

FACULTY SENATE

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

February 15, 2005 – 3:30 pm – Ferguson Forum

APPROVED MINUTES

ABSENT WITHOUT ALTERNATE: Wolfgang Bertsch, Priscilla Davis, Daniel Goldmark, Tatiana Tsakiropoulou-Summers, Amilcar Shabazz, Art Allaway, Jerry Weaver, Karen Burgess, Caryl Cooper, Tonyia Tidline, Vivian Wright, Kim Andrus, Will Schreiber, Ken Wright, Mike Parker

GUESTS: Joanna Hutt, Dialog; Marlin Caddell, Crimson White; Saori Hasegawa, Public Affairs Journalism Student; Adam Jones, Tuscaloosa News

Roll call and quorum check by Secretary John Vincent.

The January 18, 2005 Faculty Senate minutes were approved.

President John Mason introduced speaker Gordon Stone, Director of the Higher Education Partnership. Mr. Stone expressed appreciation to Faculty Senate members for their support and importance in the higher education process. There is significant growth money in the State of Alabama's Educational Trust Fund budget this year. The Higher Education Partnership was formed in 1997. For eight years, an educational funding struggle has occurred. Growth was minimal some years, some years there was no growth at all and some years there was proration. Presidents of the higher education institutions of Alabama came together last fall and formed a set of priorities based on four principles. First, to begin any budget recommendation process with at least the amount of money that was appropriated last year; second, unfunded mandates of the past be funded this year; third, whatever percentage amount is given to the compensation pool for K-14 should be the same for the university community; fourth, if there is a bond issue, make certain we have the opportunity to participate in that issue in an equitable manner. The basic number forecast for the 2005-06 budget year is \$550 million dollars in available revenue with \$240 million dollars being carried over from last year. The remaining difference is actual projected growth. "Old" money has already been appropriated and the amounts being considered would be "new" money. For the first time in eight years, the exact budget amount requested by higher education has been appropriated. AEA is requesting a seven percent increase for K-14 teachers and the State Employee Association is requesting an increase. Both organizations are in need of increases and the Legislature will make that decision. The efforts of the HEP will be to insure that those funds do not come out of the appropriation for higher education. Higher Education Day will be Thursday, March 3 in Montgomery beginning at 11:00 AM. This is the most important activity of the year for HEP. Transportation and lunch will be provided. Most of the State of Alabama administration will be in attendance. Higher education should express their appreciation for their support and insure that the HEP voice will continue to be heard. There is a supplemental budget request to go back to last year and fund those mandated areas that did not receive full funding and a request that the budget return to 2/3 – 1/3 for education. Everyone was encouraged to join the HEP and membership details were explained. The mission of the HEP is to communicate the importance of higher education and bettering the lives of the people of Alabama. The question was asked about the monies that could be moved from the Education Trust Fund to the General Fund. There are earmarked tax

dollars that are designated for a particular fund. Once they are in that particular fund the Legislature has more flexibility in determining how those dollars are spent. There are some activities paid for out of the General Fund last year that have been moved to the Education Trust Fund this year. There has been a request for immunizations to be paid for by the Education Trust Fund. This brings up the question of what is the definition of education. The AEA wanted to redefine K-12 and higher education a few years ago with the HEP winning the Supreme Court case. The hope was expressed that the definition of education would not be softened. The HEP will not support diversion. There has not been a projection for the 2007 budget. The question was asked concerning the promise made last year by the Chair of Education Finance and Accountability in the House of Representatives that this would be the year for higher education due to concessions made last year. It is the intention of higher education to continue to remind them of that statement. It is felt that progress has been made this year toward that commitment. There are approximately 150,000 votes on campuses in the State of Alabama. With those influencing others the amount of votes could be 450,000. The goal is to continue to advocate for higher education.

Legislative Agenda – *(Margaret Garner)* Transportation to Higher Ed Day events will be provided with reservations to be made through Carolyn Benton cbenton@uasystem.ua.edu. The buses will depart at 7:00 AM. There will be a pre-rally with information being provided concerning talking points for speaking with the Legislators. Last year there was a meeting in a reserved area to speak with the Legislators and will be provided again this year. A job fair is part of the activities for the participating students. The number of members in the HEP is very important. This illustrates the strength and interest of higher education. Students can contact the SGA office or contact Carolyn Benton for reservations. There are two pacts – the Higher Education Partnership and a University System-wide pact. Details of membership requirements were discussed. The Legislative Breakfast will be held Friday, February 18, 2005 at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel at 7:00 AM. The speaker will be Dr. Mack Portera addressing the subjects of a unified budget request and a Legislative update.

