

LSU Agriculture Faculty Council Meeting Minutes

9:30 am, June 17, 2016

Room 212, Efferson Hall



Members in Attendance:

Naveen Adusumilli, Ed Bush, Margo Castro (proxy Kori Myers), Chris Clark, Cynthia Clifton, Adriana Drusini (proxy Kori Myers), Bruce Garner (via Acano), Andrew Granger (via Acano), Kenneth Guidry, Denise Holston-West, Joan King, Ken McMillin, Kori Myers, Ioan Negulescu, Carol Pinnell-Alison, Diane Sasser and Gary Stockton (via Acano).

Members not in Attendance: Mandy Armentor, Dorin Boldor, Joe Chang, Kiki Fontenot, Kurt Guidry and Chuck Monlezun.

Call to Order- The meeting was called to order by Chair Ken McMillin at 9:32 am.

Vice President and Dean's Report – Dr. William B. Richardson was unable to attend, but plans to attend our July Faculty Council Meeting.

Guests – Ms. Ann Coulon, Associate Vice Chancellor for administration

Budget:

Currently we are waiting for the legislative session to come to an end to know exactly how we will fair regarding the budget. The numbers are very confusing and it is looking better than it did at the start of the session. As of now, the reduction to the AgCenter for the 2016-2017 will be \$2.5 million. They are working to make \$4 million of one time money into permanent funding for the AgCenter. Unfilled vacancies were the only reason that we were able to close out this fiscal year. Our budget reduction of \$2.5 million can be reduced if they reduce the overall reduction to higher education. The situation is very frustrating for everyone, faculty on the campus and in the field by not knowing what is going on, but our administration does not want to send us false information that can change daily. It is a different story daily at the legislature. Hampton Grunewald continues to work tirelessly for us at the capital. The AgCenter administration will know more by next Thursday, June 23. The faculty expressed that more communication from administration to the faculty is needed. Mrs. Ann said a monthly newsletter will come out to help inform faculty. This newsletter was sent out last month in an email format from Dr. Richardson. The newsletter will provide program updates and be sent monthly or multiple times as month as needed. She said they will do a better job of informing the faculty.

Budgets updates change daily so nothing regarding the budget will be sent out until it's official from the legislature. The governor is supportive of the AgCenter; he did restore \$4 million to our budget which will help reduce the cut but at this time the AgCenter cut is still \$2.5 million. Each vacancy is being evaluated for necessity. The business plan done in 2010 has been very helpful to the AgCenter in deciding which vacancies are a priority to be filled at this point. At this stage, it is all about choices and our administration is doing their best to make the right choices. We must get past this legislative session to evaluate where we are and move forward. Our business plan does need to be updated. The budget since 2010 has been so erratic that it makes planning for the future almost impossible. Faculty Council expressed that we do not have faculty to teach critical courses and these courses are the life or death of some degree programs. We need to have some sort of plan to handle these critical needs. Faculty Council members asked if administration can spend the budget we are allotted wisely to help us move forward. Ann said that the retirement incentive saved \$2 million. Administration plans to pull groups of individuals together to help make recommendations as we move forward. Faculty council members feel the AgCenter needs to refocus because the way we do business has changed. Services need to be eliminated and we need to know what will happen in the next 5 years. If the AgCenter is solely focused on 4-H, then we need to know that. Ann said no definite decisions have been made as of now. Once we know the budget reduction then decision will made with a collaborative effort from the program leaders.

Structure:

Faculty Council expressed concern about the severe lack of structure in the AgCenter. We currently have a program structure, but agents in the field have no support. Agents have absorbed so many responsibilities that they do not know where to turn for advice or support. Ann stated that our current structure has positives and negatives. Faculty Council members pointed out the example that one field agent in 4-H has 5 bosses who are all not on the same page: a parish chair, a regional coordinator, a regional director, a department head and a program leader. Faculty council members have asked for an organization chart which clearly defines the chain of command for close to a year now and have never received it. Faculty members noted that we have lost 7 4-H agents and 3 professors who have resigned or submitted their resignation in the last two weeks. Half of these individuals noted a lack of support and structure as key factors in their decision to leave the AgCenter. People do not know where to go or who to contact if there is a problem because the chain of command is unclear. We need fewer administrators and more workers so that our leadership is used wisely.

