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Faculty Senate Newsletter, September 2011

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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LSU FACULTY SENATE

Monthly Newsletter

September 30, 2011



President's Message

It would be fair enough to borrow from Shakespeare and proclaim the long budget crisis, which bodes to run from 2008 until 2013, as the fully nuclear winter of our discontent. Alas for the spirits of sorrow, the perpetual summer of our tropical state leaves us without adequate imagery to describe the gloom that pervades a campus that has been daunted by the people's penury and demoralized by unaccountable private critics of exposed public servants. As Shakespeare well understood when he analyzed King Richard III, the deformity of the world eventually deforms even the strongest soul. Several of these "welcome" columns having been dedicated to the

shortcomings of the administration; this column will make some suggestions about ways that faculty may avoid deformation by the slings and arrows of a university too poor to support an archery program.

Faculty members should think twice before grafting themselves onto the organizational structures that repress them. They might begin by asking for whom they work: for their departments, for their colleges, for their universities, for the people, for the spirit of investigation, or for something else? Over large periods of time large numbers of faculty members tend to identify with their home "units" even when given a chance to break out of those pens. All too many committee meetings start out with comprehensive goals but conclude with ruffled feelings about departmental prerogatives. Similarly, faculty members need to break the institutional habit of leading by following: of asking for a model of innovation rather than creating a new plan that others might imitate. If there were ever to be a forbidden speech list at a university, it should include phrases such as "I like that idea, but before we move ahead I'd like to see what Ouachita Baptist University is doing." Third, faculty could be more imaginative in seeking leaders. Rather than devising overblown boilerplate descriptions of administrators like those in prominent professional journals, they should critique the prejudices that animate and mislead those involved in the search process (for example, asking whether the old ladder system, in which professors became chair and then climbed to deanships or higher offices, might lead to exactly the wrong sort of localized vision). Many other illusions need debunking, whether the notion that small class size is always good, the feel-good theory that all colleagues enjoy equal standing (a false promise that leads instructors to neglect their options for negotiating fair contracts), or the hopeful notion that retaining faculty members at great expense will lead to trickle-down benefits for the rank-and-file.

The administration is not the only perpetrator of bad deeds. It often only reflects the unexamined expectations of its constituents. Wouldn't it be nice simply to say, "no, I'm not excited about this or that initiative; no, I don't see evidence that the LSU South Campus is leading us into the future; and, yes, I think that I can do something original rather than importing a model from some half-baked poorly selected peer-aspirational institution?"

Faculty Governance Staves off Southern Administrative Plans for Exigency and Furloughs

In *Paradise Lost*, old John Milton repeatedly opines that good may come from evil. So it is that the bitter saga of Southern University's financial woes and attempts at exigency declarations has concentrated faculty governance energies to an unprecedented degree and has produced effective new statewide coalitions. Educators around Louisiana were staggered when the doubly new and thoroughly callow Southern administration, which includes both a new Chancellor and a new University System President, suddenly affirmed that the only possible solution to Southern's problems would be the drastic move into the equivalent of bankruptcy. This, despite the fact that every other campus in Louisiana had avoided that extremity. Fortunately, the more experienced Southern University Faculty Senate, under the leadership of long-term President Sudhir Trivedi, worked out a compromise proposal in which faculty would agree to a furlough in exchange for protection against exigency declarations and against the firings that such a declaration would bring. Unfortunately, beginner-President James Llorens reneged on his promises, producing a home-brewed "Voluntary Furlough and Program Discontinuance Agreement" that asked faculty members to sign away ten percent of their salaries and many of their rights with no reciprocal offers or even employment protection. Llorens's home-made deal-with-the-devil may be viewed on the [LSU Faculty Senate web site](#). During the Southern exigency controversy, faculty governance officials from other campuses intervened three times. First, LSU Faculty Senate President and ALFS Vice-President Kevin Cope issued an emergency letter to the Southern University Board of Supervisors, explaining the calamities that result from exigency declarations and reminding the Southern Supervisors of the impression being made on observers throughout the learned world. This letter seems to have had a favorable effect in that the Southern Board surprised everyone by backing away from an exigency endorsement. Second, Southern Faculty Senate President Sudhir Trivedi arranged for faculty leaders to review the Southern University budget, which lacked the detail and resolution required to make sound judgments (or to trace the use of large sums of money) and which showed enormous subsidies for an athletic program of questionable standing. Third, LSU Faculty Senate President Kevin Cope was again asked to go the scriptorium, this time to write a letter to the Board of Regents. Cope asked the Regents to tell the Southern administration that balancing the budget at the expense of faculty while allowing for no faculty input and while skipping over the requisite careful planning would not only disgrace Southern University but would tarnish all of Louisiana higher education. The Regents agreed, with the result that the A-minus or maybe strong B-plus team in the Southern administration is back at the drawing board.

Senate Revises Spate of Policy Statements

Regular readers of LSU's University [policy statements](#) are all too aware that a great many of these documents were last revised shortly after the battle of Jericho. Indeed, most universities fall short on the regular updating of policies, at least until a crisis forces post-hoc adjustments. With encouragement from the Office of Academic Affairs, the LSU Faculty Senate has been updating batches of policies. PS-29, a reissue of the policy governing classroom decorum; PS-70, regulating the naming of facilities; and PS-110, governing the membership of the Athletic Council and the appointment of the Faculty Athletic Representative have all undergone thorough renovation and have been approved and published by the University. PS-110 counts as a major breakthrough insofar as it establishes procedures by which the Faculty Senate will nominate colleagues for service in the powerful legions of athletic administration. Currently revised and in the pipeline for approval and promulgation are PS-7, in which the Faculty Senate has clarified an array of rules relating to honorary professorships, chairs, and awards; PS-22, which has been upgraded to strengthen mandates for class attendance; PS-44, which defines the grading authority of faculty members; and the as-yet unnumbered new policy, PS-"XYZ," which sets out conditions in which impaired faculty members may be removed from the classroom pending adjudication of their cases.

Faculty Senate Commissions Two New Ad Hoc Committees

Subsequent to resolutions passed near the end of the 2010-2011 academic year, the Faculty Senate commissioned two new ad hoc committees during the summer. Under the guidance of Senator Wes Harrison, the Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Workload will resolve confusions relating to the distribution of teaching duties. Under the guidance of Judith Sylvester, the Task Force on a Tobacco-Free Campus has begun interviewing campus officials from pertinent departments, whether the Wellness Center or the LSU Police Department. Meanwhile, Will Hires's Ad Hoc Committee on the Institutional Repository continues its research, with the expectation of sponsoring a visit from one of those preposition-enamelled "outside" experts in November.

Parking Violation Disputes to Be Resolved via Due Process

For some years, LSU law enforcement officials have found themselves in an awkward jurisdictional posture: handing out parking tickets to violators and then serving as the hearing board for appeals. Thanks to the just inclinations of interim CIO and security guru Brian Nichols (with an assist from parking czar Gary Graham), faculty and staff who dispute their parking ticket will now face a jury of their peers comprised of two professors and three staff members. Ditto for the student cadre, which will create its own tribunal.

ADMINISTRATOR IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Jacqueline Craddock, Director of Development, Swine Palace and LSU Theatre

If all the world is a stage, then Jacqueline Craddock may be an Atlas. As Director of Development for LSU's Swine Palace, Craddock carries much of the weight of the theatre season on her capable shoulders. This is not to say that Craddock views her titanic responsibilities as a punishment. Rather, Craddock thrives on the various challenges and potential for growth that her position offers. "I love to direct the energy of the theatre," she says.



The level of enthusiasm and energy Craddock brings to her position in Swine Palace's program is certainly needed. As Director of Development, Craddock oversees everything that goes into fundraising and marketing. On the fundraising side, Craddock solicits major gifts from alumni, donations and ticket sales. In addition, Craddock acts as the steward for any gifts Swine Palace may receive. Despite the sustained effort that fundraising alone demands of her on a daily basis, Craddock is also in charge of getting the word out on productions, a task that Craddock has absorbed and which comes with its own set of duties, including working closely with directors and faculty involved in produc-

tions to put a marketing package together, factoring in the cost of printing brochures and advertisements, and ensuring that productions are in line with Swine Palace's mission to produce plays of social relevance to the LSU and greater Baton Rouge communities.

