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Faculty Senate Newsletter, April 2010

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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LSU FACULTY SENATE

Monthly Newsletter

April 30, 2010



President's Message

For the last several months, members of the extended LSU community have hopped from big issue to big issue, from hope to fear to anxiety, and on to occasional relief. Although the very big issue of the higher education budget will occupy us for months to come, it is important to remember the many smaller items that support or otherwise accumulate into the gigantic challenges that we face today. So it is that, in the wake of the Louisiana Postsecondary Review Council, with its disappointing recommendation that all four year institutions capitulate to a single "superboard," both educators and administrators will want to do their level best to keep the governance of educational institutions within the sphere of influence of "the little

people": those teachers, professors and researchers who, day in and day out, carry the bricks and mix the mortar by way of building the temple of education. The proposed "superboard" will take educational policy farther away from the academic personnel who implement it and so merits resistance.

Viewers of *The Ten Commandments* know that the making of big bricks requires little bits of straw. Educators who anticipate building a better future should occasionally look past crises to recognize the importance of fine points and telling details. Two recent small scale events merit consideration as we try to imagine what our beleaguered University will be doing after the recession passes. Although it drew only passing interest when it grazed the edges of the newspapers, Chancellor Martin's recent suggestion that budget shortfalls might be overcome by impounding funds for construction of the band hall deserves special praise. Proposing that construction delay irritated an assortment of our Supervisors, who seem to have missed the adverse symbolic value of building an enrichment support facility while faculty face layoffs. Although we all adore the Tiger Band, we require employment to buy tickets to hear it, a small and simple fact that Chancellor Martin affirmed against considerable opposition. Another detail that has become so small as to reach invisibility is the fate of the micro-brewery and mini-pub that the Chancellor proposed for the Lod Cook Hotel and Conference Center. The Faculty Senate has been long committed to improving the quality of life on the LSU campus, as well as to providing non-academic recreational options by way of raising the level of collegiality and creating a sense of mutual proprietorship over our collective destiny. Rumor, which provides more truth than is commonly acknowledged, reports that the micro-brewery was scuttled under political pressure from pietistic elements among legislators from the northern part of our state. If indeed the mini-pub expired under leveraging from the Elmer Gantry wing of our government, we have yet another demonstration that apparent trivialities, such as whether The Chimes will have an able competitor, can at least epitomize the impairment of our academically enabled freedom to choose. Let us hope that Chancellor Martin, like the namesake of the famous English cider, can keep pecking away at certain blockheads!

Please enjoy this issue of the newsletter, which includes information about some very serious issues that affect us all.

With all good wishes,

Kevin L. Cope, Faculty Senate President

ALFS Meets, Begins Initiative on Board of Regents Membership

The Association of Louisiana Faculty Senates (ALFS) held its spring meeting on April 17 in the Lod Cook Center. Comprised of faculty leaders from all Louisiana colleges and universities, ALFS provides both [online](#) and on site venues in which to initiate and coordinate faculty efforts on behalf of higher education. ALFS delegates from the LSU System, from the University of Louisiana System, and from Louisiana's private colleges heard from LSU System Vice President Mike Gargano, whose presentation ranged from educational policy issues such as new admissions requirements, to enrollment management, to the aftermath of the Tucker Commission.

Following Vice President Gargano's presentation, ALFS delegates resolved to renew the drive for faculty membership on the Board of Regents. Louisiana remains perversely unique in the lack of faculty representation on the various boards that govern higher education. The first step in this initiative will be the passing of resolutions by the System Councils, a body led by faculty senate presidents within the four higher education systems. That resolution will request four faculty seats: one for each system on the Board of Regents. The LSU Council of Faculty Advisors unanimously passed such a resolution at its April 23rd meeting at LSU in Alexandria. The other three systems are presently in the process of developing resolutions. Once those resolutions are in hand, the heads of the System Councils will present the combined resolutions along with an accompanying petition to the Commissioner of Higher Education.

Bargaining and Representation Committee's Duties to Continue

The [Ad Hoc Committee on Bargaining and Representation](#) has made good use of its first year of duty by issuing a preliminary report and by organizing a "Faculty Issues and Discussion Series" that has covered topics from "speed up" in the profession to benefits. The Committee reports that its work will require additional research and that it has plans to intensify the level of debate on this campus. Additionally, the adverse effects on working conditions and expectations brought about by the recession and by legislative action have convinced the Committee that it should continue its efforts for another year. At the request of Committee Chair Michael Russo, the charge to the Committee has been renewed until at least May 2011.

