

Minutes of Faculty Senate (FS) Meeting
Thursday, November 19, 2009
Admin Rm 2-91, ULM Campus
12:30-2:10 p.m.

Senators Present: J. Anderson, M. Bontty, W. Campbell, Y. Dupre, J. Feldhaus, C. Grinnell, A. Hill, C. Hutto, M. Lowe, M. Matusiak, L. Nicholson, J. Pankey, L. Reid, D. Rhorer, C. Steckline, P. Sylvester, B. Walker. H. Wilson

Senators Absent: D. Chandler*, K. Kervin*, M. Parker, S. Owens, W. Brown (resigned)

Call to Order and Roll Call: President Walker called the meeting to order and Secretary Reid called the roll.

Approval of minutes: The minutes of the Oct 15, 2009 were reviewed and accepted with corrections (Steckline/Rhorer).

Committee Reports:

Executive Board: On November 12, 2009, the FS Executive Board met with Dr. Richters and the Deans to discuss ideas and interests related to faculty. President Walker indicated that the following major points were brought up during the meeting:

- 1) The Provost and Deans are against continuing the “plus-one” course load;
- 2) The Provost and Deans are aware that faculty are exhausted; and
- 3) Because of the situation that the University is in (e.g., the workings of the Tucker Commission, looming budget cuts, and faculty and staff shortages), ULM is having to operate in a tactical rather than a strategic mode. Dr. Richters indicated that this is a three year cyclical event and not the preferred mode of operation. With changes that likely will be imposed from the Board of Regents, the Board of Supervisors, and the Governor’s office, the University does not know how to address the possible impact on ULM. President Walker reported that Administration feels that after one more year of major budget cuts, we will be back in a strategic mode.

Senator Anderson posed a concern that ULM may have to re-develop its Strategic Plan. Senator Sylvester, who is a member of the Strategic Plan Committee, remarked that adjustments will have to be made. Senator Rhorer expressed concern that workload policies would be difficult to implement.

Faculty Welfare Committee: Senator Steckline reported that the Faculty Friends gatherings were held on Wednesday, October 28th from 2-4 pm and on Thursday, October 29th from 11-1 pm. Four of the 7 new faculty members were in attendance. Communication breakdowns leading up to the Faculty Friends gathering were discussed.

Faculty Handbook: Senator Reid reported that the Provost and Julia Barnhill are working on approving the changes made to the Faculty to tacoe

Ad Hoc Committees:

Faculty Productivity and Performance: Senator Nickelson stated that a meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 20, 2009 and that they plan to implement their proposed faculty workload policy initially as a pilot program.

University Planning Council: Senator Steckline reported that at the Ad Hoc Committees Quarterly Report meeting on November 3rd, President Cofer indicated he was considering opening the quarterly UPC meetings to more faculty and staff. All reports indicate the committees are active with the exception of Administration Productivity and Performance. The FS asked President Walker to look into this. Senator Wilson asked how the Administration functions are being evaluated in light of SACS requirements.

Unfinished Business:

ORP Resolution – President Walker presented a revised resolution addressing the ORP cuts in retirement benefits. A suggestion was to add content regarding the inequity of benefits for disability coverage. Senator Hill pointed out that faculty members who have TRSL have additional disability coverage not available to those with ORP. This is referred to as TRSL Part A “disability retirement”. In TRSL faculty can purchase disability insurance as a supplement to that benefit. ORP participants can only purchase disability insurance. The link to the TRSL disability benefits page is <http://trsl.org/active/index.php?page=Disability>. Senator Steckline suggested the ORP resolution be reworded and approved via email vote (to be conducted by President Walker) and to acknowledge LSU for their work.

New Business:

Social Networking Page – Senator Anderson reported that ULM faculty and staff need a means for group discussion and comments and that Facebook or a similar type of social operating system might provide that avenue. The discussion indicated that while this could be positive, there may be too many aspects that are non-secure. Senator Grinnell suggested that a blog area may be more controlled. This topic was tabled to be discussed at the January meeting.

Straw poll on Plus One program – President Walker reminded the FS that a provision of the 2008-2009 resolution regarding teaching one extra course per year (known as the Plus One program) was that the Senate would consider the wishes of the faculty to determine whether or not the program should be voluntarily continued for the 2010-2011 academic year. He stressed that a vote to continue would not mean that the Faculty Senate would recommend a continuation of the program since this strictly would be a straw poll.

Between the end of October and mid-November, 2009, individual Faculty Senators conducted a straw poll of their constituents regarding the Plus One program. The following results were obtained from the 193 respondents:

84 For Continuing

104 Against

5 Neutral

Other: Senator Steckline inquired about campus issues relating to energy conservation and safety. Specific issues noted: it appears the football stadium lights have been left on all the time, that the policy for designated smoking areas has not been implemented, and that littering around campus is a problem. Senator Steckline also asked what recycling efforts were currently in place on campus. Senator Lowe reported that one recycling endeavor was for the recycling of the Hawkeye and old newspapers. In response to the comment that recycling costs money, she responded that ULM had received some money for the newspapers. Senator Grinnell reported that a company in Monroe will pick up recycled goods. President Walker will inquire about this with the Administration.

The next meeting will be January 21, 2010 with President-Elect Anna Hill convening in the absence of President Walker who will be abroad teaching in Hong Kong.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Reid
Faculty Senate Secretary

* indicates excused absence;
Name/Name indicates Moved/Seconded