Beyond juggling all of the various duties and tasks go into successful fundraising and marketing campaigns each season, Craddock also faces the challenge of making faculty, students, and staff on campus aware of the contributions that Swine Palace adds to the LSU experience. "Many people don't know that we're on campus," Craddock admits. And yet the impact that Swine Palace's award winning program has had on LSU's reputation as an institution dedicated to excellence has been substantial. In 2006, it won both the Louisiana Governor's Arts Award for Outstanding Large Arts Organization and the YWCA Racial Justice Award. In addition, in 2007 it became one of only a handful of American companies to perform at the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre and the Beijing Central Academy of Drama for its production of *The Heidi Chronicles*. Swine Palace also produced the world premier of *Cocktail*, co written by Obie award winner Ping Chong and one of only thirty five shows from the United States to be exhibited at the Prague Quadrineal, also in 2007. Craddock likens this honor to winning an oscar.

"I love to direct the energy of the theatre."

An LSU graduate herself, Craddock is keenly interested in the opportunities that Swine Palace offers theatre students. "I love to see them evolve on stage," she says with obvious excitement. Nor does Craddock focus her attention only on those who occupy the spotlight. She shows equal enthusiasm for students interested in set design and the other kinds of behind the scenes work that are integral to a production's success. "They're learning amazing skills," she says succinctly.

The 2011 2012 season marks Swine Palace's twentieth anniversary. If the amount of energy and enjoyment that Craddock is channeling into her duties is any indication, the staff, students, faculty and patrons of the LSU community should be in for an entertaining year.

LSUUnited Gains Momentum Despite Resistance from Top Officials

In a surprise move unthinkable before three years without a raise and the discovery of the massive diversion of retirement funds into the statewide unfunded accrued liability, LSU Faculty Senators voted by a three-to-one ratio in favor of a resolution urging support for LSUUnited, the burgeoning faculty union for LSU and for Louisiana higher education. Although it stopped short of a full exhortation to join the union, the resolution made it clear that faculty encourage the LSUUnited team in their efforts to amplify the voice of faculty and to seek better pay and working conditions for all employees. The vote set off a hailstorm of media coverage, much of which may be accessed from the menu on the "In the News" page of the [LSU Faculty Senate web site](#) but none of which will include administrative comment, that news cycle apparently having fallen during a "no comment" day. The excitement over these initiatives took a different form on the upper decks of the Flagship University, where those commanding the bridge refused to grant LSUUnited the authority to deduct dues from paychecks (a privilege granted even to Friday drinkers in The Faculty Club and to postgraduate athletes and weekend warriors in the Faculty Athletic Club) even despite compliance with the published policy of the LSU System, [PM-65](#), the reason given for the non-compliance being simply that the University has not complied lately. Undaunted, LSUUnited members have lodged an extensive appeal with the LSU System, which is more than a little surprised by this turn of events. Meanwhile, the Flagship University continues to sail well behind the fleet as LSUUnited takes its case to universities around Louisiana. Presentations at Baton Rouge Community College, Southern University, and Grambling have drawn sold-out crowds that are appropriate for the sell-out of faculty members, while upcoming presentations at the LSU Health Sciences Center in Shreveport and at LSU in Shreveport already evidence a long attendance list.



Faculty Senate Revamps Language of General Catalogue

In the migration from published general catalogues and bulletins to the online versions of the compendia, hard-core information about classes, curricula, and schedules has tended to overshadow the ancillary catalogue material that sets the tone for pedagogical operations. Gone are the days when students would at least thumb through pages of prefatory material before arriving at the cold hard facts of course numbers and section availability. Under the guidance of retention maven Sandra McGuire, the Faculty Senate has made an effort to punch up the language of and increase the interest in the first fifty pages of the *General Catalogue*, authorizing the inclusion of a new, firm statement on attendance that mirrors the sharper policies in the soon-to-be released revision of PS-22. That language includes the dreaded word "required" in tandem with the equally fearful term "attendance" and includes affirmations about student responsibility and the relation of attendance to success and graduation.

Online Travel Service Discovers Other Countries

For the last several years, faculty governance around the state has been trying to convince officialdom that it would be helpful to select a travel service that could actually be used. Long strides have been made with the selection of the curiously named Shorty's Travel Service as the state provider. Yet that name contained a secret: LONG journeys were apparently forbidden owing to alleged "complications" that prevented ordinary holders of Ph.D.s from making the kinds of reservations that any snuff-dipper could complete on Orbitz, Expedia, or Kayak. In one of those latter-day revelations that dazzle flat-earthers who see their first pictures of our round planet as photographed from space, the Shorty's travel reservation site now sports a logo proclaiming **"*NEW* You can book simple international reservations online!"** Thank goodness for that exclamation point that conceals the fact that holders of doctorates from major universities remain unable to do anything that is more than "simple."

Portraits of New Commencement Regalia Now Available Online

Readers who have been following the saga of the new, upgraded Commencement regalia will delight in the beautiful promotional spread created by Zac Lemoine of the LSU Media Relations office. Visitors to the [LSU Commencement web page](#) may view high-resolution studio portraits of the new ceremonial apparel. Committed to the export of fashion revolution and hopeful with regard to the dignity of Louisiana Commencement ceremonies, Faculty Senate officials are hoping that other campuses will follow suit in the upgrading of graduation events and the attire that goes with them.

Media Relations Covertly Switches Coffee Brands

Observers embedded at LSU Media Relations report a new shake on the sugar jar in that most productive of LSU "units." More than a few disgruntled staffers have confided that the PR Palace on Lakeshore drive has quietly replaced its *Community Coffee* jugs with caffeine carafes from *River Road Coffee*. Now, both these beverages being Louisiana as well as Baton Rouge products, we are at a loss to explain the switch, there being no evidence of a motion to or away from homegrown percolations. But we do know that there are those in the advertising apparatus who now regard themselves as chicory-challenged.

Gubernatorial Candidate Hollis Meets with Educators at “Alexandria Summit”

Faculty leaders from around the state gathered on September 24th in Alexandria for the fifth meeting of the new Louisiana State Colleagues Collaborative (LSCC), an affiliate of the Association of Louisiana Faculty Senates (ALFS). LSCC seeks to create a network of professionals from all systems and from all campuses who are devoted to faculty governance and eager to have a voice in the management of higher education. Delegates from every higher education system heard and delivered reports from the likes of special collections librarian Laura McLemore, UNO activist Steve Striffler, community college professor Laura Sells, staff members Lisa Verman and Kristie Galy, LSUnited Co-President Mike Russo, ULM faculty governance officials Donna Rhorer, Anna Hill, and Paul Sylvester, Southern University Faculty Senate President Sudhir Trivedi, LSUHSC medical researcher Tammy Dugas, and ALFS President James Robinson. The highlight of the event was a presentation by gubernatorial candidate Tara Hollis, who laid out her plan for higher education and sought support from higher education professionals. The meeting issued a decision to create a legislative input team so that faculty members may develop their own voice in discussion regarding higher education. The LSCC is open to all persons who cherish higher education. Mark your calendars for the next meeting on December 3rd!