The University will conduct a **Plus/Minus grading system** faculty-wide vote in three to four weeks. The draft of the ballot contains two parts. Item one will be "I wish to continue the current plus/minus grading system" or "I wish to eliminate plus/minus grading". Item two will have three options if the vote is to continue the plus/minus grading system. Option one would continue the system as it is, option two would record the plus/minus grades on a student's transcript but would not impact the student's GPA and option three would only record "plus" grades and give an additional .5 quality point for each "plus". There could possibly be some changes in the ballot before being sent to the faculty. Details will be discussed with the Provost in the meeting with the Steering Committee on Thursday.

The nominations for **Faculty Senate offices** are: Mathew Winston for President, John Vincent for Vice President and Karen Steckol for Secretary. Nominations will be taken from the floor and the election will be in March. Anyone being nominated should be contacted to make certain they would be willing to serve. The current nominations for **Ombudsperson** to replace Philip Johnson, whose term expires on August 15, 2005, are Walter Robbins of C&BA and Garry Warren of Engineering. The Senate By-law states "that Ombudspersons shall be elected by the faculty in conjunction with Faculty Senate elections every year". It will be a faculty-wide vote.

Everyone was encouraged to participate in the faculty-wide "**Faculty Feedback on Deans**" survey and to encourage their colleagues to participate if they have not done so.

Vice President's Report – (*Mathew Winston*) The Faculty Senate requested that a copy of all **CUC committee reports** be sent to the Faculty Senate office to be kept on file. Nancy Bohanon of the President's office will be forwarding those reports. The Faculty Senate through a resolution recommended the formation of an Environmental Protection Committee. This is in progress with the CUC proposing seven faculty and seven other members on this committee. There will be a new CUC chair elected in the spring facilitating a smooth transition. Mathew Winston, Vice President of the Faculty Senate, attended the meeting of the **Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics**. The Faculty Senate requested that Mathew acquire more feedback concerning the "Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics: Principles, Rules, and Best Practices" document. Feedback was received from the Academics and Athletics committee, President of the Faculty Senate, John Mason, Faculty Senate Academic Affairs committee, Faculty Senate Steering Committee, Intercollegiate Athletics committee and Mathew met with individuals on the Academics and Athletics committee, Director of Undergraduate Admissions Jason Sanders and Jon Dever, Director of Academic Services of Intercollegiate Athletics. Directed by this feedback, three amendments to the document will be proposed. The Coalition will vote on all submitted amendments and, if passed, will be incorporated into the document for a final vote. The three amendments are for the vote proper to be on the actual specific proposals and the introduction of the document, concern about need-based athletic scholarships and problems restricting sports to non-divided seasons. There would be particular problems with outdoor sports. The Director of the NCAA, Myles Brand, has posted on the NCAA website a general endorsement of the document. In the document the statement regarding need-based athletic scholarships was not proposed as a rule or preferred practice. It is a philosophical statement. In the 21-page document there are only three NCAA rule proposals.

Secretary's Report – (*John Vincent*) No report.

Academic Affairs – (*Marcia Barrett & John Vincent*) This committee will meet in two weeks regarding the changes in **Appendix H**. Apparently there has been an agreement to include copyright ownership for materials developed by graduate students.

Faculty Life – (*Wythe Holt & Nick Stinnett*) This committee is currently working in conjunction with the Benefits Committee to sponsor a resolution requesting supplemented **child-care** for faculty and staff.

Financial Affairs – (*Wolfgang Bertsch & Karen Steckol*) No report.

Karen Steckol reported the Task Force for **graduate assistant medical benefits** has finished their work. There are 700 graduate assistants without medical benefits. The committee's recommendation to the President will be to add this group to the student's Viva coverage with the University covering all or as much as possible of the \$600,000 premium. There would be a lifetime medical maximum coverage of \$250,000 and a prescription limit of \$500 a year. This coverage would be for the graduate student only with the option of buying coverage for additional family members. This would be a benefit that could attract additional graduate students to the University. The question was asked if the graduate student could participate in Bamaflex. Karen will report back on that question.

Research & Service – (*Clark Midkiff & Tatiana Tsakiropoulou-Summers*) This committee met with Dr. Marianne Woods, Associate Vice President for Research, at the request of several faculty members. Treatment of animals and export violations were among items discussed. The committee discussed ways to establish more permanent ties with the Office of Vice President for Research. In the past, various Faculty Senate offices met regularly

with the administration.

Faculty & Senate Governance – (*Robert Moore & Jerry Weaver*) - A report on elections is given above.

Student Affairs – (*Caryl Cooper & Priscilla Davis*) No report.

Legislative Agenda – (*Margaret Garner*) Reminded everyone of the Legislative Breakfast on Friday and Higher Education Day on March 3 in Montgomery and to be considerate of students wishing to participate.

Meeting adjourned 4:50 PM