

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

OCTOBER 16, 2001 - FERGUSON FORUM - 3:30 PM

(Corrected Minutes)

ROLL CALL AND QUORUM DECLARED.

ABSENT: Bill Chaplin, Terry Royed, Sharon Beatty, Dexter Gordon, Jerry Rosiak, Peg Lyons

GUESTS: Joanna Hutt, Dialog, Professor David Beito, Emily Kraft (Crimson White)

The Minutes of the September 18th Faculty Senate meeting were approved.

Action Items:

A resolution proposing a system of **Evaluation for Deans and Chairs** was brought forward last year and was rejected by the Provost and the Council of Deans. The two basic reasons for the rejection were the deans and chairs felt threatened and it would be an administrative burden. A new committee including experts in performance evaluation and personnel administration was formed. In reviewing the chart listing the number of faculty by college, Arts and Sciences, with the largest number of faculty would be the only college with an administrative burden of collecting the data. The new proposal suggests that a random sample of A&S faculty could be surveyed or a random sample of discursive comments could be recorded. It is also possible that electronic means could be used to tally responses and comments and thus avoid the sampling problem.

Over the summer, the Ad Hoc committee visited with several deans and chairs to get feedback, opinions, and information. The standing committee on The Selection and Evaluations of Deans and Chairs also asked the deans for copies of the instruments they use to acquire feedback from their departments. Only two deans responded. The Ad Hoc committee would work with each dean to comprise the appropriate instrument to be used in the feedback survey. The primary purpose of the evaluations would be professional development. The point was made that deans and/or chairs could ignore the responses but ultimately they would be held accountable at their five-year review. Some faculty members would prefer input through an anonymous survey because they would not be comfortable with a face-to-face meeting with their dean or chair. The ad hoc committee is willing to make a presentation to the deans and chairs and let them know they are willing to assist in devising the most efficient instrument for their situation. The resolution passed with 30 yeas, six nays and one abstention.

A **resolution Commending the President and Provost for their Leadership** was presented. Discussion included the points that the enrollment of National Merit Scholarships had increased along with high- ranking academic students. The President has been accessible and the general consensus was that the President and Provost have done an outstanding job. The addition of top 50 "public" universities recognized by the U.S. News and World report was noted. The opinion was expressed that regretfully the U.S. News and World Report was being used to measure the success of the University of Alabama. The resolution passed with the suggestion that it be sent to all media and the Board of Trustees.

President's Report - (Norm Baldwin) The Steering Committee sets the agenda for the business of the Senate. The extremely important issue of the **Strategic Planning Initiative** would take a lot of time to review, therefore, the date of October 30th has been set for a

special Faculty Senate meeting with this being the only issue on the agenda for that meeting. Senators are required to attend. The Strategic Planning Initiative originated in the Systems Office four years ago and would impact every faculty member and department and college on campus. This document will be on the Faculty Senate web page for everyone to review before the meeting. This meeting will be used as one of the public forums to be held with another forum in November. The ad hoc committee will have a final report to the Faculty Senate for approval before going to the Systems Office.

The **Posting of Student Evaluations preliminary survey results** were discussed. According to the response, faculty does not support the posting of student evaluations. Two-thirds (68%) of the faculty strongly disagree with making student evaluations public. Almost two-thirds (64%) of the faculty response feels that student evaluations should be made voluntary if the faculty is legally required to make student evaluations public. The majority of faculty want evaluations kept on file in the departments if required to make them public. Dr. Sorensen stated that he would not force the faculty to publicize student evaluations. There are legal concerns and the Faculty Senate should make its position known to the SGA. The Provost told the SGA she would have a response by Thanksgiving. Ron Rogers would like to put together a committee composed of Faculty Senate members, faculty, students, and SGA members to comprise an instrument acceptable to everyone. At this point, it is not known if that is an option that the faculty would like to exercise, and the sense of the faculty should be determined. For legal advice, a number of attorneys in the Law School have been contacted along with the AAUP. There are options to be considered with one being total discontinuation of the evaluations. A suggestion was made to do this before any legal action is applied. An expressed concern was that student's would think that the faculty was trying to hide something if evaluations are discontinued. There would have to be a change in the Faculty Handbook (page 69) which could only be done with a faculty referendum to discontinue the evaluations. The referendum is conducted by the Provost's office. The survey was sent to everyone on the Faculty Senate listserv with over 1,000 names including retirees listed. The responses numbered 341, with many faculty members not checking their e-mail on a daily or weekly basis. There has been one follow-up e-mail request for a response. The security of the responses was questioned with assurance being given that the responses are anonymous.

It was expressed in Steering Committee that the last Faculty Senate meeting was not as civil as it should have been. The consensus was that everyone should address comments to the President or presiding officer of the Faculty Senate, not to an individual.

A request was made for **judges for the Homecoming decorations** on November 2 with Steve Miller, John Mason, Jeremy Butler, and Norm Baldwin volunteering.

Student Affairs - (Dexter Gordon & Alvin Winters) A report was given in response to the resolution proposing the **privatization of the Greek system**. The arguments given against privatization included the impact on the pattern of residential life, lack of fire protection and food service inspection. The cost of privatization is prohibitive with an estimate of \$23.4 million to purchase the Greek houses. The design of those houses would preclude their use as office space for the University. A further look at other options and a report will be given at the next Steering Committee meeting. It would be difficult to determine the value of the property that the houses are on with the Board of Trustees determining whether the property would be sold. It was felt that permission would not be forthcoming to sell the property. It was suggested that the houses could be used as dormitories. A motion was made and seconded to allow David Beito to speak to the Senate on this issue. He objected that the issue being discussed did not address the principle involved. He stated that it was not a difficult issue to solve but that discrimination based on race existed in these organizations and that micro-management would exist for years to come. The point

was made that even when sororities and fraternities are located off campus, they are still affiliated with the educational institution. Disaffiliation is a concern to the National Organization of Sororities and Fraternities since disaffiliation is usually a disciplinary action. It was suggested to address the issue of the lack of African American faculty. This is considered to be the larger problem and segregation as a whole at the University should be the priority issue. The Student Affairs committee welcomes any input.

Financial Affairs - (*Terry Royed & Keith Woodbury*) This committee is working on Intellectual Property Rights. They are working on changes for the Faculty Handbook concerning this subject and will present recommendations to the next Steering Committee meeting.

Academic Affairs - (*Don Desmet & Beth Macauley*) No report.

Faculty Life - (*Jerry Rosiek*) No report.

Planning & Operations - (*Bill Keel & John Mason*) This committee is working on two main issues – fall break and moving the start of finals to the first Saturday after the end of classes.

Legislative Agenda - (*Margaret Garner*) There will be a budget shortfall of 3 1/2 to 4% and everyone was encouraged to contact their legislator and the governor to close any loopholes for higher education. The Legislative Breakfast will be held the first Friday in November and everyone is encouraged to attend and to take the message back to their colleagues. The HEP, the advocacy group for all four-year institutions, has accepted a proposal from Margaret Garner to have a Courage Conviction award for those that stand tall and firm for higher education. Constitutional reform seminars will be held this fall and next spring. Very important information will be given and attendance is encouraged.

Meeting adjourned 5:05 PM