Mentoring:

Faculty Council members expressed the need for more mentoring for 4-H Agents. These agents immediately begin all of the tasks in their jobs without clear expectations and mentoring. There is no consistency amongst 4-H agents because the expectations among the regions and state vary. Ann stated that we have a good mentoring system in place for 4-H. 4-H agents who serve as Faculty Council members and mentors disagreed. 4-H agents receive little to no mentoring from the state office or their regional coordinators or their assigned mentors who only meet with them no more frequently than quarterly. Faculty Council members described a new 4-H agent as an individual who is hired into a job with no guidance earning minimum wage for the hours they work and in less than 2 years they are gone because they feel they are not making an impact and have no leadership. A faculty member and parish chair stated that in the past, state 4-H staff would travel to parishes mentoring agents or the district agents would travel to provide mentoring, but neither of these happen today. The AgCenter is thinly staffed with insufficient people in place to do the jobs needed while losing people due to no mentoring or structure. Faculty Council suggested a complete reorganization of mentoring in the AgCenter and will make suggestions on how the AgCenter can move forward in this area.

Interim Department Heads:

We currently have 4 interim department heads. They are in Entomology, Experimental Statistics, Animal Sciences and Agriculture and Extension Education and Evaluation. They will be closing the search for the head of Entomology soon. The other unit head positions have not opened searches to date.

Medical Marijuana:

This question was asked of Ann: On 6/16/16 Dr. Richardson's comment at the St. Joseph Research Station about the plans to be recommended to the Board of Supervisors that the AgCenter would be the grower of record of medical marijuana. Ann stated that is a very complicated issue. As they move forward in the process, the legislature feels that the AgCenter and Southern University Agriculture Research and Extension Center are the agencies to handle this process. The complicated details are being worked out on this.

Service Advisory Meetings:

All groups have met. A master list of all committees will be assembled by Ken and sent to Ann.

Workday:

Workday is consuming Human Resources right now. This system is replacing every business system. This system was not designed for extension. Ann feels the AgCenter made the right decision in moving to this new system. We rent space on a system and do not have to maintain a system. We can no longer use a home grown system as we have in the past. They want to roll out the system as needed for faculty to use it. Faculty can access the system on their computer, tablet, phone etc. This is a very robust system. Leave, timesheets, travel, expenses, benefit changes, etc can all be done in this new system. The implementation is far too fast, but it was the best of the bad choices. They have been bringing in the regional office managers to train them so they can train their staff members. The human resources staff and finance staff are learning and redoing procedures so they can train

others. They can continue to do everything as under the previous system, but trying it in the new system. Regions are all going to handle the roll out of the system individually by region. The system has training videos available. Parish chairs will have to learn approvals, deductions, benefits etc. We will all have to learn how to submit leave approvals and change our benefits. Some faculty are excited while others are not. We will push for timesheets and leave to be done through workday for everyone. Some parameters must be sent by the unit heads. We can expect a slow roll out of the system. They have challenges with leave and time sheets, but are working through these. We have some farm staff that do not use computers. Administration will not want passwords shared with anyone. If you share your password, they can make decisions for you. If faculty has a credit union deduction, they will have to make changes. No faculty member has to make changes to their payroll direct deposits. An electronic feed is dumping our information into the new system. LSU is a tenant in the workday system that will go live on July 1. Ann thinks the new system will be good in the long run, but it will be a hard adjustment in the beginning. This system will be slower in some things and faster in others. The process will have to evolve. July leave will be posted in Workday. She encouraged us all to take it as it comes. Parish chairs will have to approve purchasing cards, too. She assured us all that everyone will get paid on time. Southern universities employees will do Workday to the extent that supervisory approvals will be needed. No definite answers at this time for Southern employees on other activities. Many people who don't have purchasing cards will be getting them. There will still be some issues with federal money and local money. The system does not handle that money easily right now. Accounting will have challenges. Each person will have one password for the system and shouldn't give it to anyone else to use. Leave requests will go electronically to our immediate supervisor. GeauxShop is going away as Workday will have ordering capacity. She suggested that we invite Jan Barnath to our July meeting to highlight the system. Faculty Council members expressed concern for the high turnover and how fast the system will handle these changes. A person is deleted from the system when she/he leaves so there should be fewer problems with the list of employees being accurate. Payroll training will be July 8th in Efferson 212 with office managers. In September, there will be AgCenter training in regarding benefits so people will be ready for open enrollment. Then in the summer, they will do one prior to hiring student workers. The budget part of the system is being built. The positive to this system is that they are coming to us to build the system to meet our needs. LSU is the first land grant to use the system for finances. Texas AM will follow us. Workday wants to market this program to higher education so they want to make us a system that meets our needs and is user friendly. In Workday, every employee will have to sign a monthly personnel activity report and go into the system and verify the account that pays the salary so employees must be trained and understand what is being certified. Faculty members stated that some people don't know their actual appointments. The new system will have our current appointments. The shifting of employees from federal to state dollars to balance the budgets will no longer be able to be done retroactively. Grants, cost sharing and local money will be very difficult in these aspects. Employees must still certify sick leave monthly and all employees must be up to date as retroactive changes will stop.

