

**FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
DECEMBER 2, 2008 – 3:00 PM – 206f SHELBY HALL**

APPROVED MINUTES

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

GUESTS: Cresandra Smothers, Dialog; Brandon Clark, SGA

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

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of November 11, 2008 were approved.

President Karen Steckol opened the meeting by introducing Brandon Clark of the UA Student Government Association. A review of a proposed University of Alabama **Textbook Adoptions Guidelines and Procedures** was given by Mr. Clark. The purpose of this document is to determine a unified University policy for faculty members to follow in their textbook adoption process. One goal of the proposal is to codify the methods already in use by faculty members. An earlier textbook adoption by faculty would enable the University Supply Store ample time to negotiate the best prices from book sellers including purchasing used books. The SGA is requesting support to make textbook adoption procedures available to all faculty members, particularly new faculty members. They would also like to place the textbook policy in the Faculty Handbook. The proposed document is divided into guidelines and procedures. The guideline section contains ideas and suggestions for faculty to use in lowering the cost of textbooks. The procedures section has information concerning methods to use in adopting resources and the responsibilities of faculty members in selecting textbooks. The main content of the proposed textbook document was adapted from the Textbook Adoption Guidelines and Procedures of Virginia Commonwealth University. It is noted in the first section of the document that faculty may not engage in direct sale of instructional materials to students. It is stated under the guidelines section for faculty to strive to minimize textbooks costs, order with sufficient lead time (following University deadlines) assuring textbook availability, utilize University resources through the library or other arrangements and limit use of new edition textbooks when there is little change. The procedures section covers the actual textbook and course material adoption process including paper textbook adoption forms, email requests and electronic web-based adoptions. The Alabama State Law enacted in 1993 is quoted in the document. It states “Institutions and colleges are required to provide bookstore retailers a written listing of textbooks, publications and academic materials that will be used in the course of study offered by institutions and colleges within two business days of the time the information is supplied to bookstores owned or authorized by institutions or colleges.” The remainder of the procedures section of the document addresses faculty confirming the usage of all items in a textbook bundle package, obtaining the current retail price of selected books and materials and a list of University Supply Store responsibilities. The suggestion was made that the Student Government Associations of all institutions partner in efforts to end the policy of new textbook editions coming out every two to three years to flush out the old editions forcing new edition purchases. A statement encouraging faculty members to consider using the new or the old

textbook editions could be added to the proposed document. The discussion included the availability and resale of old textbooks, publisher/supply store issues, establishing a textbook rental program, various department/school policies, textbook price mark-ups, books authored by faculty and the accessibility of information. Congress has established a grant program to establish textbook rental programs with The University of Alabama on the leading edge of acquiring one of those grants. The University now has a Textbook Committee pursuing various methods of lowering textbook costs. Members of the Textbook Committee are Co-Chair Brandon Clark, SGA; Co-Chair Melondie Carter, Faculty Senate; Karen Gardiner, Director of Freshman Comp; Teresa Shreve, Director of University Supply Store; Bernadette Chavira-Trull, Associate Director of University Supply Store; Dr. Miguel Mantero, Chair of Curriculum Instruction; Melissa Juliano, New College; James Fowler, C&BA; Donna Meester, Theater Department; Nancy Dupree, Information Services Librarian; Caroline Fulmer, Asst. Professor of Consumer Sciences; Dr. George Daniels, Asst. Professor of Journalism; Vickie Peeples, Asst. Professor of Human Development and Faculty Senator; and Michael George, University Registrar. This committee has short and long-time goals to decrease the cost of textbooks. John Vincent expressed the opinion that the proposed document would not be an appropriate addition to the Faculty Handbook. The consensus of the Steering Committee is that the document should not be in the Faculty Handbook but should be utilized, distributed and made available. A textbook web site is being developed and will be one of many information resources for this particular subject. This proposed document will be presented at new faculty orientation and TA and GTA training sessions, Dialog, online Dialog before textbook adoption date deadlines, added to book store paperwork and a syllabus attachment. Changing the textbook selection at the very last minute, wording in the document and desk textbook copies were issues discussed by the Steering Committee.

President's Report – (*Karen Steckol*) - There will be a meeting with the Provost on Thursday, December 4th at 1:30 PM. to discuss the sabbatical issue, master teacher and the maternity policy. An email was sent to the entire faculty from President Steckol concerning graduation attendance. Divisional graduation ceremonies were discussed. Suggestions were made including cost, changing students sitting in alphabetical order and coordinating ceremonies back to back to utilize flowers, staging, etc. and other changes. The Faculty Life Committee is researching this issue.

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

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

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

Faculty Life – (*Deidre Leaver-Dunn & Lowell Baker*) This committee met on the 20th and discussed the semi-permanent mechanism to recognize significant **academic achievement** by members of the faculty. The consensus of the committee was that semi-permanent recognition would be small and would become permanent when the economic situation improved. The committee recommends the first step should be division level establishment of standards and guidelines for such awards. Semi-permanent recognition displays could be placed in the foyer of Gorgas Library or at some location on campus. More detailed discussion concerning representation will follow the establishment of guidelines for such recognition. Displaying some type plaque to **recognize years of service** upon retirement is

an issue this committee is following. An appropriate place for such a display was discussed. One recommendation was a meal with the Provost and/or University President.

If there continues to be separate summer **graduation ceremonies**, the committee recommendations included that new faculty be recognized separately, faculty be more involved in the processional, faculty seating be moved either directly in front of the stage or closer to the dissertation chairs, Faculty Senate assigning each department a percentage of faculty members to attend graduation, selling tickets to graduation to limit the number of attendees, move to divisional graduation ceremonies and for faculty to be involved in recognition of students graduating from their particular degree program. Having graduate school graduation divisional and only undergraduates at the large ceremony was another suggestion. The negative aspect of that would be the lack of exposure of the students to the Ph.D. pomp and ceremony.

Financial Affairs – (*Katrina Ramonell & Steven Hobbs*) No report.

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

Faculty & Senate Governance - (*John Mason & Michael Martone/Marci Daugherty*) One member for the **Merger and Discontinuance Committee** and two members for the **Mediation Committee** will be elected at the next Faculty Senate meeting. Forward any nominations to the co-chairs of this committee. An **Ombudsperson** will be elected in March.

Student Affairs – (*Melondie Carter & Carolyn Cassady*) No report.

Legislative Agenda – (*Margaret Garner*) No report.

Reports from Other Committees –

John Mason reported as a member of the **Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics Committee** the need for the Faculty Senate to vote on the bylaws of this organization. It was suggested that the bylaws be sent to Joe Hornsby, Faculty Athletic Representative, to be reviewed. After reviewing the voting process and the final draft of the bylaws, the Steering Committee recommended the bylaws be presented to the entire Faculty Senate for a vote. COIA has been instrumental in raising awareness of graduation rates in athletics. The University of Alabama football team has 100% graduation rate this year.

Mentalhealth.edu has been presented to some coaches, assistant coaches, recreation center and student workers with very positive feedback. More aware faculty members would give a more comfortable atmosphere for students to come to them with mental health problems. Statistics were reviewed indicating that the problem is significant. Counseling is available and each department/school has mental health liaisons.

The subject of the future of **Foster Auditorium** was brought forward. Renovation of the building would be extremely expensive.

Meeting adjourned 4:25 PM.