

10-2016

Faculty Senate Newsletter, October 2016

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, October 2016" (2016). *Newsletter*. Paper 51.
<http://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/senate-pubs/51>

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 COLUMN

When November opens the calendrical gateway to the holidays, Thanksgiving, the holiday nominally devoted to appreciation, draws attention to the question of gratitude. Faculty members live, move, and have their being in the sphere of gratitude. These talented people, whose aptitudes would qualify them for a thousand high-paying careers, set aside lucrative opportunities in order to celebrate the bounty of knowledge. Even during the most depressing moments of an academic career—even despite excessive workloads, deteriorating facilities, and budget shortfalls—faculty members quietly applaud, through their service, the implicit generosity of a universe that not only makes itself interpretable, but allows its denizens to enjoy and appreciate the process of discovery.

What Thanksgiving also reveals is the chief challenge to Louisiana colleges and universities: the deep-set, systemic ingratitude that surrounds and ultimately undermines the higher education project. Many colleagues would like to simplify the feeling of inadequate appreciation that they routinely experience by blaming it all on the administration: by taking the hard-line labor activist view that callous managers merely exploit faculty members. Administrations, however, are also victims—albeit well-aid victims—of a far more subtle if far more extensive substratum of ingratitude that also accounts for such phenomena as the declining infrastructure of our state (a state which was running first in the deterioration derby even before Donald Trump made decay a campaign theme).

First if most elusive among the species of ingratitude is the suspicion of outside influences that comes from a long run on the wrong side of history. The last stop for unjustly evicted Acadians, a slaveholding state on the losing side of the civil war, and a venue where initiatives to declare the capitol city a zone friendly to all persons routinely fail, Louisiana has a centuries-long tradition of resenting improvement efforts that either come from or link to the outside world. The vast majority of professorial faculty in Louisiana either hail from or have passed considerable time in other lands; additionally, with respect to the distribution of education in America, they are deep into the disdained “one percent.” In virtue of their education and experience, faculty members count as foreigners. Louisiana’s history has created a disposition not to appreciate, but to fear, resent, or disdain extraneously originated improvers. Next, the overall poverty—or, rather, astoundingly unequal distribution of income—in Louisiana has set up an almost obsessive zeal for vocational education or “workforce development,” which, in turn, casts into suspicion time-consuming curricula such as those in the liberal arts, thereby diminishing appreciation for studies that seem to slow up the rush toward prosperity. Third, students, under pressure from all the foregoing and mesmerized by the notion that they are “customers” or “clients” (despite being heavily state-funded in even the best universities), have little motivation to thank those to whom they should be apprentices. Yes, some students excel and yes, some come back after years to show gratitude, but those remain few in number in comparison to the thousands who come and go. The cult of funded research, additionally, has redirected such gratitude as remains away from university personnel and off to donors and granting agencies. And then there is the appreciation-poor Governor, who has shown little interest in the advice or expertise of dozens of faculty members who worked for his election.

Administrations, under the influence of these and many other social, economic, and even raw emotional influences, must perform the harder act of balancing between the gracefulness that comes with the life of the mind and a culture-suffusing ingratitude that has been churning for centuries. Executive search firms require them to write long application letters about their gratitude to their faculty colleagues and campus communities at the same time that they are also writing long letters to donors, thanking those givers for providing money that those same donors have sequestered to themselves through their influence on tax policy. Because no one can seem authentically sincere to everyone all of the time, administrations get caught in a loop of mixed gratitude and ingratitude.

Followers of the sun’s path know that Thanksgiving occurs within a few weeks of the darkest time of the year, and that for a reason. The glum state of affairs relating to gratitude should make for an enlightening Thanksgiving recess conversation topic—and, perhaps, for some solutions. Perhaps the recognition that university management cannot be grateful even if it wants to be will encourage some to consider organizing labor actions.



Kevin Cope

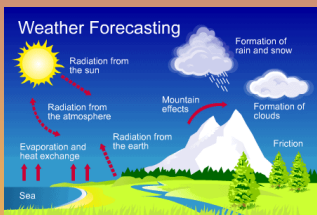
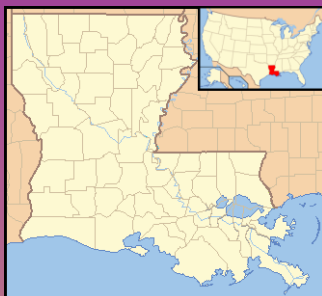
TABLE OF CONTENTS

President’s Column.....	1
Higher Education Headliner	2
Simulated Election Shocks Idealists; Rallo: You Take the Low Road, But I’ll Take the Higher Education Road; Food Pantry Drive Reassures, Raises Questions; General Education Revamp Begins at LSU	3
A.G.’s Corner	4
A.G.’s Corner con’t; LSUnited Ad.....	5
Act 619 Alarms Faculty, Squanders Money, Downgrades Education; “We’re Here to Win” - But, Then, Maybe, We’re Not Here; Loss of Mike VI Ignites Captive Mascot Issue	6
Lifestyle Feature.....	7
Five-Day Flip-Flop, Flops, Speedy Possession Changes, and Scholar Athletes; LSUA Launches new BSC in Health Professions; Tip of the Month: Chewy.com; AAUP Ad.....	8
CIO-CTO Transition Opens Debate on Role, Scope, and Mission of IT Services; Tuition Discount Rate Primed to Pump Achievement; “Moment or Movement” Symposium Scores State-wide Success	9
Veterinary School Ad.....	10
LSUnited Begins Graduate Student Organization Effort; AAUPLA Listserv Revives; Veterinary School Goes Gender Neutral; Planned Parenthood Flap Troubles United Way Campaign	11
Monthly Movie Review.....	12
Resource Workshop Ad	13
Middleton, McNeese Libraries Amp Up Service, Structures; The Back Story, or, Chiropractor Needed at LSU-HSC-S; Nichols State Faculty Senate Probes Job Action, Seeks Statewide Participation; LSUA Chancellor Search Reaches to Green Mountain State.....	14
Monthly Movie Review con’t.....	15

Higher Education Headliner



Dr. Robert Rohli



Robert Rohli, a New Orleans native, has a passion for the physical terrain of his home state. His interest in geography, and later climatology, began in high school when he took a geography class, and his teacher told him that he should be a geographer. Young Rohli had no idea what being a geographer actually entailed, but when he got to the university level, he found his niche in this important field. Now, Rohli is a professor in the LSU Department of Geography and Anthropology and teaches classes in climatology and geography. He also coordinates the Louisiana Geographic Education Alliance (LaGEA). He decided to become a coordinator in this program due, in part, to his early experiences in high school. He wanted not only to help students understand the importance of geography, but to share his enthusiasm for this discipline as well. The other part of his interest was due to his faculty mentor at LSU, Philip Larimore, who introduced Rohli to the program. So, when Rohli came back to LSU after his time in Ohio, he wanted to honor Larimore by continuing the LaGEA program for Louisiana's youth.

Perhaps nowhere else on Earth are the fields of climatology and geography more closely intertwined than in the low-lying marshlands of south Louisiana, where subsidence, sea-level rise, and human settlement patterns have combined to create a slow motion ecological disaster, the solution to which is one of the most important political and economic questions for Louisianans. In other words, Louisiana's students are in a unique situation that provides a rare learning opportunity. Rohli paints a picture of the projected worst case scenario for south Louisiana—one in which an area representing all land south of the intracoastal waterway, south of Lake Pontchartrain, and north through the Atchafalaya Basin are all entirely submerged by the Gulf—to emphasize the crucial importance of these two fields in terms of the economic, cultural, and ecological future of the state and the nation.

Of course, to solve such a complex and serious problem, Louisiana will need future

generations with an understanding of its multifaceted causes and the capacity to correct them, which is why the LaGEA program is so important. "We have to make sure the Legislature understands that investing in good science is a sound investment," Rohli explains. While many states have line-items in their state budget to provide for geography education, Louisiana is not one of them. Therefore, LaGEA is the most in-depth education in geography many Louisiana students may receive. Rohli is particularly proud of a resource which he helped to create and which students can access in electronic form, the Annotated Student Atlas of Louisiana (available for download [here](#)), a beautiful 188-page atlas of Louisiana that includes historical and geographic information of interest, as well as pedagogical tools designed to interest Louisiana students in the unique history and geography of their state. When asked what Rohli would do with a blank check, he answered that he would have copies of the atlas printed for every high school in Louisiana.