LSU 360:

The AgCenter is buying our own license from Digital Measures to configure the common academic online platform for the faculty evaluation and promotion and tenure process to AgCenter needs and to be able to connect to our systems. There will be a meeting with the vendor to do this in order to be more centralized. Faculty Council members questioned as to why faculty evaluations are not uniform among campuses. There will be some standardizing, but the A&M campus system is not going to accommodate agents. Main campus is concerned with meeting their campus needs and their system does not meet our field needs. There is little progress with this now since IT is busy with CMS and other AgCenter personnel are busy with Work day. In the next few weeks, they will begin work on this. Ann said the data integration will be an initial load into the system. They are watching to see how main campus handles the data inputting. Main campus has indicated that student workers will be hired to enter individual faculty data. Faculty Council expressed concerns over work needed by faculty for the initial data loading.

P & T:

The old system for P &T will be used this year.

Unit Head Evaluations:

The current system will be used. Ann provided two documents, the unit head evaluation form and the unit head evaluation questions, that will be completed by the unit heads. It is planned to have the unit heads complete the documents and submit to Human Resources by the beginning of August with the evaluation system opening mid to late August. The unit head evaluation committee has not met and there is no time for them to meet. Ann will send these documents to the unit head committee and ask for their input. Faculty and staff can complete the survey on their unit head. Unit head evaluations have not been conducted in 4 years. As in the past, any unit head can be evaluated by any faculty member. The evaluations are anonymous and the unit heads see the raw data. Faculty Council members asked when deans are evaluated. The provost evaluates the deans every two years on a rotation basis. Unit heads do read the evaluations and the comments in their evaluation. Regional directors should send their evaluations to their employees with dates for open and close. Parish chairs are not evaluated through this system. Faculty Council members asked that parish chairs be added to this system allowing for the people they supervise to evaluate them. Parish chairs are reappointed every 3 years and this system is the only way the people in their office can have input on the job they do as a parish chair. There is a disconnect in the parish offices because many faculty members do not feel comfortable talking to their parish chair. Faculty Council members feel this is the only formalized way to offer an evaluation on a parish chair and everyone deserves the opportunity to evaluate their parish chair. IT can make this work in the system. Forms will be sent to unit heads for completion. We must send any form changes we have to Ann by July 1st. Our next meeting is July 15th; forms will be ready by then to be inputted into the system. Secretaries need to be able to evaluate their parish chairs through this system.

Policy on minors and supervision of minors:

They are trying to develop an umbrella policy which is very difficult since so many activities in 4-H involve minors. The risk management committee will be reconvened for their input. LSU police will have input as well. This involves supervision of minors at events and activities through 4-H. The policies need to be foolproof with no room for error. Faculty council members asked for detailed policies, policies must meet our needs. 4-H agents on Faculty Council requested that our 4-H Program Leader, Mark Tassin, send all policies to 4-H Agents before the Faculty Council meeting in July.

Audit:

AgCenter is under a huge financial audit. The equipment inventory is a huge problem with many items not accounted for. Unit heads are being asked to delegate someone in the unit to do all of the inventory and not send the inventory lists to faculty members. The person who signs off on the inventory sheet is responsible for the inventory on that list and there needs to be accountability for everyone who has control of the equipment at any point in time. A policy and foolproof system for inventory is needed. The AgCenter is frustrated with the audit, but audits keep us accountable. The question was asked: How do we handle rotating agents with computers who are assigned to multiple offices? In these cases, to what inventory are those computers assigned? Individuals who borrow equipment and don't tell anyone are causing inventory problems. Transfer forms for inventory are not being done as needed. Ann said her long term goal for inventory is for all equipment to have a tag for electronic reading. Equipment is also not being surplus in a timely manner.

Job Descriptions:

It is time this year for all job descriptions to be updated. Everyone in the AgCenter will have updated job description. The AgCenter needs to a better job of communicating this decision within the chains of command and consistency among unit is needed. Faculty members do not know what is acceptable or not acceptable in their job assignments. Hopefully, updated job descriptions will help to remediate some communication problems.

Non Tenure to Tenure:

The only ways a faculty member can go from non-tenure position to tenure-track position is through the P and T evaluation process or for the position to be advertised and the search and hiring procedure to be completed.

Zero Tolerance:

Main campus has a zero tolerance policy on automatic drug testing when accidents occur. AgCenter is following the Office of Risk Management procedures. It's a state statute that mandates post-accident drug testing. If the

employee is under the influence for an accident, the state will not pay for injuries related to the accident. The AgCenter has to build a state wide network to drug test and have identified a state wide company to handle this drug testing for us. Each employee will know where to go for drug testing and emergency care.

