

## FACULTY SENATE MEETING

DECEMBER 11, 2001 – FERGUSON FORUM – 3:30 PM

### UNCORRECTED MINUTES

**Roll call and quorum check by Keith Woodbury, Secretary.**

**ABSENT:** Catherine Davies, Terry Royed, Anup Agrawal, Sharon Beatty, Subhabrata Chakraborti, Mark Nelson, Carol Donovan, Jerry Rosiak

**The November 20 and 27 minutes were approved.**

#### **Action Items:**

The first action item was the revisions to the **Strategic Planning Initiative Document** with a ten-minute discussion limit. Preliminary copies have been sent to the Provost with input from the public forums incorporated into the document. This revised document will be forwarded to the Presidents, Provosts, and Faculty Senate Presidents of the University of Alabama at Huntsville and The University of Alabama at Birmingham. Dr. Andrew Sorensen and Dr. Nancy Barrett of The University of Alabama will also receive a letter and copy of the revised document. The letter requests any input be forwarded to Dr. Margaret Garner with a January 15 deadline. The Systems Office has a February deadline for the final document. The Faculty Senate supported the motion from the Taskforce Committee to approve the revisions and to send the document and letters requesting input to the persons stated above. Appreciation of the Faculty Senate to Dr. Garner and the entire committee was expressed for their hard work and dedication.

The next action item was the **appointments for the Mediation Committee** with Barney Cargile and Martha Morgan rotating off. The remaining members on the committee are Jeff Richetto, Nick Stinnet, Paul Stewart, and Harold Bishop. No more than two appointments can be from the same college or school and should preferably be tenured. Carol Prickett of the School of Music was nominated with twenty years at the University and a high character recommendation. Marsha Adams of the School of Nursing was also nominated. Marsha has won the "Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award" and would be an asset to the committee. The Senate voted to approve these nominees. It was suggested to have backups in the event the approved nominees could not serve. If necessary, the President of the Faculty Senate will request backup nominations at the next meeting of the Senate.

**President's Report** – (*Norm Baldwin*) The Faculty Senate Steering Committee met with Dr. Sybil Todd concerning the desegregation of the Greek organizations on campus. Dr. Todd expressed that the end result of the Faculty Senate and the Office of Student Affairs was the same. She stated that the methods and timelines were different. When questioned about the desegregation timeline of the Office of Student Affairs, no firm answer was given. A request for the support of the Faculty Senate for the Greek organizations was articulated. The Office of Student Affairs is attempting to assist fraternities in increasing their membership. There was only one African American involved in rush this past year. Unified rush is a problem with the African American sororities and fraternities because they are on a different intake schedule than the white Greek organizations. The Office of Student Affairs is reviewing the recommendation/referral system. It was the consensus of the Steering Committee that the Office of Student Affairs is not addressing a lot of the issues that the Senate has raised, particularly unified rush, Greek accreditation and the blackball system. The Faculty Senate will continue to ask for progress reports on these

issues.

Melody Twilley has been corresponding with Wythe Holt and Pat Hermann. Wythe gave an update on Melody's efforts toward becoming a member of a sorority.

The Provost reported in her meeting with the Faculty Senate Steering Committee that there is a good chance the University will have a **five million dollar shortfall** due to a decline in enrollment, increased benefit costs, and utility expenses. What method to use to meet this shortfall has not been determined. It was reported that there had been no information forthcoming concerning any early retirement incentives. It was suggested that retirement incentives be reviewed at the departmental basis.

The issue of **submitting grades online** was discussed with the Steering Committee questioning the procedure used and the method used by those with limited computer experience. Summer school grades were submitted online and had a favorable response. The security of posted grades seemed to be a great concern with the points being made that changing the password was definitely an option and the proper computer hardware was needed. A problem of parents calling the professors concerning grades was brought up. The professor cannot discuss the grades without the student signing a consent form, therefore, do you put the parents on "hold" while tracking down this information? It is a problem. The faculty was not consulted before the online grading system was installed.

There were some concerns about comments made by a member of the **Board of Trustees** regarding losing enrolling students due to the diversity issue being advocated on campus. There was also deep concern about the process followed to hire the new Systems Chancellor. It was suggested that Norm Baldwin write a personal letter to Sid McDonald rather than the Senate passing a resolution. The point was made that, during this sensitive Legislative time, objections should be expressed in a low-key manner.

The **Task Force on the Evaluation of Deans and Chairs** resolution has not been formally presented to the Council of Deans at this point. The committee continues to lobby the deans for support.

**Student Affairs Committee** – (*Alvin Winters*) The committee wrote a memorandum stating the reasons they do not support the Beito/Nuckolls **Privatization of the Greek System Proposal**. Those reasons included implementation is impractical considering funding, five drafts of the resolution were received by the committee, legal aspects of lease agreements of the sorority and fraternity properties, and privatization would not correct the Greek system segregation problem. It was also determined that the fraternity that integrated discriminates on the basis of religion. They do not allow non-Christians and to qualify to be a member belief in Jesus Christ must be professed. A letter will be written commending them on integrating, but the Senate will not pass a commendation resolution.

**Planning & Operations** – (*Bill Keel & John Mason*) The SGA has proposed a **Fall Break**. Scheduling a break would be a problem with the starting date of classes along with other difficult issues. The committee would like input concerning this issue. The SGA has proposed beginning final exams on the first Saturday after the end of classes. A working group was formed and they are already unhappy with the schedule. Some students have multiple exams on the same day. The attempts to coordinate a Fall break with the county and city schools would be difficult since the schools change their dates. There are concerns about the financial burden placed on the University if some staff and administration are not required to work during any declared Fall Break. Also, where would the days be added – at the beginning or the end of the semester? A fall break would give faculty and staff an opportunity to catch up on work if just the students are on break. Please pass along any

suggestions concerning this issue to this committee.

**Standing Committees –**

**Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee –** (*Keith Woodbury*) It was voted by this committee 11-10 to forward a recommendation to Bob Wright supporting Domestic Partner Benefits (DPB). The Financial Affairs Committee projected an increase in cost of \$128,000. Others project an approximate quarter million dollars cost for the University, but DPBs would not increase individual insurance premiums. The number applying for benefits would be approximately 20-50. Some suggested qualifications for these benefits would be a long-term relationship, co-ownership of home or vehicle, joint checking account, beneficiary of a will or annuity, etc. To dissolve a domestic partnership would require registering a signed affidavit so stating. The permanent guidelines are not yet in place. There have been opportunities and meetings for those opposing this measure to speak out.

**Legislative Agenda Committee –** (*Margaret Garner*) A Legislative Agenda Breakfast was not held this month. The Higher Education Partnership has made efforts to stop the AEA TV ads. There are efforts on all sides to come to a resolution and encouragement to come to a solution concerning education funding.

Meeting adjourned 5:00 PM