In addition to his duties with LaGEA and his faculty position, Rohli also works with residential college programs. Students with similar majors are put into the same residential hall for their first years, and the idea is that they can form study groups and friendships organically. Rohli has been working with instructors to do study sessions at residential halls with students in these programs. A student's first year at a university can be quite daunting, particularly with the sheer number of students, but the residential program helps to foster a sense of community. This is another of Rohli's passions. Rohli provides valuable services not only to LSU, but to the greater Louisiana community, and neither he, nor his area of study, should be taken for granted at Louisiana's flagship university.

— By Amy Catania and Nate Friedman

SIMULATED ELECTION SHOCKS IDEALISTS

One of the better campaigns of recent date on the LSU A&M campus has been King Alexander's multi-pronged effort to register students as voters. For decades, the complexity of the registration process has partnered with student apathy to deter student participation in the electoral process. To his credit, Alexander has arranged for multiple voter registration opportunities, whether at campus symposia or during dignitary visits or on a day-to-day basis in student-frequented venues around campus. The latest effort in the civic engagement campaign effort, however, took almost everyone by surprise. By way of a dress rehearsal for voting, Student Government at LSU sponsored a mock online presidential election. Somewhat awkwardly announced at the conclusion to the *Moment or Movement* symposium on community engagement and tolerance, the results of the student mock election heavily favored Donald Trump with a score of nearly 48% (Hillary Clinton bagged 33% and other candidates the remaining 19%). Well, at least LSU is involved in another first: announcing at least the mock election of Donald Trump during a major symposium on progressive thinking and community engagement.



News that The Donald had trumped Hillary in LSU's mock election ironically came at the close of an on-campus diversity symposium

GENERAL EDUCATION REVAMP BEGINS AT LSU

One of the toughest nuts to crack in the orchard of higher education is that of general education. On one hand, general education (or surrogates such as distribution requirements or core curricula) commands a battalion of supporters. General education of some sort is required by both national accrediting boards and by the various professional organizations that credential specific vocational programs. Better, it is one, perhaps the only one, area in which traditional bricks-and-mortar universities definitively outperform their online or commercial rivals. General education is the hallmark of a first-class, character-forming rather than simply purchased education. Owing to all of the foregoing, general education produces gigantic numbers of student credit hours, all to the financial betterment of universities. Despite all these selling points, general education in Louisiana remains diffuse and disorganized. Some regard it as the prerogative of the Regents, with their management of credit hour requirements; some see general education as the key component in transfer and articulation agreements; many schools designate so many courses as eligible for general education credit that focus is lost; and, sadly, students often accord general education a low priority, even to the point of skipping classes and accepting poor grades by way of energy management—by way of devoting the greatest effort to career-pertinent goals. It is in this whirlwind of pros and cons that the LSU Office of Academic Affairs is valiantly stepping with a year-long reassessment of general education that has been chartered by Provost and Executive Vice President Richard Koubek and assigned to Vice Provost Matthew Lee. The year-long effort will attempt to re-energize general education by finding ways to associate intellectual breadth with achievement, leadership, success, and, above all, the quality of life that comes with being an educated, thoughtful person.



RALLO: YOU TAKE THE LOW ROAD, BUT I'LL TAKE THE HIGHER EDUCATION ROAD

To date, certainly Louisiana's most outgoing Commissioner of Higher Education, Joseph C. Rallo, has once again taken to the road in an effort to bring not only higher education, but a sense of responsibility for it to the people. Beginning on Halloween Day, Commissioner Rallo's "Stakeholder Engagement Tour" rolled into the seed-rich but germination-challenged core of northern Louisiana. First stop on the junket was a business, politician, and all-purpose stakeholder powwow at the University of Louisiana in Monroe. Next, the perambulating Commissioner trotted over to Louisiana Tech, where, in another first for Louisiana Commissioners, he engaged in a coffee conversation event specifically for faculty and staff. Target participants included colleagues from Grambling, Louisiana Tech, Delta Community College, and ULM. Once the All Hallows had passed, the Commissioner darted over to Shreveport, where he chatted, bantered, and otherwise consulted with the northwest Louisiana business community, with special input from the [Shreveport-Bossier Business Alliance](#) and the [Shreveport Chamber of Commerce](#). As we go to press with this story, the Commissioner is concluding his pilgrimage with another innovation, a touring edition of the Board of Regents meeting, which, for the first time since Methuselah was a kindergartner, will be taking place outside the Regents' lair in Baton Rouge.



Matthew Ware of Grambling joins in the discussion during the Commissioner's latest pilgrimage

Whatever differences may exist between the faculty and the administration, only a Grinch who made off not only with Christmas but with Hanukkah and Eid too would deny that the Commissioner's outreach to Louisiana's regions, especially to the northern part of the state, is both a major morale-builder and a necessary step in the creation of a statewide commitment to learning—in the development of a joint identity for diverse Louisiana that includes a robust higher education system.

FOOD PANTRY DRIVE REASSURES, RAISES QUESTIONS

Late in the eighteenth century, visionary poet-painter William Blake noted that "pity would be no more, if we did not make somebody poor." Blake's complex aphorism points up the duality of charity, which draws admiration insofar as it demonstrates generosity and care for fellow creatures but which also raises questions about economic systems that abandon multitudes to poverty. That duality has again come into focus with the recent LSU Food Pantry Protein Drive, which aimed to beef up the food pantry inventory of meat, poultry, and protein-rich plant-based foods. On the one hand, no one can do anything other than applaud volunteer efforts to nourish comrades in the war against ignorance. On the other hand, the carefully worded advertisement for the drive, which reports that the pantry is available "for all students to utilize during times of food insecurity," carefully sidesteps the question of extreme income inequality in Louisiana (and with respect to the wealthy donors who allegedly "support" higher education). How is it that a rich country leaves its most promising youngsters to scramble for bare sustenance, and who is responsible? Does the situation that the food pantry addresses suggest a splendid future for the increasingly privatized university that our management boards envision?



Food drive draws applause but raises larger questions



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

Dear A G,

I'm an ORP (Optional Retirement Plan) participant and have done a little better than expected, given the limits on that program, in piling up assets. As I look ahead to retirement within five to eight years, I find myself bewildered by the "educational" material that I receive from both the state-selected retirement fund vendors and from assorted financial service companies. In particular, I'm confused by one of the most commonly mentioned post-retirement investment vehicles, the annuity. Amazingly, my retirement vendor, despite including "Annuity" in its own name, offers not a word, on its web site, about options for what to do with my money once I get my not-so-hot elderly hands on it. In the email and in the postal mail, I receive advertisements both from famous television advisors who claim to "hate annuities" and offers and inducements from companies that promise happy and secure futures through annuity investments. A G, you've a straight-shooting guy. I know that you're probably not allowed to make specific recommendations, but can you explain the pluses and minuses of annuities as vehicles for the use of accumulated retirement funds?

With many thanks,

Darlene in Cheneyville



The Response

Dear Darlene,

I hope you enjoyed the Founder's Day festival last month in Cheneyville. I found the domino tournament to be quite exciting.

Annuities and mutual funds can both take advantage of market increases but the largest advantage of annuities is that they are better at shielding you from market losses than mutual funds. Stock market declines will have a direct effect on the value of mutual funds, especially those funds that are heavily invested in equities. On the other side several types of annuities are out there and each of them can be enhanced with riders to better address your personal tolerance of risk.

While there are more protections from downward trending markets with annuities that protection is far from free. That protection comes at a somewhat significant cost when compared to mutual funds. Unlike mutual funds, which have generally low fees, insurance companies that sell annuities tack on more charges for every protection feature they offer you. The average annuity is very likely to charge fees for services that are double those of mutual funds. Additionally, annuities often have heavy surrender charges and mutual funds do not which means that the use of annuities does reduce your investment flexibility and liquidity.

