

FACULTY SENATE

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2004 – 3:30 PM – FERGUSON FORUM

APPROVED MINUTES

ATTENDANCE: Absent without an alternate – Jessica Lacher-Feldman, Carol Drolen, Lori Messinger, Jay Lindly, Charles Nuckolls, Janis Nuckolls, Harry Price, Doug McKnight, Mitch Shelton

GUESTS: Dr. Bailey Thomson's family and friends (wife Kristi, daughter Sarah and sister Becky Jordan and Roy Jordan, Cynthia Lee Almon, Gail Brown, Kathy Crockett, Dr. David Sloan); Jason Getz, Tuscaloosa News; Chris Otts, Crimson White; Gilbert Cruz, Tuscaloosa News; Seth Burgess, Graduate Student Association; Roy Greg, (alternate for John Hallman), Professional Staff Association.

The Faculty Senate minutes of December 9, 2003, were approved.

Caryl Cooper and Sheri Shuler came forward to read the resolution passed by the Senate at the December meeting in memoriam of **Dr. Bailey Thomson**. They stated that they were honored to do so and that Dr. Thomson was a wonderful colleague, a good soccer parent and man and a nice person.

Resolution

In Memoriam of

Professor H. Bailey Thomson

1949 - 2003

WHEREAS, the Faculty Senate of The University of Alabama wishes to honor the memory of University of Alabama Professor H. Bailey Thomson, an exceptional professor of journalism in the College of Communication and Information Sciences, and to express its gratitude for his leaving irreplaceable gifts to the University, to his profession and to the state of Alabama; and

WHEREAS, to the University Bailey Thomson leaves a legacy of excellence in teaching, research and service that will always be difficult to match. Professor Thomson was a beloved teacher, colleague and mentor, as shown in the eagerness of students and faculty to come forward and express their gratitude for his example and sharing of knowledge. Many of these testimonials can be seen at the website Dateline Alabama at www.datelinealabama.com, created by students in C&IS; and

WHEREAS, Bailey Thomson joined the faculty as the Reese Phifer Visiting Professor of Journalism in 1997. He is called a "difference-maker" by friend and colleague Dr.

Culpepper "Cully" Clark, dean of the College of Communication and Information Sciences. Bailey Thomson attained full professor status this year; and

WHEREAS, among Bailey Thomson's numerous gifts to his department and the University is the Clarence Cason Non-Fiction Writing Award, which is now recognized among the nation's finest prizes. Previous recipients have included Gay Talese, E.O. Wilson, Howell Raines, Albert Murray, Wayne Flynt, and Diane McWhorter; and

WHEREAS, a twenty-five-year journalist, Bailey Thomson believed passionately that journalism was not simply a profession but a "way of knowing," a way of coming to understand the social world in thoughtful, caring, practical language, as Dr. Clark said in his eulogy delivered at the Nov. 30 Memorial Service in Tuscaloosa, Alabama; and

WHEREAS, for his profession Bailey Thomson left a legacy of excellence in journalistic and editorial writing. In 1994 the Mobile Register published a special section titled "Sins of the Fathers," coordinated, edited and in part written by Bailey Thomson. This section explored Alabama's social, economic and political problems linked to the state's 1901 Constitution. It became a finalist for that year's Pulitzer Prize. In 1999, the American Society of Newspaper Editors presented him its Distinguished Writing Award for his series "Dixie's Broken Heart," published by the Mobile Register. Runners-up that year were Howell Raines of The New York Times and Paul Greenberg of The Arkansas Gazette. Two years later Bailey Thomson was again a finalist for that award and for the Pulitzer Prize; and

WHEREAS, another of Bailey Thomson's editorial series, "Century of Shame," won the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association's Carmage Walls Distinguished Writing Award; and

WHEREAS, to the state of Alabama, Bailey Thomson left a legacy of quiet activism for changes that would benefit all Alabamians; and

WHEREAS, Bailey Thomson had been actively and vigorously working for constitutional reform since 1995. He continued his fight for constitutional reform, and in recent years, was heavily involved with Alabama Citizens for Constitutional Reform. He also served as editor and contributor to a book of essays published by the University of Alabama Press titled Century of Controversy: Constitutional Reform in Alabama; and

WHEREAS, Bailey Thomson leaves behind wife Kristi, a Brookwood Middle School teacher, and daughter, Sarah, a sophomore at the University, as well as countless friends, faculty and students.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Faculty Senate of The University of Alabama that it extends its heartfelt sympathy to the family of H. Bailey Thomson and its gratitude for the legacies of excellence and activism he leaves to all.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution be included in the permanent minutes of the Faculty Senate.

