

Minutes
Faculty Senate Meeting
University of Louisiana at Monroe
November 8, 2007

Members Present: Brett Bennett, Monica Bontty, Sally Davidson, Joseph Feldhaus, Stephen Fox, David Hare, Anna Hill*, Cecil Hutto, Megan Lowe, Lance Nickelson, Mona Oliver, Shirlee Owens, Linda Reid, Donna Rhorer, Jeff Rush, Pamela Saulsberry, Dorothy Schween, C. Turner Steckline, John Sutherlin, and Holly Wilson.

Members Excused: Megan Lowe, Kitty Kervin, Jeff Rush, and John Sutherlin.

I. President Steckline called the meeting to order at 12:30 P. M. Welcomed Jack Palmer from CEHS, Department of Psychology, as new Senator. Secretary Rhorer called the roll.

II. The minutes of October 18, 2007, were approved as amended. Senator Reid moved to accept the minutes. Senator Owens provided the second.

III.

A. Executive Board

Senator Steckline reported on the Executive Board's meeting on November 1, 2007, with President Cofer. Topics discussed included student advisement, Nash Plan, challenge of scheduling Math modules, gateway classes, summer reading program, crediting of graduation to original school of enrollment, essay part of LEAP test, WAC resurgence, CALL initiative, push for more online courses in Health Sciences, Career Services' move to Placement Center, creation of Office of Sponsored Grants and Research, possible formation of School of Online Learning, creation of Straight Talk with the President.

B. Academic Standards—no report.

C. Constitution and Bylaws—no report.

D. Faculty Welfare Committee

Senator Wilson reported that the committee will meet to review last spring's Faculty Senate Questionnaire to formulate additional action plans. Faculty Friends Program came out of the last survey.

E. Fiscal Affairs—no report.

F. Committee on Committees—no report.

G. SGA/STAP—no report.

H. Enrollment Management Council—no report.

I. Faculty Advisory Council—President Steckline reported that the body met in Baton Rouge on October 26, 2007. Topics of general interest included initiatives such as Go Grants, Nash, and cost saving moves.

The largest expenditures are utilities; in fact, 7 billion dollars go to pay for electricity and computers.

Other topics included identification of the progress each school makes toward recruitment and retention, selection of a University President for ULL in Lafayette, and workforce development tied to the universities. In the first FAC meeting this year, members discussed pay raises; in this meeting, they discussed the desire for uniformity of pay raises across colleges and wondered if that was even possible.

IV. New Business

A. Strategic Planning Committee

Vice-Provost Eric Pani came to the meeting to discuss and answer questions about the Strategic Planning Committee's work. He noted that the committee will establish an overarching goal, and 5 committees will work under that umbrella. He asked Senators who would like to serve on committees to volunteer.

Next, Senators inquired about such topics as student engagement, experiential learning, possible action plans which could come out of the committee, and alternative based delivery of modalities of learning. Dr. Pani noted that with the last plan objectives were not measurable; in this one, they should be. Senator Owens asked if there was any evidence that students will learn more from these changes. Senator Wilson noted that student centered means more than student engagement; student centered, she added, means that the instructor considers where the student is and brings the person up from there. Senator Schween added that this type of learning connotes a give and take between students and faculty members. Senator Oliver said that the old paradigm was faculty centered and the new is learner centered.

The discussion turned to the means for measuring outcomes. Senator Reid wanted to know how the exploration of truth and meaningful research fit into the plan. She added that she did not see anything addressing how we are "exploring truth through meaningful research" in our goals.

Dr. Pani added that he is the SACS liaison. He said that every college and each department has to look at SACS requirements and that all needs to be completed in the upcoming spring semester. The Strategic Planning Committee's report should be ready by early January. Senator Wilson asked to whom the mission statement spoke, and expressed concern that students might read it as an entitlement.

President Steckline will submit names of volunteers to Ken Clow soon. The subcommittees will meet during the first week in December.

