

# HUMANITIES AND NATURAL SCIENCES COLLEGE ASSEMBLY

February 8, 2007

## Minutes

### I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the College Assembly was called to order by Dean Frank Scully at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 8, 2007 Room 332 of Bobet Hall.

Attendance: Adams, B. Anderson, R. Anderson (proxy), Beard (proxy), Berendzen, Bernardi, Blundell, Bourgeois, Brazier, Brisco, Butler, Cahill, Calzada, Clark, Coolidge, Cotton, Dewell, Dittrich, Doll, Dorn, Egejuru, Fernandez, Fleischer, Gerlich, Gnuse, Gossiaux, Hammer (proxy), Hauber, Herbert, Hood, Hymel, Janz, Joyner, Kaplan, Kargol, Kornovich, Koplitz, Lewis, Li, Mabe, Matthews, McCay, McHugh, Moore, Mui, Nicoll, O’Gorman, Randall, Rodriguez, Rogers, Ross, Rowntree, Salmon, Saxton, Sebastian, Shuh, Simon, Spence, Thibeaux, Tucci, Wessinger, Zucker.

### II. INVOCATION

Rev. Leo A. Nicoll, S.J. delivered the invocation.

### III. OPENING COMMENTS

Dean Scully said he saw the need to hold the assembly without motions on the agenda in order to continue discussions by the body. He said his intent was to have an open forum as a way to interact.

### IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Faculty Legal Defense Fund – Lynn Koplitz said that she was reminded by Cynthia Wessinger to mention the Faculty Legal Defense Fund established in the May or June assembly. She said that \$700 in anonymous contributions were deposited into the fund in a sub-account of her personal account in the credit union. She said that donors were assured of meticulous records, receipts, and confidentiality. She reminded faculty that the stated purpose of the fund was to assist dismissed faculty members with the expense of URTC case preparations. She said checks may be made payable to the Loyola Faculty Legal Defense Fund, delivered to Room 417 in Monroe Hall, or deposited in the credit union.

### V. REPORTS

- a. Status of Suspended Programs – Dean Scully reported that the Physics proposal is on the fast track with the Provost, and that the Classical Modern Language Department was rethinking elements of its past and nearing completion of a new proposal. Faculty requested clarification of the term “fast track.” The Dean explained that the strong proposals will quickly move through the College Curriculum Committee, University Courses and Curriculum Committee, and SCAP. He said that special meetings could be called as needed. He said his past experience with SCAP was that approval was awarded within 15 minutes.
- b. Academic Rigor at Loyola University New Orleans – In the absence of Daniel Green, President of SGA, Dean Scully responded to Daniel’s UPT statement that courses were not rigorous and that that affected the amount of time students had on their hands. Dean Scully said he considered the statement important enough to do several readings on rigor and learned that it included the culture cultivated in the dorm and classroom. He said the concerns were not unique to Loyola, and that other universities were trying to determine how to get students to spend more than ten hours per week studying. He suggested forming a committee. Connie Rodriguez suggested that rather than forming another committee, the Dean might have existing committees dealing with similar issues take on the topic. Dean Scully agreed.

## VI. OLD BUSINESS

November 11 Assembly Quorum Question -- Dean Scully gave a brief recap of the November 11 assembly vote on “A Call for Action – Part II. Personnel Issues” (complete minutes on intranet site). The vote by paper ballot had been 42 in favor, 7 opposed, 3 abstentions. The sign-in sheets had indicated 125 faculty names, 19 of which were extraordinary faculty. A quorum had not been declared. Lynda Favret presented an updated list with confirmed eligible voting numbers as: 114 full votes, 6 half-votes, for a total of 117. David Moore said that Robert Gnuese’s November 11 suggestion had been to send paper ballots to all eligible members. Electronic voting was dropped from consideration because of complexity. At the February 8 assembly, Dean Scully agreed to send paper ballots, though he mentioned the return would likely be low.