Unanimously adopted by the Faculty Senate

The University of Alabama

December 9, 2003

The rules were suspended by a unanimous vote by the Senate to consider the proposed

"Resolution in Condemnation of Hate Message That Was Scrawled on the Door of the Campus NAACP Office". Wythe Holt presented the resolution stating that on Wednesday morning of last week a person came to the NAACP office and scrawled on the door a hateful racist message. He stated this was not an isolated event and not likely a joke. The Coalition and Diversity Inclusiveness committee passed a resolution much like the one being presented today. This has not been through the official process of going through the Steering Committee because the event took place after this month's Steering Committee meeting. There are three problems mentioned by senators and others: (1) "joins with the Coalition and Diversity Inclusiveness committee in its condemnation" to be replaced by the word "condemned" (2) a problem with the actual words scrawled on the door being stated in the resolution and was replaced with "racial slur" in the draft presented today and (3) two objections to the use of the word "terrorist". With that disfavor it was suggested to delete everything after "anonymously up to the and not including the period" or delete everything after the dashes and up to the period. Tuesday, January 13, the University participated in an anti-racist activity and there was a conference sponsored by the Dean of Students titled "Fighting Hate" and a conference considering ways to fight segregation conducted by Cully Clark with participants from Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi. In September the Board of Trustees passed a resolution hailing diversity as an important ingredient for a good education. It was stated that there would be a breach in the color line in the all-white fraternities. The President of the SGA, Katie Boyd, has pledged that her administration will be open to African-Americans. She has named an African-American, Robert Turner, as her Chief Executive Assistant. For such reasons it is believed that the hate message was not a joke. Rage was expressed for the anguish minority staff and students have suffered because of this and other hateful acts. Wythe Holt made a motion to vote for this motion and Nick Stinnett seconded the motion. A senator expressed his objection to using the phrase "terrorist tactic". John Vincent presented a second version of the resolution as an amendment stating, "Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate of The University of Alabama condemns the message that was scrawled on the door of the campus NAACP office on Wednesday, January 14, 2004. We invite all segments of the campus community to join us in condemnation to oppose this kind of message and to eradicate racism on this campus." Wythe asked that the proposal be considered as a substitute rather than an amendment. Margaret Garner seconded the shorter version. One senator expressed the opinion to include the word "terrorist" since that was the intention of the message and it was much like a terrorist act. It was suggested to strike the words "joins with the Coalition for Diversity and Inclusiveness" and that the Faculty Senate should make their own strong statement concerning the racist act. John Vincent withdrew his proposed version to allow all suggested amendments to the original resolution to be considered and voted on one at a time. It was suggested to strike "designed as" and replace that phrase with "terrorist tactic". This was accepted as a friendly amendment. One senator had his tires slashed a few years ago after participating in a diversity event. The Dean of Students has taken some action concerning the racist act but, as of this date, the President of the University has not spoken publicly. He was urged to do so. It was Martin Luther King's birthday this week and the University Board of Trustees are meeting next week. It was restated to delete the phrase "joins the Coalition for Diversity and Inclusiveness in its condemnation of" and replace it with "condemns". The vote was passed with one nay. The resolution as stated passed with one abstention. John Mason stated that it has taken many people at this University many years to try to repair some of the damage and heal some of the wounds cause by racism. Unfortunately it only takes one or two to reopen those wounds in a matter of seconds. I hope that we send a clear message to current and future students that this will not be tolerated. If that is their attitude then they should take their tuition dollars and go home.

The resolution reads:

Resolution in Condemnation of Hate Message That Was Scrawled on the Door of the Campus NAACP Office

Be it resolved, that the Faculty Senate of the University of Alabama condemns the message that was scrawled on the door of the campus NAACP office on Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2004. That racist slur is a completely unacceptable message for any campus at any time, but especially for The University of Alabama in the twenty-first century – and this instance is particularly contemptible because it was written anonymously, a terrorist tactic. We invite all segments of the campus community to join us in condemnation. We further invite the immediate response of our University's Administration, to oppose this kind of message and to eradicate racism on this campus.

Adopted by the Faculty Senate

The University of Alabama

January 20, 2004

Nominations and the election of a faculty member to the **Mediation Committee** was the next item on the agenda. At the last meeting two were elected. One, Pam Bucy was not able to serve. Karla Carmichael has been nominated and has indicated she would be willing to serve. There were no further nominations with a motion being made by Roy Ann Sherrod to close the nominations and seconded by Mathew Winston. The vote was unanimous to elect Karla Carmichael.

An article from the Mobile Press Register concerning the cost of the Shelby Building was attached to the agenda for the senator's information.

