

Faculty Senate Resolution 11–19

Call for an Audit of the Budget and Procedures of Southern University with the Prospect of Censure

Introduced at the request of the Southern University Faculty Senate President

Whereas good governance of universities requires careful financial and other planning that involves all stakeholders: faculty, staff, students, and administrators;

Whereas preparation for financial emergencies requires systematic and extended consultation along with the open exchange of information;

Whereas national educational and professional organizations as well as local and state universities offer widely-recognized template procedures for the management of financial crises;

Whereas both the Southern University System administration and the Southern University administration have followed no published procedures, have engaged in only superficial consultation with campus stakeholders, and have set out no plan of consultation prior to the recent declaration of financial exigency at Southern University;

Whereas the published budget of Southern University lacks adequate detail and resolution to develop a plan or to allow for public scrutiny;

Whereas the Southern University has increased its subsidy to its athletic program by one million dollars and whereas the total athletic subsidy exceeds the alleged deficit to be recovered from faculty furloughs;

Whereas universities in Louisiana share many common interests insofar as they are regulated by a common Board of Regents and insofar as policies imposed on one higher education system often migrate to others;

Whereas Chancellor James Llorens as well as Commissioner of Higher Education Jim Purcell demonstrated astounding callousness in referring to the declaration of exigency and with that the dismissal of faculty as a “bold” and admirable move that will begin the process of realigning all of higher education;

Whereas neither Southern University nor the Southern University System have any plan, either just or unjust, with regard to the development of an exigency procedure;

Whereas dismissals of faculty at three University of Louisiana schools have demonstrated that firing of faculty for purported financial reasons bring opprobrium to all of Louisiana higher education;

Whereas the unjustified declaration of financial exigency needlessly stigmatizes all colleges and universities in Louisiana;

Therefore be it resolved that the LSU Faculty Senate affirms its commitment to the welfare of the Southern University faculty, staff, and students and urges those concerned in the management of Southern University to retract their rash decision;

Therefore be it further resolved that the LSU Faculty Senate calls for a forensic audit of the budget of Southern University and of the Southern University System as well as for a review of the governance procedures of these institutions, audits and reviews to be conducted by appropriately qualified persons who are not members of either the Southern University or Southern University System administrations;

Therefore be it further resolved that the LSU Faculty Senate joins with Faculty Senates around Louisiana in urging Southern University and the Southern University System to create a panel with substantial faculty representation as well as with two or more qualified academic professionals who are not Southern University employees to develop solutions for budget problems and for improving governance procedures;

Therefore be it further resolved that, if the foregoing measures are not initiated within one month of the passage of this resolution, the LSU Faculty Senate censures the Southern University administration, Southern University Chancellor James Llorens, the Southern University System Board of Supervisors, and Southern University System President Ronald Mason.