

**FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
JANUARY 12, 2010 – ROOM 2436 SCIENCE & ENGINEERING BUILDING – 3:30 PM**

APPROVED MINUTES

ATTENDING: Karen Steckol, Lowell Baker, Melondie Carter, Carolyn Cassady, Marci Daugherty, Rona Donahoe, Margaret Garner, Jim Hall, Steven Hobbs, Deidre Leaver-Dunn, Michael Martone, Katrina Ramonell, Ed Stephenson, Harold Stowell, John Vincent, Ray White

ABSENT: Marcia Barrett, Clark Midkiff, Jeanette VanderMeer

GUESTS: Cresandra Smothers, Dialog; Dr. Judy Bonner, Provost; Dr. Lynda Gilbert, Vice President for Financial Affairs; Reba Essary, Associate Vice President for Finance.

Roll call and quorum check.

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of December 1, 2009 were approved.

The meeting began with a presentation of **The University of Alabama's budget for 2010-11** and information about last year's budget. In less than two years The University of Alabama has lost \$57.4 million dollars in state appropriations. The appropriation of two million dollars for new faculty hiring has been added to the one million dollars set aside last year. PEEHIP (Health Care Program) and TRS (The Employment Retirement System of Alabama) have required an additional \$3.2 million dollars due to increased costs. Utilities were increased \$1.2 million dollars, \$800,000 for the Library and \$500,000 for the 348-RIDE program. The 348-RIDE has been a tremendous success with outsourcing as the only pliable solution to the great demand for this service. Two million dollars have been allocated for communication and internet upgrades. Four million dollars have been allocated for new debt service. The 2009 operating revenue was \$433 million dollars and 2010 is \$494 million dollars. Non-operating revenue decreased one million dollars due to the loss of state appropriations. The total revenue figure is \$731 million dollars, operating expenses \$683 million dollars bringing the total asset figure to \$47.6 million dollars. The tuition portion of the budget increased from 35% to 38%. The most dramatic financial shift should be toward self-reliance on the part of the University with rising health care costs as the crucial issue. Increased utilization of doctor visits and health care benefits is to be expected with the growth of the University. The \$11 ½ million dollar budget cut was covered by tuition revenue not totally allocated leaving available funds to compensate for this reduction. Infrastructure and operation improvements will not be done due to this budget cut. The goal of the University is to continue operating at the highest level possible in light of appropriation reductions. The University of Virginia is self-supporting and reviewing their plan could give the University some unforeseen advantages.

Support for higher education is not at the level it should be given the employment and industry brought in by those institutions. The question was asked concerning methods to improve general public perception of the need for higher education and how to reach our Legislators with the message of improving higher education funding. Discussion included ways to compensate for the increase in health care costs, eliminating wellness programs, short-term investments, market value loss, financial soft costs and the economic recession affecting everyone. Tuition is becoming increasingly more important in the University's overall budget. The bond market is very positive for UA due to its solid financial position.

Construction projects on campus are moving forward; Science & Engineering building, Foster Auditorium renovation, Bryant-Denny stadium expansion, School of Nursing building, Coleman Coliseum renovation, Softball facility renovation, new fraternity house, University Boulevard improvements, Lloyd Hall renovation, parking expansion and bike path improvements. Purchase of the Bryce property by the University is funded by oil, coal and gas revenues. The land was given to the University by the Federal Government for campus improvement.

Appreciation was expressed for the administration's leadership and faculty's hard work during these economic hard times resulting in the solid situation of The University of Alabama.

President's Report – (*Karen Steckol*) President Steckol will be meeting with the Provost on January 21st. A University of South Carolina doctoral student has requested permission to send a **survey** to the Faculty Senate members. The Steering Committee approved. Karen expressed appreciation for the visits, notes and flowers during her illness.

Academic Affairs – (*Marcia Barrett & John Vincent*) No report.

Faculty Life – (*Deidre Leaver-Dunn & Lowell Baker*) No report.

Financial Affairs – (*Katrina Ramonell & Steven Hobbs*) The UA budget presentation was their report.

Information Technology – (*Jim Hall & Ray White*) **IT grievances** to be reported in a future meeting with John McGowan includes telephone outages, problems with building reservation programs, computer viruses and infections and extreme slowness of technology problem notification.

Research & Service – (*Ed Stephenson & Harold Stowell*) The Faculty Senate will vote on the **Research Misconduct Policy** presented at the Faculty Senate meeting on December 8, 2009. This vote will take place at the next meeting of the Faculty Senate on January 19, 2010. The approved changes were replacing Appendix L with the revised document and formatting changes; addition of the policy stating “Should the position of the University Research Compliance Officer be vacant at the time of an allegation, an acting RSIO shall be appointed. Neither the Vice President for Research nor the Provost may serve as RSIO”.

Faculty & Senate Governance – (*Michael Martone & Marci Daugherty*) No report.

Student Affairs – (*Melondie Carter & Carolyn Cassady*) Barnes & Noble through student book stores have entered the **textbook rental program**. The University book store is not associated with Barnes & Noble. UAB, UAH and other institutions are associated with Barnes & Noble. Discussion included the advantages and disadvantages of hard copy texts and electronic versions.

Legislative Agenda – (*Margaret Garner*) Dates for Legislative Breakfasts have not been set. **Higher Education Day** in Montgomery, Alabama will be March 4th. Everyone was encouraged to join the Higher Education Pact and to make a major effort to attend Higher Education Day. Buses will be available for transportation. The HEP is the only voice available to speak for the needs of higher education. The membership fee (\$12.00 per year) is very reasonable.

New Business – A deadline has been set for input and suggestions for **Foster Plaza**. The suggestion was made to meet with the President and Provost with a presentation of the current design plans and a review of the design suggestions for Foster Plaza. President Steckol will forward this request to the Provost. Some changes and revisions have been made in the plans. The Board of Trustees will be meeting in February and will possibly vote on the Plaza. Historical, architectural and sculptural suggestions should be brought forward to be considered in the design plan. A national, regional or campus sculptural competition was suggested. The sense of the Steering Committee is for the University to take this important opportunity to appropriately commemorate the historical significance of Foster Auditorium. Steven Hobbs suggested establishing an “Institute for Educational Freedom” truly portraying the historic meaning of Foster Auditorium in a broader context.

Beginning classes and “Move in Day” for students were delayed due to a “**Snow Day**”. Due to the long term freezing weather there were broken pipes and water leakage. There was only one plumber available for repair work.

The University of Alabama has more **instructional days** than most in the SUG. There are more classes and labs in the spring semester.

Meeting adjourned 5:30 PM.