

9-2014

Faculty Senate Newsletter, September 2014

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/senate-pubs>

Recommended Citation

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College, "Faculty Senate Newsletter, September 2014" (2014). *Newsletter*. Paper 36.
<http://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/senate-pubs/36>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Senate at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Newsletter by an authorized administrator of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact gcoste1@lsu.edu.



Faculty Senate Newsletter

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

One of the favorite processes among those who study contemporary culture is disaggregation, the breaking apart of previously bundled ideas, resources, or experiences. Living in what might be described as the “à la carte” age requires a readiness to accept a degree of genial incoherence and thereby to increase the range and economy of selection at the expense of getting any reasonable facsimile of the big picture. Musical albums become downloaded singles; meals dissipate into fats, “carbs,” sodium, sugar, and an assortment of nutrients; books centrifugalize into first articles, then abstracts, then executive summaries, and finally into citations or, worse, citation tallies.

What has gone unnoticed, in the conservative academy, is the degree to which the fashion for disaggregation has already upended administrative structures even while old-fashioned, highly aggregated structures continue to flourish at the middle-management level. In Louisiana, the wave of searches for top-level administrators, whether state commissioners or university system heads or campus presidents or chancellors, has demonstrated that the most successful candidates are those who are most able to assert the disaggregation of their supposed administrative talents from their equally supposititious academic credentials. Thus, a typical candidate for a top, senior position must assert a kind of emotional sympathy for this, that, and the other discipline but dare not present himself or herself as a chemist, musician, or sociologist lest he or she be dismissed as a pedant with only local skills. A successful candidate must present himself or herself as completely disaffiliated from any particular group or skill set and yet capable of doing everything, albeit in no particular way.

The desire for an abstract, disaggregated top-level leader clashes with the expectation that middle management will remain fully aggregated: that, say, a Dean of Art and Design will not only know and practice at least some of the arts but will fight for his or her college and its welfare, even when territorial or proprietary behavior damages or endangers the institution as a whole. The aggregation of middle management with a particular subset of departments is often infectious, leading faculty to imagine that their interests abide in the success of a department. More often than not, the reverse is true; faculty stand to do more, to find more support and garner more fame, by leveraging affiliation with a large institution that serves the general public and academic interest than by clinging to department or college loyalties.

In academe today, we hear a great deal about interdisciplinarity, about crossing the borders and the silos resulting from several centuries of internal Balkanization. The first step toward realizing the dream of interdisciplinarity might be completing of the disaggregation project. Many if not most faculty presently resent leaders whom they see as without any disciplinary or college loyalties, but that resentment arises in part from the perception that pleasing the middle management—helping the Dean or the Vice-Provost with this or that territory-relevant project—involves aiding and abetting the implicit “state of war,” as Thomas Hobbes called it, with the upper management. A heroic experiment might involve disconnecting Deans from their putative disciplinary areas and then charging those Deans with developing programs to which faculty members might subscribe themselves. Thus, the Dean of Science might be re-designated simply as “Dean 1”; the Dean of Humanities as “Dean 2”; the Dean of Music and Art as “Dean 3”; and so on. Portfolio-free, these Deans would then set about developing whatever genuinely inventive programs that they fancy might induce faculty members to join their ranks. An engineering Dean, for example, might create programs in the history of invention that would induce historians or sculptors to defect from their traditional colleges and decamp to the engineering laboratories. Meanwhile, an engineer who had “had it” with finding ways to accelerate the functions of iPhones might head over to the former Dean of Music in the hope of planning a new program in brass instrument functionality improvement.

The benefits of such a plan would be manifold. Deans would become at once more responsive to faculty members, whose memberships in their disaggregated “colleges” they would seek, and also less enthralled to the administration, which presently keeps them under a heavy thumb and under the fear of doing anything other than promoting their isolated competence areas. In the long run, upper administrations would have less to worry about, for the urge to win, to emerge as the Dean or similar official with the most loyal faculty members from any discipline and with the most innovative programs, would work better than fear in encouraging productivity and inventiveness. Interdisciplinary research would flourish while neglected disciplines, especially those left behind in the rush to promote STEM education, would get a new lease on life, if only because every Dean would be counting every enlistment, even from modest bookworms.

The present system, in which upper-level leaders pretend to know both nothing and everything while middle management pretends to know some one thing in excruciating detail but to have no ambition to deal with everything is not working, indeed is a strange mix of puppet theater (oppressed and often well-meaning Deans dangling from system-level strings) and treachery (university “unit” heads trying to find ways to work around the top dogs while professing deep commitments to whatever the highest leaders regard as worthy of deep commitments). It is time for bold experiments that allow faculty to choose the programs to which they will deliver their talents and that allows more and better leaders to emerge among those with disciplinary and administrative talent, not only one or the other.



Kevin Cope

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-------|
| President's Welcome..... | 1 |
| Higher Education Headliner; Nicholson Repatriation Expands LSU..... | 2 |
| Monthly Movie Review..... | 3 |
| Water Campus Ceaspool Splashes Commissioner Candidate; Bell Rings in New Year of Longer Contracts; Regents Re-Enshrine Course Articulation Matrix; Wise Council Sticks to 24-Hour Limit | 4 |
| Capitol Park Museum Advertisement..... | 5 |
| Louisiana Association of Educators Launches Higher Education Legislative Alert System Summer; Case of the Missing Candidates: TRSL Elections; Southern University Faculty Senate Votes No Confidence, Scores in Media; Shorts Travel Still Pushing Malaysian Airlines..... | 6 |
| Primer on the OGB Crisis; Master Plan Maybe Losing Master Cylinder..... | 7 |
| Primer on the OGB Crisis con't; Chief Rabalais Unveils Security App..... | 8 |
| Lifestyle Feature..... | 9 |
| Summer Salary Orgy at LSU, Grambling, LA Tech; Roth IRA Emerging in HRM; Retirement: Steps Forward, Backward, and Sideways..... | 10 |
| Education Reduces Game Interest, Triggers Groupon Approach; Tidy Anti-Butt Handout Scores Design Success; Booking Blockades Bookstore, Stymies Outreach | 11 |
| “Justice in America” Showcases Rushing Legal Nightmare; New McNeese Radio Station Beams Faculty Spotlights; Florida Faculty Senate Ejects LSU Search Agent; AAUP On the Brink of Releasing LSU from Censure | 12 |
| Glass Ceiling Cracking at LSU; Gala Marks SUSLA Faculty Senate Rebirth; Want to Find out Who's Naughty and Nice in the Legislature?; Logo Levitation Lifts Calls of Questioners | 13 |
| Cyber Security Center Activates Faculty Reconnaissance; Noel Collection Embarks On Unprecedented Access Project; Olinde Center Wow, Raises Eyebrows; New Mace Comes in at \$7K..... | 14 |
| Middleton Library Listens to Students' Needs—24/5 Experiment in Progress..... | 15 |
| Newsletter Influence Yields Copycat Success; Tip of the Month: Jovial Brand Organic Einkorn Cookies; Food Truck Shatters Monopoly, Combos FS and Auxiliary Triumph..... | 16 |
| A.G.'s Corner..... | 17-18 |
| Monthly Movie Review continued; Lifestyle Feature continued..... | 19 |
| LSU University to Host “March With Congressman John Lewis” on Oct. 21..... | 20 |

Higher Education Headliner

By: Amy Catania and Nate Campbell

Jeffrey Campbell is a passionate and dedicated member of Louisiana State University. He believes in doing things “the LSU way.”

Almost twenty years ago, Mr. Campbell came to LSU from a small town just outside of Lafayette in order to begin his career at LSU. His first job was as an assistant ticket manager with the Athletic Department. In working for the university, he came to realize that LSU is more than just a collection of buildings and disparate individuals; it is a way of life. As Mr. Campbell states, “It is a passion; it gets in your blood.” Today, Mr. Campbell is the Senior Director of Administrative Services, Risk Management, and Parking. In this position, Mr. Campbell works closely with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), campus police, and the university administration.

One of the major challenges for the department is that many employees have reached retirement age. Thus hiring and training new personnel is of primary concern. Mr. Campbell wants his new hires to be knowledgeable and friendly; he takes customer service very seriously. He would like anyone who visits the parking and transportation office to get their questions answered quickly and efficiently. If personnel at the window cannot answer a question, ideally they should be able to direct the individual to the right place the first time with no run-around. For Mr. Campbell, this is an integral part of his department’s mission.

Another goal for the department is to improve the computer mainframe so that permits can be ordered and sent out efficiently and easily with minimal errors or hassle to the consumer. Right now, as the system stands, parking permits are available through limited means. In addition, paying tickets can be problematic under the current system, but this could be improved through a more user-friendly interface. Mr. Campbell wants to focus on maximizing convenience through system modifications.

For Mr. Campbell, the human element is incredibly important. As LSU continues to expand both in population and physical size, parking has become an issue capable of arousing intense passions. Mr. Campbell believes that to solve the perceived problems with parking, the LSU community must fundamentally re-conceive parking as a convenience rather than a privilege, and his department as a “convenience-driven entity” — one that is self-sustaining, with no government subsidies. Revenue is derived from parking permit fees, visitor parking, violations, and a percentage of game day parking permits. As a result, prices will need to reflect demand around campus in order for the department to achieve its mission of self-sustainability.

Contrary to popular belief, there is enough parking

on campus for everyone, but it is on the periphery, requiring students to walk what they might consider to be inconvenient distances. On some other campuses, parking is just as peripheral, but outside infrastructure allows for greater mobility. In the future, Mr. Campbell believes that LSU parking will be vertical, with more high-rise parking structures than traditional lots, but this will require greater revenue streams. In other words, there will need to be a trade-off between higher fees and greater convenience in the future.

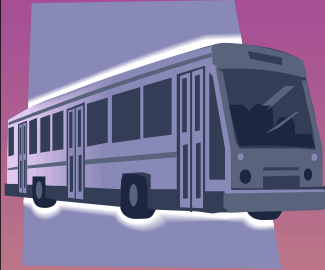
Two other commonly-held misconceptions deal with parking after 4:30 PM on weekdays and violations. For the former, many believe that they do not need permits after 4:30 PM, but in fact, while all permits are welcome after 4:30 PM, they are still required. If a permit is not displayed between 4:30 PM and 10 PM, that vehicle may be ticketed. As for violations, many believe that those writing tickets are doing so with malice aforethought. In fact, their main concern is safety, not only for individuals on campus, but for the environment. Although violations are an important revenue stream, Mr. Campbell would prefer there be fewer violations, demonstrating an increased awareness of safety considerations both during the university’s hours of operation and during special events.

Game days, as a partnership between the university and the city, provide particular challenges for Parking and Transportation Services. Although departmental personnel work closely with the city, a major problem is the static infrastructure of city streets and surrounding environs, which have remained largely unchanged since the 1960s. While stadiums of comparative size, such as the Superdome in New Orleans, are situated near major thoroughfares, Tiger Stadium is situated far from major highways and so poses logistical challenges for both university and city personnel. Unfortunately, there is not much the university can do to remedy this situation, but new concepts, like the contraflow model that has been adopted for this season, will help to alleviate some of the strain on surrounding thoroughfares.

Athletics are not only an important revenue stream, but serve to create the very unique culture that originally drew Mr. Campbell to the university. When asked about this culture, and what makes it unique, Mr. Campbell responded, “I think it’s the diversity, the willingness to accept people. When you come here on a game day, no matter who you are, no matter what you look like, be it a gator or a large elephant... whoever... people are willing to share whatever they got.” For Mr. Campbell, this sense of inclusion is what makes LSU special and is part of the “LSU way,” a philosophy that he works to bring to every element of his life be it professional or personal.