Summer Surge in Salaries and Incentives for LSU Athletics a Stark Contrast to Academic Austerity Measures

One of the most remarkable transitions of modern academe has been the shift in expectations with regard to the economic role of athletics. Where academicians once expected athletics to support and contribute to universities, they now seem content for athletics to sustain itself. Rather than a minimum expectation, the solvency of the titanic LSU athletic program has now become a virtue: “one of only a handful of programs in the country that doesn’t lose money.” Along with this recalibrating of expectations has come another surge in athletic salaries, the overall character of which has been discussed in the public media but the details of which have slipped from public view except to those who read the briefing materials for the LSU Board of Supervisors. Although advertised as a \$700K deal, the contract of women’s basketball coach Nikki Caldwell allows for a whopping half-million additional dollars in post-season compensation—for, one might say, doing her job. Also included is a clause allowing for a cool million in “liquidated damages” in the event of an early termination. Going less deep into the piggy bank but nevertheless into the pool, the curious new double-coaching arrangement in LSU swimming and diving allows for a three year series of raises, beginning with another \$10,000.00 for each coach this year, \$4,000.00 per coach-capita in the following year, and another \$4,000.00 for each trainer in the third year. The ability to come up with a multi-year pay plan for coaches in non-revenue sports suggests that the failure to devise a similar multi-year compensation plan for faculty requires discussion, especially given that the raises were justified with respect to the “value” of these sportsmen to the University (at last report, faculty members were also conjectured to be “valuable”). On the other hemisphere of the roundball, a contract renewal rolled over to the head men’s basketball coach following a mysterious deletion from the Board of Supervisors’ agenda in July, a rumored set of discussions, and then restoration of the contract proposal to the August Supervisors’ task list. That one-year extension delivered well over a million dollars to a coach with a one-out-of-three win record—not the best precedent in a university where a one-out-of-three submission-and-publication rate would likely not suffice to obtain tenure, let alone lavish contract extensions. Reporting on softball coach Beth Torina’s contract was also somewhat underestimating. True, Torina’s base contract calls for \$100K, but there is also \$10K for media appearances, \$10K for undefined “services” to the Tiger Athletic Foundation, \$90K for post-season achievements, and \$15K for “academic incentive compensation” (a kind of negative pay for not allowing students not to succeed in the classroom), yielding a total possible annual compensation of \$225,000.00. The big new contract for athletic director Joe Alleva merits an amazed smile owing to terms of the sheer bravura of its style. The prose of the Alleva contract reads as if it were written by a handicapper for The Daily Racing Form: “The proposed amendment will increase the base salary for LSU A&M Athletic Director Joseph L. Alleva by \$175,000, from \$350,000 to \$525,000 per year. It also alters the terms of his potential incentive payment based on his position in the NACDA Director’s Cup Rankings. Under his current contract, he could receive \$50,000 annually for being in the top 10, or \$100,000 for being in the top 5. Under the amendment, he can receive \$50,000 annually for being in the top 20. Finally, the amendment adjusts his academic progress rate incentive. Under the current contract, he could receive \$25,000 annually if the graduation rate of student athletes equals or exceeds the general student population, and \$50,000 if the student-athlete graduation rate is 5% greater than the general student rate. Under the amendment, he will receive \$50,000 for each year that all athletic teams attain a multi-year NCAA Academic Progress Rate of 925 or higher.” Reading that makes one think it easy to figure out a winning

Commissioner of Higher Ed Authorizes Faculty Retention Policy for Favored Few

Faculty enthusiastic for the welfare of their institution have often consented to selective pay increases for the purpose of retaining esteemed colleagues. Unfortunately, selective pay increases also discriminate against those in fields lacking head-hunting competition from private industry or requiring the greatest amounts of study time or perpetrating basic research. In a finite economy, retention raises also penalize those who remain loyal to the institution. Most readers of the *Newsletter* are familiar with the practice of “cherry-picking” during times of financial crisis. “Cherry-picking” occurs when an exigent institution attempts to hand-pick faculty members for dismissal without a general policy governing all professional employees. Commissioner of Higher Education Jim Purcell has authorized a new version of this trespass: a kind of cherry-re-grafting operation in which monies from unknown sources are used to retain, without publicity, fanfare, or public comment, scholars who are regarded as “key”—a term with at best an impressionistic definition. Purcell is invoking Executive Order BJ2011–12, which gives the Commissioner of Higher Education permission to “manage the positions within higher education.” In a memorandum dated August 8th, 2011, Purcell announced that he “would encourage you to allow your institutions flexibility in addressing situations where an increase in salary will keep key personnel—especially those faculty, researchers, technicians or key management personnel who are at risk of seeking other employment opportunities.” Few institutions in Louisiana have rational or just compensation policies, but those few that have thought about this matter will no longer find that equitable treatment of employees is encouraged. Rather, limited funds will be moved to those who are “key” from, presumably, those who are in the hole.

Faculty Activist Ravi Rau Draws SRO Crowd at Off-Broadway Venue

Followers of faculty governance initiatives know well the tremendous contributions of physicist and educationalist A. R. P. “Ravi” Rau, whose countless columns for newspapers and whose tireless efforts to strengthen faculty prerogatives have become legendary. What is not yet part of that legend is Rau’s skill as a thespian. Serving as the prologue and commentator to the pre-debut test-run of LSU’s new production of *Copenhagen*, the dramatized tale of an encounter between physicists and uncertainty moguls Werner Heisenberg and Nils Bohr, Rau drew a standing room only crowd to the experimental theater in the Music and Dramatic Arts Building. In a gymnastic move worthy of a Kenneth Branagh or Peter Sellers or perhaps Ringling Brothers production, Rau was conscripted into a chair-moving maneuver, hauling in chairs at a rate that could not keep up with the arrival of sitters. Congratulations to Ravi for his sterling performance and for his revitalization of the physics following.



Online Campus Map Site Proves Hard to Navigate

During the 1980s, cartography was one of the fashionable topics for avant-garde humanities scholars, and indeed, the frenzy for hermeneutical maps continues to this day in corners of academe such as Atlantic Studies. The history of mapmaking will not be complete, however, until the experts on the LSU campus find a way to do what every other campus has managed to do: produce a campus map that is quickly accessed and readily usable. In a curious paean to Adobe software, a visit to the [campus map site](#) proclaims “Welcome to the Flash-driven Campus Map!” and then confronts the users with a list of requirements for usage that would make a minister of protocol cry “uncle.” When the conditions are met and the map is finally accessed, a bewildering menu in which buildings are distinguished from places draws one to a list of venues, the clicking of which drops one atop the building at such a close-up scale that one feels sympathy for that wicked witch in *The Wizard of Oz* atop whom a cottage was dumped. Efforts to change the scale or drag the map usually lead to a computer lockup. Singer Moms Mabley used to ask, “has anybody here seen my old friend Bobby Kennedy,” but nowadays the late Moms might be satisfied to know which building stood next to Coates Hall.



**Coastal studies without context:
Could any mariner find this shore
with this map?**

Search Committees to Hire New Top Level Administrators: Questionable Policies

With the decline in popularity of Ouija boards, members of the LSU community will lack clues as to the rationale underlying the composition of the search committees now combing the nation in search of new administrative talent for LSU. Of the three committees in play, that dedicated to the discovery of a new Chief Information Officer (a position quietly downgraded from Vice-Chancellor for IT Services) seems to possess the most mission-centered expertise but the least faculty presence (moreover, one-third of the members will work for the new CIO). The second committee, devoted to the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor for Research and Economic Development, proceeds under the able chairmanship of Dean Rick Koubek, that reliable and virtue-seeking Diogenes of the Den of Engineering, yet in its composition, partially stymies its efforts by continuing the Philistine traditions of the administration, which, in failing to appoint committee members from any of the arts and from most of the humanities, once again misunderstands the need for energizing development in the disciplines that distinguish a university from a sausage factory. Most bewildering of all is the Provost search committee, for which Faculty Senate input was wisely solicited but which, in its finished form, abounds with administrative dependents, includes the now-mandatory appointee from the journalism zone, and introduces two non-academic private citizens. The latter, members of the Flagship Coalition, seem not content to support the University, but rather inclined to manage it. One of these mixed-militia minutemen aboard the Flagship takes his credentials from the admittedly applied-tech world of helicoptering (meaning that we now have not only helicopter parents on campus, but also helicopter donors); the other is most easily evaluated by a look at his company's [web site](#), where the selection of armaments would more than suffice to assure readers that the Flagship battle-ready, or at least ready to defend a street corner against rival drug dealers.



CV Entry for a Provost Search Committee Member?

