

**FACULTY SENATE MEETING  
AUGUST 21, 2007 – 150 SHELBY HALL – 3:30 PM**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**ABSENT WITH ALTERNATE:** Ed Stephenson/Pieter Visscher; John Mason/Mike Dugan

**ABSENT WITHOUT ALTERNATE:** Douglas Lightfoot, Giles D’Sousa, Karen Burgess, Kagendo Mutua, David Arnold, Viola Acoff, Norm Stein

**GUESTS:** Susan Mitchell, College of Nursing; Adam Jones, Tuscaloosa News; Cresandra Smothers, Dialog

Roll call and quorum check by Faculty Senate Secretary Clark Midkiff.

The minutes from the April 17, 2007 Faculty Senate meeting were approved.

In the absence of Faculty Senate President John Vincent, Vice President Karen Steckol called the meeting to order.

The University of Alabama President, Dr. Robert Witt, addressed the Faculty Senate. Dr. Witt began his remarks referring to the University’s **“Vision for the Future”**. This vision consists of three elements. The first element is to be the institution of choice of the **“best and brightest” students**. The second element is to be a **student-centered research university**. The third element is to be an academic community united and committed to **servicing the citizens** of the State of Alabama. In each of the last three years, UA has enrolled the largest and best qualified freshman class in the history of the university. Last fall, 4,378 quality freshmen enrolled at the university ranking UA in the top one percent of all the public universities in the country in terms of National Merit Scholars. UA ranked in the top two percent in all public (650) and private (2500) universities. Last fall the freshmen class average ACT score placed them in the top quarter nationally. Out of 4,378, 749 had high school GPA’s of 4.0 or higher. Although the statistics are not in for fall 2007, the rankings should remain in these high brackets. The fall 2007 freshmen class will number about 4,500. As the goal of 28,000 students nears, the freshmen enrollment will decrease to some degree. Total enrollment is 25,000 plus. UA is the dominant institution in growth in the state. Seven institutions in Alabama had decreased enrollment. Seven institutions in Alabama had increased enrollment. The average institutional growth in Alabama last year was 3,200. UA accounted for 2,000 plus of that enrollment increase. The goal of UA in the last few years has been to move the level of faculty and staff **salary structure** to be fully competitive in attracting and retaining quality faculty and staff. From the fall of 2003 to the fall of 2006, extraordinary progress has been made in advancing that level. Over the last four years the merit raise pool for faculty has been right at 35%. The merit raise pool for staff over the same time period has been 32%. In the fall of 2003, all of academic ranks were significantly below the SUG 50<sup>th</sup> percentile. Full professors were about \$8700 on average below, associate professors about \$4500 below, and assistant professors about \$7500 below. In three years, full professors have increased to \$4,000 plus above the SUG percentile. The future goal is the 75 percentile of the Southern University Group. The University’s

**research environment** will see increases in grants and contracts again this year. In the coming year's operating budget, the figure for new faculty hires will be three million dollars. UA now provides a tuition scholarship for out-of-state GRA's on grants and contracts providing the difference between in-state and out-of-state helping UA to remain competitive. Salary increases and health insurance are additional benefits for **Graduate Students**. Some changes regarding **indirect cost return** are being made. An additional ten percent where the grant or contract has flowed through a center will remain at the center to strengthen their resources. A **cluster hire** with a budget of \$500,000 will be made this year. The Provost working with the Deans will select an initial area to strengthen research capacity through these faculty hires. Steven Black has been hired for the **Center for Ethics and Responsibility** to head up efforts to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Alabama. One project will be to address the problem of fifty percent of children in kindergarten not being prepared to function on grade level. By the time this group of children enter the third grade, they are a full grade behind. The prognosis for this group dropping out of school by high school increases significantly. About 300 at risk pre-kindergarten children are in this project. The goal is to have these children prepared to function at grade level by the time they reach kindergarten. The closing times for the bars on **the Strip** are an issue. The goal is to close the bars at an earlier time on Friday nights. The University now has four full-time **housing inspectors** as part of the Crimson Choice program. Private rental property owners can voluntarily apply for inspections. Information about those properties is passed on to the parents of students after the properties pass inspection. The new Residence Halls opened on schedule. The 960 bed facility of Ridgecrest II will open in the fall of 2009. It will have an underground parking deck with 1,000 parking spaces. The **bus system** is in the process of making adjustments in creating double lanes and fine tuning some of the bus stops and routes. The renovation and **maintenance of existing buildings** includes Lloyd Hall and other projects. The construction of **Shelby II** will begin this fall. The **Capital Campaign** goal is \$500 million by June of 2009. The \$400 million dollar mark in cash and pledges was passed this July. Questions from senators included requesting more information about cluster hires, national rankings, college lending-kick backs that have been in the news, raises for adjunct faculty, recruitment of minority students, scholarships for community college graduates and food services on campus.

