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Faculty Senate Resolution 12-13

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FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION 12–13

“CEO Searches and the LSU Community”

Introduced at the request of the LSU System Council of Faculty Advisors

Whereas proposals to combine the administrations of LSU System campuses and to restructure the LSU System were prepared by a group of three consultants from the Association of Governing Boards (of Washington, D. C.), consultants who had minimal exposure to faculty, staff, and students of the LSU System and whose visits to LSU System campuses and communities have been few in number and impossible to document;

Whereas the aforementioned proposals remain untested hypotheses that have not yet been shored up by institutional, demographic, economic, or any other kind of data;

Whereas consultations by the LSU System management board with stakeholders in the LSU campuses and communities have been limited to two ninety-minute breakfasts on the A&M campus and to a smattering of three-minute “public comments” at LSU System Board meetings;

Whereas the Attorney General of the State of Louisiana has demanded that the LSU System propose remedies for its violation of open meeting laws;

Whereas the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Committee on Colleges (SACSCOC), the accrediting agency for most of the LSU System campuses, has cautioned both the LSU A&M campus and the LSU System that its hasty and erratic approach to governance restructuring may imperil the entire accreditation of the LSU System institutions;

Whereas the behavior of the LSU System Board of Supervisors in regard to restructuring has elicited a large body of public criticism regarding the politicization of university governance in Louisiana;

Whereas classroom service, research obligations, and state travel and leave regulations create insurmountable obstacles for colleagues who would like to contribute to the discussion of university governance but who, owing to poor communication

from the LSU System office, often receive little or no advance notice of significant actions;

Whereas the overlapping membership of the support groups funding restructuring studies, of the supporter groups of prominent state politicians, of the search and “transition advisory” committees, and of search committees for on-campus, middle and upper management personnel gives rise to questions concerning influence-peddling;

Whereas the “town hall” visits initiated by the LSU System interim President have taken the form of question-and-answer sessions that minimize dialogue while a to-and-fro debate with a panel of faculty experts was canceled and then delayed indefinitely;

Whereas the one faculty member on the presidential search committee who is not currently serving as an administrator whose job does not depend on the “command line” is, however, a former administrator and was appointed by unknown procedures, without consultation with any faculty governance officer on any LSU System campus;

Whereas the “Transition Advisory Team” includes no faculty, staff, or student members;

Whereas the consultants for the LSU System originally proposed three scenarios for LSU’s future, but only one of these avenues to advancement has been explored, the decision among those options having been made by unknown means and therefore de facto in violation of the Louisiana open meetings law;

Whereas both the search consultant for the LSU System and the LSU Board have declared their intentions to conduct a secretive search that culminates in the selection of only one candidate, who will then make a visit to and presentation at only one LSU System campus;

Whereas a similar one-candidate search for the President of the University of Louisiana System resulted in the appointment of that candidate on the same day as her visit to Baton Rouge, with no opportunity for faculty, staff, or student input;

Whereas the last three one-candidate CEO searches at LSU or the LSU System have produced candidates whom the LSU Board itself has either dismissed or eased from office;

Whereas the concealing of search processes not only diminishes the dignity of a great, free, and innovative university, but also raises questions concerning compliance with the spirit as well as the letter of equal employment and civil rights laws;

Whereas the composition of the LSU Board provides little evidence or reassurance regarding diversity in any sense, whether racial, economic, gender, political, vocational, or ideological;

Whereas LSU Board members have distorted and misrepresented the small measure of faculty input into the restructuring process that has been allowed, a particular example of which misrepresentation is the omission of the essential academic advanced, “terminal” degree qualification from advertisements for the presidential search;

Whereas the expenditures and resources required for both the consultants’ reports and for the proposed numerous committees and subcommittees charged with managing the “transition” process not only calls into question the cost-saving dimension of the proposed restructuring but also siphons the talent and the funds needed for the many problems resulting from an extended period of budget shortfalls;

Therefore be it resolved that the LSU Faculty Senate asks the LSU Board of Supervisors and the interim President of the LSU System to suspend the consolidation of the LSU System Presidency and the LSU A&M Chancellorship until an impartial committee that includes a substantial representation of faculty and professional staff from the LSU System campuses—colleagues who have been selected through procedures in keeping with shared governance principles—can review and revise procedures for pertinent executive searches and can evaluate the full range of options for the future of the LSU System campuses.