All returns equal.... fees and expense charges can have a very strong effect on the size of the principal of your investment account and the best advisors caution everyone regardless of what vehicle they choose for investments to carefully analyze costs and fees.

Here are some definitions that may help in the comparison of mutual funds and annuities:

Mutual Fund.... A pool of investments owned by many investors. Each person buys shares in the mutual fund, and the fund then invests the money based on its design. Funds are designed based on asset classes such as equities (stocks), fixed income (bonds) and money market securities. Each investor shares in the gains and or losses of the mutual fund, and returns are not guaranteed.

Annuity.... An annuity is a contract between an individual and an insurance company. When you invest in an annuity you basically shift the risk of running out of money to the insurance company. As previously mentioned annuities are significantly more expensive in regard to expense fees than mutual funds because of this feature. Generally, people invest in two different types of annuities: "guaranteed" and "variable."

Guaranteed Annuity.... This type of fund guarantees income during retirement. A well-known example is TIAA Traditional. Generally it preserves the value of your principal, pays a minimum guaranteed interest rate (with opportunities for additional amounts) and lets you choose lifetime income payments when you retire. Unlike your bank account it is not guaranteed by the FDIC or any other federal agency but rather by the ability to pay of the issuing insurance company. Any dramatic gains or losses through stock market performance are irrelevant because your payments are fixed.

Variable Annuity.... The value of this type of annuity fluctuates based on the market performance of its underlying securities, similar to a mutual fund. Unlike fixed annuities, there is no guarantee of principal repayment or rate of return. On the plus side annuity participants can be shielded from downward performance by purchasing certain protections. Generally, investors give up some of the gains during "bull markets" to insure against heavy losses when the "bear" comes calling. So as the market goes up your annuity returns go up a lesser amount but when the market goes down your losses will be limited as well.

So how do you decide on what to invest in.....

It starts with your personal preference for risk. If you stay up nights worrying about your retirement accounts and live in fear each time the stock market has a downturn you might want to secure your returns by giving up the possibility of large gains in order to guarantee steady returns. Paying expenses to an insurance company to guarantee returns and/or gain predictable retirement payments can purchase peace of mind. But if your risk tolerance is more "middle of the road" you may need to consider other factors in choosing where to invest your money.

Another important factor in regard to investment choices is your age. Investing in a very aggressive stock mutual fund at 62 when you are planning to retire at 65 is akin to betting large amounts at the greyhound track to assure your comfort in retirement. Similarly investing all your money in an annuity at age 30 is the equivalent of putting all your assets in coffee cans and burying them in the backyard.

The right approach is to provide for retirement by finding the right percentage of both equities and fixed assets that provide a chance for a steady retirement income while still allowing your principal to maintain pace with inflation and rising expenses. For years the advice was to take the number 100, and subtract your age from it, and the remainder is the percentage of your investments that should be in equities (stocks). With the increase in life spans some financial advisors will suggest you use the number 110. Either number provides a good basis for decision-making. An example is that a fifty year old investor seeking guidance on portfolio construction could construct an investment portfolio that would have 50% of his savings invested in an equity based mutual fund and 50% in annuities or fix return investments. (If you are under 40 I suggest you consider using the number 110 as your basis.)

Reflections on family history and health are also helpful factors to consider as you approach your retirement investment decisions. If no one in your family has ever lived past 80, and you suffer from high cholesterol, high blood pressure, elevated levels of blood sugar, take part in risky recreational pursuits and you only use your Bowflex as a TV stand then based on actuarial figures you will need less money in retirement. The reason is you will likely die at a younger age than someone in excellent health who is descended from folks who have lived well past age 90. The shorter you expect your retirement to be the smaller the total sum of your principal need be.

Based on your stated target of retirement in 5-8 years I am assuming that you are 57 years old. The actuarial tables I use to predict mortality states that the average 57-year-old woman has about a 55% chance of

living to age 84 or longer. Thus, probability dictates that if you retire at 65 then your retirement income must last you at least 20 years. This would insure that you have enough funds to live comfortably until your probable death sometime in or around 2044. As a result you need to balance your need for securing your principal with the need for growth required by a lengthy retirement. For someone your age it is suggested that you begin to seriously migrate some of your retirement savings in increments over to investments with guaranteed returns, but keeping in mind that you will still need some reasonable percentage of growth in your portfolio to insure enough money to overcome future inflation and a lengthy period of retirement. That means that at 57-60 years old somewhere around 40% of your investments should still be in equities with the amount decreasing slightly each year, as you grow older. Even past retirement you will need some of your investment in equities in order to continue to provide the opportunity for higher returns. Your need for paying attention to the return on your investments does not end at retirement.

If you have not already done so now is the time to be sitting down with financial advisors to determine the proper mix of income investments and growth investments. You should be considering your tolerance for risk, your health, the financial contributions of your spouse or partner, what type of lifestyle you will be seeking to have upon retirement, as well as what other assets and expenses you may have such as homeownership, mortgage debt and other considerations. Keep in mind that while annuities can be a good investment vehicle, companies often provide sales folks with higher commissions for annuities than for mutual funds providing some people with an incentive to push annuities. It is best to get multiple opinions from planners and to do some research on your own. Additionally, it is important before deciding whether to move to annuities from mutual funds that you ask and receive precise answers regarding commissions earned by the sales people, the fees charged, and the restrictions on withdrawal associated with the annuity.

Good luck.

LSUNITED

A VITAL LSU • A VITAL COMMUNITY

Why Join LSUnited?

Inform ♦ Advocate ♦ Organize

Connect with faculty members and graduate students across departments to:

- Help keep faculty informed of issues that affect them
- Advocate on behalf of faculty interests
- Build a stronger, better LSU academic community

Contact Mike Russo: 6923louis@gmail.com
Membership Fee: \$10



ACT 619 ALARMS FACULTY, SQUANDERS MONEY, DOWNGRADES EDUCATION

Between 2009 and 2015, the Louisiana legislature authorized, countenanced, and paid for no less than six inquiries into the overall structure and purpose of Louisiana higher education. Beginning with the LAPER (Louisiana Postsecondary Review commission), panel after panel scrutinized the distribution and purpose of Louisiana collegiate resources. All of this commotion resulted in a grand total of one action: the transfer of the University of New Orleans from the LSU to the University of Louisiana System. Along the way, a variety of historically, socially, and academically significant institutions (such as Louisiana's historically black colleges and universities—"HBCU"s) were repeatedly terrorized and threatened with extinction. As if all this were not enough, the Louisiana legislature has now authorized [Act 619](#), which directs the Board of Regents to conduct an "evaluation of the state's delivery of public post-secondary education delivery system" [sic]. Suggesting through the repeated intonation of "delivery" that higher education might learn a lesson from Amazon Prime, the bill imposes a gigantic list of tasks and evaluations ranging from discovery and interpretation of square footage on campuses to level of indebtedness and on to "centers of excellence." The bill mentions "faculty" only with respect to statistical information such as race, gender, rank, and presumably serial number. Most alarming of all is the continuously reiterating of "workforce development" as well as new abstractions such as "educational demand," presumably a euphemism for the student tuition flow that emerges from the workforce-driven market for certifications. Despite its tech-industry flavor, the bill does not include the word "graduate," per graduate education. Everyone in higher education, whether part-time instructors in persecuted HBCUs or wizened administrators, should think deeply about and prepare a response to the call for "centralization" that, once again, threatens to erase the identity of institutions and of the cultures that go with them.



