

**FACULTY SENATE MEETING
DECEMBER 9, 2008 – 3:30 pm – 150 SHELBY HALL**

APPROVED MINUTES

ABSENT WITHOUT ALTERNATE: Seth Appiah-Opoku, Lowell Baker, Sheila Black, Martin Evans, Branwen Lichtenstein, Douglas Lightfoot, Seth Panitch, Bruce Trace, Doug Cook, Lonnie Strickland, Akram Temimi, Thad Ulzen, David Arnold, Anqare Haque, Srinath Viswanathan, Deidre Leaver-Dunn, Steven Hobbs, Lee Pike

ABSENT WITH ALTERNATE: Harold Stowell/ , Laurie Bonnici/Dan Albertson, Norm Stein/Steve Emens, Marcia Barrett/Jason Battles

GUESTS: Adam Jones, Tuscaloosa News; Cresandra Smothers, Dialog; Brandon Clark, SGA Vice President for Academic Affairs

Roll call and quorum check by Secretary Jeanette VanderMeer.

The minutes of the November 18, 2008 Faculty Senate meeting were approved with one correction.

Brandon Clark, SGA Vice President for Academic Affairs, SGA Faculty Senate Representative and Textbook Committee Co-Chair, began the meeting with an overview of the proposed **Textbook Guidelines and Procedures** document. The document has the support of UA administrators, the Council of Associate Deans and the Faculty Senate Steering Committee. The purpose of this document is to determine a unified University set of guidelines for faculty members to follow in their textbook adoption process and to codify the methods already in use by faculty members. The University of Alabama taking a pro-active, flagship role regarding the textbook cost reduction issue is part of the vision. The SGA has looked at the procedures of other institutions, a textbook rental program, new requirements and compliance of the Higher Education Act, and “Turn the Page” tactics with both short and long-term goals to strengthen the youth textbook market. The Student Government Association’s vision is to lower the cost of educational resources without sacrificing quality. One senator asked Mr. Clark if they had considered that the very people they were asking for support and assistance were the people who wrote the textbooks. The document states, “Faculty should strive to minimize the costs of textbooks for students while maintaining the quality of education and academic freedom”. Brandon Clark said, “The students are making an investment in their education and want to maintain the integrity and academic freedom of faculty while making every effort to reduce the expense of acquiring an education. In some instances complimentary textbooks are given to faculty by the publisher. In other cases faculty members must purchase a textbook before teaching. In the event there are extra current copies, giving those to the library for student access would be beneficial”. A senator expressed concerns about a “lack of acceptance of books as part of the educational process and a lack of understanding the consequences of the guidelines on publishers in general. One consequence could be a continuing shrinkage in the opportunities for publishing knowledge not just in textbook publishing but in other kinds of books. Current updated textbooks are a necessity in classes where knowledge moves forward very quickly making the two or three semester textbook usage impossible”. Major publishing companies have bought smaller publishing companies resulting in only five major publishers and five major distributors increasing the cost of textbooks. In view of this the SGA is looking at less costly ways for

students to have educational material access. Melondie Carter stated, “Faculty is well represented on the Textbook Committee which meets for the first time on Wednesday, December 10th. It was pointed out the textbook guidelines and procedures document contains suggestions, ideas, and methods to raise awareness to help lower textbook costs and are not required or mandatory. By 2010 according to the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act bundling will no longer be allowed. The price of the textbook will be listed on the online course listing. These will be mandated by federal law. The Textbook Committee will review bundling process used by the Supe Store. Methods suggested to faculty members to confirm the price of adopted books includes web-search, consulting the Supe Store and requesting the price from the publisher or their representative. A senator pointed out that some of the things she is doing to help students such as buying back some of their textbooks and reselling to incoming students would not be allowed under the textbook provision document. The document is just one part of several options being followed by the SGA such as online textbook exchange allowing students to contact and sell books to each other and contacting publishing representatives to discuss the issue. Concern was expressed that the proposed policies would reduce student use of textbooks. It was stated that book use would be determined by the student’s commitment to acquiring an education and lowering the cost would be more incentive for students to purchase textbooks. The document proposed lowering the cost of textbooks by offering various alternatives and not to discontinue using textbooks. The Textbook Committee is a permanent committee and will continue to look at all aspects of the issue. The textbook document was presented as an information item. Since the Textbook Committee had not formally met the document was not presented for a vote but a sense of the Senate was requested. Originally the document was presented to be included in the Faculty Handbook. It was determined that the Handbook was not the appropriate place for such a document. It will be placed on the University’s Academic Affairs web page. Mr. Clark will take the suggestions and input from the Faculty Senate meeting to the Textbook Committee for discussion.

An election was held for one member of the **Merger and Discontinuance Committee** and two members of the **Mediation Committee**. Noel Engebretson, Arts & Sciences, was nominated for the Merger and Discontinuance Committee and was elected by acclamation. Two nominees for the Mediation Committee did not meet qualifications. Karla Carmichael of Education and Janis Edwards of CIS were elected by acclamation.

President’s Report – (*Karen Steckol*) Bylaws from the **Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics** organization were presented for approval. John Mason has been the Faculty Senate representative since COIA was founded. COIA has been instrumental in bringing academic awareness regarding athletes to the forefront. The University of Alabama football team has 100% graduation rate giving them a number one ranking. There are fifty-six COIA members. A motion was made and seconded to approve the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics bylaws. Approval was unanimous.

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

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

Academic Affairs – (*Marcia Barrett & John Vincent*) The issue of **sabbatical** limitations was determined to be unique to the College of Arts & Sciences. The full-time instructor pay situation continues to be discussed and varies from department to department and school to

school making it difficult to gather information. The academic dishonesty policy is on the agenda for the next meeting.

Faculty Life – (*Deidre Leaver-Dunn & Lowell Baker*) The committee is recommending divisional **recognition for faculty achievement** until something more substantial could be in place. There were plans for an Academic Plaza to display recognition items but that is on hold for economic reasons.

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

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

Faculty & Senate Governance – (John Mason & Michael Martone/Marci Daugherty) A questionnaire will be distributed in January requesting faculty members to express interest in any of the nineteen or twenty University campus-wide committees. Everyone was encouraged to express their interest in being a **CUC** member.

Student Affairs – (*Melondie Carter & Carolyn Cassidy*) No report.

Legislative Agenda – (*Margaret Garner*) A **Legislative Breakfast** will be held in January at the Capstone Hotel. A preference of the Faculty Senate was expressed for the third Friday in January. The breakfasts begin at 7:15 AM. It is important to have good attendance and everyone was encouraged to attend. An email will be sent from the Montgomery office for reservations.

Reports from Other Committees

The **Vice President for Research** search has narrowed to three candidates. Campus visits will begin in January and it is assumed that faculty will be included in those visits.

The **Human Relations Council** will meet Wednesday, December 10th.

The **Evaluation of Deans and Chairs** issue which has been taken to the Council of Deans for a vote will be addressed to determine the progress of this issue.

The **Intercollegiate Athletic Committee** was given information about how the SEC and bowl tickets are distributed. The faculty receives five percent of those tickets and “A” Club receives 10%. There are approximately 4,000 faculty and staff members and approximately 1,600 “A” Club members. The opinion was voiced that the percentages should be swapped. The Athletic Department determines those percentages. There was further discussion concerning tickets.

Appreciation was expressed to Brandon Clark for taking his time to address the Faculty Senate.

Everyone was wished a safe holiday.

Meeting adjourned 4:40 PM.

