Southeastern Louisiana University  
FACULTY SENATE  
Meeting Minutes  
2007 November 28 (for December)  
[Approved by the Faculty Senate on 2008 January 23]

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Senate President White called the meeting to order at 3:04 PM. Membership Secretary Ply called the roll. Senators absent were Campbell, Davis, Echols, Hines, Holt-Ochsner, Kerber, McCalman, Mitchell, Nero, Schulte, R. Traylor.

II. Approval of the Minutes of November 7

The minutes of the November 7 meeting received approval after a technical correction. The approved November 7 minutes appear at http://www2.selu.edu/Academics/Depts/FacSen/110707minutes.pdf.

III. Invited Guest—Dean Stephen Soutullo

President White sought and received unanimous consent to alter the agenda so that Dean of Enrollment Management Stephen Soutullo (who had yet to arrive at the meeting) would be called on to speak during consideration of the issue Progression Scholarships in Old Business (Section IV Subsection D infra).

IV. Old Business

Items A through D (infra this section) constituted Old Business on the agenda.

A. Minute-Taking at Executive Council Meetings

President White recognized Senator Lewallen, Chair of the Constitution & Bylaws (C&B) Committee, concerning the issue Minute-Taking at Executive Council Meetings. Senator Lewallen (seconded by Senator Neuerburg) moved Resolution 07-08-05, which appears at http://www2.selu.edu/Academics/Depts/FacSen/resolution070805.doc. After brief discussion by Senators Llopis, Ply, and Yeargain, the resolution was approved unanimously.

B. Electors for Tenure and Promotion Review Committee

President White recognized Senator Lewallen, Chair of the C&B Committee, concerning the issue of Electors for Tenure and Promotion Review Committee. Senator Lewallen moved Resolution 07-08-06, which (seconded by Senator Yeargain) appears at http://www2.selu.edu/Academics/Depts/FacSen/resolution070806.doc. There being no discussion, the resolution passed on voice vote.

D. Progression Scholarships

[Dean Soutullo having arrived in the chamber, the issue Progression Scholarships (Agenda Item IV.D.) was in actuality placed on the floor before the issue Faculty Safety (Agenda Item IV.C.); refer to the paragraph under Agenda Item IV.C. infra.]

President White recognized Senator Nelson, Chair of the Academic Committee. Senator Nelson yielded to Senator Neuerburg, who (seconded by Senator Bancroft) moved to place the Faculty Senate into a Committee of the Whole, which motion passed.
1. In the Committee of the Whole, Senator Nelson reported that the Academic Committee continues to research the issue of Progression Scholarships and requests input from the assembled senators. Observing the arrival of Dean Soutullo in the house, Senator Nelson and President White, with the consent of the house, recognized Dean Soutullo to speak on the issue Progression Scholarships (PS).

2. Dean Soutullo described the PS concept as set forth in http://www.selu.edu/admin/fin_aid/info/scholarships/ (in the section titled “Southeastern Progression Scholarship”; see also http://www.selu.edu/admin/fin_aid/info/scholarships/index.html#progression and http://www.selu.edu/news_media/news_releases/2007/nov/transfer.html). Dean Soutullo indicated that the goal of the PS program is to offer the scholarships to 40 percent of Fall 2007 first-year students on their becoming sophomores. Funding during Fall 2008 will entail $280 thousand, and the PS program will ultimately climb to funding of $1.6 million per annum.

3. Senators raised a number of inquiries, which may be analyzed into the five groups (a. through e. infra).

a. Monetary/funding inquiries

(1) Senator Muller inquired as to whether a student can obtain a PS beyond the Louisiana TOPS (Tuition Opportunity Program for Students) and other scholarships. Yes, responded Dean Soutullo, subject to a student maximum of $13 thousand p.a. He added that his office desires to reduce graduates’ loan debt.

