the Greater Baton Rouge Area Board for Farmers Market. Public news recognition stated she was a Vice Chancellor for the Southern University AgCenter and did not mention her 60% LSU Ag Center administrative position. This recognition was also posted to our LSU AgCenter intranet with no mention of her serving as our Vice Chancellor. This public news recognition was a lost opportunity to promote both campuses and show our collaboration. Ken has visited with Dr. Richardson about this to express the Faculty Council displeasure about this.

#### Faculty positions

Ken also visited with Dr. Richardson about discrepancies in announcements, advertisements, and search committees for faculty positions. A new position for an in vitro digestion nutritionist was advertised as Assistant/Associate/Full Professor rank and buried in the announcement was that it will fill the endowed Gordon D. Cain Chair of Agriculture. For another position advertised for extension and applied research in seafood technology, the search committee members were selected to have bias toward internal candidates even though the internal candidates have doctoral degrees from LSU. Main campus has PS-36T that specifies that appointment will not ordinarily be offered to a person whose terminal degree is from LSU unless the department has an exceptional need for a candidate with the person's qualifications or unless the candidate is one of exceptional merit and has achieved an excellent record elsewhere since completing the terminal degree. In another situation, a non-tenure track faculty member is going through the promotion and tenure review process to be placed into a tenure-track faculty position without the position being advertised. In discussions, it was discovered that some units have followed this process, other units have just changed the position to make it tenure-track, and other units have followed the policies on hiring faculty members by going through the advertising, interviewing, and selection process even when an internal candidate was selected. Ken will visit with Dr. Richardson about these inconsistencies, which may violations of the Equal Opportunity laws.

**Adjournment:** The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ioan Negulescu and seconded by Adriana Drusini. The meeting was adjourned at 12:08 pm.