Loyola University New Orleans
University Senate
Thursday, May 11, 2006, 3:30 pm
Multimedia Room 1, Monroe Library
Italicized names represent those in attendance

Biological Sciences
E.L. Beard

Business Administration
Joseph Ganitsky
Mike Sibley
Wing Fok
Karen Arnold
Donal Dozier
Jing Li

Chemistry
Thomas Spence

City College
Dee Harper
Barbara Ewell (acting secretary)

Communications
Mary Blue
Nancy Dupont
Cathy Rogers

Drama & Speech
Georgia Gresham

Education
Mary Ann Doyle
Margie Dermody

English
Ted Cotton
Kate Adams
Marcus Smith

History
Robert Gerlich, S.J.
Mike Ross

Languages and Cultures
Connie Rodriguez
Josefa Salmon

Law School
Patrick Hugg
Jim Klebba
Lawrence Moore, S. J.
Mitch Crusto
David Normann

Law Library
Michelle Pope

Library
Richard Snow [proxy Trish Nugent]
Alicia Hansen

Mathematics and Computer Science
Xuefeng Li
Ralph Tucci

Music
James MacKay [by proxy]
John Murphy
Alice Clark

Philosophy
Francis Coolidge
Edward Kleist [resigned]

Physics
Armin Kargol

Political Science
Conrad Raabe

Psychology
Lawrence Lewis
Glenn Hymel

Religious Studies
Grant Kaplan
Robert Gnuse

Sociology
Marcus Kondkar

Visual Arts
Simeon Hunter

Guests:
Maria Calzada (Math)
Stephen Scariano (Math)
I. John Murphy, Chair, called the Senate to order at 3:35 p.m.

II. Lawrence Moore, S. J., offered the invocation.

III. Reports from the Chair

Elections and Awards
The chair noted that there were very few ballots received by the Senate Awards Committee, and since the Senate will change in response to the new academic structures envisioned by Pathways, the Executive Committee recommends that the awards be postponed, together with the end-of-the-year party, traditionally held after the May meeting.

Minutes
Grant Kaplan inquired about the minutes of the April 20 meeting; acting secretary Barbara Ewell explained that they have not yet been transcribed and apologized for the delay.

Letter to the Task Force of the Board of Trustees
Chair John Murphy read to the Senate his letter of May 4, 2006, approved by the Senate Executive Committee and sent to the members of the Academic Task Force of the Board of Trustees, reflecting the responses of the Faculty to the Pathways Plan. While the letter acknowledged the need for a reexamination of the university’s structures in the wake of the August floods and the appropriateness of some changes (such as the expansion of the College of Music and Fine Arts), the letter also noted the paucity of data supporting the financial necessity of other changes proposed by the Pathways Plan and the insufficient planning and inadequate processes by which these radical revisions to our academic structures are being made. The Chair noted that copies of correspondence from the AAUP to the president (copied to local chapter president, Mary Blue) had been added to this letter. [Chair’s letter attached.]

Several members of the Senate complimented the content and tone of the letter. But others inquired about the actual delivery of the letter to the members of the Board. Murphy said that he had brought the letter to Sr. Annie Ramagos on Friday (May 5), but Larry Moore, S.J., noted that as a member of the board, he had not yet received the packet for the May 19 meeting. However, he agreed to insure the receipt of this material by the members of the board committee.

Discussion ensued on the Board’s responsiveness to the faculty’s concerns, including whether the revised Pathways Plan (to be presented to the Board on May 19) would be available to the faculty and whether the Board had any plans for considering the Faculty’s concerns.

Nancy Dupont noted the four-page e-mail response to the Senate’s request for more data (“Background Office”) provided by John Cornwell in the Provost’s Office. Grant Kaplan pointed out that Pathways Plan regards programs that produce a ratio of net revenue to
overhead of less than 2.28 as subsidized, even if they operate in the black. Maria Calzada added that many colleges and departments that are being retained that are well below that standard. Nancy Dupont observed that revenue production had never been considered a criterion for hiring or tenure.

Marcus Kondkar commented that although the changes are being touted as data-driven, the data is highly inconsistent, and that without a clear vision of the actual goals of this plan, good judgments simply cannot be made. Kaplan agreed and pointed out that no such vision has been presented to support the rhetoric of change.

More discussion followed on how to insure that the Board will hear the voice of the faculty, given the supposed proscription against faculty communicating directly with board members, the inconsistency of the data provided as justification, and the inadequate time for thoughtful responses.

**Letter from SCAP to the Board of Trustees (Maria Calzada, member of SCAP and Senate Guest)**

Maria Calzada reported on SCAP’s efforts to respond to the Pathways Plan with a letter dated May 10, 2006, to the President, the Provost, the Board of Trustees and the Faculty Senate. In its letter, SCAP noted serious concerns about the data used to eliminate programs, particularly the departments of Education and Computer Science. It also urged that the specific needs of adult students be immediately addressed by creating alternate support structures to replace those lost by the demise of City College. SCAP also recommended the retention of a separate Loyola Institute for Ministry. Finally, SCAP strongly rejected the creation of new college, since its administrative structures would cancel any presumed savings from the dissolution of City College.

Discussion followed on the mechanics of delivering this letter to the Board, since SCAP has no formal means of communicating with the Board of Trustees and the Provost has indicated that it is “too late” for any further input.

A motion to suspend the rules was passed in order to consider a motion on forwarding SCAP’s letter to the Board of Trustees through the Senate.