HB 331: Not Yet the Complete Answer to Retirement System Deficits

Both hope and alarm spread through the informal Louisiana educators' benefits network with the formulation of HB 331 of the 2010 Louisiana Legislature. Sponsored by Representative Franklin Foil, this bill permits certain groups of educators to re enter the TRSL defined benefit plan. Although faculty governance officers rejoice in Representative Foil's attempt to reopen the TRSL plan, examination of the bill in its present form gives pause. HB 331 raises as many questions as it answers and recommends several questionable implementation strategies. Returnees to TRSL, for example, would not be permitted to retain their accounts and begin accruing service years within TRSL anew, as had been hoped, but would be asked to surrender their extant Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) accounts. Years-of-service granted in exchange for this buy-in would be determined by the same actuaries whose calculations have led to the drastic reduction in the portion of employer contributions that reach employees. And worse! The LSU Faculty Senate is in the process of analyzing this bill and will soon release a more general explanation. Faculty Senate President Kevin Cope has asked for a parlay among Representative Foil and faculty governance officers from across the state. Readers may keep up with events as they arise at the [Senate "ORP Crisis" web page](#).

Business School Deans to Take Lead in Transfer Tracks for Specialist or Accredited Programs

Early in April, the Statewide Articulation and Transfer Council accepted and passed along to the Board of Regents the LSU inspired guidelines for the "Nevers Bill," the portable degree that allows students to move from one Louisiana institution to another with a block transfer of sixty hours credit and junior standing. This initial recommendation postulated general "tracks" that would serve the needs of the majority of students emerging from the Technical and Community College System as well as from other four year institutions. This initial program introduces questions about students who might want to pursue an "accredited program" in which they must also satisfy the requirements of outside accrediting agencies. LSU is taking the lead in tackling this issue by sponsoring a new "inter system working group" of Business School Deans and program Directors. The initial working group will include LSU's own Eli Jones; UNO Business Dean Jim Logan; McNeese Business Dean Mitchell Adrian; Louisiana Tech Dean James Lumpkin; Southern University Business Dean Donald Andrews; Delgado Community College Business program Coordinators Marilyn Ciolino and Patrick Conroy; LSU System Vice President Mike Gargano; and Statewide Articulation and Transfer Council General Education Committee Chair Kevin Cope. This "working group" bodes fair to set national precedents for specialized transfer programs and is certain to establish LSU as a leader in articulation initiatives.

"Getting There" Remains "Gones-O"

Complaints continue to pour in regarding "Getting There," the new interface provided ([continued page 2](#))

ADMINISTRATOR IN THE SPOTLIGHT

K.C. White, Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of Students

As Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of Students, K.C. White's main priority is figuring out "how we best serve our students and helping them to be successful." Looking at her department's position on a broader scale within the Division of Student Life, White believes her office's role on campus is to "complement what goes on inside the classroom."

White has served the Office of the Dean of Students since July 2002, when she joined the staff as Associate Dean. White's primary responsibility is to oversee the four main areas of the office.

The first area, Campus Life, characterizes the service, involvement, and leadership portions, and was formed two years ago when the Center for Student Leadership and Involvement and Union Programs combined. Several Student Life staff members also help to advise Student Government, not a separate department, but an entity that White emphasizes "has lasting impressions in all of the different roles that are played outside of the classroom." Greek Life is also a visible part of the office, as 17% of LSU undergraduate students are involved in Greek activities, and Greek organizations are a significant part of the institution's history and tradition. The third area, Disability Services, serves as a resource and advocates for students with learning, physical, and other disabilities. The final area, Student Advocacy and Accountability, was formerly known as Judicial Affairs. While it does govern academic and non-academic violations of the Student Code of Conduct, this area was recently renamed to reflect the important role that the office plays in advocating for students as well.



Including "advocacy" in the new name is one way in which White and her staff are working to change the conception students might have that the Office of the Dean of Students is merely "where you have to go when you're in trouble." She emphasizes that they are also a place to come "when we can advocate on your behalf."

