Call to Order

The meeting of the Thirty Sixth Regular Legislative Session was called to order at 6:29 p.m. by Speaker Loga. Senator Grotte led a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

There were 40 senators present.

Reading Correction and Adoption of Minutes

Senator M. Boudreaux moved to accept the minutes of the last meeting as dispersed by email. Senator Sanderson seconded this motion.

New Business

SGR No. 37 by Senators Terrebonne, de Gravelle, and Koke, a Resolution to urge and request LSU Information Technologies to redesign the LSU mobile app. SGR No. 37 was referred to Students Auxiliaries and Services.

SGR No. 39 by Senator Grashoff, a Resolution to reaffirm LSU Student Government’s position of opposition toward the proposed Suffix Grading System and to urge and request President and Chancellor F. King Alexander to not approve the Faculty Senate’s proposal to change to plus/minus grading. SGR No. 39 was referred to Academic Affairs.

Committee Reports

Academic Affairs – Senator Triche
She stated that the committee unofficially heard Senator Grashoff’s resolution. They are having a meeting with the registrar next week regarding the syllabus database.

Budget and Appropriations – Senator Grashoff
He stated they heard a finance bill for $20,000 for Memorial Oak Grove.

Campus Affairs and Sustainability – Senator Zerkus
The committee heard two sustainability bills.
The committee is not officially meeting next week.
Student Auxiliaries and Services – Senator K. Latham
The committee heard a bill, which Senator Grotte will discuss later.

Student Life, diversity, and Community Outreach – Senator Muehleman
He stated they heard a bill regarding SGR No. 34, which was rejected in committee, but they discussed using the initiative in a different manner.
He also stated the Mix It Up event is moved to Free Speech Alley.

Rules – Speaker Pro Tempore Boudreaux
He announced that this session has doubled amount of legislation written this semester.
He also stated that in accordance with the Union, they must cancel rooms earlier, so notify the speaker pro tempore if your meeting is cancelled.

Executive Officer Reports

Michael Panther, Director of Student Outreach
Announced events regarding Student Outreach
Asked everyone to come check it out

Brendan Copley, Director of Parking and Transportation
Announced changes to parking, such as certain UREC parking become a complete “X” lot and a change in the “Night A” bus route

Question: Senator Landry asked if the route that was changing was a Tigerland route.
Answer: The route changed was a night route that stopped at Tigerland.

Question: Senator Grashoff asked how much parking would become an “X” lot. Answer: He didn’t know at this moment.

Unfinished Business

EO No. 1 by President Tufts, an Executive Order to appoint Haley Ford to the PSIF Committee.

Author’s opening comments by President Tufts. He stated that she has a finance background and she’d like to get really involved.

Favorable passage urged.

98% in Favor EO No. 1 Enrolled

EO No. 2 by President Tufts, an Executive Order to appoint Melanie Love to the PSIF Committee.
Author’s opening comments by President Tufts. He stated that she was well qualified and wanted to be involved.

Favorable passage urged.

98% in Favor EO No. 2 Enrolled

SGFB No. 9 by Senators Grotte, D. Boudreaux, K. Latham, and Terrebonne, a Finance Bill to allocate twenty-four thousand one hundred eighty dollars ($24,180) from the LSU Student Government surplus account to fund the purchase of picnic tables for the LSU Memorial Oak Grove.

Author’s opening comments by Senators Grotte, D. Boudreaux, K. Latham, and Terrebonne. Senator Grotte said that it is funding eight picnic tables similar to the ones near On-the-Geaux. Senator D. Boudreaux stated he met with administrators, and they were extremely receptive to this idea. Senator D. Boudreaux also yielded his time to Will Lowe, campus architect, who stated that they’d like to brighten the place up especially at night. Senator K. Latham said that this is more than picnic tables, but it is also a partnership with other services at LSU to create a wonderful place on campus. Senator Terrebonne stated that they originally thought they could ask architecture to complete this, but there were issues with the University.

*Question:* Senator de Gravelle asked why eight picnic tables should be purchased.
*Answer:* They estimated this based on the area.

*Question:* Senator Lazo asked if it had to be that certain table or something cheaper.
*Answer:* Senator Grotte stated that it had to be this table because of LSU’s contract with the contractor.

Debate by Senator Grotte, who had technical amendments.

Debate by Senator M. Boudreaux, who stated that he really like this bill because it solves a seating problem with the Union.

