

NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY

Faculty Senate Meeting September 16, 2010

MINUTES

1. Roll Call:

Present: Jim Baker, Carol Britt, Simone Camel, John Doucet, Amanda Eymard, Melissa Goldsmith, Brian Heck, Rodney Hodges, Todd Keller, John Kozar, John Lajaunie, Lisa Lauer, Richard Mathis, Stephen Michot, Lois Nelson, Dale Norris, Gaither Pope, Randy Ryker, Anke Tonn, Keri Turner.

Absent: Wendy Adams, Luke Cashen, Shari Lawrence, Becky LeBlanc, Balaji Ramachandran, Gary Rosenthal.

2. Approval of the Minutes: July 29, 2010 minutes approval postponed until October meeting.

3. Administration Remarks:

Dr. Stephen Hulbert – discussed planning in place for possible 35% budget cut that would include program and staff reductions. He stated that Nicholls’s survival and higher education in general are at risk, and that it is time to become more aggressive. He is starting to see more legislative support on this critical issue.

Dr. Laynie Barilleaux – Reiterated that the Senate needs to approve the University Calendar, and that the Distance Learning Committee is requesting to become a “standing” committee.

Mr. Larry Howell – presented a PowerPoint presentation on the impact of the proposed budget on Nicholls State and the region that was shown to regional legislators on September 7, 2010. Factoring in reductions to date and unfunded mandates, minus revenue from the GRAD Act’s tuition increase, the total budget reduction amounts to \$5.9 million. Previously affected were 117 positions, including 47 faculty; 8 academic degree programs; 4 concentrations and associate degree programs not directly connected to the B.A. degree. There would also be reductions in Student Services, Research Support, Technical Support, and Athletics. Mr. Howell reported on Nicholls’s record of success in retention, graduation rates, number of graduates, average ACT scores (22.1), and accreditation despite ranking 3rd lowest among 14 institutions in salary and 2nd to last in state funding per FTE, while having the highest FTE instructor-to-student ratio (27.1 students) in state and 2nd to highest undergraduate class size at 25.3 students. The proposed solution would be to generate revenue through the elimination of the tuition cap, differential tuition based on the cost of the program, and an equal cut in all state institutions.

4. Senate Officer Reports:

Faculty Advisory Committee to the Board of Supervisors – Dr. Michot reported that the committee expressed its concern over the wording of the proposed Board changes to Policy & Procedure. The Board of Supervisors postponed any decisions at the August meeting, and was open to proposals from the Faculty Advisory Committee. The committee discussed furloughs as a proposal for saving tenure. FAC is slated to meet next on September 23, 2010 in Baton Rouge.

5. Committee Reports:

Faculty Welfare – is reviewing the Grievance Policy particularly with regard to conflict resolution. It was mentioned that the State Attorney has issues with adding an additional layer to the resolution process.

6. Old Business:

a. Proposed Academic Calendar 2010 – 2011.

Motion to Accept: John Doucet; Second: Rodney Hodges; Discussion: None

In-favor: 19; Against: 0; Abstained: 1

b. Proposed Reorganization: Todd Keller asked Senators to meet with their respective units and obtain feedback. All suggestions would be considered and discussed prior to presenting one united Senate proposal to the President.

7. New Business:

a. 10-Hour Office Requirement for online courses. It was stated that online faculty already hold regular office hours, but in addition make themselves available online practically 24/7 due to the nature of these courses.

b. Distance Learning Committee is requesting to become a permanent “standing” committee. It was not a part of Academic Affairs because of the unique technical criteria.

c. Homecoming Week – participation and advertisement were encouraged.

8. Other Business:

Dr. Michot presented two suggestions forwarded from the faculty: 1) that office hours be reduced proportionately for faculty teaching additional courses; and 2) that administrators teach a free course to help divert the financial crisis, as required of the Arts & Science faculty.

9. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn: Rodney; Second: Kozar.