LaTech President Reneau Sets Merger Priorities

Louisiana higher education is awash with rumors of takeovers and mergers (our leaders seem to have forgotten that the age of the leveraged buyout ended twenty years ago—but, then, new ideas are slow to reach our very deep south). Rumblings include the formation of a Baptist-appropriate northern Louisiana rival flagship institution comprised of the merged LaTech, LSUS, and LSUHSC-Shreveport; a merger of LSU and LaTech; and even a surrender of assets and autonomy by financially troubled Centenary, which apparently imagines that the public sector can bail it out. In the midst of all this, Dan Reneau, LaTech President, has set some clear priorities. According to the Ruston newspaper, *The News Star* (June 9, 2011), Reneau has laid out some non-negotiable points for any potential takeover partner: Louisiana Tech must remain Louisiana Tech (readers of children's books remember the terrible fate of teddy bear Fuzzy Wuzzy, who, upon getting too fierce of a haircut, inspired the observation that "Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't fuzzy, was he?"); the University colors must remain red and blue (no third-rate secondary colors for Ruston); and the athletic teams must remain the Bulldogs (for men) and the Lady Techsters (for women). With demands like that, premiere university status is surely just around the corner.

McNeese State Makes Faculty Governance Surge

Great news is emerging from long-neglected southwest Louisiana, where the fresh and energetic leadership of McNeese State Faculty Senate Vice-President Janet Allured is hoisting faculty members into spheres of influence seldom experienced in that underrated but contribution-intensive institution. Allured's stewardship has led the McNeese administration to initiate a survey of faculty opinion about the needs and goals of that institution—a survey that, although still short on the willing recognition of faculty discontent, marks a turn in the right direction, indeed a recognition that there is a right direction. The survey may be viewed [online](#). Undeterred by administrative shyness, Allured and her colleagues have also initiated their own faculty satisfaction survey, which, with the slightly grudgingly given consent of former Sea World attorney and McNeese State University President Philip Williams, will address a wide range of issues, whether faculty satisfaction with administrative performance or working conditions or benefits or even the overall culture of McNeese. Allured and her colleagues have also made huge strides forward in clarifying and publishing both the bylaws of the McNeese Faculty Senate and of the University itself. To Janet and her confrères, those of us who have attended McNeese State football games can surely say that this is far more than "another Cowboy first down."

University Sees Return to Installation of Administrators under Cloak of Secrecy

For several years, the LSU Faculty Senate has maintained a non-stop if sometimes low-level campaign to ensure not only the transparency and fairness but also the accessibility of major administrative services. Schooled in anxiety and strangely addicted to the tense pleasures of suspicion, the administration has occasionally lapsed into its bad old ways, with the result that perfectly good reputations for perfectly admirable colleagues are endangered by irrational secrecy. Examples of this process include the recent metamorphosis of the head of University College into an "Executive Director" with minimal advance warning to anyone and with no traceable search (not even an internal one). No one doubts that the holder of that title, Paul Ivey, has served the University valorously and is deserving of appropriate recognition; but the granting of that recognition under a cloak of secrecy and through the ad hoc creation of titles can only put the supernova of excellence behind the nebula of concern. Similarly, no thinking faculty member is unaware of the fierce battle for faculty prerogatives mounted by K. T. Valsaraj, who, on more than one occasion, has taken unpopular stances and defended colleagues. Unfortunately, the administration chose to advance the fortunes of this admirable Vice-Chancellor for Research and Economic Development not by an open display of his merit, but by posting an advertisement in the deep labyrinth of the LSU System help wanted e-pages, all in a bare, minimal compliance with advertising regulations. For these reasons—and so as to make clear that LSU candidates can compete with any rivals (after all, the best person, Tony Lombardo, won the Facility Services throne in fair and open jousting)—the Faculty Senate will soon take up a new policy on searches.

Historic Murals at McNeese State at Risk

The flood of news from McNeese State University has brought concern about the fate of historic Kaufman Hall, the first building on the McNeese campus and currently a target of aggressive restoration efforts. Like many of the buildings at LSU, Kaufman Hall is a modest, not always pleasant product of the Works Progress Administration. However bulbous its architecture, it contains a variety of artifacts and murals worthy of preservation, some of which may be viewed [online](#). Let us hope that the McNeese administration respects these contributions to Louisiana culture legacy while it spruces up an ailing building.

LSU Professor Does Double Duty as Food Critic

A new galloping gourmet has been discovered in the person of former LSU Faculty Senate International Education Committee Chair and Kinesiology professor Li Li, who was featured in the [food section of *The Advocate* on August 18th](#) as an expert commentator on oriental cuisine. Li had been tapped for his expertise in local cultural enclaves, an expertise which brought him to the Vin Phat oriental market in an effort to upgrade non-occidental cooking skills as well as international awareness in Louisiana.

New Covert Higher Ed Governance Commission Formed over Summer

Following the three successive failures of the Tucker Commission, 2011 legislative initiatives, and a team of New Orleans consultants to reorganize Louisiana higher education, those who imagine that the educational disorders of our state may be solved by tweaking the statewide management structure are trying once again, setting up yet another higher education governance commission under the authority of HCR 184 (authored by Shreveport-based representative Tom Carmody). Operating beneath the radar screen and during the dog days of summer, the commission has planned a series of hearings and has already produced a prodigious quantity of documentation (with the assistance of not-inexpensive consulting firms). The LSU Faculty Senate has been tracking this commission and has attempted to bring it out of its air-conditioned lair and into the hot sunshine of public debate by obtaining and promulgating its documents, which can be accessed from a menu within the [LSU Faculty Senate web site](#). Faculty would be well-advised to acquaint themselves with a stealth operation that threatens to change institutional missions, displace governance structures, and move the center of authority even further away from faculty than it already abides.

Board of Regents to Charge Campuses for New Program Review

Just as it appeared that the age of temporary services bureaus was passing, the Board of Regents is positioning itself as an employment exchange for freelance program evaluators. Under pressure to end the moratorium on new programs, the Regents, in a memorandum issued June 9th, have issued a draft proposal by which campuses seeking to establish new programs must submit proposals along with a list of four candidate program reviewers, the latter of which will be contacted and hired by the Regents, albeit under contract to and paid by the petitioning campus. A codicil notes that campuses must agree with the Board of Regents on fees and must cover the cost of the review; there is no indication as to whether that "cost" will include overhead for the Regents office.

Fostering Active Learning, Learning Communities: COE Hosts Summer Development Workshop for LSU, BRCC Faculty

By Cassier Arceneaux

The College of Engineering hosted more than 20 eager faculty members from LSU and Baton Rouge Community College for a three-day faculty development workshop in May.

The College of Engineering's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Talent Expansion Program hosted the fifth-annual FDW, which provided faculty with new strategies for improving retention among undergraduate students. The purpose of this workshop was to enhance professional and instructional skills and motivate faculty with innovative teaching tools.

Workshop participants learned how to recognize students' learning preferences, incorporate active learning strategies in their classrooms, write and use learning objectives in their courses, and implement effective grading and assessment techniques.

Dr. Rebecca Brent, president of Education Design, Inc. and Dr. Richard Felder, professor emeritus in chemical engineering from North Carolina State University, facilitated the workshop. Brent and Felder have presented more than 300 workshops on effective teaching, course design, mentoring and supporting new faculty members and faculty development on campuses throughout the U.S. and abroad. In addition, Brent and Felder co-direct the American Society for Engineering Education National Effective Teaching Institute.

Felder commenced the workshop by explaining, "This workshop is about ideas, dozens or hundreds of ideas. We want you to watch them as they fly by and question if they can work in your own classroom."

Funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation, the CoE is using the NSF grant to attract faculty from engineering, construction management, math, chemistry, physics and English who teach first- or second-year students. The goal of the program is to improve retention through STEP courses by designing ways to engage students in their classes and programs and discussing activities to increase their students' understanding of difficult concepts.

To date, approximately 100 LSU faculty members, PhD students and postdoctoral students from the CoE, biology, chemistry, English, math and physics and eight BRCC faculty members have participated in the faculty development workshops.

LSU and BRCC joined forces in the fall of 2010 to offer the "BRCC to LSU Engineering Pathway to Success" Program for approximately 35 academically talented, financially eligible students, who have completed the Associate of Science in Engineering degree at BRCC and will transfer into an engineering degree program within the LSU CoE.

