

FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 16, 2001 - 3:30 pm - 309 FERGUSON

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Present: Pat Bauch, Norm Baldwin, Steven MacCall, Don DeSmet, Bill Keel, Bob Sigler, Rob Ingram, Marcia Barrett, Bing Blewitt, Dexter Wood, Keith Woodbury, Wythe Holt

Absent:

Guest: Joanna Hutt, Dialogue

Minutes from last Steering Committee were approved with a correction of the date of the meeting and minor corrections.

President's Report - (Pat Bauch) A letter from Dr. Sorensen concerning the University's endorsement of the **Fair Labor Association**, as opposed to the **Worker Rights Consortium**, expressed his view that after further research both organizations have their limitations. Dr. Sorensen's observation is that a proper monitoring program holds greater promise for being established by the Fair Labor Association and the present course of action of the University is adequate for now.

The **membership drive for HEP** has been extended through January hopefully to increase membership. A report from Gordon Stone giving further information is forthcoming. The enrollment form is on the Faculty Senate web page. It is also under Government Relations.

The **anti-racism workshop** participants included twenty professors, four graduate students, five administrators, and three staff members with many positive responses concerning the workshop. At this time, thirty-four are registered for the February 1-3 workshop.

Pat encouraged everyone to attend the "**State of the Graduate School**" address to be given by Ron Rogers on Wednesday, January 17 at 1:30 PM in 310 Bidgood.

Some **committee reports** have not been forwarded to Steven to post on the web. All committee chairs were prompted to send those reports.

Research & Service - (Harry Blewitt & OPEN) This committee is dealing with a **clerical staff member** requesting a letter from the Faculty Senate recommending that the University consider having a **merit raise policy** in place for this level employee. There is some confusion concerning the direction this type complaint should follow. After discussion and suggestions, Bing will request information about the specific merit raise policies that are presently in place. The complaint also concerns the quality of evaluations. If an issue is determined, the Research and Service committee will write a letter and submit it to the Steering Committee for approval.

Pat received a letter from Provost Nancy Barrett requesting a review of the **UA System Strategic Planning Initiatives** document with a response/comments to her by January 31. One concern regarding this document is that it was done with very little faculty input. Margaret Garner was the only University of Alabama representative in the group. Several faculty members represented UAB on this committee. During the process, they were told not to discuss these issues. Suddenly, the document came out with the Board of Trustees approval. Concerns regarding the academic recommendations are strong. The main thrust of the document is the three UA campuses collaborating on courses being offered. Joint programs and the level of the course rankings seem to take away the competitive edge of the institutions. Another possibility could be the elimination of teaching positions and the uncertainty of the end result and/or direction that this would take The University of Alabama. The suggestion was made to have an emergency meeting as soon as possible and invite Chancellor Meredith to meet with the Steering Committee. Another possibility would be to appoint an ad hoc committee. There is an urgency to slow this implementation down to allow involvement by the Faculty Senate. Pat will contact the Chancellor tomorrow to set up a meeting.

Vice President's Report - (Norm Baldwin) The **Evaluation of Deans and Department Chairs** committee will meet on Thursday. A report will be given at the next Steering Committee meeting.

Academic Affairs - (Don DeSmet & Carmen Taylor) The Provost requested Hank Lazer review all undergraduate policies. Recommendations were made by e-mail to Hank Lazer in October from the Academic Affairs committee regarding a new policy on **Academic Warning and Suspension to Replace Suspension/Probation Policy**. This will be presented at the next Faculty Senate meeting. The Academic Affairs committee did not bring these recommendations before the Steering Committee or the Senate for review and approval. A new policy is now in place and will be implemented this fall. Don will call Hank Lazer and check on attending committee meetings. The Steering Committee discussed these changes and the concern that the Deans have the power to eliminate suspensions for any reason. There are no standards in place to prevent favoritism or other factors involved in a suspension. A draft motion to abolish the "**forgiveness**" policy is under discussion by this committee. It was suggested that Provost Barrett be reminded that there should be an appointed member of the faculty on every Task Force. The by-laws set aside the fourth Tuesday for extra meetings for the Faculty Senate/Steering Committee, if needed.

The **Information Technology Committee** has requested that Don and his Academic Affairs Committee set up a meeting of this committee and interested Faculty Senate members and others to discuss the standard level of computer support across-the-board support by the faculty/staff across the campus. Possibly an e-mail will be sent with information about the meeting welcoming comments. Pat reiterated that any motions/proposals come through the Steering Committee.

Faculty Life - (*Wythe Holt & Rob Ingram*) The only comment concerning the **Mediation Document** concerned the compensation for an attorney. The members of the Tribunal do not receive compensation. The second consideration is compensation for an attorney for the faculty member. The administrator has the paid attorney and the faculty member has to pay their attorney's fees. Another concern is the number of three members on the Tribunal rather than five. The document was sent to the Provost with the Provost expressing only three objections. Those have been addressed and Wythe will prepare the Mediation Document with the revisions/discussion of concerns and present it at the next Faculty Senate meeting. It was suggested that this is an action item and it should be placed first on the agenda. Steven will post the document on the web.

The **ADA lawsuit** has been discussed with no decision or recommendation being made at this time. The progress on **mentoring new faculty** will be discussed with the Provost and a report will be made at the next meeting. This committee acknowledged the honor given Astronomer, Bill Keel.

Financial Affairs - (*Keith Woodbury & Deborah Martin*) This committee deeply regrets the resignation of Deborah Martin as co-chair of this committee. She will be moving to Kentucky. The **travel reimbursement policies** are being reviewed. Issues that this committee will be considering are the Quest/Distance Education issue, distance courses, location, finances, etc. and research contracts and expenses that are outside the contract.

Planning & Operations - (*Marcia Barrett & Bill Keel*) This committee would like Sandy Woodley to come and meet with the Steering Committee and will make efforts to have a link on the Faculty Senate web site.

Student Affairs - (*Dexter Gordon & Rob Ingram*) This committee has met with Dr. Sorensen and will have a report in the near future.

Senate Operations - (*Norm Baldwin & Jim Taylor*) The Senate Operations committee will present two resolutions - one to formally **create the Faculty Life Committee** and the other resolution to move the **Faculty Senate meeting dates** in January to a week later. Planning and Operations has to approve the calendar change. Any change to the by-laws must be submitted at one meeting and voted on at the next. These will be presented at the next Faculty Senate meeting and will be posted on the web. Notices have been sent to several Senators regarding absences with the absences for the first meeting last year being excused due to the lateness of notification of new Senators.

Pat requested an Executive Committee Meeting with date and time to be set.

Meeting adjourned 5:50 PM