(2) Senator Muller wanted to know whether the ultimate $1.6 million (mentioned in IV.D.2 supra) will be offset by formula-based funding. Provost Crain and Dean Soutullo: Yes. Provost Crain predicted that a new formula for institutions’ funding will include performance involving graduation rates.

b. Context outside Southeastern

(1) Senators Jeansonne and Ply: What happens in case of withdrawals? Provost Crain offered a response that the concern of course withdrawals is now at the System level and that the Board is devising a System-wide policy on withdrawals, along with a related cluster of desirable outcomes regarding retention/graduation rates. Dean Soutullo said that lots of calls to him from other institutions in the System have concerned that cluster of desirable outcomes.

(2) Senator Shwalb: “Do precedents for the scholarships exist at other universities?” Provost Crain: Not in Louisiana, but around the country Yes. The Provost briefly described scales, in other states, for tuition charges tied to progression toward graduation.

(3) Senator Ply: So undecided students need “to get themselves decided”? Provost Crain: Yes. Dean Soutullo indicated that careful record-keeping in his office indicates that Southeastern’s student retention is now above 30 percent overall and that, more meaningfully for the future, 40 percent of last year’s beginning students returned. Provost Crain: The SREB (Southern Regional Education Board) peer group has a graduation rate just above 40 percent; so that is currently Southeastern’s graduation-rate objective.
c. Grades

(1) Senator Ply: “What happens if students have a bad semester?” Dean Soutullo cited the description which appears at http://www.selu.edu/admin/fin_aid/info/scholarships/ (in the section titled “Southeastern Progression Scholarship”) to the effect that the student must maintain a 2.0 cumulative grade-point average (GPA) on Southeastern’s 4.0 basis.

(2) Senators Jeansonne, Ply, and G. Traylor questioned the role of the PS 2.0 GPA requirement in curricula where students must have higher than 2.0 to be in the curriculum, thus the anomaly that students can receive scholarships while not being eligible for their desired majors. Dean Soutullo responded that that’s the way it is, and that inevitably students will possibly switch majors to retain the PS.

(3) Senator Ply sought assurance that the GPA concerned is the “cumulative” one. Dean Soutullo responded Yes.

(4) Senator Llopis: Can students repeat courses to get a higher grade and keep the PS, but in the meantime the student is no closer to graduation? Soutullo: Center for Student Excellence personnel will explain the needs to the students. Also, students can go in and out of the scholarship; so motivation is on advancing in their curriculum because of the 4-year limit.

d. Transfers, and switchings of majors

(1) Senator Ply inquired about transfer students. Dean Soutullo said that their situations will be worked out with junior colleges and articulation agreements and Louisiana scholarship matrices (see, e.g., http://appl008.lsu.edu/bor/articulation.nsf/HomePage?OpenPage); the student must have a 3.0 GPA, and the range of the award amounts is from $500 to $1500.

(2) Senator Trowbridge inquired about students in curricula with higher numbers of hours than the 120-semester-hour benchmark. Dean Soutullo responded that the PS award is for 4 years’ maximum, that all undergraduate programs in the General Catalogue are listed as 4 years, and that the PS 4-year limit may later be revisited if a 5-year undergraduate curriculum enters the General Catalogue. He also speculated on whether students can switch programs and indicated that they can, but that administrators of the PS program will learn from experience. If PS students switch curricula, there is a what-if query in the degree-audit system to count and accommodate only applicable courses in the target curriculum.

e. Advising and registration

(1) Senator Ply: Can students who are about to graduate get priority in registration? Dean Soutullo: Do they? No. Can they? Yes. Dean Soutullo said that his office is working with the PeopleSoft program to try to advance students’ registration appointments in cases where the student is not to be graduated in the registered-for semester but in the semester after that.
(2) Senator Ply: What if a student needs just 3 semester hours (e.g., to complete degree requirements)? Dean Soutullo: The University will “communicate” all needs to the student so that the student can plan, such as to go to summer school, and thus maximize the benefit of the PS.


4. Dean Soutullo concluded his comments on the PS issue by conveying that initially parents and potential students are “thrilled” by the PS opportunity.