This unique engineering program allows students to enter into a proposed engineering program at BRCC to gain an Associate of Science in engineering degree. Upon successful completion of the associate degree requirements, students would then transfer seamlessly to LSU to complete a Bachelor of Science degree in a CoE discipline.

Having BRCC faculty attend this workshop will help to strengthen the program's recruitment, retention and placement into an integrated and comprehensive program that promotes student success in transitioning from the community college to LSU and foster the faculty learning communities between the two campuses.

Reflections

Participants from past workshops joined this year's participants to explain how they have incorporated new strategies in their own courses. After attending last year's workshop, Dr. Carol Friedland, assistant professor, construction management and industrial engineering, realized her students did not understand what constituted a good presentation. Friedland explained how she and a student worker produced a series of example presentation videos to help students better understand the elements of an effective oral presentation. In addition, Paul Britt, instructor, department of mathematics, noted that when employing active learning strategies in his calculus classes, "The students stay more focused and they seem to realize that I care about their learning. They know that I am not simply lecturing at them. They are experiencing something different from the normal math class and they seem to appreciate that. I have had students tell me they realize I am trying to reach them. Isn't that what teaching is all about?"

For this year's workshop participants, the Fall 2011 semester marks an exciting time as they implement active learning strategies in their classrooms. Workshop alumni will continue to modify their teaching techniques and gather as part of the Faculty Learning Community to share experiences and provide support to this year's participants all working toward the same goal – enhancing education for students.



LSU Child Care Center Earns National NAEYC Accreditation

The LSU Child Care Center has earned accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) – the nation's leading organization of early childhood professionals.

"We're proud to have earned the mark of quality from NAEYC, and to be recognized for our commitment to reaching the highest professional standards," said Michelle DeMeulenaere, Director of the LSU Child Care Center. "NAEYC Accreditation lets families in our community know that children in our program are getting the best care and early learning experiences possible."

To earn NAEYC Accreditation, the LSU Child Care Center went through an extensive self-study process, measuring the program and its services against the ten NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and more than 400 related Accreditation Criteria. The program received NAEYC Accreditation after an on-site visit by NAEYC Assessors to ensure that the program meets each of the ten program standards. NAEYC-accredited programs are also subject to unannounced visits during their accreditation, which lasts for five years.

"The NAEYC Accreditation system raises the bar for child care centers and other early childhood programs," said Jerlean E. Daniel, Ph.D, executive director of NAEYC. "Having earned NAEYC Accreditation is a sign that the LSU Child Care Center is a leader in a national effort to invest in high-quality early childhood education."

AAUP Rips UL System for Assault on Tenured Faculty

Readers of Greek tragedy know that the penalties of bad behavior are inflicted several generations after the trespass. So it is that the sudden cancellation of the French program at Southeastern Louisiana University, which was accompanied by the firing of three tenured professors, along with the release of four tenured chemistry professors at the University of Louisiana at Monroe and the noticing of several professors at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, has drawn a rebuke from the American Association of Universities Professors. The AAUP has advised the public that the University of Louisiana System has initiated an "unwarranted assault" on faculty job security. Read the full story in [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#) and peruse the official AAUP announcement via [this line](#). Publicity spreading like bacteria in a Petri dish whenever a public institution is infected with folly, the Hammond Daily Star published thoughtful editorials on these outrages by German Professor [Katherine Kolb](#) and by [Heidi Rogers Kinchen](#).

APA Charges Study Abroad Faculty for Retirement Benefits over Summer

Thought that Louisiana institutions wanted to promote internationalization? Think again. Study Abroad faculty were hit with a rude awakening this summer when Academic Programs Abroad unexpectedly announced that it would charge the employer contribution to retirement programs to employees. When the University informed Academic Programs Abroad that it would assess charges for retirement contributions to units effective July 1st, "APA" responded by raiding the salaries to which faculty, then abroad and little able to respond, had agreed. As a result, employees paid both the employee and the employer contribution. No wonder the Benefits Committee wants to arrange for legal insurance.

New Game Day Parking Fee Raises Questions

Faculty at LSU rejoiced at the early-summer decision to charge football fans for parking on University premises. At last, celebrating professors conjectured, football parking would yield revenue that would ease the financial crisis. Jubilation turned to chagrin, however, as teachers and researchers discovered that they would have to pay to come to work on game day or, alternatively, leave labs untended and experiments running on their own. The chagrin intensified when the University mysteriously backed down from its plan to charge for the use of the Hayfield and other free lots, sums desperately needed to buoy higher education projects of all sorts. Considering that Mayor Kip Holden arrives at games in a kitsch limousine that is covered with flashing lights, capable of stopping traffic, and allocated a stadium-side parking spot, the rumored claim that city officials were worried about traffic jams seems somewhat extenuated.

Board of Supervisors Creates Account for LOUIS Fee Payments

At its June meeting, the LSU Board of Supervisors granted LSU the authority to create a special restricted account for the receipt of fees paid by state institutions to support LOUIS, the statewide library database system. The arrangement became necessary after the Regents slashed all but \$500,000.00 of its support for this essential library system. The institution-by-institution figures may be viewed via the LSU Faculty Senate ["text and report archive"](#) page.

Legislature Taking Harder Look at Jindal Education Nominees

However worthy of ribbing our intellectually skeletal legislature may be, it often takes the right action, even if owing to questionable motivations. In the last days of the legislative session, Jindal selectee Ed Antie, who, during his candidacy hearing, repeatedly referred to “the girls” in his office, withdrew from consideration for appointment to the Board of Regents rather than miss confirmation. Around the same time, a Jindal appointee to the LSU Board of Supervisors, Ann Duplessis, who had already opined in open hearings that faculty members would welcome benefit reductions in order to keep higher education solvent and whose biography on the state legislature web site alludes to her experience as proprietor of Hair and Body Corner Day Spa, quietly disappeared from the Board owing to non-confirmation. Hats (or perhaps hairstyles) off to our legislators for enforcing a minimum of common sense.

Task Force for Common Course Numbering Files Recommendation

The statewide task force on common course numbering has filed its recommendations with the Board of Regents. Charged with devising a plan to assign transfer-ready code numbers to every course in Louisiana, the task force quickly discovered that the renumbering of the 38,000 courses listed on the many Louisiana campuses would require several lifetimes. As a result, and in consultation with the Commissioner of Higher Education, the task force has recommended that by the fall of 2013 the seventy-five courses that account for eighty percent of transferred hours should be studied and renumbered, with the remaining 37,925 courses to follow in due course. Concern for faculty control of the curriculum and of admissions standards led to a recommendation that the Regents assemble statewide faculty committees to determine the meaning of and requirements for course equivalency. A determination that courses are equivalent implies full acceptance of the course at institutions receiving transfer students, a concession that requires faculty approval.

LA Statewide Colleagues Collaborative Bring Questions to Commissioner of Higher Education During Summer “Listening Tour.”

Almost anything that counts in Louisiana higher education almost invariably occurs during the summer, when audiences are at a low ebb and when ease quiets worrywarts. So it is that Commissioner of Higher Education Jim Purcell recently embarked on a sporadic “listening tour” with stops in Thibodaux, Monroe, Alexandria, Lake Charles, and Lafayette. With few faculty available, probability favored the commissioner being able to “listen” only to the chorus of workforce development enthusiasts who comprise Louisiana industry, whether the spin doctors of Lamar Advertising or the blockbusters of Cajun Concrete. Thanks to Faculty Senate vigilance, however, the new statewide Louisiana Statewide Colleagues Collaborative were able to station several interrogators at all of the Commissioner’s whistle-stops, to salutary effect. Faculty are reminding the decision-makers in the Claiborne Building that higher education needs to use that adjective, “higher,” in an informed way that recalls the values of institutions and stresses basic research and not-for-profit areas of study. Indeed, and to everyone’s surprise, the “listening tour” has acted as a catalyst to stimulate faculty engagement at an assortment of suffering and under-appreciated institutions.