Debate by Senator Lazo, who stated that he feels it is a great idea considering the area is rather unattractive now.

Debate by Senator Grashoff, who stated that he thinks it is an awesome idea, and it is directly for the students, so it is even greater.

*Question:* Senator de Gravelle asked how much money is currently in the surplus account, can we fund more tables should the need arise, and can we use a different account. *Answer:* He stated it was about $40,000; it could not be funded again since it was from the surplus account, and it would be possible to use a different account, but he’d have to discuss this with Mrs. Arlette.
Debate by Senator Gore who stated that he was extremely in favor of this, and it was his favorite spot on campus.

Debate by Senator Lazo who stated that this spot was special to alumni, and he thinks they would like to see people enjoying that space.

Debate by Senator Larousse who stated that he is worried about the amount of money spent on this.

Question: Senator K. Latham asked if this would show that Student Government is for the students. Answer: He believes it would, but so would six tables instead of eight.

Question: Senator M. Boudreaux asked if he would agree that seating is an issue in the Union. Answer: He stated that he agrees, and there is also a bill that would increase seating within the Union.

Debate by Senator de Gravelle who stated that it is a lot of money, and she feels like she would prefer six tables rather than eight tables.

Debate by Senator J. Latham, who stated that he is totally behind this bill, and six tables limits foot traffic.

Debate by Senator Murphy, who stated that she doesn’t think an extra $6,000 would be bad if it beautified our campus.

Debate by Senator Landry, who stated that he appreciates Senators de Gravelle’s and Larousse’s concerns regarding the amount of money, but he also trusts in the landscape architects’ knowledge.

Debate by Senator de Gravelle, who stated that she wants to save students’ money.

Debate by Senator Griffin who stated that the current format doesn’t matter to students because it’s impractical.

Question: Senator Frink asked if she thinks that they could inform people that are on campus tours that Student Government sponsored this. Answer: She stated that they would definitely do that, as students are already interested in what Student Government does.

Point of Personal Privilege: Senators Nay, Mahtook, and Frink are present.

Debate by Senator de Gravelle, who proposed an amendment. Author’s opening comments by Senator de Gravelle, who stated that she is trying to reduce the amount sent in order to save student’s money and put it towards other initiatives next semester.
**Debate** by Senator K. Latham who stated that she wants the original bill in full force, and this gives the students something concrete.

**Debate** by Senator Mahtook, who stated he is against this amendment, and if they’re going to fund eight tables and expend the original amount of money, then they should do it.

**Debate** by Senator Landry who stated he is against the amendment because they should do the bill in full force rather than backing off.

**Debate** by Senator Zerkus who stated that they shouldn’t be thinking about future initiatives since the account is “first come, first serve.”

**Debate** by Senator D. Boudreaux who stated that this number has been highly considered by many people, including experts.

Final comments by Senator Grotte who stated that he is obviously against the amendment.

**With 14% in Favor, the Amendment fails.**

Favorable passage urged.

95% in Favor SGFB No. 9 Enrolled

**SGR No. 33** by Senator Davis, a Resolution to urge and request the LSU Department of Athletics and the LSU Sustainability Department to place recycling bins throughout Tiger Stadium near every trash can.

Author’s opening comments by Senator Davis. He brought forth and discussed a PowerPoint on the benefits of recycling in respect to our local ecosystem.

**Debate** by Senator Davis, who had an amendment.

His own and therefore adopted

Favorable passage urged.

Senators K. Latham and Grotte abstain from voting.

100% in Favor SGR No. 33 Enrolled

**SGR No. 35** by Senator M. Boudreaux, a Resolution to urge and request the Office of Campus Affairs and Sustainability to provide recycling bins for all participating Greek houses.

Author’s opening comments by Senator M. Boudreaux. He stated that he wanted to make a big impact for sustainability. It will cost no money since the Sustainability department will send their recycling bins over happily.

**Question:** Senator Mahtook asked if he ever looked into getting a recycling bin in the Old Row area. **Answer:** He stated that people just use it for trash, but the Sustainability department would be looking into that.
**Point of Personal Privilege:** Senator Faircloth is present.

**Debate** by Senator Frink, who stated that the directors of sustainability are very excited for this bill, and the Sustainability department is considering doing chapter visits.

**Debate** by Senator Lazo who stated we should have a proper place to put recyclable materials.

**Debate** by Senator Hunt who stated that he is in full support of this bill, but the bin would have to be taken out pretty often.