5. Senator Nelson moved (seconded by Senator Bancroft) to eliminate the PS issue from the table. Parliamentarian Yeargain ruled that this type of motion is not subject to discussion. The motion passed. The issue Progression Scholarships is discharged sine die from the business of the Faculty Senate.

C. Faculty Safety

[The issue Faculty Safety (Agenda Item IV.C.) was in actuality placed on the floor after the issue Progression Scholarships (Agenda Item IV.C.); refer to the paragraph under Agenda Item IV.D. supra.]

1. On the issue Faculty Safety, President White recognized Senator Bancroft, Chair of the Facilities, Safety, and Security Committee (FSS) to speak on the issue Faculty Safety.

2. Senator Bancroft, the Committee of the Whole Continuing, announced the desire of the FSS Committee to gather information relative to the issue Faculty Safety. Senator Bancroft requested and gathered Faculty Senate input in three arenas (a. through c. infra).

a. Protection

Senator Bancroft emphasized that protection of faculty and property is the main concern.

(1) Senators Ply and Genre mentioned an incident of which they are aware, the specifics being confidential.

(2) Senator Naquin—expressing an apprehension that a potentially violent individual can still be around while the threatened faculty member remains vulnerable in the classroom—observed that students as well as the faculty member need protection.

b. Restraining order

Senator Bancroft requested information on the faculty’s latitude to effect a “restraining order” in any case of violence or threatened violence from a student.

(1) Senator Ply observed that such information is important.

(2) Senator Yeargain interjected a jocular comment that individuals could be relieved of rights and recourse by a declaration that they are “terrorists.”
c. Response when student “crosses the civility line”

Senator Bancroft said that the first reaction is to call the University police.

(1) Senator Ply: “Once a faculty member raises a harassment charge, the offending student should be barred from being around.”

(2) Provost Crain requested and received permission to join the discussion and indicated three concerns { (a) through (c) infra }:

(a) A threatened faculty member has the prerogative to demand a student’s leaving and to call the police but cannot keep the student out permanently.

(b) The resulting procedure is not necessarily part of the University’s student Judicial Process but does involve the need for certain individuals to be notified of the threatening incident.

(c) The administration desires to bring the formal (official) communication channel and informal communication (rumor mill, grapevine) communication channels together to bolster understanding, trust of authorities, and due process.

3. Senator Bancroft thanked the Faculty Senate for the input on the Faculty Safety issue and stated the FSS Committee’s desire that the issue Faculty Safety continue in Old Business for the 2008 January meeting. (See also Section V Subsection A *infra*.)

President White dissolved the Committee of the Whole into the regular meeting of the Faculty Senate.

V. Announcements

There being no New Business on the agenda, President White proceeded to Announcements. Announcements A through D *infra* were on the agenda. Announcement E *infra* was, without objection, accommodated on the agenda by President White.

A. Parking Issues

President White announced that Dr Marvin L. Yates, Vice President for Student Affairs, has accepted an invitation from the Faculty Senate. Dr Yates’ visit will occur during the 2008 Spring semester, to encompass a more-meaningful extent of experience with shuttle buses, the parking garage, and expectations about the sustained effect of those campus additions. President White also conveyed to the Faculty Senate, especially Senator Bancroft as Chair of the FSS Committee, that Dr Yates has ideas on the issue Faculty Safety (see Section IV Subsection C *supra*).

B. Recycling

President White announced that the University has posted a job notice for a “Coordinator of Recycling” to be employed in Physical Plant Services. Senator Naquin, Associate Professor of Health Studies and B.C. Purcell Research Fellow, conveyed that faculty members in the Department of Kinesiology and Health Studies requested recycling bins in the Department’s facilities but have yet to see them. Provost Crain said that various difficulties, including procurement issues and independent and redundant efforts in the
past, created the need for the advertised position of Coordinator of Recycling. President White urged that University recycling could be improved by heightened emphasis on recycling in the City of Hammond. Senator Beauvais pointed out that the Hammond City Maintenance Department does provide for a recycling facility on Saturday mornings at the Hammond Northshore Regional Airport. President White referred to a recycling-support letter from Baton Rouge Mayor Honorable "Kip" Holden which appeared in the Advocate on November 17 (http://www.2theadvocate.com/opinion/11512306.html retrieved 2007 November 28).

