

MINUTES

LTC Ad-Hoc Committee – Open Meeting

**Wednesday, December 14, 2005
Baton Rouge Community College – Louisiana Building
5310 Florida Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70806**

The LTC Ad Hoc Committee convened an open meeting for the purpose of allowing employees of the Louisiana Technical College the opportunity to speak to members prior to their deliberations, as it relates to restructuring of the LTC.

The committee chair, Mr. Brett Mellington called the meeting to order at 1:45pm.

The following Committee members were in attendance: Brett Mellington, Chair; Edwards Barham; Mike Chandler; Ann Knapp; and, Kathy Sellers Johnson, Ex-Officio Member. Supervisor Vincent St. Blanc, III, was also present for the meeting. LCTCS Staff present for the meeting were: Dr. Walter Bumphus, Dr. Angel Royal, Dr. Toya Barnes Teamer, Jim Henderson and Pat Eddy.

Chair Mellington informed the members of the audience that the meeting would adjourn at 3:30pm. Under the rules established for addressing the Board of Supervisors, Chair Mellington informed the members of the audience that would be making comments to the committee to limit their remarks to five minutes or less, so that everyone would have an opportunity to speak. Further, Mr. Mellington informed members in the audience that “Opportunity to Comment” forms were available so that anyone in the audience that chooses to address the committee should ask for a form, complete it, and return it to the acting Board Coordinator. The committee would include those individuals on the roster for speaking that completed forms on site, following those that emailed their forms in advance, if there was time available.

Chair Mellington also stated that if someone had signed up and someone has spoken and stated the case to which the individual was going to speak, the person could remove himself or herself from the list.

The first person to address the committee was Mary Deville. Ms. Deville introduced herself as Director of Institutional Research in the Louisiana Technical College’s Office of the Chancellor. The other portion of her job duties is to serve as the assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Enrollment Management and Registrar. Ms. Deville stated that she has been with the LTC since 1994, originally on the Coreil campus located in Ville Platte. She served as an instructor for 5 years on that campus. From that position, Ms. Deville moved to the TH Harris campus in Opelousas to serve as the SPSO, which is a student personnel services officer. The title SPSO is used because those individuals wore multiple hats, doing financial aid services, admissions, and enrollment – a wide variety of things.

Ms. Deville has been with the Chancellor’s Office since 2001. Her main job has been institutional research during this period of time. She communicated that she had seen the System (meaning the technical college) go from a regional model, which was basically set up for accounting purposes, under the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). This was dismantled, and the campuses became individual institutions. The college was 42

individual institutions at that time. Each campus did whatever they had to do without any “real” guidance. The college had programs and curriculum that was developed, but from the student’s point-of-view, they were not always able to transfer from one campus to the other, with those credits. According to Ms. Deville, the campuses did not have standardized policies or procedures. In terms of accountability, Ms. Deville stated that the campuses were accountable to themselves more than anything else.

In Ms. Deville’s opinion, since the merging of the independent institutions into one college, they have gone through a lot and have had a lot of resistance. There have been a lot of people in the college that don’t want to change, but there is a large majority of people in the college that say that what has been done to date is good. The college has standards, policies, they report numbers...as it relates to numbers they have definitions to following. The college reports to the Board of Regents and has credible numbers. The college has become a credible institution that it not looked down on by the higher education community. They have earned their place in higher education. Ms. Deville believes the enrollment numbers of the LTC have remained steady even though community colleges have emerged. The college is now one institution. Ms. Deville shared that the federal government looks at the LTC as one institution. The students are receiving their Pell Grant money. The federal government is doing audits on the college, and their numbers are being examined. Ms. Deville believes that things are going well. She further stated that there is room for change, but that the college has come a long way. She believes with the good guidance and leadership that the college has now, they have been able to do good things. She believes to dismantle any of the structure in place would hurt the technical college. Ms. Deville indicated that she was open for questions, should members of the committee have any.

Supervisor St. Blanc, LCTCS Board Member, asked Ms. Deville what she meant by dismantle. Ms. Deville communicated that employees are hearing that “they” are looking at doing away with the districts, the system office (meaning the LTC Chancellor’s Office). They are also hearing that one of the districts would be done away with – it would not be a part of the technical college anymore. She wants to make sure that they can continue to progress like they are progressing now.

The next speaker to address the committee was Ms. Laurie Fontenot. Ms. Fontenot is an LTC employee, and has been with the college since 1994. She is a nursing instructor at the TH Harris campus, and has been the department head there since 1997. She has been around to see some of the changes that have occurred. Basically, Ms. Fontenot communicated to the committee that she wanted to come and talk positively because she believes that what has been happening lately is a lot of negativity going on. In essence, she is tired of a lot of the negativity and believes that people need to hear about some of the positive things that the college has done.