LOSS OF MIKE VI IGNITES CAPTIVE MASCOT ISSUE

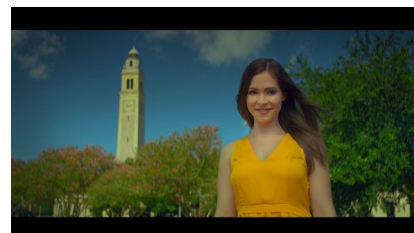
Melancholy descended on the LSU A&M campus with the passing of Mike VI, the popular mascot for the eponymous LSU Tigers. With the exception of the second live tiger on campus, Mike II, this latest player in LSU's commercially productive animal drama spent a shorter time on campus (nine years) than any other. During Mike VI's last days, the Baton Rouge newspaper published an investigative [story](#) that explored the probable difficulties in finding a successor to Mike VI (presumably Mike VII). The story included robust criticism from representatives of the Humane Society and other animal advocacy groups of the process for acquiring a live tiger, of the practice of displaying animals primarily for public amusement, and of the disturbing tradition of converting a sentient animal into a mascot or even trademark. Embarrassment was no stranger to LSU officialdom as journalists learned that the sanctuaries from which previous Mikes had been obtained had been shut down by the United States Department of Agriculture owing to a spate of violations. To top it all off, PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) announced a nationwide petition [drive](#) by way of shaming LSU into ending the live mascot habit. The LSU A&M Faculty Senate sprang into action with the formulation of a [resolution](#) calling for suspension of the quest for a replacement for Mike VI until such a time as a community dialogue involving the full range of stakeholders—including expert faculty from a variety of cultural and disciplinary traditions—could consider the full range of issues raised by the keeping of mascots. Meanwhile, LSU President King Alexander has indicated a willingness to engage in the aforementioned dialogue and perhaps to convert that discussion into a forum not unlike the recent *Moment of Movement* symposium. More to come on this story, to be sure.



PETA, the Humane Society, and other animal advocacy groups oppose LSU's search for Mike VII

"WE'RE HERE TO WIN"—BUT, THEN, MAYBE WE'RE NOT HERE

Those who lived during the cold war and who also experienced the post-Nixonian thaw in relations with China remember that, when the world changed in and around the Asian superpower, Mao Tse-Tung's widow, Jiang Qing, not only endured imprisonment but was also somewhat clumsily air-brushed out of all official photographs in the Chinese state archives. Western photo viewers who saw fuzzy grey blotches where they had previously seen the legendary party chairman's spouse smiled grimly and doubted whether such highly visible disappearing acts could convince a media-savvy audience. Which brings us to the new "We're Here to Win" LSU A&M advertising campaign, which, admittedly, strikes, if not a more upbeat, then at least more interpretable note than the cryptic "love purple, live gold" campaign that has drawn confused chortles over the last few years. The new campaign is proving anything but cryptic, indeed is devastatingly clear. So extreme is this clarity that, when football coach Les Miles failed to win, he was, per the slogan no longer here. Shortly before the coach ejected, LSU crafted a television spot in which a pixie-like actress appeared in attire reminiscent of a cheerleader boasted about assorted LSU accomplishments. As usual, a handful of academic deeds were translated into sports lingo and justified with respect to athletic accomplishment. Ornithological advances were compared to birdies in golf; achievements in French studies came to light in front of an ensemble of football jerseys bearing French surnames (someone forgot that even the Cajun people were victims of French colonial oppression). In the original version of the advertisement, the deeds of landscape architecture were proclaimed on the manicured lawn of a football field while the camera zoomed out to reveal the mute Miles, who was presumably indulging his renowned taste for grass. But, then, magic happened. In the following week, the Miles segment vanished! Fortunately, the internet not only tells the tale, but retrieves coaches from limbo. The original version of the advertisement can be viewed [on the internet](#), the one place where one doesn't have to "win" in order to be "here."



Miles disappears from sports-centric LSU television advertisement

Lifestyle Feature

FIVE FORGOTTEN HERBS



Often enough, the lifestyle column in the *Newsletter* addresses the offbeat, whether the unknown world of the outer reaches of Baton Rouge's Florida Boulevard, the overlooked ethnic cuisine of Shreveport, or the merits and demerits of airports in far-flung regions of the globe. Thanksgiving, however, is a holiday that celebrates the familiar, whether in a literal way, through the congregation of families, or whether more subtly, through, say, the display of warm colors near the center of the spectrum. Given that the turkey-driven holiday is now right under our nose, it seemed that the moment had arrived to re-appreciate some familiar but severely underused aromatics: herbs that everyone has heard of but that may be falling to the periphery of attention even among the best home chefs.

King in the cut-down kingdom of the underappreciated is undoubtedly tarragon, an herb that was routine during the remoulade era—back when deviled eggs counted as high cuisine—but that is now deployed only by diehard gourmets. As much or more an aroma as a taste, tarragon combines high and bright, almost citrus-like tones with a licorice aftertaste. The ideal complement to lemon, it amps up lemon cream sauces by simultaneously illuminating opposite ends of the flavor spectrum. Remarkably, tarragon revitalizes softer, more base condiments such as mayonnaise or aioli and, of course, old-fashioned remoulade. Among the proteins, tarragon is best suited to chicken and light-meat fish, where its delicate, almost frivolous complexities leap up from a neutral but umami-rich field of flaky protein.

Tarragon, surprisingly, can also make an appearance in or alongside cheese, which is where its seeming antagonist, sage, also flourishes. Surly sage contradicts tarragon insofar as its basic, flinty, dark, and deeply woody flavors define a profile far more central to the taste spectrum than that of the bipolar tarragon. Sage remains notorious for its wondrous effect on English mild cheddar cheeses, which it can transform into an almost complete dish (but, please, be sure to use neutral crackers; crackers with their own flavoring

admixtures will undo the quiet, cerebral contribution of nominally intelligent sage). Sage is also a winner alongside pork, although the combined earthiness of the pork and the sage profiles calls for the cautious



addition of a spicy acid such as Louisiana hot sauce.

The hot-headed comedian Rodney Dangerfield always used to complain that “I don’t get no respect,” and so it is with marjoram, the most forgotten of all common herbs. The kissing-cousin of oregano, marjoram exerts similar influences on acid-vegetable sauces such as tomato or “red” or marinara sauce, but does so in a slightly more fruity and likewise rather more whimsical way, without the in-your-face pointedness of its more familiar Italian herbal counterpart. Marjoram may also brighten up a simple poultry roast or may add a new inflection to a Niçoise salad dressing or Niçoise-style braising sauce (if there are black olives in the dish, the effect can be wondrous and uplifting). Marjoram has had a hard time competing with oregano, which unflinchingly declares its Italian legacy, but it is

marjoram that can enhance a classic America turkey stuffing, conveying herbal overtones but not getting lost in the heavy turkey drippings.

Cilantro also belongs among the herbs that have fallen victim to stereotypes. Just as marjoram has struggled to retain its prominence despite a withering assault from oregano, so cilantro has had to fight its way first out of the shadow of chili powder and next out of the general connection with Mexican cuisine. True, cilantro adds punch to tacos, enchiladas, or their various sauces. But it is also well-adapted to American pseudo-Latin food such as chili or even chicken soup, where its savory yet slightly lime-like flavor can make an American classic seem almost Greek, and that by way of a Mexican ingredient! Cilantro, too, has made its way into Indian cuisine. Even chicken tikka masala benefits from an herb that is available in supermarkets year-round and that is easily grown fresh in the Louisiana backyard.

At the end of this list is plain old dill. Poor old dill: it has gotten stuck in the adjective position alongside the substance “pickle.” Yet dill can go everywhere: in an Italian salad dressing; in cheese from Somersetshire; in the marinade for gyros or schawarma; in any of a dozen Indian sauces; in German *Rouladen*; and, in sum, just about anywhere that an aromatic plant can be an impact player—including atop that Thanksgiving turkey!

Have you hugged your obscure herbs today? It’s OK to do so vigorously; crushing herbs is one of the best ways to extract the flavor that they lovingly give to you!



FIVE-DAY FLIP-FLOPS, SPEEDY POSSESSION CHANGES, AND SCHOLAR ATHLETES

Those who read the classics know the old saw about prophets seldom grasping the full implications of the forecasts. Not only was Cassandra unheeded in her own country—she also lacked the interpretive skills to decrypt her own message, ventilated as it was during an emergency-induced trance. So it is that the tradition of unexpected wider implications has arisen in the latest, October 14th letter from LSU Athletic Director Joe Alleva to the LSU community and its piebald suburbs. Alleva opens the letter with the prophecy that “there will be a lot of talk about how the LSU-Florida game came to be played in Tiger Stadium.” The immediate message from the clairvoyant Athletic Director seems to pertain to the change of venue—a possession change vis-à-vis this high-profile contest from storm-ravaged Florida to spared Baton Rouge. The utterance, however, invokes a larger range of meaning, for there certainly will and should be talk about the scheduling of two major football clashes within a five-day interval (November 19th and November 24th). What academic or even fitness-related purpose might be served by exposing students to ferocious collisions separated by so short an interval? How will the academic role of these “student-athletes” be served by a nearly ten-day marathon of pre-game rituals, sparring, and debriefing? And, to follow up on another line in the aforementioned letter, how does an emotionally-driven economic stirring—per the letter, “we felt it was important to the local economy to have a game in Baton Rouge”—justify the use of free student-athlete labor under such excruciating conditions?