**Debate** by Senator Faircloth who stated that he is in support of this bill, and it has been successful in his Greek house.

**Question:** Senator Frink asked if he announced the recycling bins and what should go in there. **Answer:** They formed a Green Committee to give advice during the chapter meetings.

**Debate** by Senator Terrebonne, who had an amendment to add SigEp to the list of participating Greek houses.

- Seen as friendly and adopted.

**Debate** by Speaker Pro Tempore Boudreaux, who had an amendment to add Phi Delt to the list of participating Greek houses.

- Seen as friendly and adopted.

Favorable passage urged.

**100% in Favor SGR No. 35 Enrolled**

**SGR No. 36** by Senator Lassus, a Resolution to urge and request LSU Auxiliary Services to allow LSU University Recreation to temporarily utilize the former billiards space in the LSU Student Union.

Author’s opening comments by Senator Lassus. She stated that the UREC would like to use this space until bidding for next year is complete.

**Debate** by Senator Grotte, who stated that this bill went well in committee.

**Debate** by Senator M. Boudreaux who stated this was good as a conversation starter.

**Debate** by Senator Frink, who stated she was in favor of the bill, but she didn’t know if it would be the best place for a workout room.

Favorable passage urged.
SGR No. 39 by Senator Grashoff, a Resolution to reaffirm LSU Student Government’s position of opposition toward the proposed Suffix Grading System and to urge and request President and Chancellor F. King Alexander to not approve the Faculty Senate’s proposal to change to plus/minus grading.

Author’s opening comments by Senator Grashoff. He stated that a similar resolution to this was passed last fall as well as both falls before that, so, if this passes tonight, it would be our fourth resolution in opposition to plus/minus grading. He also stated that students work hard for their grades whether it should be an A, B, or C, and punishing students for their grades is not the way to go about it. He also stated that in the spring of 2013, the Faculty Senate conducted a survey on grades, which showed a majority of the grades from the survey decreasing compared to the small amount that increased. He stated that these surveys demonstrated something that would have a negative effect on students’ GPAs. According to Senator Grashoff, 224 students from these surveys provided feedback, in which 82.6% of the feedback was against this suffix, or plus/minus, grading. He said this shows that students have a negative reaction to this grading system. He also said that since TOPS and other academically based scholarships have GPA requirements, this system would act as a hindrance to students attending the university, and even students thinking of applying to the university. Senator Grashoff stated that he had a friend who would’ve chosen elsewhere had LSU implemented this grading system; therefore, it could possibly lower our enrollment numbers. He also said that it decreases competitiveness when applying for graduate school jobs because of a set minimum GPA. He also stated that a lot of instructors, like English instructors with papers, for example, use a subjective grading scale to assign A’s, B’s, C’s etc., and this would cause an issue with teachers having to decide if an assignment was an A+, A, A-, etc. Also, he stated that faculty gets to decide the range of grades for this system, e.g. an engineering teacher gets to decide where within a range of 80 to 60 is a C+, C, C-, and with that, it makes it somewhat optional for teachers, and may cause confusion because of that. He also stated that it might lead to scheduling bias where a student may want to schedule a teacher who gives more A+’s. Senator Grashoff said that on top of all of this, he believes that students should be represented in something that may deter them from getting a degree. Senator Grashoff also shared some words from President Tufts about his meeting with Joe Alleva, Athletics Director and Vice Chancellor, who has been opposed to plus/minus grading in the past and is now worried that it would affect his current constituents in a negative way. He also stated that President Tufts is going to meet with President and Chancellor F. King Alexander personally to bring him this legislation.

Question: Senator K. Latham asked if he believes students were bypassed in this issue.
Answer: Senator Grashoff said he believed they weren’t allowed to put in as much input as possible.

Question: Senator D. Boudreaux asked if this would change how our GPAs are calculated, if his GPA at the end of the semester would be changed if this grading system
were implemented, if the rules and regulations regarding admission to senior colleges and scholarships would change based on this grading system, and if this grading system would be optional for all University faculty. **Answer:** Senator Grashoff said no, it would change how we are awarded our quality points; his GPA could potentially change; the rules and way things are awarded would not change since they are based on GPA and not quality points; and the guidelines didn’t specifically state if it would be optional or mandatory, but it sounds as though it leaves it up to the teacher to decide what grades are defined as an A+, A, A-, etc.