As the nursing and allied health subject matter expert, for about the last year and half, Ms. Fontenot chose to address that area. In terms of what has been done right since the inception of nursing and practical nursing in the State of Louisiana, the LTC campus have graduated over 30,000 LPNs, or 85% of all of the Louisiana LPNs. Of that amount, greater than 90% of them have passed the NCLEX licensing examination the first time that they sat for it. This percentage is higher than the national average, and it is higher than some of the college’s sister institutions within Louisiana.

Ms. Fontenot addressed the review process of practical nursing programs initiated by the Board of Regents. At first, she admitted, she was opposed to the review. However, the review proved

to be a positive process in that strengths and weaknesses of the programs have been identified. Ms. Fontenot stated that the programs are not perfect – no body is perfect. But with the Board of Regents external review committee reports and the LTC responses to those reports, the college has been able to identify what the campuses need to work on. Ms. Fontenot believes that change is inevitable, and the college cannot remain the way that it was ten to fifteen years ago. The college needs to move forward. There may be a need to look at the consolidation of resources to better prepare students within the State of Louisiana.

Ms. Fontenot suggested that perhaps all of the LTC programs need to undergo an extensive review as it was an eye opening experience. Ms. Fontenot referenced a chapter in the Jim Collins book, *Good to Great*, referring to getting the right people “on the bus.” Her belief is perhaps the some of the people get off of the bus because some of them are the wrong people. She stated that employment needs to be examined to determine who is willing to move forward, who is not going to be negative, and who is going to be proactive to get things done. Overall, she believes that in the past the atmosphere in the college was a “me” and “my” type of atmosphere and now it needs to be a “we” atmosphere.

Supervisor St. Blanc communicated that people that don't like change will still be left on the bus because that is the System that we live in. He stated that the Board will do the right thing, and that no one on the Board has ever indicated their desire to dismantle any of the colleges in the System.

Ms. Danneal Jones addressed the LTC Ad-Hoc Committee. Ms. Jones serves as the Dean of Student Affairs for the Louisiana Technical College – District 1. She has been with the technical college for three years. Ms. Jones stated that she made the transition from working in a four-year public environment to a two-year environment because she believes in the construct of access for students. She believes that many of the students at the LTC would be in jeopardy if the college did not have specific programs available to them. She believes that there is a need to change, to restructure, to refine programs and services, as it relates to the needs of the State so that the college makes the best use of resources for their students. However, in doing that she believes that “we” have to remain true to the mission of what the college represents. She stated her belief that this needs to be communicated in the efforts as the Board moves forward in its deliberations regarding the technical college.

Ms. Jones stated that whatever message is to be conveyed that it is very clear to the students and faculty and staff so that it does not come out as erroneous information. Recognizing the marketing is important to what the colleges do, if the wrong information is communicated to the community, then it is very difficult to realign with the message stressing what the college does. She believes that even though we're in the midst of change, the college is in a very chaotic time. However, she does believe that positive change will come out of this but it is all about how the change is managed and marketed. Ms. Jones asked the LTC Ad Hoc Committee Members to be very sensitive that the college is in troublesome times and that the institution has the power to bring the State to a higher level. She does not want the mission to be lost in the change.

The next three speakers requested to address the committee as a group, as they were members representing the LTC Faculty Senate. Chair Mellington concurred with the request.

Luther Davis, President of the LTC Faculty Senate, stated that the faculty shares in the vision of the mission of the LTC, and it is their desire to be a major part of any changes that might occur. He communicated to the committee that he started working for the LTC in 1980. Coming from private industry, Mr. Davis communicated that he was accustomed to having policies and

procedures that had accountability. When he started at the LTC, he didn't notice any policies, which served as a catalyst to invigorate him because he thought that he could participate in making positive change. He stated that everyone was doing their own things in their own areas that fit their individual needs. Now, the campuses are working as a system. Mr. Davis' appeal is that the LTC faculty is talented, skilled, educated, and gifted visionaries who are capable to assisting the Board, if given the opportunity to brainstorming process early. He believes that the LTC faculty is being asked for input on the back-end of the process and that a lot of the decisions have already appeared to have been made.

Mr. Davis asked members of the Board if they would consider having one of the LTC faculty members to sit on the Board.

