

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

SEPTEMBER 18, 2001 - FERGUSON FORUM - 3:30 pm

(Corrected minutes)

ROLL CALL AND QUORUM DECLARED.

ABSENT: Bill Chaplin, Dexter Gordon, Jerry Rosiek, Peg Lyons, Mitch Shelton

GUESTS: Dr. Andrew Sorensen, President of The University of Alabama; Nancy Barrett, Provost; Sybil Todd, Vice President of Student Affairs; Bob Wright, Vice President of Financial Affairs; Jeff McNeil, Director of Advancement; Samory Pruitt, Dr. Sorensen's assistant, Joanna Hutt of Dialog and other media members.

A motion was made to suspend the rules to allow Dr. Sorensen to speak to the Faculty Senate. Dr. Sorensen introduced his executive staff, consisting of his assistant and the four Vice Presidents. The Athletic Director is also part of his staff but was not present. Dr. Sorensen commended the faculty for their efforts toward The University of Alabama being listed in the U.S. News and World Report's Top Fifty public institutions in the United States, indicating that this is a direct result of faculty accomplishments. The survey is conducted by sending questionnaires to the Presidents and Provosts of 300 research universities in the United States and asking them to rank institutions according to a five-point scale. Of the twelve institutions in the Southeastern Conference only three saw increases over last year. Vanderbilt had a 2.5% increase, Arkansas had 4% increase and The University of Alabama had 15.4% increase in scores. The Chronicle of Higher Education published a listing of National Merit freshmen in the United States last fall. Michigan with 45,000 students had 48 Merit Scholars, University of Virginia had 45, Wisconsin of Madison had 44 and The University of Alabama with 19,300 enrollment had 58. The University of Alabama is dealing with proration and Dr. Sorensen related to the Senate that Gov. Siegelman had given his personal assurance that there would not be additional proration in the Fall. The President requested that the faculty make a top priority of supporting all efforts in the Legislature for increased funding and salaries. Salary comparisons were presented to the Board of Trustees at their recent meeting. He also stressed that other sources of revenue should be found. Dr. Sorensen reviewed the events since the September 11th attack on our country including prayer vigils at Denny Chimes, churches of all faiths, student organizations and other locations in our city. There are well being and safety concerns among the international students from one hundred nations represented on our campus. The University community has come together to focus on transcending all barriers.

Dr. Sybil Todd was asked to give an update on the progress of the **integration of the Greek system**. She stated that they were saddened that integration did not happen during fall rush. She stated that change is difficult and that she was glad to see the statement expressed by the Faculty Senate that most students are not racist although there are racists among students and faculty. She expressed that the goals of the Faculty Senate and her office are the same but the timelines are different. Some sororities and fraternities expressed that a larger minority pool is needed. Student Affairs will continue to work toward the integration of the Greek system.

The August 28th minutes, previously posted on the Faculty Senate website, were approved by voice vote.

Action Items: The **Quality Council** appointments of Mary Alice Fields, Helga Visscher, Ken Wright and Senate Liaison Laura Pedersen was ratified by the Faculty Senate.

The [resolution composed by Bing Blewitt commending Professor Pat Hermann](#) for his efforts for increased racial diversity in the Greek System during the past fifteen years was brought forward from the Steering Committee. Those opposing the resolution quoted Pat Hermann in the August 28th article in The Tuscaloosa News which stated that David Washington "sold out" his race. According to the opposition, Pat Hermann expressed no remorse for making that statement and they considered it character assassination and a personal attack. There was concern expressed for a professor making these type comments about a student. The opinion was expressed that this resolution is ill timed following closely behind the publishing of the article in the Tuscaloosa News. There were expressions of praise and appreciation for the contributions of Pat Hermann. Pat Hermann was present, and a motion was made, seconded and approved to give Pat Hermann an opportunity to address the Senate and to respond to the comments that were made. Hermann stated that his correct statement was that Washington "sold out" his organization, the NAACP, and the black students on this campus. His interpretation is that character assassination is an attack on a person's character and his statement was an attack on his actions. He expressed resentment for the slander addressed against him but is proud that his abrasiveness has brought attention to the integration issue. There was a call to question and a request for a roll call vote. The request for a roll call vote was defeated by a vote of 7 yes 26 nay. The resolution commending Pat Hermann passed by a show-of-hands vote with 27 yes, 8 no and 5 abstentions.

