

FAC/BOS Report
March 28, 2008
Submitted by Mary Sue Ply

The Board of Supervisors passed these measures directly affecting Southeastern: full approval of the Proposal for a Bachelor of Science degree program in Supply Chain Management, and approval of the proposal to create a clinical option in Radiologic Technology in the Bachelor of Science degree program in Health Studies. The board received the audit report noting a few “findings” in financial aid allocations, resulting in refunds to the lender of \$247.16 and \$33.10. Southeastern’s new dean of graduate studies and research, Jerald Ainsworth, was introduced to the board; he said the university wants “to be an economic driver” through research and Master’s degree programs.

Mrs. Elsie Burkhalter, board chair, announced the formation of an advisory committee, chaired by retiring ULL president Dr. Ray Authement, to review applications for the president of University of Louisiana System and make recommendations to the search committee composed of three board members. Included on the advisory committee will be a faculty member and a student representative. Mrs. Burkhalter specifically referenced the FAC’s letter requesting a voice for faculty in the selection process.

The board was apprised of legislation that would affect higher education and discussed ways in which the members could remain informed and participate in discussions with legislators. The bills regarding tuition and TOPS requirements (especially the limit of \$250,000 on the family income), and the resolution regarding textbook costs received the most attention. Students want faculty to post their book requirements well before the semester so that students can shop online for cheaper copies. Dr. Clausen noted that faculty salaries still need to be addressed since the increases last year were based upon outdated SREB statistics. Also discussed were the goals tied to student access and success initiatives: (1) increase the total number of graduate in the system by 2400 students by 2012; (2) ensure that graduates reflect population distribution; (3) try to get students graduated within five years; (4) improve the quality of graduates for the workforce. Dr. Clausen stressed that faculty were not the problem; they were part of the solution.

Other topics of discussion were students’ need to develop writing skills throughout their college career—and across the curriculum, and the continued training of university police in crisis response and management.

History was made at the FAC meeting when Board chairperson Elsie Burkhalter attended the meeting to hear faculty concerns, to thank the FAC for the letter requesting a voice in the selection of the new system president, and to provide information about how the selection advisory committee would function and what timeline would be followed in order to hire a new president at the June 27 meeting. Penny Ferguson of the AFT-affiliated higher education teachers union gave a report on HB 179, which would detrimentally affect faculty sick leave. He urged FAC representatives to contact their legislators and to inform their faculties of the threat to sick leave. Since the bill was going before the House Education Committee during the next week, faculty would need to contact legislators in a timely fashion.