

Faculty Senate Resolution 11-11

“Call to Support and Join LSUnited”

Sponsored by Senator Patrick McGee

Whereas LSU has suffered financial setbacks since 2008 that have dramatically damaged its morale and the intellectual climate here for research, teaching, and learning;

Whereas the Louisiana legislative bodies have cut critical taxes and failed to propose new ones that support higher education without proposing or permitting adequate alternative means of funding, particularly at LSU as the state’s flagship university;

Whereas in the most recent statistics on Gross State Product from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Louisiana ranks 23rd in the country¹; and at most flagship universities in states that rank below Louisiana in GSP, including Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Nebraska, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Utah, and Wyoming, faculties have higher average compensation (salary and benefits) than the LSU faculty, according to AAUP figures for 2009-2010;

Whereas the Chancellor has been forced by the economic and political circumstances in this state to support unilateral actions of the LSU administration in order to cut the budget of LSU, and has had to seek and endorse private solutions to the university’s financial problems;

Whereas as a result of this crisis, termination notices are being extended from term-to-term to critical though untenured LSU faculty members, many of whom have either resigned or are seeking employment elsewhere;

Whereas students suffer from this crisis either directly through the loss of teachers and programs or indirectly through the instability of the faculty and staff of this university;

Whereas collective bargaining is a democratic practice that has played and continues to play a historical role in improving the conditions of labor, both intellectual and physical, in this country and elsewhere;

Whereas unionized research university faculties usually receive higher overall compensation by comparison with the LSU faculty²;

¹ See “Gross Domestic Product by State in Current Dollars 2008” on the site of the U.S. Census Bureau. The source of this table is the U.S Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) at the U.S. Department of Commerce. Another table at BEA ranks Louisiana 23rd in 2009 in “Chained (2005) Dollars” for “Per Capita Real GDP.”

² For example, University of California—Santa Cruz by 30.5%, University of Connecticut by 27.8%, University of Delaware by 29.9%, University of Florida by 10.1%, University of Hawaii—Manoa by 21.3%, University of Massachusetts—Amherst by 7.9%, Wayne State University by 3.2%, Rutgers University—New Brunswick by 36.4%, State University of New York—Albany by 21.4%, University of Cincinnati by 5%, University of Rhode Island by 17.2%, and University of Vermont by 2.1%.

Whereas unionized faculties can speak with one voice to influence the educational agenda in their states;

Whereas unionized faculties can negotiate collective bargaining contracts that better protect faculty rights and limit managerial discretion through the construction of formal rules and procedures;

Whereas the Faculty Senate appointed the Ad-Hoc Committee on Bargaining and Representation, which led to the formation of LSUnited, the emerging LSU faculty union affiliated with the Louisiana Association of Educators and the National Education Association;

Whereas the general goals of LSUnited are 1) to enhance job security, 2) to seek adequate and consistent compensation, 3) to improve and protect faculty benefits, 4) to create a rational work environment, and 5) to give the faculty a greater voice on the issues that these goals address;

And whereas the success and effectiveness of LSUnited depends on the free involvement of large numbers of faculty from different backgrounds and fields, who can determine the specific goals of the organization through democratic procedures and elect a leadership that will work with the faculty to achieve those goals;

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate as a body hereby expresses its support for LSUnited and calls on its own members and their constituencies in the colleges, schools, and departments on this campus to support LSUnited in the struggle to improve the working conditions of the LSU faculty and the overall quality of this university.