The staff starts early in informing students of the resources they offer, reaching already-admitted high school seniors in presentations at orientation sessions. They also conduct educational sessions for faculty members, especially new faculty. White explains that faculty can "be our eyes and ears" in identifying students who may be experiencing medical or personal

difficulties, especially students who don't live in residential life areas. The Office of Dean of Students is there to reach out to those students, or help faculty members guide students to the proper resources for help. They also contact faculty on behalf of students, for instance, in the case that a student may need to miss class or assignments due to a death in the family. White emphasizes that their office still holds high standards of accountability for students; however, she points out that even when students come to their office because of conduct violations, the staff may end up helping that student as a result of the contact.

"Let us be your advocate; let us be

your champion."

White enjoys following collegiate sports and describes running as her "outlet." She has run the Marine Corps and the Walt Disney World Marathon, but appreciates the beautiful backdrop the LSU lakes offer here at home. Since White was diagnosed with breast cancer a year ago, she has appreciated the support she's received from the LSU community. She says that through her journey she's gained perspective on balancing work and life and being grateful for the blessings in her life.

Overall, White and her staff are "committed to student success." White recognizes that "It is hard enough to be a college student today. There are lots of different pressures." She encourages students to "Let us be your advocate; let us be your champion. And if you're not sure where to go, come to the Dean of Students office and we'll figure out the most appropriate place."

On Campus Controversy Over Faculty Prerogatives and PS-44

Newsletter readers are surely aware that a controversy has arisen around the removal of a professor from the classroom owing to allegations concerning grading practices. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee has taken two steps with regard to this troubling matter. First, the Executive Committee has received a briefing from the accused professor and has briefed her concerning the grievance process. Additionally, the Chair of the Grievance Committee has met with the Faculty Senate President to review procedures by way of ensuring a careful, thorough, and proper evaluation of this case.

Second, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee has met with the Provost to discuss the revision of PS-44, the policy statement that prescribes duties, practices, and responsibilities related to grading and that explains procedures for emergency or extraordinary situations. Last revised in 1996, PS-44 provides little guidance with regard to exceptional circumstances or with regard to the responsibilities of parties involved in enforcement actions. For instance, the current PS-44 offers no hints with regard to contemporary grading problems that might arise from online education or from legislative pressure to retain students or increase graduation rates. The Office of Academic Affairs understands the weakness of PS-44 and has shown its willingness to improve that document; those improvements are underway. Faculty Senate officers will also continue to work with state officials to protect faculty grading prerogatives against well intentioned but inadequately advised attempts to increase "performance metrics" at the cost of diminished grading standards (already, popular blogs have re-christened our acronym, defining "LSU" as "Low Standards University").

Graduate Council Membership Rules Revised, Nearing Implementation

On March 15, the Faculty Senate approved Resolution 10-03, which called for new rules for membership on the Graduate Council and which established a model for the election rather than appointment of future members. After a Resolution passes the Senate, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee consults with the administration regarding the implementation of both the letter and the spirit of the new legislation. A refreshingly cordial negotiation with Provost Merget and with Graduate School Dean David Constant has led to the formulation of a policy that will allow for an orderly phase in of an elected Council membership and with that, a greater sense of self determination among the many faculty (continued page 3)

"Getting There" (continued)

by the state travel agent. Recently identified problems include a requirement to submit TSA security information to complete a hotel reservation (remember, Motel 6, which is where you can stay at the official state per diem rate, is a high security area!); identical screens for air, hotel, and car rentals (for example, one is asked to declare a departure time for a hotel check in); lack of an "anytime" option for flight departures; no clear distinction between "hold," "confirm," and "purchase" screens (if you think that you've confirmed your hotel reservation, look again—or, worse, expect a terrifying plain text "hotel cancellation warning" message as you pull into the airport); a bewildering confusion between an information only search and a true booking search; so many pop up windows that the thread of a search or a reservation is easily lost; and, as promo people say, "much much more"!

Faculty Senate President Kevin Cope met with Accounting Services head Donna Torres, our ever dependable travel maven and all around expediter, to discuss these and other travel related difficulties. The ingenious Donna has recognized that the Accounting Services web site does little to make matters better (for example, it never mentions areas in which LSU travel policy diverges in practices from the state and from the LSU System travel guide, PM-13). Donna has vowed to work on the Senate suggestion for an instantly accessible window or pop up that provides basic guidance to current travel rules and procedures. Donna, we cheer and exhort you!