Further, Mr. Davis communicated again that the LTC is the best kept secret. He believes that people don't know who they really are because they cannot market their products. He stated that if they could market their product, then the enrollment of the college would increase. He said that District 1 is suffering and that faculty is concerned about their jobs. He referenced the "rumor mill" and that there is discussion that the LTC campuses in the region will become a part of another institution. Also, he referenced the furloughs, layoffs, and the faculty members don't know what the future holds for them.

Mr. Ken Egan acknowledged that he understands that the Board is facing difficult decisions as it relates to Hurricane Katrina, as well as the reorganization of the technical college. He stated that sometimes when large decisions are being made that sometimes facts get left out. His primary concern, as communicated by Mr. Egan is that the past should not be lost as the Board is charting the direction that the college is going in. He believes that the primary purpose of the institution, whether it is called trade schools of technical institutes or technical colleges, is to teach people to be ready to go into the workforce. He acknowledged that a certain amount of academics is necessary to do that, but somehow as the college transitions, they this fact is not lost.

Mr. Egan stated that he has been around for twenty years, first with BESE and now with the LCTCS. He acknowledged that most of the changes in the college have been positive and good. However, he believes occasionally, when the college has been locked into a collegiate atmosphere, it takes away from some of the basic functions of the institution. Mr. Egan referenced a community college newspaper that he picked up and addressed an article about the Utah College of Applied Technology. He shared the mission statement with the committee. The statement read:

The mission of the Utah College of Applied Technology is to provide, through its regional campuses, market driven technical education to both secondary and adult students, which meets the demand by Utah employers for technically skilled workers. This is accomplished through competency-based education and training programs, which may be long-term, short term, apprenticeship, custom designed for the employers' individual needs. Most of the programs are offered in an open entry, open exit format providing flexibility for students and employers. Students are assisted in acquiring the basic skills necessary to succeed in these technical training programs. UCAT provides students skills to enter, re-enter, upgrade or advance in the workplace, which contributes to economic development and improves the quality of life for Utah's citizens.

Mr. Egan believes that somewhere in that mission statement is what the LTC used to be about. He believes that the college has gotten away from that original mission. He again acknowledges that some of those changes are positive. But basically, he believes that the LTC

basically trains people for jobs and that community colleges train people in more in an academic environment. He believes that the LTC does a good job with teaching people how to get jobs. He further stated that in the reconsideration of the reorganization that the Board not lose sight of this fact.

Ms. Jerrylene Fontenot addressed the LTC Ad Hoc Committee. Ms. Fontenot currently teaches at the Coreil campus in Ville Platte. She also taught at the TH Harris campus for four and a half years. Having worked in business she believes that she understands what business and industry needs from students in the business department. Ms. Fontenot communicated that one of the things that employers are telling staff at the college is that it doesn't matter if a student has an associate of applied science. She communicated that employers do not care if a degree is the AAS or AAT (Associate of Applied Technology) degree. Ms. Fontenot urged the Board to consider returning to the AAT degree to the technical college. Her belief is that some of the students enrolled at the technical college will have a very difficult time in achieving the AAS degree.

The other issue that Ms. Fontenot raised focused on developmental education courses. She acknowledged the need for a certain amount of English, math, and science. She questions why students in the shop areas such as auto mechanics, air conditioning, welders, need to know about all of the information included in the PLATO English curriculum. She further questioned why business students that just want to get a diploma, need to know about geometry. She believes that these areas need to be reexamined.

Ms. Fontenot then shifted her comments to faculty, and focused on the fact that 9 month faculty do not have the option to be paid over a 12-month period. Since all faculty in other colleges and the public school systems have that option, she believes that LTC faculty should have that option as well.

Another issue that Ms. Fontenot addressed was the need to look at the rank and tenure policy.

Ms. Fontenot went back to the comment originally made by Mr. Egan regarding the shop area. She believes that the college should have more open enrollment and more flexibility for scheduling so that students can enter at a variety of points.

Chair of the Board, Kathy Sellers Johnson, ex-officio member of the LTC Ad Hoc Committee, addressed several comments made by the LTC Faculty Senate. Further, she communicated that she would reference a letter sent to her by the Faculty Senate. First, Ms. Johnson addressed Mr. Davis' suggestion that faculty of the LTC have representation on the LCTCS Board. Ms. Johnson informed Mr. Davis that the make-up of the Board is constituted by the legislation that created the system, so the board has no control over membership. However, Ms. Johnson communicated her desire for the Faculty Senate to provide input to the Board through the campus deans, vice chancellors and the chancellor.

The next item addressed by Ms. Johnson was the comment made by Mr. Egan regarding, "what the college used to be about, and what the college is about today." Ms. Johnson questioned Mr. Egan as to what he believes the college is about today.