**Legislative Agenda** – (*Margaret Garner*) The Higher Education Partnership leadership retreat for all fourteen colleges across the state was held recently. Over one hundred students attended with nine from The University of Alabama. **Higher Ed Day** in Montgomery will be March 6, 2008. Faculty consideration was urged for those students wishing to participate in this event. Through the Student Health Center seven initiatives in **health and well-being** are being developed. The alcohol-drug survey was completed by 97.7% of UA's freshmen class. There are two electronic modules for e-learning courses available through MyBama.

**President's Report** – (*Karen Steckol for John Vincent*) The Provost is requesting lenience with students **late for class** at the beginning of the semester due to adjustments to the new transit system. Students should receive a similar memo regarding patience with faculty. The SGA will continue to address the issue of textbook prices. The **Faculty Terminal Degree** report was received from the Office of Institutional Research listing the number of faculty obtaining degrees from institutions. The University of Alabama has 74 faculty members (7 ½ %) with Ph.D.s from The University of Alabama, UAB 27; Florida State 25; Georgia 21; LSU 19; Chapel Hill 17;

Ohio State 17 and Texas A&M 11. The **United Way Steering Committee** for UA has been formed with Faculty Senate President, John Vincent, a committee member. The **archeological excavations** requested by the Faculty Senate have been completed. The foundations of Washington and Jefferson Hall have been identified and will not be disturbed by future construction on Capstone Drive. Faculty Senate Vice President Karen Steckol will participate in **Convocation** in the absence of John Vincent. The **Honors Council** has requested Faculty Senate President John Vincent speak at the Honors Council induction ceremony on September 13. The new interim Vice Presidents for Research and Student Affairs will meet with the Faculty Senate Steering Committee in September and October. There has been no official word on the composition of **search committees** for three vacant vice president positions.

**Academic Affairs** – (*Marcia Barrett & Rona Donahoe*) The committee will meet on September 4 at 3:30 PM in 104 Bevill Building.

**Financial Affairs** – (*David Arnold & Jeanette Vandermeer*) A meeting has been scheduled with Dr. Lynda Gilbert, Vice Chancellor for Financial Affairs, on Tuesday, August 28. A date to present the **university budget** to the Faculty Senate will be set during that meeting. The Faculty Senate Financial Affairs committee will meet on September 4 in 209 Bruno Library at 3:30 PM. An email will be sent to committee members to remind them of the meeting.

**Faculty Senate Governance** – (*John Mason & Roy Maize*) The names for the “Faculty Participation in the Selection of Deans and Department Chairpersons and in the Evaluation of Academic Programs Committee” will be forwarded for approval following some further checking by this committee.

**Student Affairs** – (*Carolyn Cassidy & Melondie Carter*) An email will be sent to committee members to discuss time and location of their meeting.

**Announcement** – Please pass along the information concerning the adjustments of the new transit system to colleagues.

It was announced that the services offered by the University Health System is a walk-in health service offered by this system and is a wonderful advantage for the faculty.

Meeting adjourned 4:25 PM