Tiger Athletic Foundation Pounces on Point System

The Tiger Athletic Foundation (TAF) has announced that "the awarding of priority points" that enhance purchasing opportunities for tickets to games and other sports related events will henceforth be limited to donors to TAF programs. To the untutored outsider, this decision seems to preclude the awarding of "priority points" to philanthropists donating to the many other worthwhile enterprises of our great university. The Faculty Senate applauds those among our Tiger fundraisers who pounce on every opportunity to please our supporters but also wonders whether some choice sports entertainment morsels should also be offered to the full panoply of LSU's supporters, whether those who score or those who do a little more!

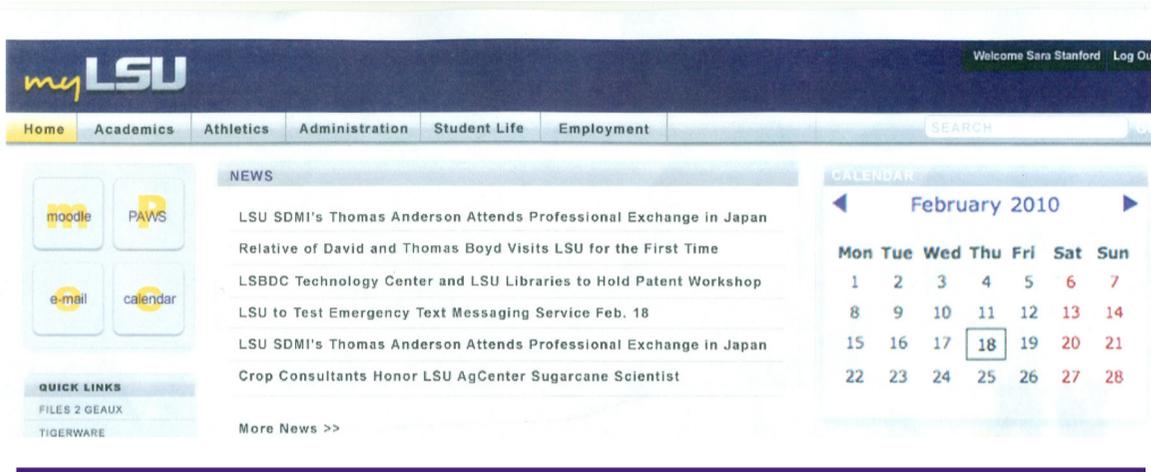
Speaking of the Tiger Athletic Foundation, look for some new retractable seating in the Pete Maravich Assembly Center. At its April 23rd meeting, the LSU Board of Supervisors approved an agreement by which the TAF will lease the floor of the PMAC for the sole purpose of replacing the retractable seating. That benefaction will cost the TAF 1.5 million dollars; additionally, TAF will pay LSU \$100 for the lease and for the opportunity to do good works. Another more-than-three-pointer for General Richard, the taciturn but witty head of the TAF!

Faculty Senate Delegation Opens Discussions with Lab School

Anyone attuned to faculty chatter at LSU knows that the LSU Lab School has certainly fulfilled one goal of educators everywhere, which is to raise questions. Owing to an increase in queries and complaints, the LSU Faculty Senate Executive Committee decided to open direct discussions with Lab School Director Wade Smith. Following a series of preliminary exchanges, Smith welcomed an amplified Executive Committee (as enlarged by the helpful presence of Professors Emily Elliott, Hector Zapata, and George Stanley) for an hour long discussion that combined demythologizing with forward looking decision making. With the help of (continued page 3)

ITS Planning Single-Sign-On Successor to PAWS

Faculty input to our increasingly friendly IT Services is proving more effective than Miracle-Gro sprayed on a house plant. Now that our information experts have responded to faculty comments by developing a program for the reform of Moodle, our IT helpers are turning to the shortcomings of PAWS. For many years, PAWS has functioned admirably as a gateway to a variety of password protected services. With the increase in the number of such limited access databases and services, the PAWS menu has become lengthy and often obscure. In response, IT Services is hard at work on "myLSU," a user interface that may eventually replace PAWS and that will enable single sign on for most password limited services. That partitive adjective "most" remains somewhat ambiguous (it may not include, for example, certain databases within the library system), but our IT experts promise to continue expanding its range and have also pledged to continue consulting with faculty as this promising system incubates.