Senate Operations - (Harry Price & Steve Miller) The **Mediation and Grievance Committee** met with the Provost and Ron Rogers. It was determined that the direction the document takes on the issue of attorney involvement in the mediation and grievance process is not desired by administration. This document will be returned to the committee for further study and revision.

The issue of **Student Evaluations** brought by SGA officers to the Faculty Senate Steering Committee was discussed. SGA has had this on the table for four years. They request that teacher evaluations be posted on a web page for student access. Primary concerns for the faculty are privacy issues, legality, evaluations becoming part of personnel files, possibly students selecting courses that are easier based on those evaluations and students having predisposed opinion of the course before ever attending a class. Students feel that the evaluations provide a much more valid and reliable student opinion than what is circulated among students. They also feel that this is an instrument of faculty accountability and will help them determine which course would be best for them to take. The University of Georgia, University of Florida and University of Michigan and other institutions has this information available to students. The SGA also makes the case that this information should be available to them under the Alabama Open Record Act. According to Norm Baldwin, a local judge expressed his opinion that since the University asks students for an evaluation, that makes the information public. One option would be to discontinue student evaluations. The point was made that public information does not mean it has to be posted on the web. The Academic Affairs Committee is unanimously opposed to the posting based on the academic objection that some students are looking for easy courses and teachers and if a teacher receives a bad ranking the student would go into the course with a preconceived negative idea. One senator stated that the faculty was unnecessarily fearful of this posting. Another stated that since this becomes part of the faculty's personnel file, it would affect salary, tenure, promotion and career. The SGA plans to poll the students for their preference. The University does not require the students fill out an evaluation form. It was felt that this would lead to sacrificing academics and turn into a popularity contest. The student could also turn in a bad evaluation as a personal ax to grind and that the

gender of the teacher affected the evaluation. It was suggested that the evaluation form and method should be improved. A motion was made and seconded to eliminate grade distribution information on the student evaluation posting if that posting is granted. The motion passed with 5 abstentions. The Steering Committee proposed that the senators relay all the information pertaining to student evaluation posting to their departments and notify them that a faculty poll will be taken in two weeks to get a sense of faculty opinion. Composition of the survey instrument will be the responsibility of officers of the Faculty Senate lead by Norm Baldwin. The Senate approved taking this survey with one opposed and one abstention.

The **outcome of fall rush** was disappointing with the rejection of an African American application. The sense of the Senate is it should not be reactionary at this time. The continued focus should be on institutional barriers such as segregated rush, the blackball system, no acceptance of an application from someone that rushed the year before and did not received a bid and no acceptance of juniors. Progress will be monitored and there will be more focus on hiring and retention of minority faculty. The focus of the Faculty Senate will continue on the policies, practices and structures that prevent the integration of the Greek System. The Senate was encouraged to look into the status of the Knight case that addresses the issue of faculty integration.

The Faculty Senate end of the year money will be spent on the purchase of a **new computer and a new laser printer** for the Faculty Senate office. This new equipment should be in use and provide the upgrade needed for the next five years.

Concern for the health, safety and welfare for the **Muslim and Arabic students and faculty** following the September 11 attack was expressed. It was suggested to have a resolution to that effect. Norman suggested that he e-mail Dr. Sorensen requesting that he make a statement expressing that sentiment. This motion passed.

Vice President's Report - (Steve Miller) The Faculty Senate was urged to support Dr. Sorensen in his pursuit of more funding for The University of Alabama and that they attend the Legislative Agenda breakfasts so they will be more informed about the strategies and plans to accomplish this goal.