LSUA LAUNCHES NEW BSC IN HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Under the guidance of former Chancellor Dan Howard, LSU of Alexandria experienced exponential enrollment growth, shattering goal after goal as new students discovered the academic treasure of “CENLA” (central Louisiana). Beloved as the home of the Alexandria Summit Meetings, LSUA continues to flourish under the interim leadership of Haywood Joiner, who, at the September meeting of the LSU Board of Supervisors, sought and received approval for a new program, the Bachelor of Science in Health Professions, from the LSU management board. Those who follow higher education know the correlation between allied health programs and ever-increasing enrollments. Small-to-medium-size institutions adjacent to small cities routinely attract crowds composed of those who wish to staff the growth field of medical para-professionals, all while benefitting from a four-year education in a comprehensive university. Congratulations to Interim Chancellor Joiner and to the LSUA community for initiating another big success.



JOIN THE:



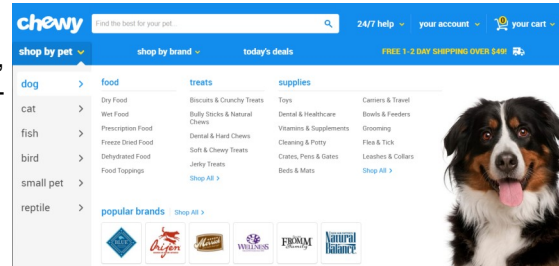
Support academic freedom
and protect the dignity of
academic effort!

<http://www.aaup.org/>



TIP OF THE MONTH: CHEWY.COM

Those of us who maintain, enjoy, and otherwise love animal companions know that the modern pet has gone boutique. Gone are the days of table



Chewy offers a huge inventory of pet support resources

scraps and a big backyard; now in vogue are artisanal treats, special diet kibbles, and purpose-driven litter. Pet parents equally well know the frustration of dealing with the big box pet stores, with their midrange to lowbrow offerings and their ferociously flickering fluorescent lights. Remarkably, bigtime e-tailers such as Amazon.com seem somewhat disorganized vis-à-vis pet paraphernalia. Into this void has rushed a new single-purpose online vendor, Chewy.com. Chewy.com seems to have everything that one could require to support at least the fundamental needs and many of the cultivated desires of any dog or cat, whether chef-crafted special bites or dozens of restroom solutions. Prices are consistently below storefront retail and remain free of sales tax. Best of all, any order for items totaling over \$49.00 in cost, even orders that include heavy items such as cat litter, ship for free, usually arriving within two days. Chewy has never failed the *Newsletter* staff. Indeed, given the high cost of plumbing repairs, water, and even toilet paper, then considering by contrast the bargain prices at Chewy, our staffers are considering ditching the plumbing and heading for the box!

CIO-CTO TRANSITION OPENS DEBATE ON ROLE, SCOPE, AND MISSION OF IT SERVICES

The biggest news of the month with regard to academic infrastructure is the quiet reconfiguration, within LSU A&M and eventually across the LSU System, of the Chief Information Officer as the Chief Technology Officer. Spurred in part by the near-emergency resulting from the stumbling start-up of the Workday enterprise system, the conversion of a “CIO” into a “CTO” struck some as more than a stirring of the acronymic alphabet soup—as, perhaps, a concession that Louisiana institutions can no longer compete with the top institutions when it comes to creative academic use of computational resources, that Louisiana can only keep the machines running and hope for the best. “CTO” sounds to some rather more like an old-fashioned grease monkey fixing it up under the hood than like an innovator in the world of top-notch high-tech scientific applications. Fortunately, the LSU leadership has been alerted by its faculty that “IT” is more than just some “it,” that faculty in ambitious institutions regard information systems as integral to every aspect of the academic project, from remedial online instruction to the performing of gigantic calculations upon sprawling data sets. This story will be continued!



TUITION DISCOUNT RATE PRIMED TO PUMP ACHIEVEMENT

Devotees of higher education lore acknowledge that every institution has a “discount rate”: a differential between the official tuition and what is actually collected. Discount rates result from an astounding number of influences, whether the de facto subsidy of higher education costs through student loan guarantees or through merit-based, donor-derived scholarships. Under the pressure of competition from recruiters around the country, LSU officials have reintroduced a new and admirable form of tuition discounting, the Louisiana Tiger Legacy Scholarship Program. Downplayed during the peak (or, rather, the abyss) or the budget crisis, the Tiger Legacy program formerly rewarded institutional loyalty, going as it did to children of alumni, but now promotes academic achievement, being measured out to children of LSU alumni and LSU employees on a sliding scale, with the amount of the award increasing with the level of ACT or SAT score or grade point average (in the case of transfer students). Congratulations to all concerned for finding a way to convert an affiliation-based scholarship into one that seeds success, all while supporting institutional loyalty.



“MOMENT OR MOVEMENT” SYMPOSIUM SCORES STATEWIDE SUCCESS

Over the years, Louisiana faculty governance has developed and promoted an astounding array of public events, whether the legendary LSU A&M Chancellor-Senate Forums, the town halls with major political figures like those sponsored by Sonya Hester and Vipin Menon, or the organized public debates created in numerous locations by James Kyrlo. In an environment in which public universities have stressed caution but underperformed with regard to public controversy, the record of faculty activists when it comes to fulfilling the civic duties of universities is nothing short of astounding. The most spectacular faculty-driven event to date occurred in early October under the banner, *Moment or Movement: A National Dialogue on Identity, Empowerment, and Justice for All*. Instigated by the LSU Faculty Senate by way of demonstrating university leadership with respect to the shootings, floods, and other sad events that beset Louisiana in the summer of 2016, *Moment or Movement* evolved with vigorous support and cooperation from the



Sonya Hester, Kevin Cope, David Terry, King Alexander, and Michelle Masse at the Moment or Movement Symposium



Ken McMillin, John Vanchiere, Jennifer Rood, and Olivier Moreteau discuss the role of professional schools in community engagement

LSU System, thereby becoming an exemplary study in the achievements of shared as well as faculty governance. Expanding to two days of workshops, faculty panels, capstone lectures, and a main event—no less than an appearance by CNN news analyst Don Lemon—the symposium revealed the insight and competence of Louisiana faculty members ranging from Shreveport’s John Vanchiere, Brian Salvatore, and Mary Jarzabek to Pennington’s Jennifer Rood, Ag’s Ken McMillin, Grambling’s Matthew Ware, and the Law Center’s Olivier Moreteau. Expected to set a precedent for more major events that will occur with an increasing frequency, *Moment or Movement* marked both a moment and a movement in the history of Louisiana higher education: a moment when colleagues from around the state cooperated in a way more massive than any MOOC and a movement out of the beleaguered ivory tower into a public sphere filled with potential supporters who eagerly await leadership from higher education institutions.



LSU
— School of —
Veterinary Medicine

**Community
Practice offers
primary care**



**10% discount on all services for all
LSU faculty, staff and students. No
referral required!**

ALL ANIMALS...ALL SERVICES...ALL THE TIME

**Call today for an
appointment!**

**225-578-9600 (pets
and small exotics)**

**225-578-9500 (horses
and farm animals)**

**LSU Veterinary
Teaching Hospital
Skip Bertman Drive
at River Road
Baton Rouge, LA 70803**

www.vetmed.lsu.edu

LSU's full-service Veterinary Teaching Hospital is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year; from small pets to horses, exotics and farm animals, emergency medicine to preventative care—we're here for you and your animals.

