

FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION 10–18

“Increased Spending on Higher Education and the Timely Pursuit of Excellence”

Sponsored by Justin Walsh

Whereas Louisiana State University has, since 2002, charted its progress towards national prominence by means of the Flagship Agenda;

Whereas the Flagship Agenda hopes to improve LSU’s service to the state by offering “a world-class knowledge base that is transferable to educational, professional, and business enterprises; an incubator for the development of new products and technologies; prominence in the national arena for federal projects and funding; nationally-ranked programs that prepare students for the most competitive and prestigious graduate programs and employment opportunities; and a competitively educated workforce, trained for attracting high-growth industries”;

Whereas the job market for scholars currently offers an almost unprecedented “buyer’s market” (even by the usual low standards) for universities seeking new faculty members at both the junior and senior levels;

Whereas state higher education leaders, from the LSU campus, to the Board of Supervisors, to the Board of Regents, to the Legislature, to the Governor’s office, have consistently reacted to the current state budget situation only by arguing over how much to cut from university budgets, faculty, and curricula;

Whereas LSU Chancellor Michael Martin has remarked publicly on the vulnerability of LSU to the poaching of its high-quality faculty by other institutions;

Whereas academic programs across the university have indeed lost staff since budget cuts began in January 2008, first through unreplaced attrition due to retirement and departures of faculty for better opportunities elsewhere, and more recently through active layoffs, leaving some programs down to only half of their normal strength or less, while faculty responsibilities and student enrollment have continued to increase;

Whereas the Louisiana economy has not, in fact, been as deeply affected by the recession relative to most other states, particularly some that already have National Flagship University systems, such as Michigan, California, North Carolina, Ohio, and Virginia;

Be it hereby resolved that the Faculty Senate calls upon all of the aforementioned higher education leaders to change the terms of their debate radically, to argue for increased spending on higher education rather than reductions, and specifically to support the opportunistic hiring of the very best rising and established scholars, who will contribute greatly to the intellectual life and accomplishments of LSU, who will dedicate themselves to furthering the education of Louisiana’s students, who will bring new energy to the fulfillment of the Flagship Agenda, and who will raise the reputation and standing of the state as a whole.