EDUCATION OPINION Cultural Differences

Throughout my 29 years as a professor I have heard colleagues across all disciplines comment many times that the "public doesn't understand us." I completely agree, but also maintain that we don't really understand "ourselves" all that well. I believe that in general there is a remarkably large gulf of understanding between faculty in engineering/sciences (henceforth, the "sciences") and those in humanities/business/arts ("humanities"). Although we certainly need to better educate the public about what we do in higher education, it would also do us well to better understand some of the cultural differences.

At the great risk of stereotyping and generalizing, let's start with humanities' perception of teaching in the sciences. A while back I attended an educational workshop here on campus and sat next to a philosophy professor. We chatted and when I mentioned that I was in chemistry he almost immediately commented "Oh, you don't have to teach very much." I've heard this comment numerous times from my humanities colleagues (and the public). Intrigued, I asked what he was teaching that semester, which turned out to be two philosophy courses with enrollments of about 25 each. He was correct that I was teaching only one course that semester, General Chemistry lecture, but with 200 plus students. On average I've taught about 108 students a semester while here at LSU. Research active faculty in the College of Basic Sciences typically teach only one course a semester. But it could be a fairly large class and the amount of work required to do a good job teaching increases rapidly with enrollment (equally true for any faculty member).

My perception of teaching duties was also flawed in that I thought tenure track humanities faculty typically had a heavy teaching load and taught three to four courses a semester. So I was more than a bit surprised to hear that my philosophy colleague was only teaching two courses. Since then I've learned that two to three courses a semester is typical, depending on the amount of graduate training involved.

Graduate training is teaching, and in the sciences, graduate students are critically important to most of us to get our research done, articles published, and grants funded. On average I've had four Ph.D. students working in my lab, while most of my colleagues in Chemistry have, on average, six Ph.D. students working for them. Chemistry is somewhat unusual in that it has one of the largest Ph.D. programs on campus (around 150 Ph.D. students) and a relatively small faculty size (27 research active tenure track faculty). Across the science and engineering departments there are, on average, closer to two to three graduate students per faculty member.

Another comment I've heard many times is that the sciences "get all the money." This pertains to departmental funds, university allotments to special programs, salaries, etc. This is true, as far as I know. But that goes to the nature of the subject matter being taught and researched, not to any intrinsic "greed" of scientists and engineers. A new assistant professor in the sciences could get \$30,000 to over \$500,000 in start up funds to renovate an older lab, purchase equipment and supplies for that lab, hire postdoctoral associate(s) for a couple of years, and pay graduate student stipends for summer research for a few years. A faculty member that is successful with research can bring in an average of \$100,000 to \$250,000 a year in federal grant funding (a few bring in quite a bit more). Over a 30 year career that adds up to \$3 million (using the conservative \$100,000/yr figure). Approximately one third of this research funding, \$1 million, goes to the university as "overhead" (indirect costs), which more than pays for the initial start up investment in a faculty member. Of course, overhead is also used to cover the utility and other costs associated with graduate research. But a lot of those costs would exist anyway due to our undergraduate teaching duties, which include experimental labs and research.

Another major cultural difference is what happens during the summer. Regardless of whether I get summer salary from my research grant(s), I work pretty much the entire summer in my LSU office supervising graduate students and generally getting to focus on research without any undergraduate teaching duties. This is true for a high fraction of science faculty, although there are greater differences here between science and engineering departments. Very few research active faculty teach summer school in the sciences. Most of us do some departmental and university service during the summer, although typically a lot less relative to the Fall and Spring semesters when we are paid by LSU.

These cultural differences often lead to misunderstandings between the sciences and humanities. But these differences are part of the diversity of any university. I believe that a better understanding of what we do and how we (continued page 4)

Graduate Council Membership Rules (continued)

who contribute to graduate education. Initial implementation is expected by May.

Faculty Senate Delegation (continued)

Professor Zapata, the Executive Committee is preparing a proposal to Dr. Smith that will include the possibility of faculty representation on the Lab School admissions committee. Readers may be sure that this long story will soon spawn new chapters.