Jeffrey Campbell



NICHOLSON REPATRIATION EXPANDS LSU

Sometimes the sloppiness of record-keeping in Louisiana can work to the advantage of higher education. In recent discussions about the improvement of Nicholson Extension, the long street that abuts the A&M College of Engineering as well as the Ourso Business School, LSU Facility Services personnel had sought to compel—or maybe just encourage—city officials to maintain a road that, according to the tradition, belonged to the metropolitan bailiwick. As Gomer Pyle in the old television sitcom might say, “Surprise, surprise, surprise!” No one could locate any records indicating to whom Nicholson Extension belonged. The city of Baton Rouge, seeing a liability, readily defaulted to the assumption that the orphaned street must belong to LSU, ceded its authority, and discretely scooted down the road. LSU A&M will now be able to do as it pleases with a street that defines the southeast flank of the campus; let us hope that planners devise appealing ideas.



Nicholson Extension

MONTHLY MOVIE REVIEW

Snowpiercer (Bong Joon-ho, 2013), Reviewed by Carl Freedman (2014)

2UOMD16LCE1



Bong Joon-ho may well be the most renowned Korean filmmaker of his generation, at least in the United States; and the fact that, with *Snowpiercer*, he has now made his first film in English can only enhance his reputation here. His Korean-language work is impressive both for its variety and for its consistently high quality. To me, his real masterpieces so far are two of the most extraordinary crime films of recent years: *Memories of Murder* (2003) and *Mother* (2009). The former is a kind of police procedural, but one that virtually re-invents the genre. It is set in a relatively small Korean town, in which the nation's first serial killer chooses to ply his ghastly trade. The local cops have no idea how to deal with such a thing. Their technological resources are primitive (a DNA sample must be sent all the way to the United States for laboratory testing), and their understanding of police work doesn't extend much beyond knowing how to beat up people who they think might possibly be guilty of something. There is considerable—and appropriate—humor in the portrayal of the local police, who manage to combine some of the characteristics of the Keystone Kops with certain qualities of the Gestapo. As often, Bong also contrasts the insularity of the Korean provinces with the more sophisticated (though here, as often, unseen) culture of Seoul—from which, in this film, a special police investigator arrives who, unlike his more rustic colleagues, actually knows something about crime and detection. Among the more daring aspects of *Memories of Murder* is the particular way that it unflinchingly confronts—as it is nearly impossible to imagine a big-budget Hollywood film about serial murder confronting—the fact that serial killing can be not only an extraordinarily difficult crime to solve (since it tends to lack the sort of “rational” motive often crucial to cracking a case) but sometimes an impossible one.

Mother is perhaps even more original and powerful. It centers on a mentally disabled but generally amiable young man who lives with—and even sleeps in the same bed with—his mother. When the small Korean town in which they live is shocked by the brutal murder of a young woman, the son is indicted for the crime; some circumstantial evidence seems to point to him, and he lacks any clear alibi. His mother secures an attorney for her son, but the lawyer turns out to be both incompetent and corrupt; and the mother decides that she can depend on no one but herself to establish her son's innocence. Any film that deals with both murder and a strange mother-son relationship is bound to recall *Psycho* (1960), with which *Mother* has some real affinities—though its narrative structure is quite different from that of Hitchcock's film. The film's resolution is surprising even though—or rather, perhaps, partly because—most of the truth is, as in many of the best mysteries, “hidden” in plain view all along.

Then there is *The Host* (2006), Bong's turn at a monster movie. The monster itself—a huge amphibian creature that emerges from Seoul's River Han and that seems quite comfortable chasing, eating, and kidnapping people on dry land—is so obviously and hilariously a CGI construct that it is hard to take it with full seriousness; and yet the film does have its insistently serious aspects. For one thing, a political theme is sounded in the monster's origin. It seems to have come into being as the result of various toxic chemicals that an official at a US Army base has ordered to be dumped into the Han; the official knows that what he is doing violates regulations, but simply doesn't care that a convenient way of disposing of the chemicals will poison Korea's natural environment. But there is plenty of humor in the film too. *THE HOST* focuses mainly on a family that tries to rescue a young female relative who has been kidnapped by the monster; and the girl's valiant would-be saviors—the mentally dim but well-intentioned father; the elderly grandfather who runs a small snack bar; the aunt who takes part in national archery competitions; the uncle who was once a pro-democracy student radical and who is now a jobless graduate in democratic South Korea—often resemble a goofy family in a situation comedy. But here the goofy family must ultimately come to terms with the death of the kidnapped girl, the film's most completely sympathetic and admirable character. A youngster of extraordinary resourcefulness, courage, and compassion, she saves an even younger boy whom the monster has also kidnapped, and almost succeeds in saving herself.

It is not surprising that a filmmaker who can successfully and almost seamlessly include abundant cinematic laughs in movies about a serial killer who murders women and a monster that kills children should have begun his career in feature films with an outright comedy, though a rather weird and dark one: *Barking Dogs Never Bite* (2000). The film features much slapstick and numerous visual jokes—the influence of both Buster Keaton and Jacques Tati is manifest—and also a hilarious, scathing satire of the South Korean university system from the viewpoint of an unemployed junior academic attempting to secure a teaching position (and the portrait may not seem entirely alien to younger academics in other national educational systems too). What really sets *Barking Dogs Never Bite* apart from anything that could possibly come out of Hollywood is, however, that much of the film's humor is based on attempts to kill and injure various cute little dogs. In America, we are accustomed to being assured that no animals were actually harmed in the making of a film; but usually this disclaimer comes in small letters and is buried somewhere among the film's final credits. In Bong's film, the same assurance is given right at the beginning, in big letters: and before long the viewer is sincerely grateful for it.

With *Snowpiercer*, Bong has turned to yet another cinematic genre: the post-apocalyptic science-fiction thriller. This film does not seem to me quite as original or interesting as the director's Korean-language work. In particular, the brilliant wit that we have come to expect from Bong is here somewhat muted, though not absent altogether; perhaps the director reckoned that American filmgoers would be made uncomfortable by his signature synthesis of the humorous with the deadly serious. Still, *Snowpiercer* is miles ahead of most Hollywood science fiction in intelligence and political nerve. It has been widely analyzed in great detail as an allegory of capitalism, socialism, and revolution; and commentators have argued for deep affinities between Bong's movie and various of the most influential and sophisticated theories of our current economic moment—from accelerationist celebrations of capitalism's ineluctably self-destructive tendencies, to microeconomic critiques of the labor process under the now defunct state socialism of the Soviet Union. I have no space here to engage such issues in the depth they deserve. I will only add one or two thoughts of my own to an extensive and robust critical conversation.

Despite the film's unusually high level of economic and political sophistication (derived, presumably, from Bong's experience as an anti-capitalist radical since his student days), the basic framing situation of the movie should seem familiar enough to any connoisseur of on-screen planetary disaster. We are given to understand that, prior to the time present of the film, the threat that global warming posed to humanity became so undeniably obvious that the world's governments—finally—got together to take decisive action against it. A certain chemical (perhaps inspired by ice-nine in Kurt Vonnegut's popular novel *Cat's Cradle* [1963]) was injected into the planet's upper atmosphere with the intention of cooling things off. The scheme worked much too well. Not only was global warming reversed, but the earth was plunged into a planet-wide ice age; a frigid climate took hold all over the world's surface, and human life was rendered impossible.

(Story continued on p. 19)

WATER CAMPUS CESSPOOL SPLASHES COMMISSIONER CANDIDATE



West Liberty University
President and Commissioner
Candidate Robin Capehart

Those who have followed the search for the new Louisiana Commissioner of Higher Education have expressed surprise at the less than stellar pool of finalists. Why dip down, in the search for candidates, to community college systems in diminutive Rhode Island, or why bend over to a center of cultural achievement such as Lubbock? The full story remains untold, but regular readers of the *Newsletter* will recall that our spring semester 2014 issues exposed the full story of the emerging “Water Campus” and revealed its extensive ties with the petrochemical industry. Now that story extends with the simultaneous disclosure, by watchdog periodical *Buzzflash*, that West Liberty University, current front office for Commissioner candidate Robin Capehart, belongs to a lucky ensemble of universities that closed lucrative mineral rights deals with the petrochemical industry and that, in particular, receive substantial revenues from fracking operations. The same article, in one of those “Louisiana coincidences,” reveals the extent of putative collaboration between Water Institute Director Charles Groat and fracking company Plains Exploration and Production; Groat, *Buzztruth* reports, received a cool \$1,600,000.00 in stock in that company. Everybody into the cesspool!

BELL RINGS IN NEW YEAR OF LONGER CONTRACTS

For several years, the LSU Faculty Senate has worked along with senior members of the instructor cadre to increase job security and stability for those who have labored long in contingent positions. This effort began bearing fruit in the spring of 2014, when LSU Provost Stuart Bell convened a focus group of instructors for the purpose of assessing working rules and conditions and of recognizing long-term contributions by those lacking formal job security. First among the recommendations was the according, to instructors with more than six years of service, of renewable three-year contracts. A more extended deliverable: the setting of an example for the many campuses in the state where instructors must spend most of their time looking for jobs in the event that the fountain of Louisiana academic employment should run dry. Congratulations to LSU A&M Provost Stuart Bell as well as to LSU System President King Alexander for making the right move and for doling out justice and equity to deserving members of the academic team.



REGENTS RE-ENSHRINE COURSE ARTICULATION MATRIX

After several attempts to create a common course numbering system through dually appointed committees, the Regents have quietly voted in not only another “course articulation matrix” but have also supplemented it with a common course numbering system, a requirement of Act 356 of the 2009 legislature. In imitation of similar systems in Texas and Florida, the Louisiana common course numbering protocol quietly redefines “learning” as success. Courses prove equivalent not when they deliver equal intellectual challenge, but rather when they provide students with an equivalent opportunity for success in the more advanced courses to which they are prerequisites. The long interval between the conceptualizing of a common course numbering program in 2009 and the implementation of that program in 2014 may have resulted from the fact that previous committees that included faculty and administrators had detected serious problems with the idea of “equivalence,” after which those committees dissolved. The *Regents Recap* for May 21, 2014 alleges that “faculty representatives from all public colleges and universities” will “come together” to develop the matrix, but information on who those faculty members might be, when they meet, and who has appointed them remains obscure.



WISE COUNCIL STICKS TO 24-HOUR LIMIT



The saga of the industrialization of Louisiana higher education continued with an embrace by the Regents of timekeeping worthy of the crazy factory in Charlie Chaplin’s film *Modern Times*. The first meeting of the WISE Council, which administers the WISE fund, the awkwardly named “Workforce and Innovation for a Stronger Economy” emolument, occurred at 12:30 pm on June 24th, with the announcement appearing at 1:15 pm on the 23rd, barely enough to qualify as the legally mandated twenty-four hour notice requirement (or perhaps twenty-three hours and temporal pocket change...). The WISE fund allocates \$40,000,000.00 that the state previously claimed not to have to the promotion of curricula pertinent to the cultivation of trained workers for certain favored vocations in the technical fields. Although top-level administrators continue to promote the WISE initiative to faculty as a way to pump more money into education overall and thereby enhance the opportunities for every discipline, evidence of this re-circulation remains elusive. The WISE Board includes no faculty members or education advocates, but counts among its members three minder-members from the governor’s office along with System heads whose employment also depends on Board members answerable to the governor.

This Week at the Capitol Park Museum



Spanishtown Road at North 7th Street

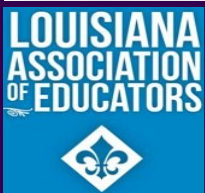
Saturday, Oct. 4 | 9:15 a.m.
Spanish Town Walking Tour
Tours begin at 9:15 a.m. at the Capitol Park Museum. Patrons are advised to dress comfortably and prepare for periods of brisk walking. Attendance is limited to the first 25 guests, with reservations strongly recommended. During inclement weather, walks will be moved indoors for an informative talk including modern and historic images. Tours generally last between 60 and 90 minutes. For more information, call [225.342.5428](tel:225.342.5428).