B. Constitution and Bylaws Proposed Amendment

Senator Feldhaus noted that the committee has not met. Some discussion relative to the proposed amendment (to not allow non-tenured faculty members to serve in the Senate) followed. It was suggested that if we put a provision into the Bylaws which stated that there could be no roll call vote that this would eliminate the pressure these members sometimes feel; then, we could have non-tenured faculty members serve. Regarding officers, Senator Hill expressed the opinion that a non-tenured person could at least serve as secretary. Historically, some

non-tenured members have served as officers, but this can put them in a very difficult spot.

It was noted that the President speaks for the entire Senate and not for him or herself. Senator Walker suggested we table the motion. Senator Wilson asked members to reconsider, and she suggested putting the provision that there be no roll call votes into the bylaws. She moved to consider the option of no roll call votes as opposed to changing the constitution. Senator Hill provided the second. Senator Reid asked to bring the topic up later. Her suggestion passed, and the topic will be reconsidered at the November 29th meeting.

V. Informal Discussion

A. Dr. Ruth Smith is not available on November 15th to present the Reorganization Report. Senator Hill reported that President Cofer had noted in the Executive Board meeting on November 1st that the report was all in the past and that we had moved on from there. The body agreed that we should call Dr. Smith to present the report on November 19th.

B. Mid-term Grades

Several Senators noted that they and other faculty members had written mid-term grading dates into their syllabi based on the official calendar; then, they learned that the mid-term grading dates had been changed. Senator Rhorer reported that she had contacted Carolyn Joyce and been told that the University Calendar Committee met on August 16th and voted on the new dates. Senator Rhorer inquired why committee members had changed the calendar during University Week for the Fall Semester which was beginning the next Monday. She inquired as to why they were not working on a future calendar rather than one for the current semester immediately before it started.

Senator Schween noted that the dates set had been too early, and she suggested that we move the calendar back. Setting it too early penalizes students, she added. Others reported that reporting of mid-term grades is not required by the Board but came into existence with the Noel-Levitz Report. Senator Schween moved that we go to a two week period in which mid-term grades could be submitted instead of moving the date forward. Senator Hill moved that we refer the matter to the Academic Standards Committee. Seconded by Senator Holly Wilson. Senator Schween withdrew her motion, and the matter was referred to committee.

C. Faculty Activities Database

Members expressed their and their colleagues' dislike for this reporting apparatus. President Steckline noted that it was now considered a part of each faculty member's annual review. (She referred to an email from Dr. Pani.) Senator Reid wanted to know if all the deans had sent this message out to their faculty. Senator Nickelson added that participation should be mandatory for all or for none. Senator Bennett noted that we have submitted several serious concerns about it.

Last year, the Executive Board was invited to a presentation by Eric Pani and Provost Richters about how the FAD worked. In the Senate's called meeting earlier this semester, the deans said it did not work. Later College of Arts and Sciences was told that it worked well, and faculty members were instructed to use it. Senator Davidson noted that

it was good as it allowed her to quickly enter any new information into the system. Senator Bennett also expressed his approval of it, but he added the problem is how it will be used by the university. Steckline noted that it is resistant to duplication. Senator Wilson moved that the issue be sent to the Faculty Welfare Committee. Issue was referred to committee.

D. Smoke-free Campus

Senator Feldhaus introduced the motion to make ULM a smoke-free campus. Senator Hill moved to accept the motion; Senator Rhorer provided the second. Senator Hill says the policy sends a message, and perhaps there is room for a designated smoking area for those who smoke. Motion passed.

E. Athletics

Athletics asks for our support in the active review and development of academic guidelines. Topic referred to Academic Standards.

F. Trailer Courses

Questions arose as to how these operate. Issues referred to Academic Standards.

VI. Adjournment

Senator Bontty moved that we adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 P.M.

Next regularly scheduled meeting of the Faculty Welfare Committee will be at 12:30 in Stubbs 219 on November 15, 2008.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna A. Rhorer, Secretary
Faculty Senate

*Anna Hill's name was omitted from the members present for the last two meetings. She attended both meetings.