Secretary's Report - (Keith Woodbury) No report.

Academic Affairs Committee Report - (Don DeSmet & Beth Macauley) It was suggested that when class rolls are received it would be very helpful to have student photos to assist the teacher with identification of the student.

Faculty Life Committee - (Jerry Rosiek & Jimmy Williams) No report.

Financial Affairs Committee - (Terry Royed & Keith Woodbury) They are working on the Intellectual Property Rights proposal and health insurance for graduate students. The committee felt it was too early to revisit joining the Worker's Rights Consortium rather than membership in the FLA and there was no interest in the issue of Test Services and other units passing on expenses to the academic side of the University.

Planning and Operations Committee - (Bill Keel & John Mason) The committee is studying the proposal of the SGA to have a fall break and other academic calendar changes.

Research & Service Committee - (Bing Blewitt) No report.

Student Affairs Committee - (Dexter Gordon & Alvin Winters) No report.

Senate Operations Committee - *(Steve Miller & Harry Price)* No report.

University Standing Committees

Legislative Agenda Committee - *(Margaret Garner)* The Faculty Senate will be a sponsor of seminars on constitutional reform to be conducted next spring. Higher Education Day will tentatively be February 19, 2002, and everyone was urged to attend the Legislative Breakfast meetings.

The **Strategic Initiative** committee reports that they met with Dr. Charles Nash and the deadline has been extended to February, 2002 and the committee will meet again soon. The report has been resubmitted to the deans. Everyone was urged to review this initiative and relay anything that needs to be addressed to Margaret Garner.

The **System Committee report** given by Bob Sigler stated that procedures and issues were discussed. Appropriate representatives from each campus have been selected. Bob stated very strongly that speed in developing the system must not come by reducing resources to the academic portion of the university community.

An objection to the time taken by special speakers was expressed and it was suggested that a special session be called on the fourth Tuesday for special speakers.

New Business - A [resolution](#) submitted by Jim Otteson and written by William Nuckols and David Beito concerning privatizing the Greek System was brought forward. Since there was not a quorum, a motion was made and passed to refer the resolution to the Student Affairs Committee. It was suggested a report be given next week and that a special session be called to consider the resolution, but this action was not taken..

Meeting adjourned 5:45 PM

RESOLUTION Commending Professor Pat Hermann

Whereas, Professor Pat Hermann has been a leading figure in the struggle for increased racial diversity in the Greek system, and

Whereas, his efforts have led to an increased campus awareness and interest in solving these difficult problems.

Be it resolved, the Faculty Senate would like to recognize the tireless efforts of Professor John "Pat" Hermann and express our sincere appreciation.

A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR PRIVATIZATION OF THE GREEK SYSTEM AND THE MEANS TO ACCOMPLISH THIS END

Whereas the Greek system at the University of Alabama regularly discriminates on the basis of class, family background, and race, and

Whereas it is improper to require the taxpayers of Alabama to subsidize voluntary organizations which discriminate on the basis of class, family background, and race at a public university,

Therefore be it resolved that the Faculty Senate calls for the University of Alabama to

end all subsidies to the Greek system and thus privatize these organizations. We call on the President, the Administration, and the Board of Trustees, to begin this privatization process immediately.

MEANS TO ACCOMPLISH PRIVATIZATION.

Be it resolved that the University of Alabama will negotiate privatization agreements with each fraternity and sorority by the end of the 2003 academic year. Each agreement will be based on one or both of the following guidelines:

The University of Alabama will purchase fraternity and sorority buildings at current market value. Once purchased, these buildings would be used for either academic or administrative purposes, or

The University of Alabama will sell at current market value the land now occupied by each sorority and fraternity building. All proceeds from these land sales will be used to improve the academic programs at the University of Alabama.

Be it resolved that the Administration and Board of Trustees will take steps during this negotiation process to raise rents currently paid by Greek houses on University land to reflect market value.