Mr. Egan responded to Ms. Johnson's question by communicating that it is difficult to answer her question in a positive way. He stated that when he started with the LTC they were using the quarter system, and had about 240 to 250 days of instructional time. He stated that a student would come in and enroll in automotive technology. According to Mr. Egan, during the student's

course of study, they taught the courses as they came along. The campuses didn't have all of the individual courses to schedule. Today, he stated the instructor has only 210 days to teach that same material. A course might have gone from 2500 hours to 1700 hours. In automotive technology, within the 20 years that he has been teaching, it has gotten more complex than it was in the past. He believes the new structure creates a difficult environment. Live work in trade education, according to Mr. Egan, is very difficult to effectively deliver in a collegiate schedule on Monday, Wednesday, Friday or Tuesday and Thursday environment. When a brake job or engine job is started, you cannot just cut the job off and tell students that the lesson will pick up during the next class period.

Dr. Walter Bumphus, LCTCS President, asked Mr. Egan, in light of what used to be the case as Mr. Egan described it, would the instruction that he just explained result in a student getting a certification today.

Mr. Egan stated that he is an ASE Master Technician, and it is a NATEF certified program. Mr. Egan further stated that an automotive technology student shouldn't be pushed into taking subjects that have no bearing on automotive technology, but only lead toward an AAS degree or some other things. Mr. Egan stated that trade education can coexist in a collegiate environment, but not by the same rules. He feels that he has been asked to meet the same rules as academic education.

Supervisor Edwards Barham asked a question of Mr. Egan was stating, "If it was difficult to teach in a Monday, Wednesday, Friday environment, how was it taught in the past?"

Mr. Egan responded that he possibly over simplified his response. He explained by saying that when he said a Monday, Wednesday, Friday environment, he is speaking of collegiate scheduling whereby now instead of just teaching engine repair, which was a certification, now he has five separate courses that he has to teach to accomplish that. He has to teach within a given period of time. In other words, according to Mr. Egan, he begins course A on Monday and if it is a 30 hour course, he ends it on Friday. If students have accomplished the task necessary to perform the job, it places him and the student in a difficult point in terms of how to grade the student or how to handle his/her situation.

Supervisor Barham asked Mr. Egan how the course was taught before.

Mr. Egan responded that basically in a live work environment, the students have to apply the course content as they get the work. He stated that if he is teaching a student how to remove and replace cylinder heads, if that job does not happen to come in to the shop, he just has to wait for the job to come in for the student to get experience with those tasks. Mr. Egan said that they don't have "mock-up" trainers or real cars to perform these tasks on, so he has to have live work to accomplish the required tasks.

Chair Mellington asked Mr. Egan, what is done if the specific job that he needs to teach never comes in?

Mr. Egan responded that it is a hard question – that eventually in the two-year course of study that the job will come in. He often makes the example that in a collegiate environment, when a course involves a lab, when a student goes into that lab everything is pre-determined. When a student goes to work on a car, it is not that way.

Dr. Bumphus stated that this is a very extensive subject that the committee could probably spend all day trying to address. He focused on the competitive posture that Louisiana finds itself in as it works with Mississippi, Arkansas, and Alabama for industries to move to the State. He referred back to other colleges that the Board has heard from in other states, and he stated that the other states are providing the instruction in the way that Mr. Egan says doesn't work very well. When Dr. Bumphus was President of a college in Dallas, he stated that the program was set up in the way that Mr. Egan has described it and that it was a stellar program throughout the country.

Mr. Egan stated that there is a compromise on the issue. He stated that they just need to look at the program. He visited Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College and that the college has a different set of rules that they use for career education.

Ms. Johnson reverted to the correspondence that she received from the Faculty Senate to ask other questions. She referred to an assertion by the members of the Faculty Senate (item 2) that the LCTCS seems top heavy and the LTC seems bogged down in too many administrative levels. She requested that members of the Faculty Senate help her understand.

Mr. Davis communicated that the concern of the faculty is that every time there is a problem with personnel in terms of who should be terminated, it always appears to be a faculty member as opposed to an administrator. On the administrative side, according to Mr. Davis, it appears that there are more people than necessary to do the jobs that they are assigned to do.

Ms. Johnson asked Mr. Davis is he referring to the campus level.

Mr. Davis stated that this observation is at the campus level.

Dr. Bumphus stated that the comment made by the Faculty Senate included the LCTCS. He asked if the Faculty Senate was referring to the System Office.

Mr. Davis stated that this probably should have been written in response to the LTC. The Faculty Senate's focus is on the LTC because that is where they have day-to-day contact.