OGB Privatization Hits Snag in Auditor’s Office

Efforts by the governor’s office to privatize the Office of Group Benefits and with that the destiny of \$588,000,000.00 (as in “more than a half-billion” in cash reserves derived from employee premium payments) hit a snag when state auditor Daryl Purpera raised questions about the economics, costs, and conjectural savings of such a move. Commenting after a threat of subpoena forced the governor’s office to release details of an assessment of OGB by a valuation firm in New Orleans, Purpera also noted that no state had undertaken the kind of peremptory privatization that the governor is proposing. Meanwhile, former Retirement Committee Chair, Senator Emeritus Butch Gautreaux, speaking at a League of Women Voters Event, satirized the governor by proposing that he be allowed to privatize and manage bank accounts—a witticism to which Jindal did not reply, allegedly owing to being away from the capitol for a ribbon-cutting for a highway project in the town of Stonewall.

Marketing of New Tiger Blonde Brand A Study In Racism and Mixed Metaphors

Followers of the Golden Band from Tigerland know that, a few years ago, while cultivating an exchange program with China, former Provost Risa Palm, in a burst of political correctness and out of a desire to push ahead negotiations with her collaborators in Cathay, quietly ordered the LSU marching ensemble never again to play the fan favorite “Chinese Bandits” football riff. Now, only a few years later, the discontent ghost of that Provost, who is now ensconced at Georgia State University, must be reeling with surprise at the selection of “Bandit Blonde,” which mixes Chinese with misogynist stereotypes, as the moniker for LSU’s new beer. Observers must also wonder whether the pressure from the more conservative corners of Louisiana led to the downscaling of the Tiger fermentation project from a micro-brewery in the Lod Cook Center, where a quality product with a refined tone could have been offered, to the roughhewn cans of beer that will soon be swirling in the paws of Tiger fans (many of whom have slipped through the clutches of former retention committees). The label for the brew may also give pause to those who eliminated the Writing Center. That label credits LSU with creating a “truly unique ‘hands-on’ educational experience for students interested in the fermentation sciences.” Now, anyone who has gotten out the door of English 1001 knows that “unique” does not admit of degrees and that “truly unique” is analogous to “very pregnant”—and that all of the above constitutes a mixed metaphor with regard to a “hands on educational experience.”



VP for University Advancement Sees Huge Salary Increase Amid Layoff of Tenured Faculty

While Southeastern Louisiana University was busy offloading costs by dismissing tenured foreign language professors, the expense slack was being made up by what one anonymous source (who provided an abundance of documentation) described as “jet-propelled promotions and pay raises” at the vice-presidential level at SELU. Between 2002 and 2009, the current Vice-President for University Advancement, who holds a Masters degree in the area of “Philanthropy and Development” from St. Mary’s University of Winona, accelerated from \$45,000.00 to \$130,000.00 per annum while canned professors of German and French reported to the poor farm. Requirements for an MA from St. Mary’s: thirty total credit hours, twenty-one of which may be earned in three-week summer sessions over the course of three years and nine of which may be earned by online independent study.

University Schedules Charity Run on Move-In Day

“Gaff of the year” award goes to LSU’s schedulers who somehow managed to authorize a 5K charity run on sorority-fraternity move-in day, with the result that sweltering parents laden with furniture were creamed, catapulted, and otherwise collided as a phalanx of runners marauded through LSU’s picturesque residential byways. Whoever would have suspected that Rosie Ruiz would be applying to become a triple delta?

Greys Shirting Comes to Attention of Faculty Senate

Among the news stories that quietly came and went during the summer was the latest misstep on the gridiron: a greys Shirting episode. “Greys Shirting” refers to the practice of recruiting more athletes than there are athletic scholarships available. The outcome of this practice is the bullying of recruits, who are pressured into enduring a period without scholarship support out of fear of never making the team if they peeve the coach. The Faculty Senate will be consulting with the Faculty Athletic Representative and the Athletic Council to make clear that this abuse contradicts the values of academe.

Faculty Senate Partners with Donna Torres Et Al. to Implement Hazardous Travel Rules

Under the leadership of the indefatigable head of Accounting Services, Donna Torres, a committee has been formed, with consent and cooperation from the LSU Faculty Senate, to implement Financial and Accounting Services Operating Procedure AS-18, “High Risk Travel to Restricted Regions.” As LSU internationalizes, the possibility of faculty traveling to dangerous or otherwise compromised areas increases, with potential liability exposure for the University. The new International Travel Oversight Committee, which includes Senate-designated faculty members, will evaluate travel authorizations for journeys to areas identified as hazardous by the United States Department of State. Thanks, Donna, for your foresight in this complicated matter.

LSU at Top of Retention Heap

Good news for Kurt Keppler, Gil Reeve, Sandra McGuire, and their teams of retention enthusiasts. The latest “Freshman Student Retention/Transfer Report” shows that LSU led the pack of Louisiana universities in total retention (retention on-campus plus retention of students moving to other Louisiana universities) at 89.7 percent. Runner-up was Louisiana Tech, which clung to the second place position with an 83.5 percent cash out. The booby prize went to Louisiana Delta Community College, where total retention maxed out at 44 percent.

LSU in Alexandria Opens Multipurpose Building Showcasing Art

Chancellor David Manuel and the faculty team at LSU in Alexandria have scored another touchdown with the opening of the new LSUA multipurpose building. Unlike most of the buildings recently commissioned by Louisiana campuses, the LSUA features light, space, and cleanliness of line—attributes that have been around since the Bauhaus movement but which have yet to reach most campuses in our state. Especially laudable in the design of the building is the abundance of art. A little known Louisiana law requires that one percent of building costs for public edifices to be allocated to public art. Whether or not that law was consulted, the LSUA design team have come up with a building that will inspire connoisseurs, that will demonstrate a salutary commitment to the arts, and that moves the bar up multiple notches with respect to standards for academic buildings.

Southern System President to Re-Brand Southern University as University of Phoenix?



The fears that rumbled through Southern University during the recent debate over the Southern budget and the possibility of financial exigency became all the more real when Southern University investigators probed Southern University System President Ronald Mason's past presentations on the revamping of universities. In a report from late January 2010, the *Jackson Free Press* chronicled the attempts by then Jackson State University President Mason to crash, burn, salvage, and reassemble no less than three great HBCUs: Jackson State, Alcorn State, and Mississippi Valley State Universities. [Mason's proposal](#) drew on antiquity for the image of the phoenix bird, which rises in new form following its self-incineration. Apparently Mason regards throwing large institutions and their faculties onto the pyre as a salutary ritual of rebirth.

SPECIAL FEATURE: THE ACADEMIC FOOD SUPPLY IN BATON ROUGE

Long after LSU recedes beneath the sediment, future archaeologists will excavate Thomas Boyd Hall and discover not memoranda or flash drives but, rather, grocery bags. More than any other human institution, the university runs socially as well as calorically on food. No significant business of the Tiger Academy is accomplished in the absence of at least minimal beverage catering; no off-the-record encounter occurs without leaving at least the traces in the form of creamer cartons. The social history of LSU is already written in the architectural archaeology of Baton Rouge, where the gleaming fluorescent-fixture hallways of Kroger, A&P, and Schwegmann's, where urgent conversations once occurred and where occasionally tenure-seeking scholars' futures were decided, have receded either into redecoration, re-purposing, or outright demolition. Academic personnel, moreover, indulge deluxe tastes and exquisitely special needs. No book may be written under power provided by Velveeta when a round of brie rests within reach.

The food supply—and, with that, the food chain—of Baton Rouge epitomizes the situation of local scholars. Ambitious temples of victualing rise up as flagship commissaries but often disappoint; forgotten refectories of yesteryear, like scholars past their prime, occasionally surprise the young and trendy with something snappy and tart; whole tribes of hungry learners migrate from outlet to outlet, looking for a food institution that can supply their needs and satisfy their specialist appetites. Great enthusiasms and commandeering slogans try to convince skeptical browsers that tier-one dining status is just around the corner while learned consumers recognize the need to pursue grants of gustatory pleasure from diverse agencies scattered across the provisioning map.

Let colleagues be duped by under-conceived if not under-funded promises, and in the interest of maximizing shopping productivity, the *Newsletter* went browsing along the shelves of the principal scholarly food sources in Baton Rouge in an effort to praise what is grand, damn what is overblown, and promote those vendors that offer savants what they need.