Louisiana Capitol Park Museum entrance to exhibits

Saturday, Oct. 4 | 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Capitol Park Museum Art Appreciation Day
Join us to celebrate Art Appreciation Day! This program is designed specifically for families to foster appreciation and understanding of art related to Museum exhibitions. Families will tour the museum's galleries in search of exhibits featuring artists and their artwork. Children can create their own work of art inspired by what they learned during the tour.

The Capitol Park Museum, 660 N. Fourth St., is wheelchair accessible.
For more information, visit www.crt.state.la.us/museum.



Louisiana abounds with public notice laws, yet even those participants in higher education policy development often wonder how and when a new issue suddenly comes into the limelight. True, Louisiana requires advance posting of all public meetings and of most actions by public agencies, yet, time and again, proposals seem to emerge out of the void and gain approval in a flash. The reason: Meeting and action postings need only come into view twenty-four hours before the event and need only be posted at the venue or in the agency where the decision or discussion will occur. Even to detect all meetings, an interested party would need to circulate around state agencies pretty much 24/7 so as to discover postings as staff assistants tack them up on out-of-the-way doors.

To remedy the problem of timely access to information, the Louisiana Association of Educators (LAE) has created CAPWIZ, a free online utility that distributes notices of meetings, legislation, or any other governmental action related to higher education. CAPWIZ allows those who wish to comment on or otherwise engage with the higher education decision-making process to discover initiatives in as timely a fashion as possible in our short-notice state. Subscribers receive alerts of emergent actions as well as a newsletter. To subscribe to CAPWIZ, visit the [LAE homepage](#).

CASE OF THE MISSING CANDIDATES: TRSL ELECTIONS

The Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL), the quasi-private state agency that manages the state educational retirement program (although it disenfranchises all of those who participate in the Optional Retirement Program, denying that outcast group the right to vote in TRSL elections), declared an April 30th, 2014 deadline for the qualifying of candidates for upcoming vacancies on the TRSL Board of Trustees. One of those vacancies is the one measly seat allocated for the entirety of higher education. Months have gone by since the qualifying procedure, but internet searches have failed to turn up the identity of the higher education candidates. Perhaps that first-generation video game, *Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego*, might be retitled to query the whereabouts of apparently abducted higher education candidates.



SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE VOTES NO CONFIDENCE, SCORES IN MEDIA

The biggest event of the summer was surely the dramatic uprising by the Southern University (Baton Rouge) Faculty Senate, which, in a daring move, voted no confidence in Southern University System President Ronald Mason. Attracting a level of attention seldom seen in a media obsessed with LSU football, the southern Faculty Senate mounted a successful media as well as policy strategy, garnering almost daily coverage of a debate. Remarkably, the media strategy succeeded in part owing to an insistence of a media outage. Noting that public forums often give celebrity administrators the opportunity to commandeer the podium and to avoid detailed questions, Southern faculty governance officials turned down proposals for public debates and other showy events, demanding instead written responses to an assortment of finely-honed questions. Those questions addressed such matters as cost savings through a review of contracts signed with outside vendors; home rule for the Southern University campuses; campus-based direction of such services as enrollment management and information technology; and a host of accountability issues. When written responses were not forthcoming, the Southern University Faculty Senate snapped into action with a vigorously worded vote of no confidence, a vote that continues to steam, percolate, and otherwise incubate in the Southern University Board of Supervisors. More on this story to come; meanwhile, applause to the Southern Faculty Senate for its strategic management of a major crisis.



Southern University Faculty Senate President Thomas Miller

HAARLEMMEERMEER (AMS) TO SEPANG (NEAR)

| | | | |
|---|----------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Roundtrip From \$1,574 | | AMS - KUL on Tue, 7/29 | KUL - AMS on Tue, 8/12 |
| 72 of 72 flights displayed | | | |
| Filter | | | |
| Price • Duration • Departure • Arrival • Airlines • Class • Fares • | | | |
| Sort | | | |
| Multiple Carriers | | | |
| AMS | KUL | AMS | KUL |
| Tue 11:35A | Tue 5:35P | Tue 2:50P | Tue 5:35P |
| 54421 Economy | to LHR 24h 5m | 54421 Economy | to LHR 20h 45m |
| MH1 | | MH1 | |
| Multiple Carriers | | | |
| KUL | AMS | KUL | AMS |
| Tue 10:10A | Tue 10:25P | Tue 10:10A | Tue 10:25P |
| MH4 Economy | to LHR 18h 15m | MH4 Economy | to LHR 18h 15m |
| BA444 | | BA444 | |

SHORTS TRAVEL STILL PUSHING MALAYSIAN AIRLINES

Folks who work in the *Newsletter* travel bureau believe that the State travel agency, Shorts Travel, should tailor its contracts in such a way that employees book flights on reputable carriers. Employees, our staffers affirm, should not travel on airlines with questionable safety records. Imagine the astonishment in the *Newsletter* office when, during a slow moment in the news cycle during late summer, a test of the Shorts system using an array of hypothetical Europe-to-Asian itineraries revealed that Shorts Travel was pushing, as suitable for state travelers, itineraries aboard troubled Malaysian Airlines as well as several other dubious aviation enterprises. A series of itineraries demonstrated the regular recurrence of slipshod carriers among the recommended, contract-compliant travel possibilities.



PRIMER ON THE OGB CRISIS

Colleagues from around the state have raised not only serious questions but puzzled brows as they attempt to unriddle the mystery of the extraordinary depletion of reserve funds and the resulting proposed changes at the Office of Group Benefits (OGB), which manages health care plans for the vast majority of state workers, including academic employees. The *Newsletter* is thus pleased to offer a very preliminary introduction to the problem, its history, and dangers associated with the solutions emanating from the office of the Louisiana Commissioner of Administration. Herewith is that summary.

Trouble at OGB began as far back as 2010, when OGB began stalling with regard to implementation of some aspects of “Obamacare” (an account of which delay is posted on the [LSU Faculty Senate web site](#)). A little more than a year later, Governor Jindal removed his own appointee from the position of OGB Executive Director owing to the refusal of that Director to countenance the depletion of the OGB reserve fund.

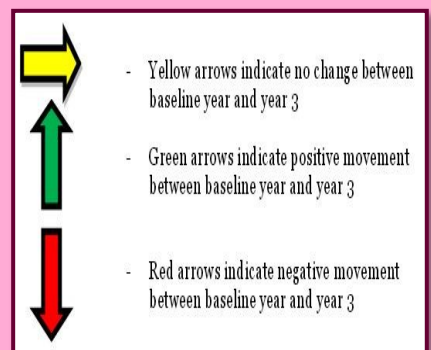
The reserve fund is, de facto, the current available cash balance of the OGB. OGB has always been a kind of management entity insofar as it supervises and handles the finances for a variety of medical and other insurance plans. In addition to specifying and monitoring the insurance plans and the contracts that underwrite them, OGB receives premium payments from participating employers (i.e., the state and its various agencies) and from “customers” (who also pay indirectly, through the state agency that employs them). The difference between what OGB receives from these two sources of premiums and what it pays to its contract, outsourced insurers is the money that comprises—that eventually accumulated into—the reserve fund. As of late 2011, that reserve fund, which, again, was constructed from premiums that are part of employees’ compensation package, had grown to \$595,000,000.00 (yes, that is over half a billion, a whole lot of money!). It is important to note that (a) this reserve fund, although a large sum, is not out of proportion to a plan that insures a quarter-million state employees, i.e., it amounts to approximately \$2,500.00 per person, which is considerably less than many people who have plans based on health savings accounts maintain as a balance; (b) this fund mounded up owing to a combination of good management and the overall good health practices of state employees, who, overall, submit fewer claims than does the general population; and (c) the reserve fund does not emanate from the general budget, but from monies that have been allocated to employees as part of their compensation and benefit package.

In 2012, the current state administration (the Jindal regime) began a push to privatize the OGB. Although the effort did not fully succeed owing to considerable resistance in the legislature, considerable damage was inflicted by the strategy to advance the privatization program. Arguing that it could make headway toward balancing the beleaguered state budget by reducing the cost of benefits, the governor’s office exercised its prerogatives by artificially reducing OGB premiums. Thus, the state began paying only a percentage of what it had previously paid, a state of affairs which met with little opposition because employees contributions to premiums were also reduced. This occurred, however, at a time when medical costs were, as they are now, rising. OGB thus entered a long-term money-losing position. It remained solvent by drawing down the reserve fund, i.e., by using previously accumulated surpluses to fend off the latent insolvency of the new actuarial regime. Over the two years since the draw-down began, the reserve fund has shrunk to less than \$250,000,000, a diminution of nearly 60%. Obviously, that downward trajectory cannot continue indefinitely.

Continued on p. 8

MASTER PLAN MAY BE LOSING MASTER CYLINDER

The Board of Regents has issued its year three review of the mast plan for Louisiana higher education. Remarkably thorough and, if not rich, at least loaded with data, this forty-page report delivers a mixed verdict with regard to a vast assortment of goals and metrics. Progress with respect to the various measures and targets are coded by green, yellow, and red arrows respectively indicating progress, standstill status, or decline. Plenty of green arrows grace these pages, but red arrows also raid the document. The bottom line, which appears at the end of the report, is that the rate of progress has steadily declined for the last three years. A big leap forward was made in the first year of the plan, but, since those opening furlongs, many institutions have fallen into or well behind the pack, yielding an overall progress rate around sixty percent, i.e., three out of every five selected measures have improved over the long term. That number may be a bit optimistic insofar as there is no complementary estimate of decline; three-fifths of Louisiana’s goals may have come nearer to hand, but the other two-fifths may either have remained at their previous distance or receded. Meanwhile, the Regents announced five target areas near and dear to industry (Advanced Manufacturing and Materials; Clean Technology and Energy; Coastal and Water Management; Digital Media and Enterprise Software; and Life Sciences and Bioengineering) without even a token genuflection to the arts, humanities, or social sciences. The obvious connection—that cultural naiveté arising from overly focused vocational education impairs the progress of even industry-friendly education—seems to have escaped the Regents’ notice.



Regents Looking for a Direction

PRIMER ON THE OGB CRISIS (continued from p. 7)

In effect, past employees are paying an extra tax. Their accumulated contributions to the reserve, which was designed to stabilize the OGB plans over the long term, are being used to compensate for earned contributions from the state (as employer). The money that is not being rendered to OGB—that employees have earned—is being used to cover other costs in the state budget while the employee payments that created the reserve are going to cover basic state expenses (patching potholes, buying patrol cars, whatever).

Some commentators have suggested that the drawing down of the reserve is also a strategy to make the OGB an easier target for bidders in an eventual renewal of the privatization campaign. Getting rid of the cash reserve effectively lowers the cost of buying OGB and its resources.

The current plan is to keep premiums at their current level and to deflect public criticism by revamping the schedule of benefits. The new benefit schedule represents a major change in the value of the OGB policies and a significant reduction in compensation to faculty and other staff members insofar as less value is delivered in exchange for premium payments. The state budget office itself has estimated that some participants in OGB plans may see an increase in cost of 47%. The increased costs result larger from a new slate of large copays; limitations on service; restrictions on selection of non-network providers; and increases in out-of-pocket expenses. The impact of the proposed changes is especially severe for retirees, who have few options and who have little representation.