Ms. Johnson's next question focused on the Faculty Senate's comment that the campus deans need more flexibility to make decisions for their campuses, their students, and their communities, and that campuses should be given more spending authority.

Mr. Egan stated that the LTC Ad Hoc Committee needs to bear in mind that the comments included came from a lot of places. Mr. Egan believes the comment that Ms. Johnson read references that in the District System the campus administrators don't have the authority to make decisions immediately – the decision has to go through a district system. In the past, they were able to operate by themselves and they could make those decisions.

Ms. Fontenot stated an example by referencing that the hiring practice takes too much time.

Ms. Johnson asked Ms. Fontenot how much time it took to hire.

Ms. Fontenot stated that as she understands the hiring process, there has to be a selection committee, there has to be advertising, the committee has to interview the candidates, the committee makes a recommendation to the dean, the dean makes a recommendation to the vice chancellor, and the vice chancellor makes the recommendation to the chancellor who

makes the recommendation to the president for consideration of the Board. In her opinion, all of this process takes time, and in the meantime, they cannot serve students.

Dr. Bumphus asked Ms. Fontenot to share what the process used to be like from a hiring standpoint?

Ms. Fontenot stated that the campus deans used to make the decision. There was an advertising process, an interview process, and the campus dean would hire it.

Dr. Bumphus asked Ms. Fontenot if the campus dean had to go to the Board for approval.

Mr. Egan stated that even under BESE, the campuses had to have BESE approval. So the campus dean went directly to BESE.

Dr. Bumphus asked did the recommendation go directly to the Superintendent or someone in his shop.

Mr. Egan stated that when he was hired, it was temporary until the appointment went to the Board. However, no one was sure as to what the process actually was.

Ms. Fontenot stated that the campuses just don't want to send students home because they cannot hire people.

Dr. Bumphus stated that the agreement with all of the system chancellors as it relates to instructional positions that require fast action that the Board has authorized Dr. Bumphus to make the decisions quickly.

Supervisor Knapp asked members of the Faculty Senate members to clarify for her the degree of rigor within developmental studies. She stated that she hears from some employers that it is crucial for employees to have a degree, literacy and numeracy skills to perform – to read OSHA booklets, etc. In terms of more of the rural areas, she communicated that she hears that the same degree of literacy of numeracy may not be required for the jobs in that community. Supervisor Knapp stated that there seems to be some disparate levels of rigor required. As a Board Member, she believes that there is a conflict between the degree of those basic general education sorts of skills that are required, not to go on for further college preparation, but to be prepared for the workforce. She asked the Faculty Senate to help her in how the colleges should provide for the necessary general education capabilities necessary for the work provision without getting into the difficulties that the Faculty Senate is alluding to.

Mr. Egan believes that everyone in trade education understands that there is a level of academic skills that students have to have – reading, writing, and the basic sciences. He stated that it was not his intent to ever give the impression that there is no need for this. However, each trade has a specific set of academic skills that they need. What the college has is that everything needs to be the same. He believes that the college is saying that what an automotive technician needs, what a welder needs, and what an office occupations person need is not the same, yet they are being put into the same courses, as the college does with PLATO software. The problem is that the college goes beyond what is necessary for the student to learn a skill. However, if a student wants to progress beyond what they have done, they need to have the opportunity to do so according to Mr. Egan.

Mr. Davis stated that industry dictates what should be taught to the student.

Supervisor St. Blanc indicated that industry dictates everything.

Ms. Jan Larose was the final member in the audience to address the LTC Ad Hoc Committee Meeting. Ms. Larose is a faculty member with the LTC – Jefferson campus. She has been with the campus for 15 years in the office occupations department. Ms. Larose's comments were directed to "higher order" skills for "trades" areas. According to Ms. Larose, she believes that everyone needs to be literate. However, she focused on a group of students that she taught in a job seeking class. She stated that she provided them tests in a variety of ways, including short essays or short statements. She focused on a student who was a magnificent culinary student, but his written English is deplorable. She believes that he will be a success in culinary because of what he can do with his skills. She believes it is a real dilemma for faculty members to deal with these students.

Ms. Fontenot asked to address the Committee once more. She referenced that the nursing program has retention problems with students because of the rigor of the program. As a result, the college has developed a pre-nursing program. The college has worked with PLATO learning to tailor instruction to support this program. She stated that Chancellor Richard is aware of the disparity in developmental education, in terms of what skills students need opposed to the ones that they don't. Ms. Fontenot believes that people need to identify the skills and competencies that students need out of PLATO, and the instruction can be tailored. She stated that this take time to accomplish.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.