

**Faculty Senate Minutes
June 2009**

President Paul called the meeting to order at 3:38 p.m. in the Chancellor's Conference Room on Tuesday, June 9, 2009.

Those present included:

Allied Health – Kelly Alig, George Hebert, Scott Rubin, Jo Thompson;
Dentistry – Dennis Paul;
Graduate Studies – Andrew Catling;
Library – Hanna Kwasik;
Medicine – Gregory Bagby, Michael Levitzky, Erich Richter, Ann Tilton;
Nursing –Leanne Fowler, Marjorie Kraus, Cynthia Langford, Veronica Barcelona (proxy for Gwendolyn Stewart-Woods);
Public Health – Richard Scribner, Neal Simonsen (also proxy for Julia Volaufova);

Those absent included:

Allied Health – Erin Dugan
Dentistry – Marco Brindis, Diedra Foret, Catherine Badell (excused);
Graduate Studies – Angela Amedee;
Library –
Medicine – Sean Collins, Dan Kapusta, Tonya Jagneaux, Kevin Reed;
Nursing – Randy Rosamond, Gwendolyn Stewart-Woods (proxy);
Public Health – Chih-Yang Hu, Mary Lynne Thames (excused), Julia Volaufova (proxy).

The meeting proceeded according to the agenda with the exception that the President's report was moved to the end of the meeting..

Agenda item 1. The May meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Agenda item 2. President's report – moved to end of meeting; see summary near end of minutes.

Agenda Item 3. Old business:

- a) LSUHSC standing Web Advisory Committee – final set of nominees. The Chair of the Committee Coordinating Committee (CCC), Senator Rubin, related the nearly complete list of candidates for the HSC's new Web Advisory Committee, although representatives from the Dental and Nursing Schools were still being sought. Also, SGAs need to be contacted early Fall Semester to recommend student representatives. The completed list will be transmitted to Dr. Moerschbaecher and posted on the Senate website. Dr. Moerschbaecher will provide a list of any positions on LSUHSC standing committees that call for CCC input and/or nominations in the coming academic year, so the CCC can take appropriate action when the Senate reconvenes.

- b) Senate resolution: Single retirement plan switch. Senator Bagby lead discussion on an issue originally brought forth by Senator Collins, which is of potential importance to all faculty throughout the system. Currently new faculty and staff must make a one-time-only choice between the Teachers Retirement Plan and the Optional Retirement plan at time of hire. At issue is providing faculty a chance to change their choice of retirement plans subsequent to the initial enrollment phase. The period that newly hired faculty have for deciding which plan to opt into is brief and typically lacks in-depth discussion of the pros and cons of the available options amidst the other demands of getting settled into their jobs. Several faculty raised the desirability of providing better information during the selection process. Even with better initial information, however, the ability to switch plans once during a faculty member's employment if they eventually determine that their initial choice is not in their best interest remains a critical need. It was recognized that the mechanics of how such a switch would work need to be worked out, but there was agreement on the need to develop this option for faculty.

Given the relevance of this issue to all LSU System institutions, the Senate voted to submit a resolution to all LSU System Senates and the Association of Louisiana Faculty Senates. This requests that they propose to the Board of Supervisors and the Board of Regents the development and adoption of a process to allow a faculty member to make a single switch between retirement plans during the early years of their employment.

- c) Election – Senate officers. The Chair of the Constitution, Bylaws, Resolutions and Nominations Committee, Senator Simonsen, opened the voting process. Since the nomination process and subsequent withdrawals had left all positions uncontested, a ballot was dispensed with and the slate of nominees was adopted by acclamation. The electees were as follows. President-Elect: Senator Simonsen; Secretary: Senator Fowler; Faculty Senate Representative to the LSU System: Senator Paul.

There was no other old business.

