

NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY

Faculty Senate Meeting 20 April 2011

MINUTES

1. Roll Call:

Present: Wendy Adams, Jim Baker, Luke Cashen, Melissa Goldsmith, Brian Heck, Rodney Hodges, Todd Keller, John Lajaunie, Lisa Lauer, Becky LeBlanc, Richard Mathis, Stephen Michot, Lois Nelson, Gaither Pope, Gary Rosenthal, Randy Ryker, Keri Turner.

Absent: Simone Camel, John Doucet, Amanda Eymard, John Kozar, Shari Lawrence, Dale Norris, Balaji Ramachandran, Anke Tonn,

2. Approval of the Minutes: Minute drafts for the October and March meetings were submitted to Dr. Todd Keller.

3. Administration Remarks:

Dr. Allayne Barrilleaux:

- New Parking lot dedication
- Consideration for early tenure may be considered at the time of hiring; however, consideration for early promotion is in-house and determined by peers. Dr. Barrilleaux asked the Senate to examine the diverse criteria used in different academic units and address the need for one university standard.
- Moodle implementation is fast approaching. Training is already being made available. Faculty will be required to convert from Blackboard to Moodle by Spring 2012.
- When advising, faculty are encouraged to submit substitutions immediately following the advising session rather than wait a number of semesters or until the student is ready to graduate in order to avoid confusion and he said/she said.
- Any question regarding the Library Director Search may be addressed to Dr. Steve Welsh who is heading the search committee.

Mr. Larry Howell:

- He has been receiving questions about faculty summer pay. A computation sheet has been sent to all deans.
- Minimum # of students required for a course to make by 10 May are: 20 for Undergraduate; 15 for Upper Level; 10 for Graduate.
- Faculty get paid 7.4% of 9-month contract per 3 hour load.
- Dr. Michot inquired whether summer pay could be calculated based on a faculty member's total student enrollment in all of his/her courses rather than on a course by course basis to take in consideration an over-enrollment in one class to compensate for an under-enrollment in another. Mr. Howell stated that it would have to be an extreme case.

4. Senate Officer Reports:

- Faculty Advisory Committee to the Board of Supervisors (FAC): Dr. Michot reported that the next FAC meeting is Friday, 29 April 2011.
- Dr. Barrilleaux added that all items on the agenda to the Board were approved at committee but still awaits full board approval.
- Dr. Lajaunie mentioned that under the proposed Governor's Budget, the state contribution versus revenue from tuition/fees is decreasing. The threshold level which allows for program elimination is becoming an actuality and the Board needs to revisit this issue.
- Mr. Howell confirmed a 60% Tuition/Fee – 40% State Fixed Contribution ratio. There will be no decrease in revenue for Nicholls State in the budget; there is a 4% operational fee increase which will lead to a corresponding 4% increase in tuition. Nicholls will be able to fund mandates.

5. Committee Reports:

- Dr. Lois Nelson reported that Senate Committee nominations are on-going.
- Faculty Welfare: Dr. David Schultz reported that the Compensation Committee lacks a Chair; thus the issue of reevaluation of the merit procedure cannot be addressed until a Chair is chosen.

6. Old Business:

- Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy: Dr. Keller advised the Senate to review the new policy and prepare for a vote at the next meeting.
- GEAC's list of approved Humanities Courses was presented. Dr. Keller clarified that although GEAC reports through the Senate, the Senate does not approve their actions. Dr. Keller's research found that Speech is considered Humanities at other universities. Dr. Michot pointed out that Music and Arts are being considered both Fine Arts and Humanities while other universities distinguish between the two. Dr. Michot also made note of GOVT 355, a Social Science, was listed as a Humanities.

7. New Business:

- University, Academic, and Faculty Senate Committee Elections: Dr. Keller noted that voting should be secret when ballots are made available. The swearing in of new Senators would take place at the next meeting.
- Faculty Senate Executive Committee Elections: Dr. Keller announced that he would not seek a re-election as Faculty Senate President. He thanked everyone and expressed his enjoyment at having been able to serve the Senate in that capacity. Qualifications for Senate President requires minimum 1 year service on the Senate within the last 10 years. Senators seeking to become an officer may self-nominate or be nominated at the May meeting after the swearing in of new Senators.

8. Other Business:

- ORP (Optional Retirement Plan) – currently the contribution is marginally up 5.9%; the rest is going to fund traditional state retirement. This is a gross inequity in the retirement system.
- Dr. Lajaunie asked what is the composition of the search committee for the VPAA. It has not been disclosed and it is his understanding that the committee lacks representation from all of the academic units, and lacks adequate full professor representation despite the fact that this concerns the chief academic position on campus.
- Mr. Howell had a discussion with the Commissioner of Higher Education who mentioned that with regard to the budget situation that Nicholls did it right by cutting programs early and building a partnership with Fletcher Community College. The Commissioner has not seen this level of achievement from the other institutions.

9. Adjournment:

Dr. Heck – 1st

Dr. LeBlanc – 2nd