

FACULTY SENATE MEETING
November 16, 2010 – 3:30 PM – 1026 College of Nursing Building

APPROVED MINUTES

ABSENT WITHOUT ALTERNATE: Lowell Baker, John Blitz, Carolyn Cassady, Priscilla Davis (sabbatical), Jim Hall, James Hamilton, Rasma Lazda, Maha Marouan, Donna Meester, Katrina Ramonell, Leslie Rissler (resigned), Todd DeZoort, Chapman Greer, Lew Silver, Bill Petty, Steve Thoma, Wayne Urban, Ed Back, Brad Hodges, Steve Emens, Wesley Church.

ABSENT WITH ALTERNATE: John Vincent/Harold Stowell, Vijaya Sundar/Scott Arnold; Janis Edwards/Alexis Crilcutt; Steve Miller/Steven MacCall.

GUESTS: David Bertanzetti & John Kasberg, Department of Human Resources; Cresandra Smothers, Dialog.

Roll call and quorum check by Secretary Jeanette VanderMeer.

The minutes of the September 21 and October 19, 2010 were approved with amendments.

John Kasberg and David Bertanzetti of the Department of Human Resources addressed questions concerning changes in the 2011 **medical plan benefits** for University employees. Medical care costs are increasing in all areas. Projected UA employee health costs for 2009-10 out-patient hospital visits for substance abuse increased 486%; costs for a surgical hospital stay has increased 35%; out-patient radiation and chemotherapy costs have increased 32.5%; physician surgical fees for in-patient services have increased 24%; mental health patient claims have increased 19% and out-patient mental health claims have increased 9.1%. The projected deficit for 2010 UA Employee Health Care cost is \$2.7 million dollars. The University is self-funded with employee health care premiums going into one fund with Blue Cross/Clue Shield handling the administrative duties. In 2010 the University has 8,300 health care plan members with an average of fourteen prescriptions filled each year. Two years ago the average was 12 1/2 prescriptions. The average number of claims for hospital stays is about 600 per year with about 200 hospital stays for surgery. These hospital stays have increased 20% over last year. There are about 100-125 babies born. Catastrophic illnesses have impacted the health care plan dramatically this year. The total health claim costs averaged \$28-30 million dollars per year. The claims for catastrophic illnesses cannot be projected or predicted. One of the requirements for the new health care reform is additional sons and daughters can be added to an individual or family plan; whether married, financially dependent, live in the same household so long as they are 18-25 years of age. Open enrollment added an additional 125 in the health plan with no additional funding coming in to cover these additional people which translates into a \$300,000 additional health care liability. Hopefully the reserve fund will be about \$2-3 million dollars this year but it is down about ten percent. Twenty percent reserve would be more of an advantage. Premiums are federal, state and social security tax exempt. It was suggested to provide insurers an

idea of what their average contribution should be to the flexible spending account which would be tax-free. The flexible spending account enrollment increased 11% this year. An example would be an employee earning \$45,000 a year contributing \$2,000 to the flexible spending plan would save \$453 in taxes. The contribution limit in 2010 is \$8,000. However, the Health Care Reform legislation, as of January 1, 2013 would limit contributions to \$2,500. A suggestion was made to put forth more of an effort to inform employees on how to save money regarding health care such as mail-order prescriptions. Next year the co-pay to see a physician will increase from \$30 to \$35 dollars. Seeing a physician at the Faculty-Staff Health Care Clinic co-pay will cost \$20 dollars. Seeing a physician specialist co-pay will increase from \$35 to \$40. Discussion included problems accessing information on the Blue Cross/Blue Shield web-site, the prescription drug co-pay and \$125 comprehensive co-pay applying to all medical costs, a list of prescribed and generic drugs, the prevention of a catastrophic illness outbreak, plan design changes and participation regarding employee wellness, nurse practitioner coverage, coverage and per person limits, routine physicals and healthy food choices on campus. The University has contributed two million dollars to the health care plan to keep premium costs as low as possible.