We have more board-certified specialists than anywhere else in Louisiana. Our specialty services include internal medicine, surgery, anesthesiology, cardiology, dermatology, ophthalmology, oncology, nephrology, reproduction, integrative medicine, rehabilitation, exotics, wildlife and diagnostic imaging (including CT and MRI).

Our Community Practice Service offers primary veterinary care for LSU employees and students. Come visit us for your pet's annual check-ups, preventative health care, disease diagnosis and management, micro-chipping, and health certificates.

**LOVE PURPLE
LIVE GOLD**

**facebook.com/LSUVTH
facebook.com/LSUSVM**

**[@LSUVetMed](https://instagram.com/LSUVetMed)
instagram.com/LSUVetMed**

LSUNITED BEGINS GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATION EFFORT



Just as the biggest earthquakes radiate from remote epicenters, so the biggest news of 2016 may have emanated from far outside the ivy covered halls, way off in a Washington committee room. Recently, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ruled that graduate teaching



assistants in the employ of private colleges and universities may form unions and may organize for purposes of negotiation with university management. Unprecedented in a vocation in which apprenticeship has been the model more often than has industrial-style labor relations, the NLRB ruling is already shaking foundations at prestigious private research universities, with their large graduate-student laboratory and teaching cadres. It is only a matter of time before similar decident employment game in pub-also abound in unrepresented

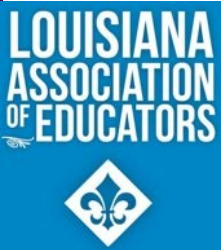
In this somewhat nervous renewed its inquiries into the ing student labor at LSU. All-LSUnited teams have visited partments on the LSU campus sess the size, morale, and ate assistants and to recruit



sions change the stulic institutions, which graduate assistants. context, LSUnited has possibility of organiz-ready, members of the upwards of thirty de-in an attempt to as-inclinations of gradu-signatories for a peti-

tion. With no less than 2,200 graduate student workers, LSU presents a huge challenge. Organizing the populous but dispersed graduate student body may require outside assistance. Recognizing the immensity of the challenge, LSUnited team members have made contact with an impressive ensemble of major unions: [SEIU \(Service Employees International Union, which specializes in government workers\)](#); the [UAW \(United Auto Workers\)](#), whose portfolio extends far beyond Detroit assembly lines; the [AFT \(American Federation of Teachers\)](#); and the [Teamsters](#). LSUnited also remains in touch with the [LAE \(Louisiana Association of Educators\)](#), with whom it has maintained continuing contacts during its extended drive to create a faculty union. Faculty members who would like to assist in the drive

are invited to help LSUnited members by advising them of the location of graduate student offices so that those aspiring initiates to the profession may be contacted and learn about the possibility of improved representation.



AAUPLA LISTSERV REVIVES

Long-serving Louisiana faculty remember that, once upon a time, the Louisiana state AAUP chapter maintained a listserv that regularly disseminated information about the profession and that served as a focal point for discussions about the status of faculty in Louisiana higher education institutions. Now, Rip Van Winkle can roll over! After a very long period of dormancy, that listserv has come back to life. Through a cooperative effort between Leslie Bary of the University of Louisiana Lafayette, an officer in the state chapter of the AAUP and a member of the AAUP National Council, and Zehra Zamin, the LSU A&M IT Services expert who most recently assisted in the creation of the ALFS-ALEXANDRIA-SUMMIT listserv, AAUPLA is now back in service and ready to enhance the flow of information. Applause and gratitude goes to all concerned in this effort but especially to Professor Bary and Ms. Zamin.



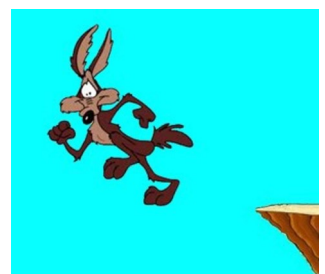
VETERINARY SCHOOL GOES GENDER NEUTRAL

True, Louisiana is almost always the last or at least forty-ninth state in which to look for evidence of social progress. At nearly the same moment as that at which the Chicago Cubs broke the curse that obstructed their winning of the World Series, a far corner of the LSU domain has taken a huge step forward with regard to respect for those who embrace difference. Early in October, the School of Veterinary Medicine announced the establishment, in its buildings, of no less than eleven gender-neutral restrooms by way of providing options for parents with children or anyone else who might desire a private and safe environment for the performance of basic human necessities. Congratulations to the School of Veterinary Medicine for setting a new standard in not only compliance, but pro-active engagement.



PLANNED PARENTHOOD FLAP TROUBLES UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN

One of the favorite diversions of the executive set, including academic management, is outsourced charity: the giving of significant sums to amalgamated charities such as The Red Cross or the United Way so as to put points on the corporate scoreboard while allowing others to make decisions about who gets what. Professors, however, like to take a careful look at the use of their philanthropy. So it is that LSU's latest United Way campaign has come under criticism owing to the omission of Planned Parenthood from the anthology of United Way charities. Many faculty have complained that supporting United Way amounts to an endorsement of a specific political agenda. Lesson learned: Look before you either leap or contribute.



MONTHLY MOVIE REVIEW

ALL THE WAY (Jay Roach, 2016)

—Reviewed by Carl Freedman

In his massive multi-volume biography of Lyndon Johnson—which, with four thick volumes in print and a fifth one promised, is considered by some to be the finest presidential biography ever written—Robert Caro stresses one theme more, perhaps, than any other. Though Caro accepts Lord Acton's venerable maxim that power tends to corrupt, he maintains that there is another, much less widely recognized principle that is at least equally important: that power tends to *reveal*. The idea is that you never really know what someone—like Lyndon Johnson—wants to do until he has the power to do it. Johnson spent his life seeking and accumulating power—and then seeking still more power—and so, on this view, it was only when, as president, he attained the supreme executive power that the American political system has to offer that he revealed himself most truly and was, as it were, most completely himself.

Jay Roach's new film about Johnson (written by Robert Schenkkan and closely based on his own successful play of the same title, which is itself taken from Johnson's principal campaign slogan of 1964, "All the way with LBJ") is heavily influenced by Caro's work. Roach, who is perhaps still best known for such zany comedies as the Austin Powers films (1997-2002) and *Meet the Fockers* (2004), has in more recent years emerged as an interesting and serious chronicler of various episodes from modern American history. In 2008, he released *Recount*, about the dispute over Florida's electoral votes in the aftermath of the presidential election of 2000. In 2012 came *Game Change*, which I reviewed in this space several years ago. It focuses on the role of Sarah Palin in the 2008 presidential election campaign, and is distinguished by brilliant performances by Julianne Moore as Palin and, even better, by Woody Harrelson as the Republican political operative Steve Schmidt (who, to his own eventual regret, was primarily responsible for Palin's being on the GOP ticket). Probably Roach's best film to date is last year's *Trumbo*, a biopic about the most famous and important of the blacklisted Hollywood screenwriters; it is very much about the times as well as the life of Dalton Trumbo.

Like *Recount* and *Game Change*, *All the Way* made its premier on HBO, arguably the most artistically creative movie "studio" in America today; and, like *Trumbo*, it stars Bryan Cranston in the central role. It focuses on the first—which was by far the happiest and most successful—year of Johnson's presidency, from November 1963, when he succeeded to the nation's highest office upon John Kennedy's assassination, to November 1964, when he won a historic landslide election victory against the hapless Barry Goldwater. Coming suddenly into the office at which he had been aiming his whole life, Johnson was faced with two tasks that might have seemed in conflict—or at least in some tension—with one another. On the one hand, America was in a state of such shock and grief as it had not known since Lincoln's assassination almost a century earlier; and so it was imperative that Johnson appear deeply respectful, even reverential, toward the legacy of his slain predecessor. On the other hand, he naturally wanted to establish an independent identity as a strong, effective president in his own right. He found a way to do both things simultaneously. A New Deal liberal in his earliest Congressional days (he took to identifying himself by his three initials in imitation of Franklin Roosevelt), Johnson had soon become a fairly conventional Southern conservative—though one who, mainly because of his presidential ambitions, was careful to maintain better relations with the Northern liberal wing of the party than most Southern Democrats did. Now he would become a red-hot liberal once

again, insisting to the nation that the best way to honor John Kennedy was to pass into law the ambitious program of progressive social reform that Kennedy had proposed. What Johnson naturally did *not* say, but which was evident enough, is that Kennedy's difficulties in dealing with Congress—and especially with the powerful bloc of Southern senators, most of whom had never much liked or trusted the wealthy Northern Catholic Kennedy—had left his proposals mostly just proposals. Now Johnson would honor Kennedy by succeeding with Congress as Kennedy himself had failed to do.