We have now arrived at a moment where there is considerable public debate about this (see the “breaking” [story](#). Searching either [www.theadvocate.com](#) or [www.nola.com](#) will uncover a large array of news stories related to this issue. A commentary from State Treasurer John Kennedy can be found [online](#); please see also the [column](#) by State Representative Ted James. Southeastern Louisiana University Faculty Senate President James Kirylo has provided the following links to commentators in the “blogosphere” as well as to additional news sources: “[LouisianaVoice Provides some Deep Background into Consultants, Contacts and Administration’s OGB plans](#),” “[LouisianaVoice Learns of Jindal Plan to Force State etirees out of OGB](#),” “[Health Benefit Changes Planned for Louisiana State Workers](#),” “[State Employee Insurance Changing](#).”

On September 25th, the House Appropriations Committee held a marathon hearing at the request of Representative John Bel Edwards. Faculty governance officials from ALFS and LSUnited presented Faculty Senate resolutions from around the state and began an intensive dialogue with policymakers.



CHIEF RABALAIS UNVEILS SECURITY APP

Few campus police chiefs make headlines, but our favorite, Chief Lawrence Rabalais of the LSU A&M Police Department, is a nonstop trendsetter! The latest feather in Rabalais’s Geronimo-quality bonnet is his release of the new security app, “[LSU Shield](#).” This one—er, one tap—solution to the security challenge allows users to summon assistance from a variety of first responders, whether police, fire control, or EMS. Packed with astounding features, LSU Shield features “geo-fencing” that automatically detects the user’s location and summons the proper authorities, whether campus constabularies or public police departments. Well ahead of the “one LSU” curve, Rabalais’s magical app also functions on other campuses in the LSU System, automatically summoning assistance at LSUS just as well as it calls the Mounties at Eunice. The only minor omission from this offering is its availability only at the Google and the Apple app stores, with the results that the many academic users of Windows phones are left off the benefit train. All in all, Chief Rabalais and his team merit huge accolades for this innovative approach to personal safety on campus.



LSU Police Chief Lauwence Rabalais and colleagues discuss LSU SHIELD

Lifestyle Feature



The gradual autumnal cooling from which not even steamy Louisiana is exempt brings in its refreshing wake a renewed appetite for both classic desserts and for that tiny little truffle that puts a period on a gourmet meal. Gradually, the lust for trifles, galettes, and other fruit-based desserts or tea-time delicacies gives way to a yearning for nuts, nougats, jellies, ganaches, and, at the peak of the appetite pyramid, all that chocolate graces, coats, or otherwise enables. Among the most complex flavors and still largely a mystery of chemists and botanists, chocolate combines extraordinary flexibility—suitability for everything from a flank-steak rub to a compliment for cognac—with a curious rigidity, with an identity that is so inescapable that its flavor had best be used wisely. For many years, the outer reaches of chocolate possibility in under-grocered Louisiana was the occasional Toblerone bar that had somehow lost its way while tumbling down the

Alps. Today, fortunately, premium victualers from Shreveport to Grand Isle routinely stock a sometimes overwhelming abundance of chocolate options. The purpose of this feature is neither to rank nor even evaluate every chocolate option on the rack, but, rather, to look carefully at the options, the characteristics, and the optimal uses for nature's most perfect bean-based treat.

In most every upscale market nowadays—whether it be traditional grocers such as Kroger or Albertsons or upscale marketers such as Whole Foods or Fresh Market or niche marketers such as Cost Plus World Market—wandering shoppers tend to encounter three ranks of chocolate. In one display or aisle abide the generic, commercial-grade offerings that congregate under the heading “candy bar” and that may be dismissed by anyone who would not earn snickers from chortling (if snobbish) connoisseurs. Another aisle, usually near the flour, sugar, and cake mix offerings, features chocolates that American tradition judges suitable for baking purposes. Still a third zone, which is more often a display or nook than a traditional shelving area, presents an array of near-boutique and controlled-appellation, plantation-specific chocolates. The distinctions between what is actually found in the second and third sort of displays is more a matter of tradition than fact, yet it creates untold confusion for those seeking the perfect chocolate experience.

Over on the baking aisle, puzzled shoppers generally confront no less than three display zones. Smack-dab in the center of vision are what Germans might call the “*Hausmarke*” brands, brands that, as befits their central positioning in the display area, have, for decades, maintained high sales volume. It is easy enough to dismiss these chocolates or to fancy that they should migrate to the abyss of candy bars, yet history and culinary technique occasionally warrant the deployment of these beleaguered blocks. Always visible in such a zone is [Hershey's baking chocolate](#), which, although cheap, originated with a proprietary recipe in which sour cream imparted an identifiable “tang” to otherwise low-grade cocoa. Despite the shortcuts that devolve from mass production obligations, Hershey's, which otherwise has little to recommend it, still maintains its signature dairy-based tartness. It has a place, for example, in a traditional icing for a devil's food cupcake so long as the glaze is confected with an addition of (still more) sour cream so as to re-naturalize its classic flavor. Adjacent to the Hershey's baking bar, shoppers will find Baker's brand chocolate, an old-line bar from rival Kraft Foods that, like Hershey's, relies on a confusing nomenclature (“semi-sweet,” “bittersweet”) that omits specific cocoa percentages. Baker dispenses with the sour cream taste, making it a better choice for those looking for a cheap but acceptable route to a traditional chocolate “frosting.” Now and then, shoppers will encounter, in the mid-range, a bar or two of Milka, purportedly [Alpine milk chocolate](#). Milka, which has trademarked the color purple even more successfully than has LSU football, delivers products that merit the judgment applied to the famous purple cow in the renowned children's poem, to wit, “I never hope to see one.” Nevertheless, the product melts surprisingly well and could serve in the event that one needs a last-minute drizzle to accent a batter layer.

At the tip-top of the chocolate display on the baking aisle, chocolate-venerating pilgrims will find an array of products from the aforementioned manufacturers that fall loosely under the heading of “cocoa,” “cocoa” in this case being interpreted as a powder from which to decoct that popular winter drink, hot chocolate. Shoppers may prepare a decent hot cocoa beverage using any of these name-brand products, but far and away the best choice, for lovers of a wintry drink, is the admittedly rare [Ah!laska cocoa](#). Ah!laska features a playfully enthusiastic polar bear as its logo and as its spokesman. Despite its arctic-style branding, it presents itself as the only kosher cocoa on the market (well, the *Newsletter* staff did once meet a certain Rabbi Bruno, but the weighty name “Bruno” is usually reserved for brown, not white polar, bears, regardless of faith). Ah!laska is a little bit tricky in its presentation; two of its three varieties are slimmed down (low fat or non-dairy), but the original powder remains incomparable.

Down at the bottom of the baking aisle chocolate display is where the action really kicks up. The low zone is the favorite repository, among grocers, for high quality or boutique cocoa powders. Most every major chocolate firm has attempted to deliver a gold-standard cocoa, but none have managed to equal, either in quality or reliability or availability, [Droste](#). Although no longer an independent firm, Droste has maintained the integrity of the proprietary techniques that have made “Dutch process cocoa” synonymous with superiority. What is remarkable about Droste cocoa is the ease with which it transitions between its role as the principal flavoring ingredient in the classic hot chocolate drink and its suitability for inclusion in baking recipes. Pleasingly bitter but never acerbic, Droste interacts perfectly with the latent sweetness of milk while it also declares itself the perfect accent flavor in a marble cake. It can even dust the top of a cappuccino. The astounding depth of Droste may make it too potent for chocolate-intensive baked delights such as brownies, for which the milder cocoa of rival Ghirardelli provides a wider-base flavor spectrum. Warning: Ghirardelli cocoa is often pre-sweetened, meaning that sugar allotments in brownie recipes must be reduced.

The mention of Ghirardelli recalls what might be called transitional chocolates: chocolates that still hold a place on the baking supplies aisle but that have also upscaled to a degree that allows them to drift into the boutique display. [Ghirardelli](#) chocolate exemplifies this transition. It began as a boutique chocolate, caught fire in the marketplace, was soon downgraded into a baking offering owing to excessive availability and inadequate exclusivity, but now has found its way back into the boutique selections. The great contribution of Ghirardelli has been the introduction to a large market of dark chocolate (60% cocoa or greater) chocolate chips, a high-contrast, depth-abundant baking addition that has saved the chocolate-chip cookie from the surplus sweetness into which most American baking has degenerated. Like Ghirardelli, another California start-up, [Scharffenberger](#) developed a cult following, in part owing to the allure of its San Francisco heritage, which it shared with its Italian-denominated competitor. Scharffenberger did away with the complex processing associated with American firms such as Hershey in an attempt to recover a fundamental chocolate flavor and aroma. It predates the appellation-controlled, plantation-specific chocolates but it postdates the truly “American” chocolates that gave us the candy bar. Scharffenberger is thus a good choice when one seeks a direct, uncluttered, clean chocolate taste, for example when confecting a flour-based chocolate cake layer that will counterpoint a vanilla or orange glaze or icing. What will happen now that Scharffenberger has been acquired by Hershey's, allegedly with an agreement never to change the product, remains to be seen.

(Continued from p. 19)



SUMMER SALARY ORGY AT LSU, GRAMBLING, LATECH



In a state in which only three out of three dozen campuses received salary boosts, it would seem that summer, when most faculty receive no pay at all, might be a period of saving, but not so in either the LSU or the University of Louisiana schools, where the summer heat sizzles through the checkbooks.

While cleaning house at beleaguered Grambling, interim President Cynthia Warrick evidently broomed up some spare currency, conferring premium jobs on John Rosenthal, the new Vice-President for Research and Advancement, who will draw \$145K per annum; on Damon Wade, new Vice-President for Institutional Effectiveness and holder of a doctorate from online university [Walden](#), who will bag \$130K; and on Janet Guyden, whose CV cites a Ph.D. in the field of “Administration and Supervision,” who will grab \$145K per year in an institution where the average salary for a full professor tops out at \$63K. At least Grambling is paying the Presidential entourage a bit more than it presents to its new athletic director, Patricia Bibbs, who is slated for \$135K each year plus an array of perquisites. At the top of the mark is the new Louisiana Tech women’s basketball coach and male Title IX beneficiary, Ross Summitt, who summits out at \$175K per year plus \$2,500.00 per month in the form of a housing allowance in the event that his salary falls short with respect to the Ruston real estate market. Not to be left behind, the state’s flagship institution, LSU A&M, popped an 8% increase to gymnastics coach DD Breaux and to women’s golf coach Karen Bahnsen, who will harvest, respectively. Another \$13K and \$10K per year, while advancing gender equity with a walloping 29% or \$40K increase to men’s golf coach Charles Winstead. Remarkably, the LSU Athletic Department, aware of the bad press that such sums induce, annotates contracts with the claim that no state funds are being used—which, in our underfunded state, might well be said of any university activity.

ROTH IRA OPTION EMERGING IN HRM

The *Newsletter* has received a flash report that the [LSU Human Resources Management office](#) will be offering employees the option of Roth IRA accounts. Roth IRA accounts invert the taxation order of conventional tax-sheltered investments; dollars deposited into a 403b or 401k account and are exempted from income tax at the time of deposit, but may be taxed at withdrawal. Dollars deposited into a Roth IRA have already been taxed but remain tax-free at withdrawal. Stay tuned to this channel for the full story in the October 31st issue.