Discussion followed on the need for this additional information by the Board. It was observed that the Board has clearly sought changes in the university from the president and provost in order to compensate for the diminished number of students we must expect in the fall. Thomas Spence observed, however, that these cuts do not clearly save any money; Grant Kaplan added that these precipitous changes may have the unintended consequence of driving away even more students.

Marcus Kondkar pointed out that the while the Board may be committed to making cuts, the process has been revealed as very flawed; presumably the Board will want corrected and correct data on which to base their decisions. Marcus Smith noted that the Colleges of Business and Law are largely unaffected by any cuts, while others pointed to the flawed data and analysis proposed by the “Background Information” document from the
Provost’s office.

Mary Blue remarked that the deficits created by the floods will eventually be covered by insurance, government assistance, and even student enrollment in the Spring Two semester; she added that the cuts do not reflect the proposed savings of ten million dollars. Marcus Smith noted the university’s energetic efforts to encourage phased retirement among older faculty as another cost-saving measure.

Marcus Kondkar suggested that SCAP include a recommendation that the university leadership prepare to deal with an impending public relations disaster in their creation of the sense that Loyola is a “sinking ship.”

The question was called and the motion to forward the letter from SCAP to the Board of Trustees as a separate item passed with one abstention.

Old Business
Mary Blue moved to table her motion of February 9; it was tabled.

New Business
Marcus Smith asked that the Senate consider a straw vote of no-confidence in the administration, citing its reluctance to communicate with the faculty after the release of the Pathways Plan, its lack of prudence in considering the negative effect on current students, many of whom are also leaving the university; its failure to encourage young faculty, who may perceive a limited future at an unresponsive institution; and its disregard for the good will and positive morale of a committed faculty and staff. The motion was seconded.

Marcus Kondkar argued that we must be cautious in our response, noting that a public reprimand to the administration can make the difficult situation that they have created even worse. Thomas Spence agreed, noting that the “nuclear option” would close down further opportunities to be heard and taken seriously. Mary Blue suggested that the Senate is not expressing a lack of confidence in the Board, but in the administration. Larry Moore explained that the Board wants a balanced budget and that many outside board members, including several educators, are putting pressure on the administration to make cuts and changes. Several senators expressed frustration with the lack of options in making our voices heard and resisting the imposition of a poorly constructed plan. Some noted that the cuts are directed primarily at academic programs and staffing, that there has, for example, been no discussion of cutting the highest administrative salaries.

A motion was passed to suspend the rules; then the question was called on the motion that the Senate take a straw poll on the lack of confidence in the Administration in the development of the Pathways Plan. A secret ballot was taken; the straw poll of no confidence passed, with nineteen voting “no confidence,” four voting against the motion, and two abstentions.

A motion to adjourn followed; the Senate adjourned at 4:45.
May 4, 2006

Dear Member of the Board of Trustees:

I wish to thank you, on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Loyola University Faculty Senate, and the faculty at large, for your time and consideration in hearing our concerns related to the proposed changes in “Pathways to Our 2nd Century” with the Board Task Force on April 21. The entire executive committee of the senate was present as well as the executive committee of the Administrative Senate and President and Vice-president of the Student Government Association. We have prepared summary minutes of that meeting that will be posted on the University Senate web page. We invite you to look there for a fuller account of our conversation.

But allow me to highlight some of the issues that were stated that day. The faculty understands that the examination and restructuring of the institution was, and is, a necessary step. I stated that the formation of a College of Music and Fine Arts has a logic to it that is accepted with open enthusiasm by the Visual Arts faculty. We, in the College of Music, have flourished as an autonomous school by most accounts; yet we see that the life and work of students and faculty may be enhanced by proximity with the other fine arts.

Other points in the plan seem more problematic. The great haste in putting the plan together has made input from the faculty minimal at best and left un-addressed numerous issues critical to a successful implementation of these major changes. Our Provost has stated that such restructuring should be the result of more than a year of study. Even the projections for enrollments that predict a financial crisis remain just that: projections. Yet decisions that will be difficult if not impossible to change and/or correct seem to have been made based on those speculations. We were quite wrong about the projected numbers of returning students post-Katrina. Programs that are operating in the black are scheduled for suspension or elimination, presumably to save costs. The faculty has a hard time conceiving of an eminent, much less “pre-eminent”, university that does not grant degrees in Physics, Computer Science, Education and the cancelled programs in Communications; moreover, we seem to have abandoned our historic mission to the local community with the dissolution of City College. Our present students are transferring while incoming students are becoming hesitant in view of these proposed changes. All of these issues were articulated more fully at the meeting with the Task Force on April 21. We urge you to read a more complete account on the University Senate web page.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration in this critical moment in the history of Loyola University New Orleans. It is our sincerest hope that the authors of the Pathways Plan carefully evaluate the reasoned feedback it is receiving. We can only urge that the

--Barbara C. Ewell, Acting Secretary

Attachments
kinds of radical changes contemplated will be proposed and implemented only under the most serious necessity and with the kind of careful deliberation that will not simply worsen what is already a very difficult and uncertain situation. It is vital that we restore a sense of confidence in Loyola’s strengths and the vision of its future.

Please feel free to contact any member of the University Senate Executive Committee should you wish to discuss any of these matters in more detail. I have listed the members below:

Dr. John Murphy, Chairman  
Dr. Marcus Kondkar, Vice Chairman  
Dr. Barbara Ewell, Secretary  
Dr. Connie Rodriguez  
Dr. Nancy Dupont  
Dr. Marcus Smith

Sincerely,

Dr. John Murphy. Senate Chairman