The Top and Bottom 5 Websites at LSU, with Honorable Mentions

Let's face it, LSU has never been very good at imaging itself. Our wonderful University remains especially backward when it comes to presenting itself on the internet. However, a survey of LSU based web sites shows that improvements are underway, that there is reason for hope and even rejoicing. To finish off this sometimes tiring spring semester on a lively note, the Newsletter reveals the results of a critical survey of LSU websites, all in the hope of greeting our public and our constituencies with an ever improving web presence. Another competition will occur in the fall; nominations for both the top five and the bottom five positions are welcome.

THE TOP FIVE

1. The College of Music and Dramatic Arts (<http://www.cmda.lsu.edu/index.html>). An appropriately dramatic improvement over the last few months has moved the M&DA site up from a tangled mess of conflicting links to a spectacular and yet economical and user friendly compendium of all that is good, entertaining, informative, and stimulating about LSU. Easy to navigate, clearly partitioned, up-to-date, and clean, this site shows just how wonderful a place LSU can be and invites users to visit again and again.
2. The College of Art and Design (<http://design.lsu.edu/index.html>). Like the M&DA site, the Art and Design site shows that modern design is not impossible at LSU and that beauty can be found even amidst the havoc of the Engineering Buildings. A&S's web designers have filled this page with diverse and delightfully energetic images. The page finished in second place only because the main pages look a little too wordy.
3. Department of Construction Management (<http://www.cm.lsu.edu/>). This hard working, information abundant site abounds in vigor and vitality. Rich in both imagery and reportage, this site offers well planned links, plain language, and easily understood "trees" of links and data. A subtle mixture of imagery and different ranges and scales combines with hints of tiger color schemes to produce a next-generation image of this brass tacks field.
4. National Center for Biomedical Research and Training/Academy of Counter Terrorism Training (<http://www.ncbrt.lsu.edu/>). The best of LSU's government integrated sites, the NCBRT offering combines tables and boxes of different sizes and aspect ratios to convey a wealth of information without taking on a too static or library like look. Imagery from local news events is juxtaposed comfortably with links to national sites to show that LSU can succeed on the national stage.
5. LSU Museum of Art (<http://www.lsumoa.com/>). Although the Museum of Art continues to struggle with connecting itself to life on the LSU campus, there is no denying that its website has the look of a truly professional, big-city cultural entity. Through careful use of offbeat color combinations, the MOA site sends the message that it is trying to break out of the Victorian era, neo-plantation composite taste that plagues Baton Rouge. This is a site that pleases the (continued page 4)

Education Opinion (continued)

perform our jobs is important to bridge the gap between the sciences and humanities.

George G. Stanley, Professor
Chemistry

Collaboration Between LSU and LA Tech Focus of April Chancellor's Forum

On April 15, the LSU Faculty Senate hosted the last of the year's three Chancellor Forums in the newly renovated Claude L. Shaver Theatre housed in the LSU Music and Dramatic Arts Building. Entitled "The Future of Louisiana Research Universities," the forum featured LSU Chancellor Michael Martin and LA Tech President Daniel Reneau. Martin and Reneau both discussed and took questions on a number of issues ranging from the status of higher education across economically challenged Louisiana to current and future joint research projects between the two universities.

Reneau opened the forum with some insightful remarks on the critical role research universities like LSU and LA Tech play. "It's research universities, by and large, that great thoughts come out of," he said. Yet Reneau was quick to point out that, despite the contributions research universities have made towards the betterment of society, American institutions have been hampered by budget cuts, which has resulted in fewer high quality students entering the American work force upon graduation compared to other countries. "There are more honor students in China than there are students in the United States," Reneau observed.

Chancellor Martin echoed these sentiments, citing his belief that there is a growing cynicism in the public eye towards funding the sciences as well as reduced public willingness to support research universities. Martin also stressed that research institutions in Louisiana must change the public perception of what they do if the state is to continue to grow in what is already an overly competitive national climate. "No state in the union needs to have a strong research university more than Louisiana," Martin remarked.

Reneau and Martin focused not just on the challenges research universities in Louisiana face but also on ways they can innovate. One suggestion was to take advantage of existing technology to allow researchers to collaborate in an online environment. "It's very workable," Reneau said. "Today the world is flat. Everything is closer." Martin made similar remarks regarding the successful use of distance learning technologies at the University of Wisconsin to increase productivity across the system's twenty six campuses. "It's powerful and ubiquitous. It's an asset that brings universities together," Martin stated.