RETIREMENT: STEPS FORWARD, BACKWARD, AND SIDEWAYS



2014 may well have been a watershed year for Louisiana retirement plans insofar as the legislature finally recognized that higher education pension support lagged far behind national competitors and was therefore posing both a recruitment-retention problem and an equity nightmare. A variety of measures passed the legislature; some improved circumstances for present and future retirees; some intensified the standstill; a few seemed to move plan participants backward. On the plus side, Act 104 confers a 1.5% permanent increase to retirees participating in the defined-benefit plan of the Teachers’ Retirement System of Louisiana. That cost-of-living increase, although below the rate of inflation since the last “COLA,” is welcome news for those under the TRSL umbrella. Unfortunately, it ultimately penalizes those younger persons currently in the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP), who, through the loss of allocations to the TRSL unfunded accrued liability (UAL), are subsidizing that raise. The overwhelming majority of defined-benefit plan participants previously worked for the public (K–12) schools; thus, higher education employees, an increasing majority of which participate in the ORP, also pay an undue share of the aforementioned increment.

Among the questionable efforts of the legislative session was Act 226, which raises the minimum retirement age from 60 to 62 for those hired after mid-2014. Although actuarially sound, this measure discourages new employees from joining an otherwise superior defined-benefit plan. Young new hires—say, those in their twenties—would face impounding of their benefits even if they were to retire after thirty years of service. Happily, this measure tends to reduce the unfunded accrued liability, albeit at a cost to future employees.

The great advance of the legislative session was surely HB6, which sets a floor of 3.25% and a maximum of 6.25% to the “normal cost” for ORP participants—for that segment of the employer contribution that reaches employee accounts. This measure has halted the dramatic erosion of employee compensation, but its implementation has been less than perfect and its mandates solve only part of the retirement problem. Despite advance press suggesting that it would immediately begin paying the maximum benefit, the LSU System stuck with the current 5.18% normal cost rate and worked out an absurdly slow progress to the purportedly full 6.25% in 2018. LSU was quickly followed by the LCTCS and by the Southern University System, which applied the same normal cost rate. In an unexpected move, however, the University of Louisiana system got out ahead of the pack by inching up to 5.24%, perhaps as a substitute for a system-wide raise. In any event, even a full 6.25% normal cost leaves Louisiana universities with a retirement plan that is 60% or more less generous than those of other state systems.

EDUCATION REDUCES GAME INTEREST, TRIGGERS Groupon APPROACH

Many months ago, skeptics wondered whether the *Newsletter* team had lost track of reality in predicting that the golden age of collegiate football was passing. This, despite a nationwide streak of stadium expansion, the building of proprietary television networks, and a huge trade in logo-encrusted apparel and souvenirs. Now, a story in *Baton Rouge Business Report* informs readers that nationwide student attendance at football games is down 7.1% even LSU Athletic Director Joe Alleva admits that “maybe going to the game isn’t the most important thing on their [students] agenda.” Could it be that education is having a favorable effect and that students are finding other forms of amusement or perhaps even studying?

At LSU, the decline in attendance has prompted a previously unimaginable sales stratagem: the recourse to Groupon-style web-based mass coupons. Groupon imitator Living Social recently posted a mass offering of \$15 tickets for a generic LSU football game. That LSU collaborated in the dip down into the bargain basement—that the coupon is not the work of some third-party reseller—is documented by a blast of fine-print that identifies the ticket source as LSUtix.net, an LSU brand.

Meanwhile, LSU opened its gigantic south stadium expansion, for which architectural reviews are still arriving, with some critics opining that the new inset structure savors of grandeur, while other critics note, with greater attention to metaphor, that most of the structure seems to be hollow scaffolding confected of genuine Louisiana low-bid concrete superimposed over a dark, empty space. Given the cellular look of the stadium expansion, it is lucky for LSU, with respect to the judgment of architectural history, that many of the grandest structures of all time have done double duty as prisons (shades of the Bastille!).



Bargain Basement Ticket Prices



New Tiger Stadium—Prison or Palace?

TIDY ANTI-BUTT HANDOUT SCORES DESIGN SUCCESS

Collaboration between tobacco-free activist Judith Sylvester and LSU System officials has given rise to a spiffy handout that quietly but firmly advises those who ply the LSU campus that complying with the new tobacco-free policies now in place at most Louisiana universities is in the best interest of everyone’s health. The idea is that a discretely delivered handout serves as a gentle prod that will encourage the potential smoker-violator to think twice before taking the puff or dropping the butt. Congratulations to Judith and to the LSU System graphics team for this splendid example of both graphic design and efficient promotion of the public good.



Beginning August 1, 2014, LSU will be tobacco free, in accordance with the governor’s “Well-Ahead” program. The Louisiana legislature has implemented a smoke-free requirement for all state university property, and all public post-secondary institutions in Louisiana must comply by August 1.

BOOKING BLOCKADES BOOKSTORE, STYMIES OUTREACH

LSU A&M faculty governance officialdom was left lost without either a bookmark or an explanatory text during a recent abortive outreach effort. Previous discussions with Barnes and Noble bookstore officials opened the possibility of a Faculty Senate meeting in the shared public events room of the lavishly appointed book and souvenir shop. This, by way of engaging the faculty in the improvement of the bookstore and of intensifying the academic tone of that environment. Those outreach plans dissipated upon the startling discovery that LSU recruiters had booked the events room during daylight hours for the entire year! So much for socializing new students into an academic culture.



“JUSTICE IN AMERICA” SHOWCASES RUSHING LEGAL NIGHTMARE



Dr. Stephen Rushing

All-seeing eyes are everywhere—the American dollar bill; the CBS network logo—and so it is that, often enough, events and ideas that administrators expect to disappear pop back up in the bright light of media attention. The all-pervasive optic of the television camera has brought a delayed media-implemented validation to Dr. Stephen Rushing, who has fought for over a decade to clear his name after accusations and abuses by the former administration of Southeastern Louisiana University. After questioning procedures for the awarding of research support at SELU, Rushing was denied access to the grievance procedure; upon his objection to this exclusion, he faced a barrage of accusations regarding his fitness for the classroom and even his sanity. Dogged in his determination, Rushing engaged in a ten-year courtroom battle which has drawn the attention of the syndicated show, *Insider Report: Justice in America*. Rushing’s case became the topic of a nationally-distributed investigative report conducted by no less than famed investigative reporter Steve Murphy. The documentary, which includes cameo appearances by Rushing’s attorney and by ALFS Vice-President Kevin L. Cope, has now migrated to YouTube, where a simple click of the mouse can reveal a welter of treachery at [Hammond’s Higher Education Academy](#).

NEW MCNEESE RADIO STATION BEAMS FACULTY SPOTLIGHTS

In one of the best moves in the recent history of Louisiana college radio, the new public service station at McNeese, KBYS 88.3 FM, has inaugurated a series of radio “spotlights” that feature the work, character, and achievements of McNeese faculty members. Among those already in the spotlight are: McNeese President Philip Williams, Chemistry and Physics Chair Ron Darbeau, Languages and Literatures Professor Baerbel Czennia, and sports expert Matthew Bonnette. These ten-minute interviews provide faculty with the opportunity to acquaint the southwestern Louisiana public with their research and teaching specialties and to reap long-overdue acclaim. The interviews may also be heard online as [podcasts](#).



FLORIDA FACULTY SENATE EJECTS LSU SEARCH AGENT

Long before local newspapers filed lawsuits concerning the concealing of information of information about the search for the LSU System President, LSU faculty advocates were urging the LSU Board of Supervisors to establish search procedures and to select a search firm that would result in an honest and productive recruitment process. In the end, two search firms vied for the LSU contract: [AGB Search](#), a collegial and highly reputable public-interest organization that deploys talented colleagues to promote excellence in higher education; and [R. William Funk Associates](#), a solo operation in Dallas that boasts about its proprietary (and secret) recruitment rosters. LSU faculty governance strongly favored the choice of AGB Search and advised against the selection of the Funk firm, but the LSU Supervisors, none of whom have held a position in a higher education institution, opted for the privateering approach. The big news over the summer was a bold move by the Faculty Senate of the University of Florida System, which passed a vote of no confidence in the search firm that its management board had designated—imposed—for its Chancellor search. That firm was no less than LSU’s ill-advised choice, R. William Funk and Associates. Funk, who is known for the promoting of “non-traditional” candidates from outside the faculty ranks, characterized the vote as “ridiculous,” but was nevertheless off the case and out of the sunshine state within two weeks. Congratulations to the Florida Faculty Senate for courageously and effectively asserting faculty prerogatives.



AAUP ON THE BRINK OF RELEASING LSU FROM CENSURE



The ever-turning rumor mill reports that the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) is on the brink of releasing LSU from its list of censured institutions in exchange for a variety of policy changes, one of which has already been met through the inclusion in the LSU A & M promotion and tenure procedures of a codicil pertaining to academic freedom and another of which is in process in the form of multi-year contracts—which increase job security and thereby confidence with respect to the exercise of academic freedom—for instructors. Stand by for updates.

GLASS CEILING CRACKING AT LSU



Whatever the pluses and minuses of any administration, the long-term impact is often a matter of demographics: how many people from which groups are hired for what kinds of positions in contrast to how many from which groups were hired for similar positions during previous regimes. Perhaps the big news from the early days of the reign of King Alexander is the cracking of the gender-forged glass ceiling in LSU upper-middle management.

Recent appointments of expert female executives include systems and efficiency expert Mary Stebbing; purchasing and procurement authority Sally McKechnie; Auxiliary Services genius Margot Carroll; and, most recently, Vice-President for Strategic Communications Linda Bonnin. A bit of crazing appeared in the retreating glass ceiling in the form of a lawsuit against one appointee for the alleged uttering of “ageist” remarks against a subordinate whose sin was non-addiction to [social media](#), but, overall, it appears that gender equity is taking hold, albeit not quite at the tip-top level, and certainly not among the LSU Board of Supervisors.

GALA MARKS SUSLA FACULTY SENATE REBIRTH

The spotlights shone bright on August 16th, when Sonya Hester, the dynamic new Faculty Senate President at Southern University Shreveport took office during a gala inaugural celebration. Staged at the Crystal Staircase restaurant, a new upper-end dining enterprise created by former SUSLA English Department faculty member June Phillips, the installation gala featured serenading from a three-piece combo, a lavish catered dinner, and addresses from dignitaries such as Southern University Faculty Senate President Thomas Miller; SUSLA President Ray Belton; and LSU Faculty Senate President Kevin L. Cope. The crowd included faculty governance officers from around the state, was graced by a powerfully rendered vocal music performance from Hester herself, and culminated in dancing under the Shreveport stars! Hester has already moved to institute major changes in the faculty governance apparatus at SUSLA. The *Newsletter* offers congratulations and is confident that President Hester will set a leadership example that will bring SUSLA into the center of the statewide higher education project.



Sonya Hester, New Faculty Senate President, Southern University in Shreveport

WANT TO FIND OUT WHO'S NAUGHTY AND NICE IN THE LEGISLATURE?

Many colleagues throughout higher education want to work with government but cannot figure out which legislators favor education. The Louisiana Association of Educators has cleared the confusion through the issuance of its annual “Legislative Report Card,” a beautifully-produced, color-coded document that rates both Louisiana Senate and House members on the standard five-grade (A, B, C, D, F) scale. To access the report card and to learn who is most eager to receive input from educators, visit the dedicated page on the LAE web site and click the link for “[2014 LAE FCPE Legislator Report Card](#).” Technical note: Owing to a minor implementation problem, clicking the link may yield a request from your browser that you identify the program to open the “octet stream.” The correct choice is the Adobe Acrobat reader.