Of all the temples of taste in the Baton Rouge area, it is surely Whole Foods, with its faux chateau architecture—its odd mixture of Frank Lloyd Wright, Abbot Suger, and Victor Coursey—that vies to become the imperial presence in the kingdom of cuisine. Arranged to create giddy disorientation (eyes of visitors never look at the shabby corrugated-steel, Boudreaux-in-Thibodaux roof for a castle that is designed to keep eyes on the aisles), Whole Foods creates the impression that one need never leave, but that, rather like Charley in the old song about the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority, “he or she may walk forever in the streets of wholeness as the man/woman who’ll never return.” And well might one never leave, given that, in an effort at misplaced holism, Whole Foods replaced its sturdy wicker-handled bags with sacks that fall to shreds if loaded with more than a few ounces of truffle. Despite its look of abundance, Whole Foods is about diversion: about ensuring that visitors purchase a very large handful of high-ticket items and then buy the rest of their downscale food elsewhere. The entire periphery of this market screams “high end,” whether the processed bakery goods, the deli offerings, the exquisite dairy products, the meat and seafood cases, or the assortment of restaurants. Inspection of each of these areas, however, betrays a level of neglect that also points to the inadequacy of workforce development. In the absence of a well-trained *Kaesemeister*, for example, cheeses are suffocated in moisture-inducing plastic wrap; deli personnel struggle to find right thickness for prosciutto; restaurant and ready-to-go offerings prove surprisingly bland and mainstream by Louisiana standards; fresh-baked bread is often over-baked and dry or otherwise mishandled by struggling personnel. As a result, a certain amount of Whole Foods traffic is driven into the interior aisles of the store, where house-brand products compete with international brands in such a way that buyers pay less but scuff up more profits for Whole Foods, which, with its generic brands, emerges as the Walmart of upper-end shoppers. The meat case, too, while superb in the area of poultry, lags somewhat in the beef and pork slots, where USDA standards are abandoned in favor of an assortment of selling points of dubious provenance and where routine sausages seldom scintillate. Sometimes, too, Whole Foods is lost in its own vendable ideology. Its chocolate section, for example, leaves much to be desired owing to its alleged commitment to unverifiable fair-trade standards. In the end, Whole Foods is the greatest food attraction ever to come to Baton Rouge—indeed, its coffee bar brews a surprisingly good cup—and yet educated buyers will want to mix its offerings with the many other markets that fill in the gaps and inconsistencies in its offerings. (to be continued on page 8)

LSU System Approves Five-Year Capital Outlay Plan

For several years, the higher educational systems have lived with a capital outlay budget that at one time involved a fifteen-year backlog owing to the appropriation of money at a rate far beneath the rate of required repairs and campus expansion. In an effort to lend some rationality to this desperate situation, the LSU System has approved a five-year plan for capital improvements on all campuses. Viewable online via the LSU Faculty Senate [“text and report archive”](#) page, the plan has been conveniently displayed as a priority list of projects, a campus-by-campus list of projects, and a year-by-year project start-up spreadsheet. First up for the LSU A&M campus: the long-awaited upgrade of the sewer system.

Louisiana Association of Educators Issues Report Card for Legislators

The Louisiana Association of Educators tracks the performance of both state Senators and Representatives, ranking them both on their voting records with respect to education and with regard to their advocacy and service, whether for K–12 or for higher education. The results can be surprising, with some legislators who make a noise about supporting education scoring rather lower than anticipated. The report card can be scrutinized via the link on the LSU Faculty Senate [“text and report archive”](#) page.

Reports Show Number of Transfer Students, Enrollment on Decline

Those little birds that fly by the windows of important people report that, according to recent data sets, the community and technical colleges are not producing anywhere near an adequate number of graduates to create a substantial cadre of transfer students for the four-years colleges and universities. Similar birds also report that the Board of Regents' new CORE 4 requirements are likely to produce a nine percent enrollment decline on the LSU campus as well as proportional declines at other four-year institutions.

Northern Life Faces Class-Action Suit

The latest installment in the retirement fund saga is a new class-action suit against retirement fund vendor Northern Life Insurance Company, the precursor to ING with reference to accounts for Louisiana higher education employees. It is very likely that those who currently hold ING retirement portfolios may have, at one time, been serviced by Northern Life Insurance. For more information and to ascertain your rights and possible settlement options, visit the [web site](#).

Klei Brings Common Sense to Sabbatical Evaluation

In a burst of common sense, the LSU University Planning Council, despite having no elected members but owing to the wise leadership of Tom Klei, has revised its memorandum concerning sabbatical application, moving away from the odd criteria of the Harold Silverman era (e.g., sabbatical seekers must travel, whether or not LSU provides support) and stressing the research record of the applicant, the coherence and feasibility of the proposed project, and underlining the variety of ways in which a sabbatical may be used. Thanks to good old Tom O'ORED for restoring clear thinking to the sabbatical enterprise.

Flagship Campus Takes Torpedo from AAUP

The long-awaited AAUP report on the Ivor van Heerden and the Homberger cases is out and on public view. Sparsely titled *Academic Freedom and Tenure: Louisiana State University*, the July 2011 report may be read [online](#).

SPECIAL FEATURE (continued)

Positioning itself in the antithetical position to Whole Foods is The Fresh Market, which frees buyers from the pseudo-ideological constipation of Whole Foods and which mesmerizes them with a relentless, breathlessly cheerful baroque-to-classical background sound curtain but which continues to face some quality-control problems. When Fresh Market opened, it served to sharpen the service standards in other Baton Rouge groceries, but, in the long run, the entropy in our under-trained workforce is catching up to it (or, rather, running it down). The produce section at Fresh Market has fallen off, with the loose mixed salad turning into a muddle of wilted leaves and the fruit selection favoring size rather than scrumptiousness. Fresh Market continues to suffer, and suffer badly, from inadequate training of deli personnel, who never seem to know how to slice imported meat delicacies and who are few in number. Like Whole Foods, it uses substantial numbers of immigrant laborers (for example, in the sushi section) whose compensation and benefit packages might raise eyebrows even on a cold salmon. On the other hand, the meat selection at Fresh Market, although seldom rich in organic offerings, has been on the rise, as evidenced by the introduction of USDA prime grade cuts and some enhancements in the poultry section. The great virtue of Fresh Market is its comparative freedom from house brands and the temptation to buy cheap that they present to browsers. The peanut butter at Fresh Market, for example, is sugar-free, whereas that at Whole Foods contains the euphemistic evaporated cane syrup. Also commendable is the ice cream case, which extends its chilly embrace to Ciao Bella products, which cannot be found at Whole Foods or anywhere else. Unfortunately, that case is just around the corner from the bakery aisle, which, like that at Whole Foods, started out going great guns (or perhaps great buns) but has now succumbed to local taste, dumping its delicate Europe-inspired cakes in favor of overly sweet and coarsely overstated cupcakes and worse (to be fair, the à la carte bakery case and the nearby tables continue to offer some admirable sweet morsels). One would do better to walk up the boulevard to La Madeleine, where there are at least a few acceptable pastries. Fresh Market is also both laudable for its regular rotation of new products but susceptible to criticism for its fickleness (the inimitable Niederegger marzipan and dark chocolate bars, for example, have disappeared to make way for junk candy). Fresh Market is a great resource for the discerning academic gourmet but it needs a trained staff and an ambitious manager to maintain its trajectory.

One of the more surprising option is Calandro's, with its two locations in the old-money Our-Lady-of-Mercy midtown zone and out in prosperous southeast Baton Rouge. Visitors to Calandro's must first get past the staff, which abounds in offbeat attitude and which seems to serve as a triage point for people who need to go into be-happy training on an emergency basis. Once over the hurdle of the mercurial staff, the visitors re-enters the world of Julia Child and Paul Bocuse: a world of specialty products and almost stunning variety of bottled, canned, and boxed delicacies. Almost anything one wants—even German sheet gelatin—can be found somewhere in Calandro's, but, then, there is also a vast store of what one doesn't want, including cheese that picks up a refrigerated smell from age-old coolers. Calandro's maintains its old-style would-be preeminence by locking down the supply of USDA prime and other top-quality meat in the Baton Rouge area as well as by offering one of the best local sausage selections east of Lake Charles. Calandro's is also a study in the merits and demerits of outsourcing, with its contract wine shop winning high awards but its leased-out bakery never rising to the standards of its shelves. Produce, too, needs a big refresher; it's all well and good to have fifty varieties of capers on the shelves, but if the lettuce is limp or the rhubarb wretched, then customers will favor newer marketing concepts. Calandro's plays a huge role in ensuring a full range of foodstuffs for discerning patrons but it is endangered owing to uneven managerial attention.