President's Report – (*Karen Steckol*) Ways to remind the students to walk in cross walks only was discussed in a meeting with the Provost.

The election for the Ombudsperson will be done and cost covered by the Provost's office.

The philosophy statement will be printed in the catalog.

The five-year Dean's review and evaluation was also discussed.

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

Secretary's Report – (*Jeanette VanderMeer*) No report.

Academic Affairs – (*Marcia Barrett & John Vincent*) No report.

Financial Affairs – (*Katrina Ramonell & Steven Hobbs*) Reba Essary, Associate Vice President for Finance, made a presentation to the Financial Affairs Committee.

Information Technology – (*Jim Hall & Osiris Molina*) The Information Technology Committee met with John McGowan, Vice Provost of Information Technology and CIO, to discuss issues concerning UA Google searches.

There is now 24/7 assistance at the Computer Help Desk.

The wireless status is completed in 80 buildings. They are one month behind in a five-year plan.

An IT newsletter will be published. Forward any items for the newsletter to Osiris Molina.

Faculty Life – (*Diedre Leaver-Dunn & Lowell Baker*) The Faculty Life Committee has been reviewing the **30 foot no-smoking ban policy** around building entrances. The only recent reference on the UA web-site is a Faculty Senate resolution passed in 2006. The Provost has agreed to make certain the University policy is clearly stated on the UA web page. This will also be added to an annual list of reminders sent out to faculty members. The actual implementation of the no-smoking ban is being reviewed. There was discussion including establishing a smoke-free campus, smoking ban enforcement methods and more effective communication concerning smoke-free areas.

Research & Service – (*Ed Stephenson & Brian Gordon*) President Robert Witt set a goal of establishing The University of Alabama ranking as an eightieth percentile of federal **research funded** institutions. To reach this goal would require an increase of 125% in current dollars. At the present time the University is at the seventy-third percentile level. The two state institutions having the greatest amount of federal funding have medical or agricultural schools. An overview of state institution funding was given. The University of Alabama receives a significant amount of funding from NSF. The University has hired a liaison to pursue more funding from agencies located in the Huntsville area.

Faculty & Senate Governance – (*Rona Donahoe & Steve Emens*) The Ombudsperson election will take place through the Provost's office. Everyone was encouraged to vote.

Student Affairs – (*Melondie Carter & Seth Panitch*) The Student Affairs Committee met with Kathleen Cramer, Senior Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, to discuss issues brought to the committee by the SGA. Lowell Davis, Office of Student Affairs, representing **student outreach programs** will speak to the Faculty Senate Steering Committee during their meeting with the Provost.

The University is working on a **sophomore experience** program encompassing UA Away (internship away from campus), UA Serve (service away from campus) and UA Study (studying abroad).

A request has been issued for input regarding the simplification of the **faculty entertainment form**. The form is burdensome and the \$65.00 allotment has not been changed in recent years.

The SGA monitors and maintains a **student test bank**. The SGA considers it important for the faculty to understand that their goal is not to assist students in any cheating effort. Student access has been suspended by the SGA until some issues are resolved. The test bank name has been changed to Student Study Resources. Only tests will be included when they have the faculty member's permission. The SGA would possibly put the test material online for the access of students and faculty. According to Dr. Mark Nelson, the student test bank was established at the request of the Faculty Senate. The possible goal was to level the playing field since fraternities and sororities have had test banks for some

time. A question concerning intellectual property and copyrights was raised. The issues raised by the Faculty Senate will be taken back to the Student Government Association and there will be further discussion.

Legislative Agenda – (*Margaret Garner*) Faculty was reminded to leave April 7, Higher Education Day, clear of tests or projects allowing students to participate in this important event of advocacy for higher education.

Anyone wishing to participate as a UA committee member should notify the CUC.

Announcement –

A blood bank has been established for Dr. Karen Steckol. Anyone wishing to donate should contact the Red Cross or email Melondie Carter.

Meeting adjourned 4:50 P.M.