LOGO LEVITATION LIFTS CAUSE OF QUESTIONERS

Animal and Food Sciences Laboratories

c. 2013

LSU
AgCenter
Research - Extension - Teaching

Up and down the LSU System and around the vast world of the Agricultural Extension Service, the scuttlebutt warns that the proposed Ag-LSU merger may still lost somewhere in the mirage of cooperation. Brands and logos being forms of abbreviation, viewers may anticipate the emergence of the whole story from the iconic identifier on the rear flank of the new Animal and Food Science Laboratories (catch it quickly; a structure built by state-appointed architects on a foundation without pilings may slip away any day). Back on the round-steak of the new lab facility, visitors will find the LSU logo being pushed up and out of the soil by the rival, more deeply rooted Ag Center trademark, with “research extension teaching” down there in the mulch position. No fusion of trademarks here! And, hey, designers listen up! Using three different fonts in so small a space as a building sign communicates a message of dissonance, not diversity!

CYBER SECURITY CENTER ACTIVATES FACULTY RECONNAISSANCE



Faculty governance officials moved up to red alert with the announcement of the establishment of a new Cyber Security Center on or near the LSU campus, a center that would take the form of a hybrid state-university enterprise. Cloaked in secrecy and unknown even to those in the Computer Science and Computer Engineering departments, the proposed center shimmered into view in the form of a command memo from the LSU media machine. The highly tardy “advance” publicity made no mention of faculty consultation, gave no indication as to the governance of the institution nor of faculty supervision, provided no indication as to how the Director, who appeared in the same *ex nihilo* fashion as a UFO on a cloudy day along Gulf Shores, was vetted by the faculty selection committee, and offered no explanation as to how the whole business came into being (although experienced wits assumed that gubernatorial command played a large part). Faculty concerns about the relation of cyber security to privacy, liberty, and a variety of academic values went unaddressed in the ecstatically enthusiastic memorandum.

NOEL COLLECTION EMBARKS ON UNPRECEDENTED ACCESS PROJECT



Amy Plaisance

Readership not only in the Shreveport area but across the scholarly world will rejoice upon learning that one of Caddo Parish’s minimally discovered treasures, the James Smith Noel Collection, is entering a new era of enhanced accessibility. Founded by tycoon and bibliophile James Smith Noel, the [Noel Collection](#) boasts nearly 40,000 rare books from the eighteenth century and earlier. Founder Noel also collected first editions from all epochs as well as items in a variety of disciplinary specialties: history of religion; science; travel and exploration; and the humanities. For many years, the bulk of the Collection—some 170,000 volumes and miscellanea from the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries—remained without a catalogue or finding aid. Now, thanks to a generous grant that may eventually reach one-half million dollars, two professional librarians (and expert cata-



Amy Blackburn

loguers), Amy Blackburn and Aimee Plaisance from Texas Woman’s University and from the University of Washington, will join the Noel Foundation staff and will, by application of the cataloguers’ art, render those tens of thousands of items discoverable and accessible. Organizers of the cataloguing project, which is estimated to last three years or more, anticipate the unfolding of a variety of emphasis areas within the Collection, areas that will attract researchers from far and wide.

OLINDE CENTER WOWS, RAISES EYEBROWS

In a spectacular gala worthy of a Hollywood opening night, leaders and staffers at LSU’s Career Services bureau unveiled the new Olinde Career Center, a splendidly appointed suite of spaces dedicated to the delivery of an assortment of services that will assist students as they embark on their professional, working lives. With multiple television cameras rolling and with reporters strolling everywhere, Mary Feduccia, Career Center Director, hosted dignitaries such as King Alexander and even top-level pitchman Stephen Moret. We applaud Mary as well as LSU A&M Student Life and Enrollment Services Vice-Chancellor Kurt Keppler. Worthy of note for those inclined to the raising of eyebrows was a slide show in which ten of eleven major sponsors were oil companies. Let us hope that some of the donations from those corporate behemoths will support the cultivation of careers consecrated to the good of society and let us hope that recruiters from the chemical industry will use their influential position to increase salaries for entry-level university-trained employees, a deluxe career center being inconsistent with an easy sell of less than deluxe, below-market salaries to home-loving Louisianans.

Mary Feduccia dedicates the Olinde Center



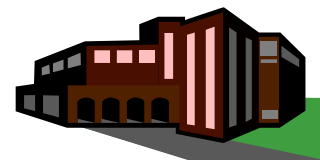
NEW MACE COMES IN AT \$7K



Attendees at LSU’s summer commencement ceremony noticed a new university mace at the head of the procession. The previous mace, it seems, sported the cartoon-like LSU logo that was developed three or four vice-chancellors ago (to reckon the interval by the lifespans of those in charge of media relations). The new mace, by contrast, shows off what might be called the “Restoration Hardware” look: a dark coffee finish and highly masculine precious-metal bands. An admittedly nice touch is the carving of the magic wand of academic credibility from a fallen limb of an old oak out on the Burden Steele grounds. Secret sources reveal that the new mace came in at \$6,799.10, admittedly a high price for a sacramentalized toothpick but a cheaper cut than the \$10,000.00 shelled out for the old mace during the reign of Chancellor Bud Davis. Perhaps there was a discount for providing the raw materials? Whatever the cost, the new scepter marks a step forward from the awkward rod that preceded it.

MIDDLETON LIBRARY LISTENS TO STUDENTS' NEEDS—24/5 EXPERIMENT IN PROGRESS

Beginning Monday, September 22 at midnight, Middleton Library switched to a new schedule, remaining open 24 hours, 5 days a week, in addition to its regular Saturday hours. Students have been expressing the need for a 24 hour study space on campus, and so Middleton Library responded by providing access to study spaces and computers through the night. The new expanded hours are from 11:00 a.m. on Sunday until 8 p.m. Friday, in addition to regular Saturday hours.



After midnight, the upper floors and basement of the library close, leaving the first floor open as a study area for LSU students and employees only. Services such as the circulation desk, print desk, and research desk close at their regular times. Use of the building during the new hours is being closely monitored to assess additional student needs.

Students are looking forward to the extended hours. "Extending Middleton's hours will really give students the opportunity to get more studying done at times that are convenient for them—after classes have finished for the day," notes Sophia Holland, a junior English major. She goes on to state, "It's going to play a huge role in improving LSU's overall GPA while also giving students the opportunity to really utilize one of the most important buildings on campus."

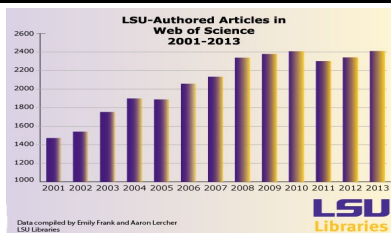
"Having a place to focus gives people a better chance to study," said sophomore Rachel Shirley.

"Being a creative writing major, I write better at night, and if I were at home, I wouldn't be as focused on it," added Haley Bordon, a junior.

A commitment to providing a safe and secure study environment factors into the new procedures. Each evening from midnight until 7:00 a.m., those wishing to remain in or enter Middleton Library are required to show a current LSU ID. Campus Transit is available until 3 a.m. to transport students from the Thomas Boyd parking lot to their on campus residence halls, sororities, or fraternities.

Additional safety measures include additional security camera coverage and two security guards staffing the library: one stationed at the door, and the other patrolling the building.

During midterms, dead week, and finals, Middleton Library will continue its 24/7 hours. For more information on library hours and procedures, see www.lib.lsu.edu or email libraries@lsu.edu



This graphic demonstrates an increase in LSU-authored articles in Web of Science over the past 12 years, which is notable in light of no improvements in funding or an increase in positions here over the past 12 years. Nor was there an increase in the number of journals indexed by WOS. The increase seems to point to an increase in faculty productivity in the absence of increased funding and support, an achievement to be lauded.

New E-Books

30k titles from Project Muse
2.8k titles from Harvard Univ Press
11k titles from Wiley

43k titles with unlimited users,
unlimited printing and downloading

◆Forty-three thousand new e-books, with unlimited printing, downloading, and users, are newly available to LSU students, faculty, and staff this fall, with the purchase of three important e-book collections.

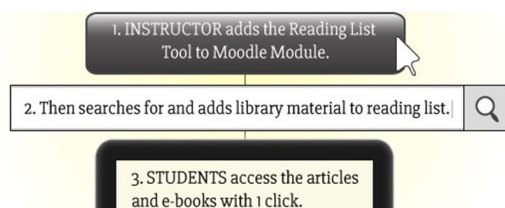
◆The UPCC (University Press Content Consortium) Book Collections on Project MUSE include 30,000 titles from more than [100 scholarly and non-profit publishers](#), including Louisiana State University Press, Johns Hopkins University Press, The MIT Press, and many others.

◆More than [11,000 e-books](#) from John Wiley & Sons provide coverage of agriculture, analytical chemistry, architecture, chemical engineering, ecology, history, materials science, mathematics, mechanical engineering, philosophy, physics, and religion.

◆Finally, the Harvard University Press eBook Archive includes 2,795 titles published by the university press from 1896 to 2006, and covering subjects like art, music, classical and ancient near

eastern studies, history, law, linguistics, communications, literary studies, medicine, natural sciences, philosophy, social sciences, and religion.

◆Teaching faculty are encouraged to search the titles and inform the libraries which are assigned for courses. If assigned textbooks are not available online, contact a subject specialist (<http://www.lib.lsu.edu/sp/subjects/staff.php?letter=Librarians%20by%20Subject%20Specialty>) to ask about available options.



◆LSU Libraries, partnering with Moodle developers in [Information Technology Services](#), has implemented an integrated tool to create linked lists of library e-books and e-journals in Moodle. With the Reading List Tool, instructors can easily set up reading lists in Moodle that link directly to library resources. The tool saves time, eliminates copyright concerns, and includes features like annotations with notes and instructions, sharing, and copying. And students have one-click access to the resources, even when off-campus.

◆The Libraries has set up a webpage with [instructions](#), and a [GROK article](#) is also available. Additional assistance can be pro-



Four or more years ago, when the *Faculty Senate Newsletter* commenced publication, folks in Louisiana higher education remained skeptical. Would Louisiana faculty members, long beaten-down as they were, respond to an influx of information about the way that the academic world worked way up on the wobbly top rungs of the administrative ladder? Perhaps the best demonstration of *Newsletter* impact is in the proliferation of start-up efforts in the same vein. Early adopters included LSU HRM, which releases a beautiful *Happenings* periodical each month, and the LSU Office of Academic Affairs, which scrambled to create its intermittent “Official Communiqué” (certainly not the zestiest title to emerge from the academic imagination). The outbreak of flattery in the form of imitation continues with the emergence of the long-awaited digest of the performing arts, the *LSU Music and Dramatic Arts Insider* (a strange title, given that the ancients cheerfully advise us that “the gates of the Muses are open to all, and given that LSU needs to get over its slightly paranoid preoccupation with exclusivity), a lively declaration of stimulating events available, often at no charge, from LSU’s most [diverting of schools](#), and in the appearance of *The International Tiger*, billed by internationalization guru Hector Zapata as “the official newsletter of [International Programs](#).” May the presses keep rolling!

TIP OF THE MONTH: JOVIAL BRAND ORGANIC EINKORN COOKIES

The world of cookies is not what it once was, what with big-scale manufacturers pumping ever more sugar and ever more cheap plant oils into trademarked wafers. Even the “artisan” cookies that rest on open shelves in markets such as Whole Foods lack the snap and the freshness that characterized the specialist bakery treats of Cookie Monster’s youth. Delight is therefore the only possible reaction when a superior packaged, ready-to-go cookie pops up on the grocers’ shelves. Such an apparition has recently occurred with the advent of Jovial brand “Organic Einkorn Cookies.” Crafted by Italian bakers albeit not baked in Italy (yes, OK, there are a whole lot of people with Italian surnames who have lived all their lives in Poughkeepsie or Laramie and who haven’t read a word of Dante, let alone seen the leaning tower of Pisa), these Organic Einkorn Cookies evidence a genuine deep chocolate taste that conjures the best cocoas that Europe offers. The flinty and sometimes sour aftertaste of American chocolate is completely absent; instead, the palette resonates of Dutch-process cocoa and a chord of Italian-style almond overtones. Better, these scrumptious wafers are confected of the ancient grain einkorn, which, although unlikely to promote the extraordinary [health benefits](#) sometimes claimed for it, yields a more complex, more pleasingly earthy taste than standard all-purpose flour. Although products from Jovial are widely available, the Einkorn Cookies seem only to have made it as far as Whole Foods, but their popularity and therefore availability is sure to spread!