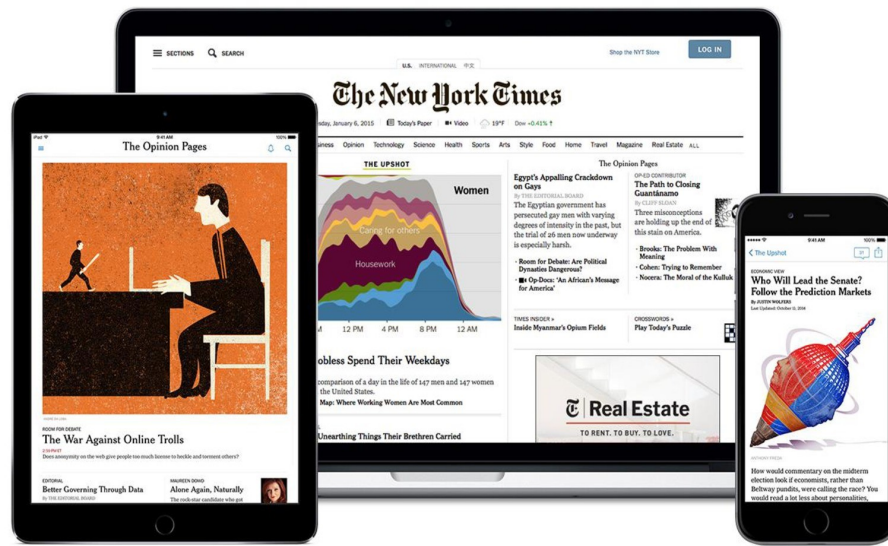
Of all Kennedy's progressive plans, none was more important than the bill that, under Johnson, became the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the first truly substantive action on civil rights that Congress had taken in a hundred years. How this happened supplies the main drama of *All the Way*. Following Caro's Johnson-centered view of events, the film shows LBJ as not just the "master of the Senate" (as Caro titles the third volume of his biography) but the master of nearly all of American politics. At one moment he is temporarily neutralizing opposition by telling "Uncle Dick" Russell (Frank Langella)—the undisputed leader of the Southern bloc in the Senate and LBJ's one-time mentor—that, though he must now posture for the liberals, the finished bill will be quite toothless. At another moment, he assures Dr. Martin Luther King (Anthony Mackie) that the bill will be just as strong as King could wish. At another, he is giving marching orders to Hubert Humphrey (Bradley Whitford), whom he seems to consider his personal ambassador to the liberals in the Senate and throughout the Democratic Party. At still another, he is forging an alliance with Everett Dirksen (Ray Wise), the leader of the Senate Republicans, flattering the old Midwestern conservative about the historic role he could play. Johnson does not scruple to dole out favors—whether a water project here or even just a pair of cufflinks embossed with the presidential seal there—in order to nail down enough individual votes to reach the magic number of 67 needed to break the Southern filibuster in the Senate against the bill. Victory is achieved, but, at the big celebration at which LBJ signs the bill into law, he is surprisingly morose—because, as he explains to Humphrey, he knows that he has effectively delivered the South to the Republican Party for a long time to come.

After the passage of the Civil Rights Act, everything else in *All the Way* is something of an anticlimax, though not uninteresting for that. There is an especially notable sequence that shows the complicated machinations over the seating of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party delegation at the 1964 Democratic Convention: an important chapter in the history of the black liberation struggle in America, though one that today seems to have largely faded from the public memory. There is also, of course, Johnson's greatest electoral triumph, the 1964 landslide, which is celebrated with a huge open-air victory party at the LBJ Ranch in Texas. Along the way, throughout the film, there are some side-glances at the escalating conflict in Vietnam, as Johnson consults with Defense Secretary Robert McNamara (Bo Foxworth). For the proverbial viewer from Mars, these brief scenes would seem of no particular importance. For the actual viewer, however, they ominously promise tragedy to come, since we know that the Vietnam War will eventually destroy the Johnson presidency, along with so much else.

—Continued on page 15



Featured Resource Workshop – November 16th 2016



Integrating New York Times Content to aid in Student Learning Outcomes

Take an in-depth tour of NYT Education Resources with Navid Ladha, Education Engagement Manager, The New York Times.

Faculty and Instructors who include The New York Times in their course syllabus as a required reading are eligible for a **complimentary home delivery of The New York Times** for the duration of the course. Contact Navid.Ladha@nytimes.com for more information. Daily copies of The New York Times are available at Manship, The 459, Middleton Library, Coates Hall, Tureaud Hall, Patrick Taylor Hall, and the Student Union, as provided by LSU Student Government.

Learn About:

- New tools and features within NYTimes.com that will support your courses
- Times Topics, an organized collection of news, archival info and multimedia dating back to 1851
- The breadth of captivating storytelling available in vast video, virtual reality and multimedia features
- Examples of how others have incorporated The New York Times into their curriculum
- Online resources, including [The New York Times in Education](#) website and our discipline specific resources

Date: Wednesday, November 16th 2016

Time: 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm (lunch will be provided)

Location: LSU Union, Acadian Room

Register: [RSVP Here](#)

The New York Times | International New York Times

inEDUCATION

MIDDLETON, MCNEESE LIBRARIES AMP UP SERVICE, STRUCTURES

Long ago in the bad old days, libraries labored under stereotypes assembled out of off-putting imagery: under visualizations of remote, guarded buildings superintended by dour bookworms eager to limit access. Two developments in the world of Louisiana academic libraries demonstrate that the aforementioned era of exclusionary experiences is at an end. At LSU A&M, the Middleton Library has taken a chapter out of the pizza industry playbook by offering, if not quite home delivery, then at least direct-to-office shipping of books. Simple to use and handily described on a library [web page](#), the new book delivery service brings books directly to faculty mailboxes and thereby spares overloaded scholars the walk over to what is, admittedly, not one of Louisiana's best buildings. Better still, the service extends to interlibrary loan items. Given that those items often impose an extra burden (both in finding them and in calling for them at the service desk), the delivery service is a godsend for overworked researchers. Over in the lower-left corner of the state, McNeese State University has announced a soft opening for its spectacularly renovated and fully transformed library building. Details remain sketchy but the "Cowboys" anticipate a formal grand opening within a few months. Given that McNeese colleagues have been requisitioning books through a stack order system for months, the unveiling of a new reading and information-distribution space comes as a most welcome announcement.



THE BACK STORY, OR, CHIROPRACTOR NEEDED AT LSUHSC-S

Those who follow higher education surely know all about the strange and sad story of the great medical school in Shreveport, LSUHSC-S, which, for months, has lacked permanent leadership, which has come under outside pressure from a strange array of influences ranging from an advisor to Saudi potentates to a cartel of speculators masquerading as philanthropists and foundation heads, and which, most recently, has sustained the largest single cut to any higher education institution, all despite a near crisis in the supply of new medical doctors for Louisiana and all despite formidable research accomplishments. Perhaps owing to relief at the prospect of a possible if admittedly long-term stabilization of the medical education and charity hospitals crisis, few have inquired into the back story of the new arrangements at the Shreveport medical Mecca. In the latest turn, the Governor's office hammered out an agreement (or, rather, peace treaty) with the Biomedical Research Foundation, which, for months, has operated under a contract that LSU endorsed despite large gaps and blank spaces. What, observers might ask, are the implications for LSU's governance of facilities whose financing and management have been re-organized by politicians and by a dubious "Biomedical Research Foundation," all with minimal input from LSU itself? And what about the quick appointment of the new Chancellor for LSUHSC-S, Dr. G. E. Ghali, whose credentials impress but the search for whom was somewhat short of Windex-level transparency? Or, to look at it both more skeptically and optimistically, does the appointment of Dr. Ghali signal a renewed acknowledgment of LSU's talent, or does it suggest that a talented insider gets a chance only when crisis leaves few other options? In sum, who will write the full back story—or, at least, the chiropractic report?



