

## FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

DECEMBER 4, 2012 – 309 FERGUSON – 3:00PM

### APPROVED MINUTES

**ATTENDING:** Steve Miller, Seth Panitch, Rona Donahoe, Wesley Church, John Vincent, Carolyn Cassady, Robert McLeod, Ed Stephenson, Carmen Mayer-Robin, Bob Riter, Ion Stancu, Donna Meester, Clark Midkiff, Reuben Cook, Liza Wilson.

**ABSENT:** Charlotte Herrin, Dwight Hooper, Jason Battles, Margaret Garner.

**GUESTS:** Cresandra Smothers, Dialog; Ross Green, SGA; Visitor Russ McCutcheon.

Roll call and quorum check by Faculty Senate Secretary Rona Donahoe.

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of November 6, 2012 were approved with corrections.

**President's Report** – (*Steve Miller*) President Steve Miller met with Interim Provost Joe Benson to review Faculty Senate's priorities. Among those priorities are a search committee for the Vice President for Research position and a replacement for Provost Judy Bonner. It would not be an ideal situation to have a Vice President for Research named before the Provost replacement was selected. The status of Faculty Handbook revisions should be followed closely.

The smoke-free campus issue was reviewed and received a positive response from Joe Benson. President Miller will continue to develop strategies for the completion of a smoke-free campus.

A universal federal mandate will be put in place requiring everything to be disability accessible.

The Faculty Senate Information Technology Committee met with John McGowan on Monday. In McGowan's proposal the University IT Committee would be disbanded with the new plan having no oversight and would not be under the CUC.

President Miller met with former UA president, Dr. Guy Bailey. Flowers were sent to Dr. Bailey and his wife from the Faculty Senate Steering Committee and were sincerely appreciated. The extended salary payment to Dr. Bailey and an appropriate Faculty Senate response was discussed.

Academic Affairs Committee co-chair, John Vincent, submitted a resolution supporting UA's termination of this year's fraternity rush activities. The following points were made during the discussion – the resolution is speculative, hazing is not limited to fraternities, long-term perceptions, speedier response time from the Senate, length of time elapsed since suspension of fraternity rush. Following a call to question, the Steering Committee voted - 6 in favor, 3 opposed, to bring the resolution to the full Senate for consideration. The resolution reads as follows:

“The Faculty Senate supports this fall’s action of the administration of The University of Alabama to terminate this year’s fraternity rush. Hazing, a form of mental and physical abuse, cannot be tolerated on this campus. The Faculty Senate desires to work proactively with the administration to prevent similar situations in the future.

President Judy Bonner, Chancellor Robert Witt, and President pro tempore of the Board of Trustees Paul W. Bryant, Jr.”

It is hoped this will lead to sub-committee discussions concerning hazing.

President Miller attended a Student Affairs Academic Leadership team meeting and will attend a debriefing session following today’s Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting.

President Miller brought forward the subject communication and operations of Faculty Senate, Faculty Senate Steering Committee, FS committees and senators. There are instances President Miller must speak for the Faculty Senate due to compression of time and circumstance. He attempts in those situations to depersonalize his response to the best of his ability. Any senator may participate in the workings of the Faculty Senate as a committee member, chair or co-chair or may attend committee meetings at any time. The role of a senator may not be as clear as it should be concerning lines of communications. Today’s Steering Committee meeting was composed of the opening forty minutes spent on one topic. There are many topics that concern the Senate and to compress those into a 1 ½ hour monthly meeting is difficult. Events occur between Senate and Steering Committee monthly meetings requiring a response. The lines of communication should consist of feedback from colleagues to their senator and their senator relaying information to their constituents from the Faculty Senate meetings. Some shared the methods used by their colleges to relay information and to reach out to their faculty members. Faculty Senate and Steering Committee minute should be posted as quickly as possible following approval. Some senators do not feel involved. There are some issues worked out with administration before the need of any action by the Senate.

**Vice President’s Report** – (*Seth Panitch*) Seth Panitch is heading up the improvement of faculty participation in commencement. Seth has met with Michael George and Denny Savage receiving very positive response to suggested changes. Some of those cosmetic changes will be implemented for the May commencement. Other suggestions are being received. One issue brought forward is the lack of a speaker at commencement. The question was asked if there is a committee to strategize changes to commencement or if another committee is needed. It was suggested to have a task force look at the commencement structure as a whole. This will be discussed in the meeting with Joe Benson.

**Secretary’s Report** – (*Rona Donahoe*) Secretary Donahoe has sent a message to OIRA requesting senator appropriation statistics needed for the upcoming spring elections with a deadline of the third week of January. There were discrepancies last year with some colleges disputing the appropriation count. This year the statistics will be sent to each college/school to review. It is difficult for OIRA to match up faculty members with senator qualifications stated in the Faculty Senate bylaws.