Agenda item 4. New business

- a) Discussion about the Tucker Bill.
- i. Before beginning discussion of the Bill, Senator Rubin relayed key points of information arrived at with the Chancellor in regard to the proposed new medical center and arguments raised against it by opposition originating from Tulane and elsewhere. It was agreed to condense this information down and distribute it as a memo to the general faculty to raise awareness regarding these issues.
 - ii. Discussion of the Bill then ensued. This Bill basically aims to place control of the new medical center in the hands of an ostensibly “independent” board rather than having it run by LSUHSC and other institutions in partnership. The problem with such a structure is that LSU would not have the authority to direct the affairs of the hospital, despite the fact that LSUHSC assumes more responsibility in operating the center than other institutions. It was pointed out that Tulane had a conflict of interest in that they already have a hospital so that if the Board were to be unduly influenced by Tulane, the viability of the new teaching hospital could be compromised. It was recognized that the Bill might come to a vote before the

informational memo (see Item 5.a.i.) was finalized and distributed to the faculty, but it was felt that the memo would still be of value in better informing the faculty. Faculty were, however, reminded that if they wished to tender any letters to the editor or other types of composition advocating a particular position on the Bill or regarding the center, they should refrain from using LSUHSC email or letterhead to do so.

- iii. Production and distribution of the informational memo under preparation by Senator Rubin was unanimously endorsed by the Senate.

Agenda item 6. Reports.

Faculty Senate committees –

- i. Education, Services, and Patient Care – the lack of coordination between schedules for the various Schools comprising the LSUHSC was discussed. There is an official LSUHSC calendar that contains information about all Schools as well as all programs within those schools. Regardless, issues arise due to scheduling. Allied Health, for example, raised as a key issue the tightness of scheduling between Spring and Summer semesters. Rather than gaps of consistent lengths between semesters, some have very brief breaks between them, while others have relatively long ones. Further problems are posed by the use of different start and end dates for classes between different Schools, raising problems for classes that draw from multiple Schools. Also of concern was the lack of a formal Spring Break. It was decided that a subcommittee would itemize the key points discussed and invite Bryant Faust to address the Senate on these issues;
 - ii. Committee Coordinating Committee – report given previously under item 3. a.;
 - iii. Constitution, Bylaws, Resolutions, Nominations, and Elections – the committee will begin to consider how to formalize provisions for electronic voting on Senate matters;
 - iv. Electronic communications – no report;
 - v. Facilities, Safety, and Security – no report;
 - vi. Professional Rights, Responsibilities, and Faculty Welfare – no report;
 - vii. Research – no report.
- b) Assemblies:
- i. Allied Health – no report (although see related 5. a. i.)
 - ii. Dentistry – no report;
 - iii. Graduate Studies – no report;
 - iv. Library – the renovation in the library commons continues to creep closer to completion. Refurbishment of Alvarez frieze completed and looks great;
 - v. Medicine – Paula Gregory presented;
 - vi. Nursing – no report;
 - vii. Public Health – the idea of provisions for making mentors available at the LSUHSC level to assist where a suitable mentor is not available for faculty within their own School/Department/Program received some support when raised at the last Faculty Assembly meeting.

- c) Faculty Advisory Committee representatives – Senator Paul reported – LSU Chancellor’s attempt to carry out major realignment of programs on the university campuses with minimal consultation with faculty and the Board of Supervisors was blocked. The Chancellor was instructed to begin planning anew in full collaboration with the faculty and the Board. A 5% tuition increase was approved for next year and the Board is considering placing the option of an additional 5% increase each year in the hands of the LSU system campuses indefinitely. A \$1.5-1.9 million budget shortfall is now projected in 2012. \$0.5 million of this is due to the scheduled end of federal Medicaid matching funds after 2011. Tax revenues are estimated to be down by \$995 million per year due to tax cuts, and with higher education taking up 31% of the discretionary budget it remains a prime target for cuts. Sustained oil prices of \$220/barrel would be needed to make up the budget shortfall under the current tax system.
- d) President’s report and farewell – President Paul closed the meeting with remarks about his past year in office. He cited the progress that had been made in many areas, with a thanks to Senator Bagby for his guidance and work in helping the Executive and the Senate as a whole follow up on and in many cases complete important work that had been started under the previous Presidency, such as putting in place a mechanism through which the Senate works with the Chancellor in selecting members for LSUHSC-wide committees. Appreciation was also noted for the administration’s willingness to work with the Senate and receptivity to the Senate’s ideas. Further thanks went out to the Committees and their heads, who appeared more active than ever before in President Paul’s past experience, and to Secretary Volaufova for her work in composing agendas and minutes as well as on the Executive Committee. Finally, thanks were offered to the Senate as a whole for bringing forth the key issues to address and making the past year’s accomplishments possible. With that, President Paul noted that President-elect Rubin would take office as of July, and the President-Elect thanked him for his service over the past year.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00pm

Submitted by
Neal Simonsen
Acting for Faculty Senate Secretary Volaufova