The LSUS Staff Senate meeting was called to order by President Daniel Miller at 11:04 A.M. on Thursday, January 10, 2013.

Staff Senators present included: Rebecca Chiles, Susan Gutierrez, Daniel Miller, Katie Simpson, and Linda Wimbley, Christianne Wojcik, Kelly Wynn.

Staff Senators absent were: Cheryl Irvin, Faye Lampkin (medical leave), Alex Mitchell, Ken Seale, LaBroderick Standokes, Marilyn Thomas.

Minutes from the December 2012 meeting were approved with no changes (motion by Senator Wojcik, 2nd by Senator Wynn).

President’s Comments
President Miller discussed the Council of Staff Advisors meeting to be held on February 1st, 2013. This will be an in-person meeting. The Council hasn’t met since November 2012.

Treasury Report
President Miller reported the balance of the Staff Senate’s account in the absence of Treasurer Standokes. The current balance is $2,973.80, including 113.66 in staff contributions since the last meeting. There have been no transactions since the last meeting.

Guest Administrator Reports
The Chancellor is out of town and unable to attend the meeting.

Business Affairs: Vice Chancellor Ferrell announced the new Executive Director of the LSUS Foundation, Laura Purdue, who started January 2nd.

There was a mid-year budget cut of about 250K, which is funding that we will not get back. We were able to make cuts from scholarship funds (students who had accepted but didn’t attend), student worker funds, and operating funds (prorated through every department). The university used to receive about 18 million in state funds, and now we receive about 9 million. This amount is basically enough to cover the required expenditures that go back to the state, so this funding doesn’t cover most operating costs. We are dependent upon funds from student enrollment. President Jenkins is asking the Revenue Committee for a funding “floor” and to stop the mid-year budget cuts. LSU Eunice is in a worse position that LSUS because they didn’t pass all of their Grad Act goals, which resulted in a loss of some of their funding.

There are basketball games tonight, so go support the teams. The University is currently searching for a Men’s and Women’s soccer coach.

President Miller asked Mr. Ferrell what percentage of our funding is state appropriated, to which Mr. Ferrell responded about 35%. President Miller believes that if the University generates 65% of our funding, then we should have more of a say about our operations. Mr. Ferrell stated that the State still has a lot of control since tuition is set by the legislature, and they have also made changes in the law about the kinds of fees a university can charge. President Miller emphasized again that if the state continues to cut funding, then the University should have more autonomy.

Academic Affairs: Dr. John S. Vassar introduced himself as the Interim Provost. He mentioned that although he has been with LSUS since 2000, he was previously focused mainly on academics, so it has been a pleasure getting to work more with staff members across campus and learning about all they do to assist students.

Faculty and staff are already making calls to students who have been dropped for non-payment.

New programs are in different phases, such as what would be our first doctoral program (in Educational Leadership). The final proposal for this program will be presented to the Board of Regents next month. We are also working on an online Masters of Education program which will be widely marketed. There are several others in the pipeline that will serve our community and keep the LSUS name out in the public.
The Reaffirmation of SACS accreditation will be coming up in the next two years. This will be a campus-wide effort, and we will need volunteers from each area of expertise to assist.

One of Dr. Vassar’s goals is to reduce the amount of paper on campus, so he is exploring ways of doing this around campus and digitizing as much as possible. President Miller agreed with this sentiment and offered the staff’s assistance in this or any other area. He encouraged Dr. Vassar to contact him or any of the Senators if assistance is needed.

Senator Simpson asked Dr. Vassar about the OneLSU concept and what, if any, effect Dr. Vassar believes this will have on the new programs being developed. Dr. Vassar stated that even with OneLSU coming and fiscal uncertainties, we need to continue to serve our students. He has been instructed by Dr. Sisson to proceed. Senator Simpson asked if Dr. Vassar foresees the Board of Regents rejecting the new degrees because of the OneLSU proposal. He answered that we can’t say for sure but he is optimistic.

Old/Current Business
There is no old/current business.

New Business
President Miller discussed the need to nominate staff members for the Transition Advisory Subcommittee Team. These subcommittees will be assisting with providing recommendations to the OneLSU transition team. The five subcommittees are: Academic, Finance and Revenue, Operations and Technology, Research and Discovery, and Student Experience. It was agreed upon that staff members should be able to volunteer for a committee or nominate another staff member. President Miller will send out an email today requesting nominations. He will then forward the nominations to Dr. Sisson for approval and to send to Dr. Jenkins. Not much is known at this point about the process, but Dr. Vassar mentioned that a recent email from Brooke Rinaudo (Media and Public Relations) provided additional information. He stressed the importance of the subcommittees and encouraged staff members to participate.

Senator Reports/Committees
Senator Chiles asked for feedback about the draft tailgate invitation that was sent out to the Senators. There was no additional feedback, so she stated that the invitation would be sent out and discussed that the event would be up in the indoor track.

President Miller asked Senator Wojcik for an update on the FORCE Committee. The committee hasn’t met yet this year, but the call team which is a subcommittee of FORCE has finished two rounds of calling and will be starting the third today to students dropped for non-payment. President Miller asked if the committee needed any additional help from staff members, and Senator Wojcik replied that they currently have enough callers. She will contact the Staff Senate if help is needed. The FORCE Committee plans to meet in February.

Comments from Guests
President Miller asked the Senate whether or not he should attend the Council of Staff Advisors meeting on February 1st, and if so, would the Staff Senate be able to fund the trip. It was agreed that the meeting was important for him to attend, and all Senators were in agreement that Staff Senate funds could be used for this meeting.

Senator Wimbley announced that there is a new Financial Aid Counselor, Mesha Small. Ms. Small was in attendance at the meeting and was welcomed.

Adjournment
There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:48 (motion by Senator Chiles, 2nd by Senator Wojcik).