

**FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**November 11, 2008 – 3:00 PM – 206F Shelby Hall**

**UNAPPROVED MINUTES**

**ATTENDING:** Karen Steckol, Clark Midkiff, Jeanette VanderMeer, Marcia Barrett, John Vincent, Deidre Leaver-Dunn, Lowell Baker, Katrina Ramonell, Ed Stephenson, John Mason, Michael Martone, Melondie Carter, Carolyn Cassady, Rona Donahoe

**GUESTS:** Cassandra Smothers, Dialog

Roll call and quorum check by Faculty Senate Secretary Jeanette VanderMeer.

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of October 14, 2008 were approved.

**President's Report** – (*Karen Steckol*) Provost Judy Bonner has invited the Faculty Senate Steering Committee to Brunch on Tuesday, December 2 from 10:30 to 12:30 at her home.

President Karen Steckol will send an email to all faculty members reminding them of their obligation to attend **graduation**. The Provost will remind the Deans to also remind their faculty members to make certain they have graduation on their schedules. The Faculty Handbook specifies one-third of the faculty should be in attendance. The discussion included relocating faculty seating at graduation. It was pointed out that at one time there was only one graduation. Today there are four graduation exercises with the possibility of another graduation ceremony in the spring. The Provost is requesting suggestions concerning graduation attendance and the possibility of an additional ceremony. These were issues assigned to the Faculty Life Committee.

The number of faculty members from a department taking **sabbaticals** has been assigned to the Academic Affairs Committee.

The meeting with the Provost on Thursday, November 13<sup>th</sup> has been cancelled. The Board of Trustees is meeting on that date.

**Vice President's Report** – (*Clark Midkiff*) No report.

**Secretary's Report** – (*Jeanette VanderMeer*) No report.

**Academic Affairs** – (*Marcia Barrett & John Vincent*) This committee discussed the lack of a raise for an extended period of time for **Part-time Temporary Instructors**. This will be discussed with the Provost.

The Academic Affairs Committee also discussed the **sabbatical** issue. The opinion was expressed that sabbaticals should be determined by the proposal and not by an arbitrary number. The size of the department and having enough faculty members to fill the teaching load should be considered. The Faculty Handbook states the number of sabbaticals per department/division cannot exceed twenty percent. The Provost has stated no more than two per department. Several aspects of the issue were discussed including lack of funding, faculty shortage, research restrictions and the reputation of the University. A ten percent limit for sabbaticals will be discussed at the next meeting with the Provost.

The Provost brought up several years ago the **Duke model** to alleviate teaching shortages. The Steering Committee was not in favor of the plan at that time. With increased enrollment at UA it was suggested to revisit the plan. The concern about the Duke model was that it might lead to a two class system affecting raises and promotions. Discussion will continue about this issue.

**Faculty Life** – (*Deidre Leaver-Dunn & Lowell Baker*) The issue of faculty earning **sick leave** was brought forward for discussion. Time flexibility and borrowing time from colleagues were the negative aspects mentioned. The positive aspect is the use of sick leave days toward retirement. The sense of the Steering Committee was not to pursue the sick leave issue. The Faculty Life Committee will meet on November 20<sup>th</sup> to discuss mechanisms to recognize faculty accomplishments.

**Financial Affairs** – (*Katrina Ramonell & Steven Hobbs*) Earmarking a portion of proceeds for academics from televising UA sporting events was discussed with the Provost. The SEC Provosts are preparing a proposal to send to the SEC Presidents to have funds taken off the top and awarded in some type competitive basis to SEC-wide academics. The institution would submit a proposal to apply for those funds. The UA Athletic Department is self-supporting and gave the University general fund a million dollars last year. The Provost will follow the progress of this issue through the SEC Provost's organization.

There continues to be concern about the use of the **P-card**. The directives to use the card have been confusing and University staff members have had problems interpreting correct usage. It has caused purchasing delays and is causing a morale issue for some staff members. The Purchasing Department web page does not have current information posted. President Steckol will discuss this with the Provost.

**Faculty & Senate Governance** – (*John Mason & Michael Martone*) There will be two elections at the December Faculty Senate meeting. Nominees are still needed for the **Merger and Discontinuance Committee**. There are three nominations for the **Mediation Committee**. In January the electronic committee preference survey will be sent. The Faculty Senate will elect two faculty members for the **CUC**. Anyone interested should indicate that on the survey.

**Research & Service** – (*Ed Stephenson &* ) No report.

**Student Affairs** – (*Melondie Carter & Carolyn Cassady*) The Student Affairs Committee met with Dr. Mark Nelson and Kathleen Kramer on November 7<sup>th</sup> to discuss student issues. Student Affairs will partner with the Faculty Senate concerning student issues. SGA Vice President for Academic Affairs, Brandon Clark, has developed a **textbook policy** proposal. This is comprised of guidelines for the selection of textbooks and cost reduction of those textbooks. Brandon Clark and members of the Student Affairs Committee will meet with the Provost on Monday, November 17, 2008. The SGA will request that the current Textbook Committee become a permanent university standing committee. A suggestion was made that the University Book Store develop a web site with textbook purchase prices posted. Various other methods of purchasing textbooks were discussed.

Dr. Nelson discussed various ways the faculty could be of assistance to the student body. The Career Center, early alert system of mid-term grades, helping students become successful, providing specific information concerning faculty advisors for various campus organizations and having a student-friendly office atmosphere were issues brought forward by Dr. Nelson.

There are funds (\$65 per class) available for faculty members to use to entertain students. The Faculty Senate Student Affairs Committee co-chairs were invited to attend the Student Affairs Faculty Staff meetings every other Thursday morning at 8:30 AM. Those meetings will resume after the first of the year.

### **Reports from Other Committees –**

The **Core Curriculum Committee** has met and will meet again on Friday, November 14, 2008. The committee will revise the procedure used to evaluate the core curriculum. The current operating policies are 15-20 years old. Once the procedure is established the committee will evaluate the core curriculum on the same schedule used in the state-wide evaluations.

The **Vice President for Research** search has narrowed with interviews to begin early next spring.

The final copy of the **Deans and Chairs Evaluation** document has been given to the Provost. This should be in place by January and implemented next spring. This will be under Old Business on the agenda for the full Faculty Senate meeting.

The **Alabama Environmental Council** is in the process of being formed. President Steckol will check with the Provost on the process of forming this committee.

Some faculty members feel if **football tickets** for faculty members are monitored then all facets receiving football tickets should also be monitored. A report was given concerning a few faculty members selling their football tickets above the set ticket price.

**Honors Dean** Bob Halli is retiring. There has been no information concerning a replacement or interim dean.

Meeting adjourned 4:30 PM.