**Question:** Senator Landry asked if the Faculty Senate had approved this, and if it was waiting for F. King Alexander’s approval. **Answer:** Senator Grashoff stated that it was approved and waiting for Dr. Alexander’s approval.

**Question:** Senator Dunn asked if this affects students getting TOPS. **Answer:** Senator Grashoff stated that this system changes how quality points are awarded and that doesn’t affect TOPS directly because the main criteria for TOPS is GPA.

**Point of Clarification:** Senator Mahtook stated that TOPS will not change their grading standards based on how LSU chooses to grade.

**Question:** Senator D. Boudreaux asked if there was a test or something that could be done to show how students would be affected now if this system was already implemented. **Answer:** Senator Grashoff stated that the new system would not affect your past grades, and the Faculty Senate kind of tested it using the study they did on a small sample of students to make a decision regarding the bigger population.

**Question:** Senator Mullet asked if the Faculty Senate wanted to use this to award high-achieving students, and how would it affect awarding the University Medal to students with a 4.3 GPA. **Answer:** Senator Grashoff stated that that is one reason is was passed, and when awarding the University Medal, a 4.3 GPA will be truncated down to a 4.0.

**Question:** Senator Triche asked how it would affect pass/fail classes. **Answer:** Senator Grashoff said that it would affect pass/fail classes because the teacher then has the option of awarding you anywhere from a 4.3 to a 1.7, so it has the potential to enhance, worsen, or not affect your GPA.

**Question:** Senator Muehleman asked if the guidelines make the teacher of a pass/fail class assign a grade. **Answer:** Senator Grashoff stated that this system makes teachers assign a grade to those classes, anywhere from a 4.3 to a 1.7.

**Question:** Senator Gremillion asked if this system was mandatory or optional. **Answer:** Senator Grashoff stated that he was unsure since he couldn’t find in the guidelines whether it was optional or mandatory, but it would be implemented in the fall if approved.
**Question:** Senator Landry asked if TOPS would take the GPA from the new system.  
**Answer:** Senator Grashoff stated that TOPS would use the GPA from the new system, so a student could potentially lose TOPS if their GPA was 2.5 and changes to 2.2, for example.

**Debate** by Senator Gremillion who stated that he feels as though the Faculty Senate is trying to bully us into a system we didn’t know about or request. He also feels that financial aid will be much harder to attain, and it could lead to a fall in retention rates. He stated that the current system satisfies the students and doesn’t matter to employers or others since “an A is an A.”

**Debate** by Senator Landry who stated that advanced placement classes in his high school were given five points towards their GPA for an A. He believes that it looks strange to employers and others to have a 4.5, for example, but he supports the resolution because students don’t deserve to have their TOPS status revoked.

**Question:** Senator Mahtook asked if he agrees that higher GPAs are more useful just for short-term, i.e., graduate school rather than actually applying to the job market, for example. **Answer:** Senator Landry stated that he agrees.

**Debate** by Senator K. Latham who stated that since we wear different hats in senate, she is representing her senior college, but the people in UCAC are aiming to get into their senior college, like the Manship School of Mass Communication, for example, and this grading system inhibits that.

**Question:** Senator D. Boudreaux asked if she thought this would keep students from getting into their senior college. **Answer:** Senator K. Latham stated that she believes that it would.

**Question:** Senator Grashoff asked if she thought students sometimes choose the wrong majors, and if students may get bad grades in that wrong major before they are able to switch. **Answer:** Senator K. Latham stated that sometimes students do, and this system hinders students who change majors and have trouble getting into their senior colleges because of a bad GPA.

**Question:** Senator Smoak asked if she thought that it would be beneficial to incoming students taking general education requirements. **Answer:** Senator K. Latham stated that it could be beneficial, but it could also hurt some students who aren’t good at certain subjects, such as science, for example.

**Debate** by Senator Frink who stated she is definitely in favor of this legislation. She stated that this would only be useful for students who can ace one class before they take a harder class, so it could boost their GPA.
**Question:** Senator K. Latham asked what was the best way to present our view on this system. **Answer:** Senator Frink said that they should go with an open mind, and treating it as a good intention.

**Question:** Senator Faircloth asked if there was a way they could actively oppose this. **Answer:** Senator Grashoff stated that he suggested going to Faculty Senate, but they already have our past legislation to consider.