That managerial attention might be best found at the inimitable Calvin's Market in Bocage, where the buoyant Calvin is always ready to help customers and where something pleasant is always found despite the old-fashioned and somewhat unappetizing "look" of his establishment. Calvin's earns kudos for its reliable of supply of local and near-local products, whether Bergeron candied pecans or pickled watermelon rinds or plain old andouille. What Calvin has accomplished against the competition and supply-chain efficiencies of Whole Foods, just across the busy street, is nothing short of amazing, although he, too, needs to catch up on trends in baking that will leave his bagged soft breadstuffs far behind (Charles Delmont, where are you now?). In the "Calvin's category"—among those markets that are at least staying on the bubble—is Maxwell's, with several locations but with some work to do with regard to display (the old-fashioned shelves and refrigerator cases make Maxwell's offerings look older and more tired than they are, although a serving of the cheese fries from the deli can overcome almost any aversion). And, then, in the runner-up position we have the perennial Albertsons, which, as it has moved down the prestige and economic chain, has become a sort of underappreciated oasis for ethnic food products. Stumbling into success, Albertsons has been forced to cater to a succession of underprivileged, resettled groups, with the result that it offers an amazing number of international products (if one can find them on its chaotic, overloaded, method-free shelves). It likewise is the last stand for local start-up companies whose Cajun products aren't moving on the shelves of chain stores in less gustatory regions of the country.

Academe has a big role to play in upscaling the cultured food chain. Almost all the blunders that the Newsletter detected result from lack of education, lack of international or intercultural experience, or just plain lack of this, that, or the other thing that education should supply. Before we set the goals of Louisiana higher education too high, perhaps we need a Dean of Bologna to ensure the congruency of our needs with the curriculum of the shelves.



The Next Search: Dean of Bologna

Pier Review Sets Sail

In an earlier issue of the Newsletter, we reported that LSU Benefits Advisory Committee Roger Laine has christened his boat "The Pier Review." That most productive of scholars and faculty governance officials has left the dry dock behind and has been spotted afloat in Lake Pontchartrain, as evidenced by this action photograph recorded by Faculty Senate on-the-go webcams.



Tip of the Month: JPL MARS LANDER VIDEO

Those who appreciate quiet elegance or who tire of action films packed with crashing sound effects will rejoice in the latest joint animation effort from NASA and Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). Bearing the simple, even pedantic title "Mars Science Lander Curiosity Rover Animation" (who needs verbs or adjectives when nouns are so expressive?), this eleven-minute video portrays the entire "Curiosity" mission, from initial space cruise through soil analysis, in smoothly time-compressed video and with only subtle rocket- and equipment-related sounds as narrative prompts. Linking high-tech with the age of (near-)silent films, this understated yet dazzling video captures the lonely heroism of space travel from a mixed cybernetic and engineering viewpoint which includes views of the planet as seen by the spacecraft and its own sensing equipment and which probes such questions as sleep by artificially intelligent beings and purposive behavior by a single-minded, task-oriented creature (something not all that far off from single-purpose humans such as offensive coordinators or special-teams coaches). The video ends with a philosophically dazzling zoom out showing the solitary rover rolling off into the immensity of the Martian landscape, traveling, like Odysseus, in search of unknown future homelands. The video may be viewed on [YouTube](#) or on some [specialist sites](#).



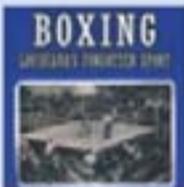
Lunchtime Lagniappe
At Capitol Park Museum

2011 FALL SERIES
WEDNESDAYS
AT NOON

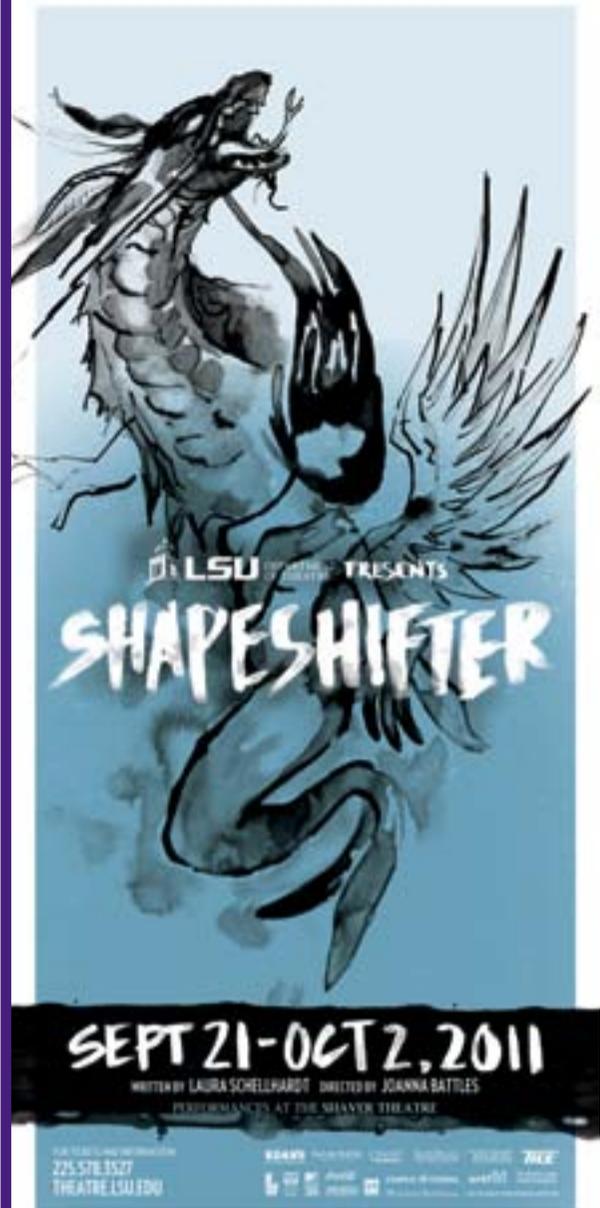
A free series of lively talks on local history designed for locals and downtown workers on their lunch break.

Programs are held each Wednesday during October and last 30 minutes with a question and answer period at the end. Guests are welcome to bring their lunch and may come and go as their schedules require. Join us!

Refreshments and box lunches will be provided by the Louisiana State Museum Friends for a small donation.

	October 5 Spanish Contribution to the American Revolution
	October 12 Roseland Terrace: A History in Pictures
	October 19 Boxing: Louisiana's Forgotten Sport
	October 26 Columnist Smiley Anders on "Writing Is Better than Working for a Living."

440 North Fourth Street • Baton Rouge, LA 70802 • ph: 225.342.5428
<http://ism.art.state.la.us/BR/br.html>



LSU THEATER PRESENTS
SHAPESHIFTER
SEPT 21-OCT 2, 2011
WRITTEN BY LAURA SCHELDHARDT DIRECTED BY JOHANNA BATTLES
PERFORMANCES AT THE SHAWNEE THEATRE
225.578.3527
THEATRE.LSU.EDU

LSU Theater Mainstage
Season Opening
Shapeshifter
Preview: Sep 21, Wednesday
Sneak Preview: Sep 22, Thursday
Opening: Sep 23, Friday - Oct 2, Sunday
Time: 7:30pm. 2:00pm for Sunday
Ticket Price: \$12 - students
\$15 - senior citizen,
LSU faculty and staff
\$18 - adults
For tickets or information, call LSU Theater Box Office at 225-578-3527 or visit www.theater.lsu.edu.