### Motion 1

*DeLoitte and Touche Limited Liability Partners -- 3700 One Shell Square, New Orleans, La. ( 504-581-2727 ) -- are the official auditors for the finances of Loyola University. Faculty of the College of Humanities and Natural Sciences need current and accurate information from the university auditors to evaluate the Pathways project. The College requests that elected faculty representatives meet with the Loyola University Deloitte and Touche auditors to obtain information on the College of Arts and Sciences departmental operating budgets and expenditures for the period of time used by Loyola University’s administration to design the Loyola Pathways project. The information must be provided in a format that is understandable to the faculty.*

*Dr. Thom Spence, Dr. Maria Calzada, Dr. Martin McHugh, Dr. Maureen Shuh , Dr. Steve Scariano are mathematicians who have conscientiously studied Loyola’s finances this year and are especially qualified to evaluate the gain/losses from Pathways on the basis of the data requested from the auditors.*

(The motion’s November 16 presenter, Letitia Beard, was unable to attend the assembly because she was hosting a Biology career event.)

David Moore presented the motion on behalf of Letitia. Dean Scully opened discussion. He advised faculty that the DeLoitte and Touche audit is available in the library and asked them to consider having it reviewed by SCAP or UPT before adopting a motion to sit down with costly auditors. He said the questions faculty have might not be the sort auditors are able to answer. David Moore asked whether the Dean had looked at the report (he had not), and wondered whether auditors would be bound by client privilege. Timothy Cahill suggested the Dean contact John Sears as one familiar with the data and possibly able to interpret the report. The Dean agreed to call John. Lynn Koplitz suggested that if money were to be spent on auditors, then the group would do better to hire its own auditors. In response to a question as to what is wanted from the books, Thom Spence cited statements from the Administration that Pathways was due to vision and cost savings – he said he wants to find the costs and savings. Stephen Rowntree remarked that when he returned to the university after an extended absence, he found it turned upside down. He said he predicts that the board will not undo what it did, and questioned the value of information even if obtained. The Dean said Letitia first needs to contact SCAP or UPT to look at the audit. He expressed doubts that figures by program could be derived. He invited suggestions and repeated that a motion was on the floor.

Motion to table: Maureen Shuh moved to table the motion. It was seconded and passed by voice vote.

## VII. OPEN FORUM

- a. Appropriate Uses of Student Evaluations of Teaching -- Dean Scully recognized Lynn Koplitz to open the topic. Lynn said that having served on SORC and the task force, she was concerned that

numerical results of evaluations were probably misused. She said this was despite the initial agreement when devising evaluations that they would not be used in a punitive way. She asked faculty to consider developing another instrument. Dean Scully disagreed that evaluations were used punitively. He said that consistently low scores were significant, and scores were coupled with information from the Chairs. He said the opening statement could be damning of SORC. Lynn said that variables needed to be taken into account in overall numbers, particularly when pulling out a few of the questions (e.g., if no writing assignments were given). When asked for an example of punitive use, Lynn cited John Whelan's case. Dean Scully declined to publicly state any individual's evaluation. He said that SORC involved eight people working hard to get the best evaluation of each faculty member. Faculty members' comments included: concern about past hair-splitting over fractional numbers, present SORC experience indicating that student evaluations are not figuring significantly, departmental protocols on salaries being made consistent across the board, grades being correlated so that hard graders were not penalized, peer assessments being considered, evaluations having the purpose of improving teaching, evaluations being used for tenure considerations, standard deviation within departments rather than across the college, evolution of the issue over the years with the goal of getting the most accurate picture and with SORC emerging as an example of doing something well within a process gaining trust. Additional considerations mentioned: the faculty handbook calls for evaluation of teaching, service and research; protocols are to be reviewed every five years; a nationally devised self-correcting instrument may not prove more satisfactory than the current one; academic rigor may be suffering because easy graders are rewarded with unchecked high evaluations. Conclusions: Evaluation instrument is due for revision. A motion was passed in 2005; the 2005 minutes will be reviewed to bring the motion back to the assembly.

- b. Other -- Maureen Shuh said that board members were soliciting topics from the University Senate. She suggested faculty forward topics to their senate representatives. Dean Scully said the Provost usually sets the agenda. Maureen named the board member as Rev. Mark Massa, S.J. of Fordham University. Connie Rodriguez said that in senate conversations, he mentioned that he hadn't received a copy of the "Call for Conversations," and requested the document. She said she sent it to him via e-mail. She said additional material was being sent by the AAUP Chapter and the senate.

## VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Maureen Shuh, seconded and passed by acclamation. The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.