**Question:** Senator Smoak asked if they should offer alternatives or a grandfather clause. **Answer:** Senator Frink said it couldn’t hurt because it doesn’t help to have no other ideas when you are so against one idea.

**Debate** by Senator Triche who stated we should present a united front in order to show that we are against this. She also stated that it is definitely harder for certain senior classes, and that the minus part hurts students.

**Question:** Senator K. Latham asked if she believed that this would discourage students in engineering. **Answer:** Senator Triche stated that she believed it would, and it would hurt students’ chances at a job.

**Debate** by Speaker Pro Tempore Boudreaux who stated that he has had experiences with senior level classes, and some teachers have their own experienced system of grading since their classes are harder. He also has been in classes where there is no system because grades are awarded according to how the group of students did together. This plus-minus system hurts his constituents because it doesn’t reward the amount of points that is has the potential to, and it’s not fair because some science courses are just extremely hard. It also hurts more students than it helps. The students that strive and get higher A’s deserve commendation and the university medal, but it isn’t fair to reward the few at the cost of many. He also doesn’t like how the faculty has disregarded the opinion of students.

**Question:** Senator Mahtook asked if he knew that students are paying the faculty of this institution. **Answer:** Speaker Pro Tempore Boudreaux stated that he knows that.

**Question:** Senator Grashoff asked if he felt that Dr. Alexander has been willing to work with the students. **Answer:** Speaker Pro Tempore Boudreaux stated that he appreciates that the chancellor does that, and he hopes that he sides with the students.

**Question:** Senator K. Latham asked if he knew the number of votes from the Faculty Senate. **Answer:** Senator Grashoff stated that he would check those and respond later.

**Debate** by Senator Hunt who stated that this system is really a gamble between choosing a teacher who grades nicely versus one who is harsher.

**Debate** by Senator Mullet who stated that he asked his teacher on his thoughts on plus/minus grading, and his teacher responded by saying that he was for it because the
other universities he had taught at had it. Senator Mullet also stated that if other faculty members can’t defend it, then he doesn’t see how we should support it.

**Question:** Senator Smoak asked if he knew that regardless of the grading system, you have to go back to the 4.0 GPA system to apply for graduate school. **Answer:** He knew this, and it is similar to contesting for the university medal.

**Debate** by Senator Grotte who stated that the plus-minus grading system would hurt his engineering classes because his grading system is determined after tests.

**Debate** by Senator Mahtook who stated that he wants to see students holding faculty accountable for possible changes to course outlines.

**Question:** Senator K. Latham asked how he thinks this would affect classes with a high drop rate. **Answer:** Senator Mahtook said he thinks it would only worsen those situations.

**Debate** by Senator Gore who stated that other universities have deemed plus/minus as irrelevant and he doesn’t understand why we would try to go back to this system.

Author’s closing comments by Senator Grashoff. He stated that although this bill was done on short notice, he put a lot of work and research into this bill. The Faculty Senate projects approval and implementation in the fall, but he likes the idea of going to the chancellor with other ideas.

Favorable passage urged.

**100% in Favor SGR No. 39 Enrolled**

LO No. 22 by Speaker Loga, a Legislative Order to appoint the standing committees of the Thirty-Sixth LSU Student Senate.

Author’s opening comments by Speaker Loga. He asked if anyone would like to change their committee.

Favorable passage urged.

**98% in Favor LO No. 22 Enrolled**

**Legislative Officer Reports**

Parliamentarian Fraenckel

You can’t debate more than once unless everyone else, who wants to speak, has spoken.

LMOTW is Senator J. Latham

Speaker Loga
Only one piece of unfinished business will be heard next week. Next week, there will be an organizational session.

**Petitions, Memorials, and Other Communications**

Senator K. Latham said she was proud of everyone and excited for passing the picnic table bill. Senator Grotte said he appreciated Senator de Gravelle and Larousse for asking the tough questions. Senator Madden said they are putting off lighted crosswalks until he has more data. Senator Frink said Campus Affairs and Sustainability would have a big focus on lighting next semester. Senator Gore said there was follow up for the Testing Center resolution, so there might be a walkway with benches as part of a capital outlay project.

*Point of Personal Privilege:* Senator Dean is present.

**Adjournment**

Speaker Pro Tempore Boudreaux made a motion to adjourn. This motion was seconded by Senator Larousse. Senator K. Latham objected to this motion. With 83% in Favor, this meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.