Ann will be in attendance at our July 15th meeting to update us.

Business

The minutes from our May 20th, 2016 meeting minutes were approved by the council with minor spelling revisions. The motion for approval was made by Ioan Negulescu and seconded by Chris Clark. Kori Myers will email amended copy to Ken for his records.

Reports

Board of Supervisors next meeting June 24- Discussion items:

- A pay increase to the baseball coach to keep him from moving to Texas.
- No raises this year for anybody as dictated by the Office of Administration
- LSUA had requested a raise as did LSUE and the AgCenter was going to do the same but the governor will not allow any raises for classified or unclassified faculty for 2016-2017.
- We have had 1 raise in 10 years.
- Jay Dardenne, Commissioner of Administration, has the final say in any raises

Council of Faculty Advisors next meeting June 24

Diane will represent the Agriculture Faculty Council

Association of Louisiana Faculty Senates next meeting July 9

Jay Dardene will be in attendance. Discussion will focus on raises and why they cannot reward their employees. Ken will be attending. If we have items for discussion let Ken know. All faculty members are welcome to attend.

Louisiana Statewide Colleagues Collaborative Summit Meeting (Alexandria) next meeting July 9

Ken will be attending this meeting that is held in conjunction with the ALFS meeting.

Announcements

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

Ken has made connection with our designated candidate. Ken wants to meet with her before things are clarified. Mike Burnett is serving as interim head of this department.

Ag representative to the graduate council

Wes Harrison has resigned from the AgCenter. Dr. Burnett has contacted Ken and we must go back to the drawing board to see if Dr. Richardson and the Head of Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology can assign Clayton Hollier a minimal A&M appointment to meet the appointment requirement to serve as the Agriculture representative on the Graduate Council. Ken is awaiting an answer on this from Dr. Richardson. Faculty Council members agreed that Clayton will be a good representative for us on the Graduate Council. Administration does not want to overburden Joan King with this additional responsibility.

Loss of Faculty

Clayton represents a different sector of agriculture and if professors are continued to be lost in the areas of basic plant sciences, then those units will not be able to teach the basic courses to their students. Every department is down to a minimal core of faculty members to continue their programs. Some departments have suspended

admitting students into their PhD programs for this year due to lack of faculty. Jeff Gillespie is also retiring from LSU so Ag Economics is losing two professors in addition to the previous vacancies. Animal Sciences has no genetics faculty member. Faculty Council members feel that we should give recommendations on core positions which should be filled. This organization cannot function without faculty members in some of the vacant positions.

Moving the AgCenter forward

The faculty are not being told how the AgCenter is going to move forward. Decisions are made, but the people impacted by these decisions have no say or input. Administration is challenged with politics, but they do not understand how their decisions impact the faculty. A change is needed in the way things are done. A building of collaboration with administration in tune with the faculty is needed. What is the long term plan? Will they will move people with expertise where they are needed without giving the faculty member a choice or input in the decision? The lack of planning or lack of input is very evident. Administration is not sharing their long term plan with the faculty. People are being treated differently; there is comprehensiveness. What is our future and where are going? People are leaving because there is no announced plan and no guarantees on job duties or locations. A new strategic plan is needed so we can all share the same vision and know the direction for the AgCenter. Agents are leaving because they do not know if they will have jobs tomorrow or a month from now. There are no longer enough people working in the field to make an impact and the AgCenter can't serve the public as has been done in the past. Even though money has been requested to provide needed services, there are insufficient funds to serve our clientele. The same verbal message has been received for 8-10 years and now we are not doing a good job at anything. Faculty Council asked if having a 4-H agent in every parish is sustainable for the future.

Discussion Items

Council representation report – Adriana Drusini, Mandy Armentor

Adriana and Mandy were absent so there was no update on the status of their report. Suggestions for changes in the Council member selection process should be sent to Ken.

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

Council needs to focus on this because mentoring is important. There are so few staff in the parishes that orientation must change to meet the needs. In several states, 4-H is volunteer driven and not based on extension personnel based. Our state does not want to go to a volunteer based program. There is no desire to change our current system, but there is not enough staff to do the necessary activities so there is a conflict between these two.

Unit Head Evaluation Committee

We will be receiving information from Ann for input on the unit head evaluation documents.

P&T and PS-42 review

We will address this with Ann at our July meeting.

Ag Center Awards Program

We will discuss this at the July meeting and use technology to enhance this program.

Adjournment: The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ioan Negulescu and seconded by Chris Clark. The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 pm.