FOOD TRUCK SHATTERS MONOPOLY, COMBOS FS AND AUXILIARY TRIUMPH



Food Truck Brings New Options to LSU—Yum!

Faculty governance participants know well that it is not only the devil but the divinity who abides in the details. When small matters—the quality of food service in the student mensa; the depth of the ink on the library due-date stamp—deteriorate, the campus is usually not far behind on the route to decay. Attention to detail enhances the overall experience of academic life and sends a message of overall quality, without which information about particular achievements falls on deaf ears. One of the great triumphs of the unrolling fall semester is thus the arrival of a food truck, Taco Churro’s, on the LSU campus. Not only does the advent of a new mobile chef operation bring LSU A&M into the culinary revolution that has put the South Congress district of Austin on the connoisseur’s maps, it has also marked a turning point in the long-running battle against monopoly concessions such as those that often enough characterize bookstores and food stores. In recent weeks, the Taco Churro’s food truck has been seen in at least three experi-

mental locations on campus, always surrounded by happy diners eager to join the cooking trend (do catch the hit movie [Chef](#), which centers on the food truck lifestyle) and to break free of the monaural Chartwells outsourced catering regime. Congratulations to LSU A&M Auxiliary Services Chief Margot Carroll, to LSU System financial czar Dan Layzell, and to LSU Faculty Governance for staying the course and for getting forward-looking food on the oak-abundant campus.



A.G.'s Corner

LSU HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER, CHIEF A. G. MONACO, ADDRESSES QUESTIONS ABOUT HRM AND "EMPLOYEES' LIVES" IN GENERAL. IF YOU HAVE A PRESSING HRM ISSUE FOR A G TO ADDRESS, PLEASE SEND YOUR QUERIES TO ENCOPE@LSU.EDU.

The Letter

From a writer on one of the LSU System campuses comes a letter of interest to almost all state employees

Dear A.G.,

With all of the changes in health insurance; ACA, OGB, and any other acronym you could think of, what is the best health insurance plan for my family? What are some ins-and-outs of the current state of health insurance and benefits with LSU?

Your dedicated reader,

Amorette



The Response

These are very good questions, and ones that I am sure many families and retirees are asking themselves in this ever challenging health insurance environment. In short, my advisement would be, you, are the best insurance for your health. What I mean by that is, through careful consideration of the myriad of factors that play into ones overall family configuration and state of health affairs, you absolutely need to make **an informed decision**. In essence, a smart insurance shopper is a conversant shopper. Furthermore, in my opinion, an engaged individual entering the marketplace will have, dare I say, a statistically significant chance of not being *taken*, or, at least until the next annual enrollment. So short of encasing yourself in bubble wrap, or engaging in Friday the 13th shenanigans, such as never leaving bed, one must wake up and smell the chianti, taking all relevant factors into mind and become an informed and engaged member of the marketplace. So absent Dr. Cope's vocabulary, the best advice is to -carefully consider each of the plans offered, discuss them with your partner and select a plan that provides, 1. The best coverage for your type of household, and 2. The most affordable access to health care. Great coverage at a huge cost will not be in your best interest, but lower premiums for a plan that doesn't give you the coverage you need is no bargain. Read the materials available online and ask questions of the people on campus who are managing benefits.

Recently, I am sure you have read articles illustrating the absolute mess in which the Office of Group Benefits (OGB) finds itself. Depending on your political leanings you can choose someone to blame and my guess is no matter the name of the official you decide to blame you will probably be correct. Interestingly, the first person I heard predict that OGB's actions would lead to a devastating decline in plan reserves and destruction of effective insurance coverage was Professor Kevin Cope. Three years ago he predicted exactly what happened and warned me to be vigilant that the LSU First plan not fall prey to the same ill-advised actions. If I had known that there was a lot to learn about benefit-finance within the subject of European literature I might have stayed awake during the lecture on Franz Kafka.

With all that being said, many changes are anticipated for the coming plan year. OGB has decided to curtail, reduce, reuse and recycle. Additionally, they have renamed their plan offerings with monikers such as: Pelican HRA & HSA, Magnolia Local, Local Plus and Open Access, and finally the Vantage Medical Home HMO. I am still waiting for the rollout of the *Alligator IDK* plan option. But I digress, this however, is only the beginning. As you may have read in newspapers or online, this topic of change has recently received a lambasting from people high in state government as well as those engaged in the state's health care debate, most likely impacted members. One of the main reasons for such outrage is the raising of Out-Of-Pocket (OOP) costs for plan members, especially retirees. It has been reported by the *Louisiana Legislative Fiscal Office*, that OOP costs for the average plan member are set to increase by 47 percent. As you can imagine, this can mean a great deal for someone living on a fixed income, accustomed to the health care schematics of pre-ACA. Furthermore, only complicating this, is the fact that those in charge at OGB are spending all their time defending some very bad decisions. I will let you research the recent articles and draw your own conclusion as to the current state of OGB and as to its purported detrimental impact to its members. What is most important is, what the future holds for LSU employees in regard to health insurance benefits. With all of these changes, for this annual enrollment, OGB has sought to undergo a **positive enrollment**. This entails that all those who are currently members of an OGB plan, must make an active choice for the coming plan year, and if no choice is made, a member would be defaulted into OGB's new Pelican HRA 1000 plan. This plan may turn out a fine choice for a few, but the plan may not meet you and your families' needs. So, we are back to the importance of individual analysis surrounding health plan configurations, allowances and preclusions, which a layperson may not necessarily be well-versed in. However, fear not, or at least not now, OGB has a hotline you can call for your questions, I would advise calling sooner than later though, pending last minute late-adopters seeking not to be defaulted. If you are still confused contact your campus benefits office. **This positive enrollment requirement does not effect LSU First participants.**

Allow me to back up and elaborate on all of the acronyms that have been referred to. Firstly, the Affordable Care Act (ACA), also referred to as Obamacare, PAPACA, etc., is a law that expanded health care access to those who are uninsured and enabled them to have expanded access to health care. This of course is the general definition, I am sure you have your own for other reasons. The deal is, ACA mandated, in essence *what* and *how* the health care market *will* and *won't* operate, and has various *carrots* and *sticks* to manipulate all into compliance. There, I used the word, *manipulate*, to appease you detractors. Moving on, important acronyms to be aware of include HRAs and HSAs. In short, a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) is used to reimburse things such as copays, deductibles, other medical costs, etc., and is financed via the employer. A Health Savings Account (HSA) is established as an account that is used to pay for health care expenses such as copays, deductibles, and prescriptions, to which an employer does not contribute. For our purposes, LSU First has an HRA. Boone-Chapman manages your access to an HSA at LSU.

(Continued on p. 18)

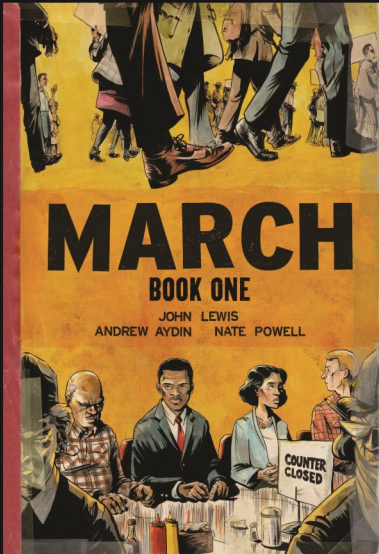
So now we know that we should be engaged, active and informed in our health care decisions, and we have a basic understanding of some of the most common acronyms. Now let's talk about some changes going on with LSU Benefits.

So, unlike OGB, current LSU First plan participants will not need to do anything for this upcoming annual enrollment, starting October 1, if they wish to stay in their current plan option. This means that plan participants will not have to make an *active* choice for the coming plan year, unless they are wishing to switch options or move to a new OGB plan. For those of you presently covered under an OGB plan, and you are not satisfied with their new offerings, you of course, have the right as an employee of LSU to enroll in the LSU First health plan. Prior to doing so, I advise you to fully review the materials online and to also speak with the benefits experts on campus.

While an LSU First plan participant will not need to make an active choice in their health care coverage for the coming year, all LSU employees should consider looking into all of the voluntary benefit options that are available to them during annual enrollment. LSU Benefits has recently inked some new agreements with UnitedHealthcare that are worth mentioning. Dental and Vision plans have both seen a stabilization of premiums and a subtle plan design change that allows for a richer and more robust plan offering. Information will be available about the changes online very soon and of course through informational meetings during Open Enrollment in October. Additionally, Long-term Care, Life Insurance and AD&D will be offered and they will all be available to all those who are interested in enrolling during this Open Enrollment period, **even if in the past you chose not to sign up for these benefits.** Through negotiations, the LSU benefits team has been successful in securing some significant discounts surrounding premiums in comparison to last year's offerings and in general has provided for more rich and robust plan offerings. I know 'rich and robust,' sound like coffee industry jargon but I believe that once you compare previous premium rates to this coming year's rates, you will at least be able to deduce savings and that should make us all happy, if not a little bit richer. For example, Life insurance rates for 2015 are around 40 percent less expensive than for 2014.

In the end, I hope you have been able to 'pick up what I'm puttin' down.' The process of health insurance and voluntary benefits selections are not as laborious as you probably thought but it does take some review. Get past the wordplay and jargon of the health care industry and its associated regulations so you can determine what works best for your household. You, and you alone, must be responsible for deciding your health insurance needs and the best way to do that is to utilize the tools available. That includes the dedicated websites as well as the dedicated professionals employed on campus to help you find your way through the benefits maze. The key phrase here is "attainment of knowledge" this of course is coupled with engagement, research, health profile comprehension and any wellness activities or initiatives you choose to undertake. In the end, as I have stated, you, are the best insurance for your health, and this is achieved through knowledge as well as taking every available opportunity to invest the time required to make the right choice for you and your family. The options are open, and the time is now. So as we move toward the annual enrollment period commencing on October 1, I encourage you to be engage, don't just default and above all make every effort to make the right choice for you and your family.

LSU | University College
presents



**CONGRESSMAN JOHN LEWIS
& ANDREW AYDIN**

LECTURE/PRESENTATION
OCT. 21, 7:00 P.M.
LSU STUDENT UNION THEATER

BOOK SIGNING
OCT. 21, 2:00 – 3:30 P.M.
LSU BARNES & NOBLE

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT:
**LSU STUDENT UNION THEATER
BOX OFFICE**
10 A.M. - 4 P.M. / MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
www.uc.lsu.edu

And that would have been that for homo sapiens, had it not been for the prescience of a single eccentric multi-billionaire—one Wilford, played by Ed Harris—who was always skeptical of the global-cooling scheme. He arranged for a remnant of humanity to be preserved aboard a moving train—the “Snowpiercer” of the title—that ceaselessly circles the frozen earth. As the main action of the film begins, Snowpiercer has been in service for seventeen years, and an apparently more-or-less stable human society has developed in its constantly moving cars. It is a society violently divided by class. Most of the passengers are packed tightly into the rear of the train, living in overcrowded filthy cars and with nothing to eat but disgusting, mass-produced blocks of protein. A bit closer to the front, in slightly more tolerable conditions, are certain kinds of skilled technical personnel. Closer still are the real elite: the first-class passengers who inhabit a lifeworld of steaks and sushi, of tailor-made suits and fine dining, of steam saunas and discos. Finally, at the front of the train, right behind the all-important engine, is Wilford’s own private compartment. This hierarchical order is maintained by Wilford’s thuggish paramilitary force, which governs by torture, murder, and other forms of physical terror.