C. Institutional Effectiveness

President White announced that plans for a student exit-exam may be of interest to the Faculty Senate. She recognized Provost Crain to speak more specifically about the status of the exit-exam concept. Provost Crain expressed that accountability in higher education is a growing topic in national discussions on outcomes related to accreditation, funding, institutional missions, etc. He joked that participation in this trend is called “voluntary” although, contextually, “voluntary” becomes a euphemism for mandatory. President White added that historically a problem with the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) is that students do not perceive it seriously. Provost Crain: The current plan is that a scientifically selected cohort of 100 students will take an examination on entrance (pretest) and later on graduation (posttest), with the difference between the two administrations of the examination to be considered “value added” during the university experience ([posttest ÷ pretest] – 1.00 = rate of improvement). Senator Clifton raised an inquiry (which was evidently prevalent in the Faculty Senate): How to motivate students to do their best? Senator Nelson averred that, on a pilot experiment at Harvard, scores actually declined! Senator Kirylo wanted to know the percentage weight which, on the basis of other institutions’ involvement, would be attributed to an entrance-exit exam in the funding decisions, curricular decisions, and other decisions, particularly at Southeastern. Provost Crain responded that experience with such examinations has yet to grow to the point where such a determination can be made and that he consequently has not seen a lot of emphasis thus far, but that Southeastern needs to anticipate that the role of such an examination is coming. The emphasis, Provost Crain said, is more on the need to make progress toward implementing and ultimately using such examination data.

D. SGA Report

Senators Marshall and G. Traylor, who represent the Faculty Senate to the Student Government Association (SGA), reported that SGA takes rightful pride in the initial efficiency and effectiveness of the shuttle-bus system.

[E. University Calendar

President White recognized Senator Yeargain, who announced that a 2-year University calendar is on the way. Senator Yeargain had a couple of observations related to the forthcoming 2-year calendar (1. and 2. infra).

1. Faculty members, administrators, and students will no longer be in a quandary about summer school dates.

2. A feeling has arisen that perhaps the University should insert a fall break just as there already is a spring break (Easter vacation). Senator Yeargain called for an unofficial show of hands on the question of whether senators would like to insert a vacation into their Octobers. Senator Yeargain assessed that senators opposing an October vacation were in the majority. A variety of observations broke out concerning academic calendars at other universities with which senators have experience. Senator Muller claimed that the schedule at Louisiana State University and
Agricultural & Mechanical College (LSU) now contains a fall vacation. Senator Muller also expressed a desire to see half-holiday/class days made wholly holidays or wholly class days (the half-day phenomenon has occurred on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and the Wednesday after Mardi Gras). Senator Muller observed that Ash Wednesday is currently a full class-day at LSU whereas Southeastern restarts classes at noon on that day. Senator Jeansonne pointed out that it formerly was vice versa (Southeastern full, LSU half). Senator Naquin recommended consideration of the calendar in use at Nicholls State University. Senator Marshall requested that the unofficial show of hands be conducted again, and Senator Yeargain obliged, the result being a 21-21 tie. Senator Jones asked Senator Yeargain whether some senator could be appointed to look at other university systems and report back to the Faculty Senate. Senator Yeargain responded that, because of deadlines, such information is possibly mooted for the 2-year academic calendar currently in process for approval. Senator Yeargain ended with an observation, confirmed by Provost Crain, that the University must reasonably adhere to the SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) guideline of 750 total contact minutes for 1 credit hour.

VI. Adjournment

At 4:26 PM President White declared the meeting adjourned, the next regular meeting being scheduled for 2008 January 23.

Respectfully submitted by

David Ramsey
David Ramsey
Recording Secretary