Faculty Senate bylaws state: “A faculty member holding a regular appointment is a tenured, tenured-earning probationary, or temporary faculty member at The University of Alabama

engaged in teaching or research at least half of a normal load during the regular (academic) year, or a librarian having corresponding rank and professional engagement.”

**Academic Affairs** – (*John Vincent & Liza Wilson*) The Academic Affairs Committee continues to solicit ideas for the “Stand in the School Door” commemoration. Good feedback has been received with some of those feeling disenfranchised being invited to share their ideas with the Academic Affairs Committee.

**Faculty Life** – (*Wesley Church & Carmen Mayer-Robin*) The Faculty Life Committee has proposed a letter printed on Faculty Senate letterhead be sent to Charlotte Harris, Associate Vice President in the Office of Human Resources, and Dr. Joe Benson, Interim Provost and Office of Academic Affairs, requesting support for the new Work Life Center and commending Work Life Center Director Cori Perdue for the implementations of many valuable programs benefitting UA faculty. The letter will be included in the agenda for the full Faculty Senate meeting on December 11, 2012.

**Faculty & Senate Governance** – (*Charlotte Herring & Dwight Hooper*) The following will be voted on at the December 11, 2012 Faculty Senate meeting:

1. Election of two Senate-appointed Mediation Committee members to replace the two members who will complete their terms of service in December of 2012. We have two nominees, Dr. Angelia Paschal, PhD (CHES) and Dr. Tyra Hilliard, PhD, JD, CMP (CHES).

2. Proposed change to the Faculty Senate By-Laws:

Section 3, Standing Committees, 12. Faculty and Senate Governance Committee, as item F.:

“Seeks nominations and conducts elections for Senate-appointed members of the Mediation Committee, Faculty Ombudsperson positions, Senate-appointed members of the Merger and Discontinuance of Academic Units Committee, and for Faculty Senate Officers.”

**Research & Service** – (*Ed Stephenson & Ion Stancu*) The Research and Service Committee continues to monitor IRB and IOCUC delay issues. Provost Bonner (at that time) requested a poll be taken of the Social Sciences and a report sent to her. Psychology did an internal report and information came from others. The information is being sorted to determine the best course of action. It was suggested to bring up the post-doc raises with Joe Benson.

**Financial Affairs** – (*Robert McLeod & Reuben Cook*) The Financial Affairs Committee was asked to look into the status of part-time instructors and compensation for part-time instructors. As of fall 2012 UA had 483 part-time instructors. Compensation for part-time instructors according to information obtained by the FA committee is determined all the way down to department level. The University does not have a set policy. The range of compensation varies from \$1,500 to \$10,000 per course. The compensation packages and funding sources varies from college to college. This information has been brought back to the Steering Committee for a decision on how to pursue this issue.

**Information Technology** – (*Carolyn Cassady & Jason Battles*) No report.

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

**Student Affairs** – (*Melondie Carter & Donna Meester*) The Student Affairs Committee headed up a program in conjunction with Alabama Reach to provide gift cards to qualified students. At this point 122 gift cards have been donated in the amount of \$3,000. This will be a year round ongoing program. Drop points have been established and the response has been gratifying.

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

A report from the **Faculty Staff Benefits Committee** included a report from the sub-committee which investigates the reserve fund for the health-care plan and anticipated cost in light of the Health Care Reform Act. In 2013 women's contraceptives will be covered without co-pay. The anticipated cost is one million dollars. With additional increased health care costs a 4% increase to premiums was recommended. UA administration said no increase will be made in 2013. The reserves will dwindle next year.

The Faculty Staff Benefits Committee was ready to vote on a smoke-free campus but lost a quorum when several members left the meeting. This will be on the January meeting agenda and there is hope for a positive vote.

### **Old Business –**

Faculty Senate priorities were reviewed and included diminishing parking spaces with a lack of faculty input in those decisions, construction and relocating parking areas. This will be on the agenda for the next meeting with Interim Provost Joe Benson.

There is concern about oversight of the athletic programs in light of the Penn State situation.

Concern was expressed about the construction of sorority and fraternity houses further embedding student separation.

The minimum enrollment guide put in place by Arts & Sciences was discussed in detail. There is a process in place to appeal any cancellation of classes.

Melondie Carter, co-chair of the United Way campaign, announced United Way had reached and exceeded their \$300,000 goal.

A security issue concerning Bama Cash cards. Robert McLeod has expressed his concerns to the appropriate people.

The trophy presentation at the SEC Championship game was talked about and those in attendance were discussed.

Meeting adjourned 5:00 P.M.