The main action of the film concerns an attempted revolution by the wretched of the rear cars, some of whom fight their way forward with the intention of seizing control of the engine. As a mere action-adventure visual narrative, the film works beautifully. Bong handles with rare skill the difficult task of representing combat in the cramped, narrow quarters of railway cars. No less skillful are the succession of (often quick but always memorable) visual contrasts that distinguish among the lifestyles of the train’s various economic levels, and the glimpses out the train windows we frequently get of the frozen landscapes and cityscapes beyond the relative safety of the Snowpiercer. Though none of the revolutionaries is particularly interesting as an individual—Chris Evans as the leader of the rebels is as undistinguished as usual, while the undeniably talented John Hurt as his elderly mentor just phones in his performance—some of their adversaries are quite striking. In the finest performances of the film, Tilda Swinton, playing a high-ranking factotum and enforcer of Wilford’s, gives us one of the best screen villains of recent years; and Alison Pill is wonderful as a teacher who, instructing the young children of the train’s elite, illustrates how education is an Ideological State Apparatus with a clarity that could hardly be improved upon if she assigned readings by Louis Althusser himself.

Snowpiercer is most intricately interesting not for its narrative or visual dimensions, compelling as these are, but for its allegory. Curtis, the Chris Evans character, can be seen as the leader of a classic proletarian revolution—almost, indeed, as playing Lenin to the John Hurt character’s Marx. Yet the relation between Wilford and Gilliam (Hurt’s character) is, if never made entirely clear, ultimately suggested to be (possibly) more problematic and complex than one is meant to think at first. It may be, indeed, that Curtis, the visual type of the all-American hero, is a dupe of essentially conservative forces, and that the truly revolutionary alternative is represented by the apparently secondary East Asian character Namgoong Minsoo (played by Song Kang-ho, one of Bong’s favorite actors). On the other hand, the apparent radicalism of Nam (as he is generally called, in an apparent sly allusion to the East Asian nation that defeated France and the United States in war) might actually be nothing but nihilism and mass murder.

As noted above, to untangle such allegories is to engage many of the most important (and often competing) intellectual methods in Marxist and generally anti-capitalist economics today. I will conclude here just by noting one problem with the overall allegory of the great train that has not, I think, been previously much remarked upon. The problem is simple: Why are the wretched masses of the rear cars allowed on the train in the first place? They are not really a proletariat, because they are not, for the most part, shown to be producing value; and, however miserable their conditions, they are together consuming considerable resources that could presumably be diverted to the first-class passengers instead. At this point the film seems to have fallen into a fatal confusion between mere oppression and genuine exploitation. It is true, though, that by film’s end the rear-car dwellers are revealed to be producers of a sort of value after all—though not a sort that would logically require many men or any women beyond early middle age. It may be that Bong, whose intelligence is not to be underestimated, has an answer to this problem. I will be looking for it in future viewings of *Snowpiercer* and, perhaps even more, in his next film—to which I am already eagerly looking forward.

LIFESTYLE FEATURE (CONTINUED FROM P. 9)

Some chocolates have never left the palace of the boutique display, even despite being common enough in Europe and Asia. Buyers should beware, for example, of attempts by low-cost but putatively high-class retailers such as [Cost Plus World Market](#) to promote junk, discount-shop chocolate such as [Hachez](#) products as true boutique items. Hachez, amusingly, has perfected the art of using file photos to suggest that it emanates from artisan hands; indeed, its website showcases those hands but never discloses the identity of the body, let alone the mind. Fortunately most merchants in upper-end markets have had the sense not only to expel Hachez from the boutique zone, but also to eject [Cadbury](#), with its foolish syrup-filled eggs, and gift-wrap-crazy [Godiva](#), the most oversold brand in chocolate history. What are the top four nationally-distributed quality chocolates: Ritter, Lake Champlain, Valrhona, and Lindt. Of these, the surprisingly palatable Ritter (also called “Ritter Sport,” for those whose idea of athletics involves a heavy dose of post-game gourmandizing) makes for a good bite. [Ritter](#) chocolate is a bit too waxy for good results in baking applications, but it stands up well to transport, is the ideal picnic chocolate, and comes in a variety of formats, whether plain, with nuts, or with reasonable fillings such as marzipan. So great has been the appeal of its unique square packing that the Ritter Foundation has chartered a [museum](#), the mission of which is the collection of art celebrating square forms. The latecomer American contender in the top-chocolate derby, [Lake Champlain Chocolate](#), also began with a “bar-based” concept: with the intention of providing a superior-quality upgrade of the traditional candy bar. The success of its snacking chocolate has led to expansion both in the line and in the conception of its all-around chocolate products, with the result that its initial fixation with milk chocolate has subsided before an influx of new but “core” products, including an abundance of [dark chocolate offerings](#). Lake Champlain chocolates continue to suffer from a slightly bitter delayed aftertaste that arises some minutes after consumption, but that fault may be an artifact of poor storage during transport. Lake Champlain is in the process of transition; before long, it will become a signature restaurant item, becoming, for example a specific type of cake (e.g., “Emeril Lagasse’s Lake Champlain Chocolate Torte”). That transition conjures up the elite name of [Valrhona](#), which is presently attempting the difficult project of negotiating the boundaries between boutique products and mass distribution and which also is attempting to find venues for the use of specific varieties of chocolate, often from specific plantations, a task which requires both the distribution of fairly specific [recipes](#) and the maintenance of full inventories in markets worldwide. All Valrhona products possess that combination of savoir-faire and refined understatement that characterize the French chocolaterie; they allow for precise targeting of effects, whether in the delivery of a couverture with a tropical-fruit halo or the packing of extra nuttiness into a creamy cake. Nuttiness is the specialty of the last and most likely greatest of chocolates with worldwide distribution: Lindt. Lindt chocolates, especially those used in baking, seem ordained by the spirits of the tropical grove to blend with any kind of nut or nut flour, whether almond, hazelnut, walnut, or even pecan. At the center of the great tradition of European baking is the batter layer comprised primarily of ground nuts and concomitantly ground chocolate. For such a layer, nothing could work better than classic Lindt 70% chocolate, the tempering of which also introduces a very, very slight citrus overtone that works somewhat like lemon or orange zest in a perfectly balanced, flavor-profiled cake. Lindt also evidences exquisite melting properties, seldom seizing up and always maintaining its laudable sheen. Nothing beats it for homemade ice cream!

All in all, chocolate is very likely the most versatile and generally delicious food in the world. Any of the above-mentioned chocolates will surely brighten the day with lip-smacking goodness. Oh, and, yes, do indulge in a little lagniappe that is not simply purest vis-à-vis chocolate connoisseurship. When in north Germany, stop by the marzipan-chocolate paradise of Lübeck, where [Niederegger](#) marries chocolate and marzipan in one gustatory sacrament after another; when in south Germany or Austria, never miss [Reber Mozartkugeln](#), spheres of chocolate and two types of marzipan (almond and hazelnut) that are veritable planets of tasting pleasure; and when in Paris, visit the incomparable [La Maison du Chocolat](#) for the best truffles and ganache-enriched baubles in the world!

LSU UNIVERSITY TO HOST “MARCH WITH CONGRESSMAN JOHN LEWIS” ON OCT. 21

On Tuesday, Oct. 21, LSU University College will host noted civil rights leader and U.S. Congressman John Lewis, as well as his co-author Andrew Aydin, for a presentation titled “MARCH with Congressman John Lewis,” in the LSU Student Union Theater at 7 p.m. Prior to the evening presentation, an afternoon book signing with Congressman Lewis and Aydin will be held at LSU Barnes & Noble from 2-3:30 p.m.

Lewis, who represents Georgia’s 5th Congressional District, is an American icon, one of the key figures of the civil rights movement. His commitment to justice and nonviolence has taken him from an Alabama sharecropper’s farm to the halls of Congress, from a segregated schoolroom to the 1963 March on Washington, and from receiving beatings from state troopers to receiving the Medal of Freedom from President Barak Obama.

Now, to share his remarkable story with new generations, Lewis presents *March*, an award-winning graphic novel trilogy, in collaboration with co-writer Andrew Aydin and artist Nate Powell. *March* is a vivid first-hand account of Lewis’ lifelong struggle for civil and human rights, meditating in the modern age on the distance traveled since the days of Jim Crow and segregation.

The first volume, *March: Book One*, spans John Lewis’ youth in rural Alabama, his life-changing meeting with Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., the birth of the Nashville Student Movement, and their battle to tear down segregation through nonviolent lunch counter sit-ins, building to a stunning climax on the steps of City Hall. It has been featured on *The Colbert Report* and *The Rachel Maddow Show*, spent weeks at #1 on the *New York Times* Bestseller List, and received honors from the Coretta Scott King and Robert F. Kennedy Book Awards.

Doors will open for the Tuesday evening presentation at 6 p.m. Tickets are required, but are free to LSU students, faculty, staff and the general public based on a priority system. All tickets will be general admission seating, so guests are encouraged to arrive early. Seating will be first-come, first-served. At 6:45 p.m., all unclaimed seats will be given to those waiting in the stand-by line.

Ticket availability for “MARCH with Congressman John Lewis” is based on a priority system with highest priority given to students from LSU’s main campus including undergraduate, graduate and veterinary medicine students, since the event is underwritten by University College. Tickets for LSU students are available beginning on Monday, Sept. 29, at 10 a.m. Students can claim one ticket per individual in person only at the LSU Student Union Theater box office with a current LSU ID. The LSU Student Union Theater box office is open from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Beginning on Wednesday, Oct. 8, at 10 a.m., faculty and staff from LSU’s main campus can claim one ticket per individual in person with their current LSU ID at the LSU Student Union Theater box office. On Monday, Oct. 13, at 10 a.m., students at the Paul M. Hebert Law Center, faculty and staff at the LSU AgCenter and the Paul M. Hebert Law Center, and members of the general public can claim one ticket per individual in person at the LSU Student Union Theater.

Seats cannot be saved for individuals who are not present, so guests who wish to sit as a group should arrive together, but group seating is not guaranteed.

Individuals who do not have tickets to the event can begin queuing in the stand-by line at 5 p.m. on the night of the event. Beginning at 6:45 p.m., those in the stand-by line will have the opportunity to fill unused seats.

Individuals with disabilities should contact the LSU Student Union Theater box office at 225-578-5128 at least seven days in advance to address any accommodation concerns.

For more information, visit LSU University College at www.uc.lsu.edu.

MEDIA NOTE: On the night of the event, there will be no media availability for Lewis, who will be arriving just prior to the event and leaving directly following the event. Filming and photography will be limited to a strict five-minute period at the opening of Lewis’ presentation. At the conclusion of the five-minute period, all video, photography and other recording devices will be prohibited.

Contact Jacquelyn Craddock
LSU University College
225-578-5342
jcraddock@lsu.edu

Contact Aaron Looney
LSU Media Relations
225-578-3871
alooney@lsu.edu



LSU | University College
presents **CONGRESSMAN JOHN LEWIS
& ANDREW AYDIN**

TUESDAY, OCT. 21, 2014 AT 7:00 P.M.
LSU STUDENT UNION THEATER

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT:
**LSU STUDENT UNION THEATER
BOX OFFICE**

BOOK SIGNING
OCT. 21, 2:00 – 3:30 P.M.
LSU BARNES & NOBLE

10 A.M. - 4 P.M. / MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY
www.uc.lsu.edu

FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC