

FACULTY SENATE MEETING
JANUARY 18, 2011 – 3:30 pm – Room 1026 Capstone College of Nursing

APPROVED MINUTES

ABSENT WITHOUT ALTERNATE: James Hamilton, Maha Marouan, Minday Nancarrow, Katrina Ramonell, Karen Steckol, Todd DeZoort, Chapman Greer, Lew Silver, Steve Thoma, Brian Gordon, Stuart Usdan, Steve Emens, Wesley Church.

ABSENT WITH ALTERNATE: Donna Meester/Seth Appiah-Opoku; Vijaya Sundar/Scott Arnold.

GUESTS: Cresandra Smothers, Dialog; Jill Beville, Professional Staff Assembly.

In the absence and at the request of President Karen Steckol the speech she gave at the October, 2010, UA Board of Trustees meeting was read by Vice President Clark Midkiff.

“As usual I appreciate the opportunity to address the Board of Trustees again. Just so you know this is the third and last time I will address this group. Three years as President of the Faculty Senate is long enough, don’t you think? My terms as The University of Alabama’s Faculty Senate President have been fantastic. The faculty I have met, the interaction with you the members of the Board of Trustees, the members I have had the privilege to work with, what I have learned about the Capstone, the changes in the campus, the growth in numbers and quality of students at the University, a successful Capital Campaign, a national championship in football, I could go on and on. It has been three great years and I truly hate to see it come to an end but it is time.

The University was founded in 1831. History will tell us that the past seven years will be the most profound in its almost 180 year history. I would like to highlight three events that occurred in the last seven or so years that will ultimately define what The University of Alabama is for the next 180 years.

First is the hiring of President Witt by the Board of Trustees seven and one-half years ago. Dr. Witt and his team of administrators profoundly changed the Capstone in seven short years. In 2003 Dr. Witt announced his vision of what The University of Alabama could be. Most of us were skeptical that we could come anywhere near achieving his goals. You know faculty, we are always skeptical. It’s what makes us faculty but, boy, were we wrong! We now have the biggest and brightest student body ever in the history of the institution. We have the largest and I can feel comfortable in saying the brightest and most prolific faculty in the history of the institution. Our campus is beautiful, we have more research and grants than ever before, and we have added faculty and received raises when other institutions in the country are laying off, cutting salaries and reducing benefits. On behalf of the faculty at the University I thank Dr. Witt and his team and everyone else who had a hand in making his vision come true. We are profoundly changed.

The second event I would like to highlight is the dedication of the Lucy Clock Tower and Malone-Hood Plaza that took place a few weeks ago. How can you not forever be changed by the stand in the school house door. The history that was made by this event, the building of this park-like venue and the refurbishing of Foster Auditorium will show the world how far the University has grown with respect to desegregation and beyond. Did you know that UA is now a leader among public universities with regard to minority students and faculty growth and will become a destination point

for people who want to learn about desegregation in the South and how The University of Alabama played such an integral part of history. How the University depicted this important event was very important. As faculty at the Capstone we are very pleased with the outcome having been a partner in the planning.

The third event I would like to highlight is the purchase of the Bryce property. This event may very well be the biggest legacy the Board of Trustees and the Witt administration will have at the Capstone. Without the purchase of this land the University would have been landlocked and growth would not have been possible. Now the University has many more choices on how to grow, redistribute buildings and venues, and make campus life the best it can be. It may take many years for this legacy to come to fruition but when it does there will be no limit to the possibilities. The faculty looks forward to helping design a vision of what the Bryce property can be.

Finally, I would like to personally thank members of the Board of Trustees, the University administration, Faculty Senate Steering Committee, Faculty Senate, faculty and staff and students who have been so compassionate and understanding of me during my illness. I have been overwhelmed with all the kindnesses, prayers, concern, help and so forth from so many people. It would be impossible to thank them all. Most of you know that I have been taking part in a clinical trial at M.D. Anderson. On November 11, 2010, I will find out if the trial is working. (It is working.) If attitude can predict the outcome it will be great news. My work as Faculty Senate President, my work with each of you, has helped me keep a positive attitude. Each of you has played a part in keeping my spirits up and helped me fight the fight. Behavior and emotions are extremely contagious they spread from person to person like germs touching thousands of people influencing everything. How could someone work at such a great place and not be impacted by positive people, energy, experience and souls. I am truly blessed.”

Vice President Clark Midkiff introduced the President of The University of Alabama, Dr. Robert Witt. Dr. Witt addressed the Faculty Senate and gave an overview of the status of The University of Alabama. The immediate and long term prognosis for the University is extremely positive. The academic community of the University is in the process of building one of the strongest academic foundations of any college or university in the country. Looking at the last two or three years as our country has moved through a difficult economic time the University has not slowed down. When assessing progress it should be measured both in an absolute and relative sense. In an absolute sense over the last few years the University has made significant progress. Measuring progress on a relative basis the magnitude of that progress is even greater because so many of the colleges and universities in the country are having to deal with these economic times using strategies that at best hold them in place and in many cases making them move backward rather than forward. Many of those institutions are wrestling with hiring freezes, furloughs, program cut backs, halting construction plans, inability to increase the level of scholarship support, and lack of ability to have faculty and staff merit raises. Fortunately the University has escaped those negative conditions. This academic year three million dollars will be allocated to continue the new faculty hiring process. Funds have been set aside particularly at the college and school level to be able to continue to add staff. Looking at any level of objective measure of the scholarship productivity of this faculty it has never been higher. Faculty publication achievements, grant and contract proposals, grant and contract awards received, even in areas without Federal research funding are extremely strong. Due to the economic status of institutions across the country the University is able to target some of the best faculty available. The University as a research institution continues to get stronger. The academic profile of students admitted for the fall of 2011 is even stronger than in the past. There were over 20,000 applications for last fall’s freshman class and the University is

running well ahead of that this year. The level of attention and respect The University of Alabama is receiving nationally continues to grow. A recruiting reception held at a home last year drew 18-20 high school seniors and their parents from Fairfield, Connecticut. This fall The University of Alabama welcomed forty-four freshmen from Connecticut. Twenty-seven of those freshmen are from Fairfield County. This fall the reception drew over 200 high school seniors. One out of every four freshmen admitted last fall had perfect high school academic records. Added faculty and staff and quality students make the University stronger and are the building blocks for stronger academic programs. Faculty and staff received merit raises and building programs remain on schedule. The University in spite of the Federal earmark loss of \$30 million dollars continues to develop one of the finest Science and Engineering complexes in the country. Two buildings are complete, the third near completion and ground-breaking for the fourth building will take place this spring. Quality facilities have an impact on the recruitment of new faculty and students. A new residence hall will be ready in August 2012. Rose Towers will be demolished in May of 2012. A new recreation center and dining hall will be built on that site with another residence hall in the planning stages for that area.

The State of Alabama's sales tax revenue is running ahead of last year. The Business School projects around 4% greater growth for the State of Alabama. This will be one of the highest growth rates in the country. Proration is a possibility this year due to delays in collecting sales tax revenue, increase in health care and retirement costs. If the University faces proration somewhere in the range of 3% the University is financially positioned to say to the colleges and schools any cuts will be absorbed centrally. The UA television and radio station will be moving to Bryant-Denny Stadium creating a state-of-the-art digital media center attracting even more outstanding broadcast and journalism students and faculty.

Dr. Witt praised Dr. Judy Bonner as Provost of The University of Alabama for the quality of faculty governance on campus and the working relationship between administration and academic units.

A senator asked Dr. Witt the reasons for the University's outstanding report. Several factors explaining the success included in and out-of-state recruiting efforts and programs, increase in scholarship support, support of graduate students, financial strength from growth and faculty support. The recruiting strategy and business model in place at the University and faculty and team support has put the institution in a position to do things other schools have not been able to accomplish. Last fall the University had 30,232 students with a goal of an additional 5,000 students over the next decade. In the fall of 2011 the University will see the last fairly large increase in enrollment.

Other questions concerned maintaining a balance between research, increased enrollment, contract and grant activities and the number of foreign students attending the University. According to any measurement used the University is maintaining a system balance. The institution would like to attract additional foreign students. Factors in attracting those students include a small metropolitan environment and the number of students from their own country.

Roll call and quorum check by Secretary Jeanette VanderMeer.

The minutes of the December 14, 2010 Faculty Senate meeting were approved with one correction.

Vice President's Report – (Clark Midkiff) No report.

Secretary's Report – (*Jeanette VanderMeer*) An email will be sent to those senators with excessive absences. The issue will be discussed at the next Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting.

Academic Affairs – (*Marcia Barrett & John Vincent*) The Academic Affairs Committee will meet the first Tuesday in February. The agenda item will be electronic office hours for faculty.

Faculty Life – (*Deidre Leaver-Dunn & Lowell Baker*) The Faculty Life Committee will meet in February.

Financial Affairs – (*Katrina Ramonell & Steven Hobbs*) No report.

Information Technology – (*Jim Hall & Osiris Molina*) The Information Technology Committee met with John McGowan. A new phone system will allow access to phone messages through email. There is a nominal fee for each line. This should be operational within a month or two.

Research & Service – (*Ed Stephenson & Brian Gordon*) No report.

Faculty & Senate Governance – (*Rona Donahoe & Steve Emens*) During March the colleges and schools will be electing senators to replace those with expiring terms. On the same ballot will be the nominees for the third **Ombudsperson** position. Ken Wright will be rotating off. Tatiana Summers is the Ombudsperson from Arts & Sciences. The result of the second Ombudsperson election from Business or Engineering should be known shortly. Make certain the person nominated is willing to serve. Criteria for Ombudsperson includes being tenured, serving as a full-time faculty member for a minimum of seven years on this campus, may not be a current member of the senate, may not be a current administrator or a current member of the Mediation Committee.

In March Faculty Senate officers will be elected. Clark Midkiff is willing to serve as president and Jeanette VanderMeer is willing to continue as Secretary. Nominees are needed for Vice President and other nominations for president and secretary are welcomed. The Faculty Senate bylaws state each nominee should submit a letter of intent to the Faculty Senate secretary by February 10th.

Student Affairs – (*Melondie Carter & Seth Panitch*) The Student Affairs Committee will meet the first Tuesday in February.

Legislative Agenda – (*Margaret Garner*) Higher Education Partnership dues may no longer be paid by payroll deduction. The HEP Executive Committee is exploring easier payment methods. Higher Education Day in Montgomery, Alabama is April 7, 2011.

The Faculty Staff Benefits Committee for December was cancelled. Rona Donahoe will be taking several items to this committee at their next meeting.

Campus Master Plan Committee – Plans for the Bryce property are in the process and more information will be available this spring.

Meeting adjourned 4:30 P.M.