LSUHSC Shreveport—A big sign suggests a big story

NICHOLLS STATE FACULTY SENATE PROBES JOB ACTION, SEEKS STATEWIDE PARTICIPATION

The wires of the ALFS-ALEXANDRIA-SUMMIT listserv were sizzling mid-October when the energetic President of the Nicholls State University Faculty Senate proposed forming partnerships among statewide faculty by way of intensifying efforts to remedy faculty pay inadequacies. With help from his colleagues, NSU Faculty Senate President Michael Jeffress reviewed personnel action forms for the middle four months of 2016, discovering, during this investigation, that thirty-nine new hires received salaries that averaged \$6,300.00 more than their predecessors, all while long-serving faculty languished without a raise. Facing extreme salary compression as well as injustice and bad treatment of those evidencing loyalty to their institution, Jeffress and his Senate distributed to faculty across the state a 2013 NSU Faculty Senate [Resolution](#) calling on the NSU President to address salary compression and inversion problems. In the absence of any resulting action, indeed faced with a worsening salary situation, Jeffress now seeks suggestions from colleagues around the state and proposed a major job action such as a walkout. It is hoped that Faculty Senate President Jeffress will soon offer a presentation at the Alexandria Summit Meeting by way of informing the statewide faculty and by way of developing a plan for more assertive action by and on behalf of underpaid faculty.



Michael Jeffress of NSU calls for statewide action on faculty salary

LSUA CHANCELLOR SEARCH REACHES TO GREEN MOUNTAIN STATE

As this issue goes to press, finalists are interviewing for the vacant Chancellor position at LSU of Alexandria (LSUA), the home campus of the Alexandria Summit Meetings. So far, the search seems to be running in a direction favorable to outside applicants, with the presumptive win, place, and show candidates coming from Texas, Vermont, and Thibodaux. According to the Fort Worth [Star Telegram](#), the three candidates are emerging from the orbits of academic affairs and of research and innovation at their respective campuses. The apparent high quality of these candidates as well as the fact that at least one of them comes from a liberal arts background evidences the enormous strides made by LSUA in recent years.



LSUA's chancellor search yielding positive results

As a history lesson, *All the Way* can be adversely criticized. When Schenkkan's play (which the film follows in most particulars) appeared on Broadway, Elizabeth Drew—who has been observing political Washington longer and more closely than perhaps any other journalist at work today—wrote a devastating historical critique in *The New York Review of Books*. She argues in detail that, though Johnson deserves credit for supporting the civil rights bill, passing it was far from a one-man operation. In particular, she notes that, in the most crucial and difficult part of the process—breaking the Senate filibuster—LBJ's influence was really quite limited. When Johnson moved from being the Senate's majority leader to being Kennedy's vice-president, he had tried to stay involved with Senate business but was told in no uncertain terms to butt out. The Senate guarded its institutional independence with extreme jealousy, and did not welcome outsiders—even, or perhaps especially, an outsider who had recently been the ultimate Senate insider—into its workings. According to Drew, it was actually Mike Mansfield, the Senate Democrats' new floor leader (who does not even appear in *All the Way*) that did the real work, in co-operation with Humphrey, his assistant, and Dirksen, his Republican opposite number. Drew (who, if not Johnson-centric like Caro, Schenkkan, and Roach, is certainly Washington-centric) might have added that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the achievement of many other people as well, above all hundreds of mostly unsung black and white civil rights workers in the South, a number of whom were rewarded for their efforts by being murdered.

So *All the Way*—like, say, Shakespeare's *Richard III*—may have its flaws as a historical chronicle. But, also like *Richard III*, it offers a stunning dramatic portrait of a powerful and complex political personality; indeed, Bryan Cranston does not suffer unduly from comparison with Laurence Olivier, Ian McKellan, and the other great actors who have played Shakespeare's evil king. Coming to major stardom as the protagonist of Vince Gilligan's popular AMC television series *Breaking Bad* (2008-2013), Cranston is now doing work that far surpasses his quite good performance as Walter White, the high-school chemistry teacher who becomes a methamphetamine manufacturer and dealer. In *Trumbo*, he magnificently incarnates the great Hollywood screenwriter, conveying Trumbo's complex (though not especially unusual) combination of radical selfless idealism with a good deal of day-to-day self-centeredness. He is even better as LBJ, a very different figure (though it is worth noting that both Trumbo and Johnson were men of huge talents and huge egos). Cranston's Johnson is vastly contradictory. He can tell Uncle Dick Russell that he loves him more than his own father and then—in the same sentence!—threaten to crush him politically if need be. Of course, Johnson's extremely various modes—cajoling, flattering, soothing, arguing, threatening, blustering—are all precisely calculated for political effect. But Cranston makes us see that they are all also genuine reflections of LBJ's personality. His Johnson is, in addition, a man of great strengths and great weaknesses. Confronting men who are major political powers in their own right, Johnson can completely

dominate them all; but, alone with his wife or with his closest personal aide, he can whimper like a frightened child. Above all, Cranston—speaking Schenkkan's lines and directed by Roach—is faithful to Caro's principle that power reveals. Perhaps the final brilliance of Cranston's performance is that he makes us believe that all the things Johnson does to pass the civil rights bill—all the tricks and deceptions and threats and bribes—are done, at bottom, because he believes that the bill is morally right and urgent. LBJ is proud to think that a Southern president will—finally—lead the South out of its long racial nightmare.

Unfortunately, Cranston's superb performance is supported by an only fair-to-middling cast playing the secondary characters around LBJ. There are two exceptions. Frank Langella, one of the finest actors of his generation—and one who has memorably played such American political figures as Richard Nixon and Chief Justice Warren Burger—is first-rate as Senator Russell. A courtly Southern gentleman of the old school, and always an implacable supporter of white supremacy, Russell was one of the most influential figures in the history of the US Senate; though he is now little remembered outside his home state of Georgia, Langella makes him live in all his sad complexity. Likewise, Melissa Leo delivers an excellent performance as LBJ's wife, Lady Bird Johnson. Leo strongly conveys Mrs. Johnson's toughness, shrewdness, and traditionally feminine charm: qualities that were not always prominent in her public profile during her tenure as First Lady but that subsequent biographical scholarship has made clear. Most of the cast, though, seem to have phoned in their performances. Bradley Whitford as Senator Humphrey projects little of the ebullience that made Humphrey so popular with his colleagues; and you would certainly not guess from Anthony Mackie's performance that Martin Luther King was the most spell-binding American orator of the twentieth century. Worst of all is probably Ray Wise's Senator Dirksen. The real Everett Dirksen, with his soothing syrupy voice and extravagantly flowery language, was one of the great political showmen of his time; Wise makes him seem about as interesting as a nondescript file clerk.

Yet, though most of the supporting performances represent missed opportunities, the film is so utterly dominated by Cranston as Johnson as to be worth multiple viewings anyhow. When I first viewed Steven Spielberg's *Lincoln* (2012)—which I reviewed in this space—I reflected that Daniel Day-Lewis's great performance in the title role had given us probably the closest cinematic thing we will ever have to knowing what it was like to sit in a room and talk with President Lincoln. I feel much the same here. As it happens, I actually was once in the same room with Johnson, when he was vice-president; but, since I was a 12-year-old Boy Scout among a couple dozen other Boy Scouts, he naturally did not try his famed powers of political persuasion on me. For me, Lyndon Johnson in the flesh does not now mean, primarily, the tall, red-faced, slightly sullen-seeming figure that I dimly recall from my boyhood (looking at the photograph I still have of the occasion, I suspect LBJ was thinking that, once master of the Senate, he was now an errand boy whom Kennedy sent to meet with Boy Scouts). It means, instead, Bryan Cranston in the performance of a lifetime.



Have a Happy Thanksgiving!

