

# FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION 15–03

## Improvements for Graduate Students and Graduate Education at LSU

*Sponsored by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee*

Whereas the education of graduate students, which provides for the continuity of knowledge by creating new faculty members and which fills the ranks of the professions with educated citizens, is a grand and indeed definitive service of a major research university;

Whereas the percentage of Louisiana citizens holding advanced degrees is low by national standards;

Whereas efforts to promote graduate education in Louisiana have been hampered by inadequate funding and by a lack of support for promotional campaigns;

Whereas approximately one-third of all graduate applications to LSU receive no response from the University;

Whereas the international outreach efforts of a university are also enhanced by a thriving graduate program and by the legions of skilled workers and creative thinkers that such a program sends into the world;

Whereas the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, which together hold responsibility for guiding both curriculum and educational policy, have recommended an assortment of changes in the organization and the supervision of graduate education at LSU;

Whereas some aspects of the organization of the Graduate School, including the creation of a graduate faculty and of a mechanism to regulate that graduate faculty, have not been updated since the 1970s;

Whereas one specific recommendation, that for the election of the membership of the

Graduate Council (Resolution 10-03), has been repeatedly compromised;

Whereas a plan for the improvement of the Graduate School that was collaboratively developed by faculty and administrative representatives has never been fully or consistently implemented;

Whereas complaints concerning the services of the Graduate School are not uncommon;

Whereas graduate education is, first and foremost, an academic endeavor and responsibility;

Whereas protocols and procedures pertaining to important aspects of graduate education such as the scheduling general examinations and dissertation defenses are obtuse and not easy to find;

Whereas the economic support for our graduate students has diminished to the point that campus activists have created a charity "food pantry" so as to prevent the starvation of Louisiana's most promising and industrious students;

Whereas the University has not discovered or formulated alternatives for graduate students who are struggling with large increases in the cost of health insurance;

Whereas the Office of Research and Economic Development, where the Graduate School is currently housed, is already overloaded with duties pertinent of its primary mission;

Therefore be it resolved that the LSU A&M Graduate School should be realigned with the Office of Academic Affairs; and

Therefore be it further resolved that the Office of Academic Affairs, along with the LSU System administration, should immediately begin a study, in collaboration with the Faculty Senate, of ways in which to advance graduate education in Louisiana and of ways in which to improve the functioning, the performance, and the student recruitment program of the LSU A&M Graduate School.