President's Report – (*John Mason*) The **Committee on University Committees** has just sent out a committee preference form to all faculty. Everyone was urged if they were interested in serving on a committee to respond. Last year while serving on the CUC John became aware that it is the Faculty Senate that provides a list of replacements on CUC to the President. That had not been followed in the past few years. Last year the Steering Committee acting on behalf of the Senate due to lack of time sent the names of Rona Donahue and Wythe Holt to the President and both were accepted. This year there are three vacancies to be filled. John would like for the Faculty Senate to vote on those names either at the February or March meeting. The list will include those that indicate their interest in serving on the CUC on the committee preference forms. We are not obligated just to those names. Anyone can suggest a name. "The new faculty members appointed to the committee will be chosen from a list provided by the Faculty Senate." Two points were made including the fact that this was a forum worked for by the Senate for years. The Senate persisted to alter committee structure allowing for faculty input. The five faculty members plus the Faculty Senate representative compromise six of the eleven voting members of the CUC. This committee recommends all other committee appointments to the President. This is an extremely important committee and elects their own chair. This is also a critical year for the Benefits Committee. There are crucial issues concerning benefits to be addressed. There was difficulty with the electronic site to register committee preferences.

Seth Burgess, President of Graduate Student Association, requested an announcement of the seventh annual **Graduate Research Conference** to be held March 10-12 at Ferguson. They are taking applications through the end of February. They are seeking quality graduate and senior students for research presentations. Applications may be found at

gsa.ua.edu.

Vice President's Report – (*Mathew Winston*) No report.

Secretary – (*Roy Ann Sherrod*) No report

Academic Affairs – (*John Vincent & Margaret Rice*) No report.

Faculty Life – (*Karla Carmichael & Nick Stinnett*) No report.

Financial Affairs – (*Catherine Davies & George Franke*) Their committee reports are on the Faculty Senate web page.

Planning & Operations – (*Mohammed Sharif & Mathew Winston*) A handout provided at today's meeting is the page from AL.com accusing the University of censorship. The major question indicated in that article has to do with the Alabama Scholars Association and the Alabama Observer cannot be distributed through the University postal system without postage payment. That payment can be made according to the University mail rates as opposed to second-class regular US postage. The Planning & Operations committee has been working on this issue. A copy of a letter was received addressed to Mike Butts, Manager of University Campus Mail Service, from Sheldon J. Gorovsky, Manager of the Rates and Classification Service Center, United States Postal Service regarding postal statutes regarding college and university mail systems. The crucial point is a statement that the letters must be related to the business of the organization, must be established as performing functions important to the operation of the academic community or characterized as a university function. A simple test would be to ask the question if the document would qualify to be printed on University letterhead. On the University web page official and non-official organizations are listed. Six organizations are listed under "Professional Organizations", The Alabama Scholars Association, Black Faculty and Staff Association, Capstone Women's Network, The Coalition for Diversity Inclusiveness, Web Tide, and the Women's Leadership Institute. How to qualify or what channel to follow is yet to be determined.

Research & Service – (*Wolfgang Bertsch & Don Hooks*) No report.

Senate Operations – (*Robert Moore*) An **ombudsperson** election is to be conducted. A three year, two year and one year term was established and as those terms expire a new ombudsperson is to be elected to fill that vacancy. Bryan Fair's term is expiring. The current bylaw calls for the current ombudspersons to serve as a nominating committee. Any faculty member or senator may suggest a name. The nominations go to the Senate Operations committee to determine if they meet the criteria and the entire faculty will vote on those nominees. A notice will be sent to the faculty requesting those nominations. The correct bylaw pertaining to ombudspersons will be posted on the Faculty Senate web page. It was suggested that a current ombudsperson be invited to speak to the Faculty Senate concerning the duties of the ombudsperson.

Student Affairs – (*Caryl Cooper & Steve Miller*) No report.

Legislative Agenda Committee – (*Margaret Garner*) **Higher Education Day** will be held in Montgomery on February 4. The Legislative Breakfast will be 7:00 AM, January 29 at the Four Points Sheraton. Bill Jones will be one of the speakers and a large number of faculty members should be there to give a sense of how concerned the faculty is about the funding of higher education. This committee is working on a plan to increase membership in the Higher Education Partnership. Student leaders have their goal set at 2,000 students attending Higher Education Day. Everyone was urged to be sensitive to

those students wishing to attend. Information is conveyed about the issues that are critical. One senator asked what would be the most important things faculty could do to make an impact. The answer was to attend the meetings and ask questions that they want answered. Steve Miller stated that Margaret Garner and Scott Bridges have worked so hard on the important issues. It is very important for faculty to attend. It was pointed out to have the faculty in front of the Legislators. The higher education employees need to have their concerns in the media so the voter will know and be aware of the message and needs of higher education.

Kate Ragsdale has been elected chair of the **Faculty Staff Benefits Committee**.

Meeting adjourned 4:30 PM