Martin and Reneau also highlighted at least one ongoing project between LSU and LA Tech and discussed tapping into the state's natural resources in a collaborative effort. Reneau mentioned that LSU and LA Tech are currently partnering on what he called a "nano articulation drug" that would be used to treat cancer patients. The patent on this treatment is pending. In addition, Martin spoke about the need to study the state's resources on a broader scale. "Louisiana itself is a very interesting laboratory," he commented. One potential joint project that Martin introduced is study of the Haynesville shale natural gas deposit. Martin also pointed out that research universities in Louisiana are in a position to teach the global community how to better prepare for natural disasters such as hurricanes. "As long as we're going to have them," Martin asked, "how can we learn from natural disasters and help other parts of the world understand natural disasters better?"

Throughout the discussion, Martin and Reneau consistently returned to the link between budget cuts to higher education in Louisiana and the public's perception of the contributions research universities make to the state. "There is a great crisis of dollars, and we are not in a priority area," Reneau stated at one point in the talks. In Martin's view, research universities in Louisiana must show the citizens of Louisiana that research is important not just at the state level, but on a global scale. Referring to the port of New Orleans as a major importer and exporter of goods, as well as to Louisiana as a cultural crossroads, Martin commented that "This state, more than most, is a global player. We ought to have a global university representing this state."



Publication Schedule for the Faculty Senate Monthly Newsletter

The Faculty Senate Monthly Newsletter will publish one more issue this academic year (in late May). Publication will resume in the autumn at the end of August. The summer will not be an idle period, however, with news and comment being collected and readied for the upcoming autumn publication cycle.

Top and Bottom 5 Websites (continued)

eye.

Honorable mentions, or, sites on the bubble: the Department of Chemistry (<http://chemistry.lsu.edu/#>) is beginning to make a move toward shedding its hard edged, beat-up-old-laboratory look; the latest site is definitely moving in the right direction. Likewise, the College of Engineering (<http://www.eng.lsu.edu/>) is starting to get the right idea and beginning to create navigable sites, although the font and the layout still looks a little clunky.

THE BOTTOM FIVE

1. Human Resources Management (<http://appl003.lsu.edu/hrm/polprogweb.nsf/index>). With a color scheme that would send anyone running for the Pepto Bismol (which at least has a bright hue) and a text image arrangement that looks like the LSU Quad the day after Hurricane Andrew, the HRM website, with its scattered links and daunting arrangement, seems to send a clear message that one had better apply for whatever one wants elsewhere. Where is the helpful human face of HRM in this mess?

2. The LSU Sesquicentennial Site (<http://www.lsu150.com/>). Perhaps there is a perverse truth buried in the choice of faded beige and grim grey for a site that is struggling to find something to celebrate while LSU is under siege by the Louisiana legislature. Featuring an "info center" that is neither in the center of the page nor especially rich in info and presenting as its visual focus a YouTube item that has not changed in months, this site commemorates the inability of LSU to present itself to the public.

3. Procurement Auxiliary Services (<http://pas.lsu.edu/>). This omnibus site aims to coordinate access to a variety of units but instead undersells the quality of LSU services and disguises the accomplishments of the people who manage the designs and materials that keep LSU operating. It is strange that a unit that includes Design Services can't come up with a website evidencing some design skills. The architecture of this site celebrates neither navigability nor helpfulness; rather, it screams "bureaucracy."

4. Mike the Tiger's website (<http://www.mikethetiger.com/>). Apparently intended to reach out to the Tigers of tomorrow, Louisiana's children, and perhaps also some future donors, this site features a web cam of Mike's habitat that never loads, no matter which browser is used and no matter which add-ons are deployed. The site includes some fun pictures but will probably frustrate its youthful audience rather than create love for LSU.

5. Office of Research and Economic Development (<http://www.research.lsu.edu/>). Looking to be astonished? Consider the way in which this site makes the impressive research underway at LSU seem inaccessible or uninteresting. If you'd like to do some interesting research yourself, this site won't provide much help; by the time you figure out the categories under which support is conjugated, you could finish the project, or earn enough to complete it with a part time job.

DISTRESSING RUNNER UP: Office of Career Services (<http://appl003.lsu.edu/slas/career/careerweb.nsf/index>), which hits its hopeful young users with a Rosetta stone of inadequately labeled and imaged semi-information.

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Questions? Comments?

Email gmlch1@tigers.lsu.edu or ckayse1@lsu.edu

