

Faculty Senate Steering Committee Meeting

February 13, 2001 - 3:30 PM - 309 Ferguson

Unapproved Minutes

Those attending: Pat Bauch, Norm Baldwin, Steven MacCall, Bing Blewitt, Marcia Barrett, Bob Sigler, Keith Woodbury, Bill Keel, Rob Ingram, Wythe Holt, Margaret Garner, Dexter Gordon, Don DeSmet

President's Report - (*Pat Bauch*) Nick Stinnett (HES) and Harold Bishop (ED) were recommended at the Faculty Senate December meeting as **appointments for the University Mediation and Grievance Committee**. It was suggested that the Steering Committee approve these recommendations and announce them at the full Faculty Senate meeting. Documents, information and letters pertaining to the **University of Alabama System Strategic Planning Initiatives** were handed out. Margaret Garner is heading an hoc committee for the review of the Strategic Planning Initiatives to deal with this issue and will meet this Friday, February 16th with the Provost. Almost all responses have agreed that there should be more time to review these initiatives. An extension from Dr. Meredith has been granted until March 1 but it is not felt that this is enough time.

Vice President's Report - (*Norm Baldwin*) The **Evaluation of Deans and Chairs committee** has met and formed a strategy that they are reflecting on before meeting with the Provost. The administrative burden of the evaluation of deans and department chairs is a primary concern. The committee has decided that "annual feedback" would be a better plan. Some review is needed before the five-year review now in place. The committee is reviewing methods of surveying faculty.

The **Distance Learning Committee** is considering allowing non-degree students taking distance learning courses.

Secretary's Report - (*Steven MacCall*) A letter will be sent to the Deans concerning the **election of new senators**. Any suggestions for the text of this letter should be referred to Steven. The meeting times and responsibilities will be included. There are two Senator openings this semester. It was decided that alternates should fill those openings, particularly at the end of the academic year when only a few meetings remain. It was also suggested that the senator should not resign but contact an alternate to attend the meetings. Their resignation would become effective on the date of the election of a new senator. It was suggested that Senate Operations review and make recommendations regarding "senator elections to fill a vacancy" procedure.

The **election of Faculty Senate officers** will go forward with Rob Ingram, Wythe Holt and Margaret Garner contacting those willing to serve. They will report to the President and Steering Committee. Pat Bauch will not be available to serve next year since she has accepted an endowed chair professorship at another institution and will be on a one-year leave of absence. Steven MacCall will not be available to serve. Several suggestions of people to serve came from members of the Steering Committee.

Academic Affairs - (*Don DeSmet*) A draft of proposals and **proposed changes in academic regulations** was presented to the Steering Committee. These proposals include: students signing a waiver allowing the University to send grades to parents particularly during their freshman year, midterm grades for all freshmen, withdrawal from a class, academic forgiveness, eliminating the grades of WP and WF, withdrawal from the University, academic bankruptcy and a review/revisal of course repeat policy. Hank Lazer requested a sense of the Faculty Senate regarding proposed changes. A possible motion from this committee is as follows: "The Academic Affairs Committee moves that the Senate provide an endorsement of the direction of these recommendations with suggested revisions, request specific details from the OAA on any proposal for the implementation for the policy on mid-term grades to the Senate for review prior to any adoption of such policy, and express appreciation for bringing this discussion to the Senate." A web page will be provided with a link from the Faculty Senate web page with information and comments about this issue with the changes suggested hi-lighted. The request is for the Faculty Senate to approve conceptually the direction of the changes proposed. The final decision concerning this issue is that there is no motion at this time and the agenda will have "go to" and "read" directions and there will be a 10-minute limit on discussion from the floor of the Senate during the full Senate meeting.

Pat requested that this committee look at **program viability**. Steve Miller is handling this, was not at the meeting, and will make a report in the near future. This report should be added to the minutes of this committee.

Faculty Life - (*Rob Ingram & Wythe Holt*) The **Proposal for Funding of a Faculty Mentoring Grant Program** was presented ([attached](#)). Who would determine the recipients of the grants and the members of the Selection Committee was a concern. It was agreed that this proposal would go forward for a Faculty Senate vote. **Diversity efforts** of this committee are to have a debate on this campus featuring Thomas Sowell and William Darity. Funding efforts are underway. The Provost has funded a Philosophy Department speaker Alan Kors, a major academic critic, on March 9

or March 16. A suggestion of this committee was to have some form of response or academic participation to make this a debate. There will be a question and answer period following the address. Academic participation would be difficult at the same event according to this committee. There is a link on the Faculty Senate web site with an article by Kors from "Reason Magazine."

There will be a meeting of the participants of the anti-racism workshops on **March 14**, directed by **Crossroads**, to determine future direction and course of action.

Financial Affairs - (*Keith Woodbury & Deborah Martin*) This committee met with the Provost to discuss **budget issues and proration**. The Provost discussed using year-end funds to lessen the impact on the colleges. Proration has had an impact on hiring qualified and excellent candidates in that they are skeptical about working here under proration. The Provost stated that it would be the same budget for next year with no provisions for faculty raises. A lobbying effort for an increase in tuition for faculty salaries was recommended. One percent increase in tuition would produce \$400,000. Tuition is one-third of our total budget and state appropriations for our budget are in the 26-28% range.

Senate Operations - (*Norm Baldwin & Jim Taylor*) The **by-law revisions** will go to the Senate for a vote. This includes a change in the date of the January meetings each year. The Steering Committee would determine the date of that meeting.

New Business - Senator Deborah Novak asked that a **resolution** be passed honoring the late **Dr. William Nichols** ([attached](#)). This will be noted in the Faculty Senate Minutes.

Student Affairs - (*Rob Ingram & Dexter Gordon*) A memo from Sybil Todd regarding an **update** from the **Think Tank Meetings** was distributed. The information included a list of items and responses from people on campus. Rob proposed that the issues contained in this memo be divided among the appropriate committees to take responsibility for monitoring and follow-up of the progress of those issues.

Pat distributed a copy of the **University Major Renovation Schedule** as an information item. Any comments or suggestions should be directed to Marcia Barrett.

Senate committees meeting date this month conflicts with Lobby Day in Montgomery. Each committee will determine their meeting time for March.

Pat met with the Provost and members of the **Student Government Association**. The students are requesting that they be allowed to access professors' course evaluations. They are working on a proposal giving them permission to do so. The point was made that this would be a violation of privacy. Security and identification would certainly be a problem. The students would like to have access online to professors' syllabi. They would like to be able to review the syllabi before taking a particular course. This is a "for your information" item.

Tim Parker will present a check in the amount of \$10,000 for Faculty Professional Development at a reception on Friday, February 23 at 3:30 PM at Seebeck in the Faculty Resource Center.

Research & Service - (*Bing Blewitt*) The report from this committee concerned the complaint from a staff person regarding the lack of merit raises for staff. This committee found someone for this person to talk to but this was refused. The Grievance Committee, The Staff Development Committee, The Professional Staff Committee and the Office/Clerical/Technical Committee are all willing to put this issue on their agenda. It was approved by the Steering Committee to give this information to this person. Bing will send an e-mail to this person with this information and provide a written report on this matter for the records of the Faculty Senate.

Meeting adjourned 5:25 PM

Resolution Honoring Dr. William Nichols
(Requested by Senator Deborah Novak)

WHEREAS, the faculty Senate of The University of Alabama wishes to honor the memory of Dr. William G. Nichols, a member of the faculty of The University of Alabama, and to express its appreciation for his 29 years of service to the University; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Nichols joined the faculty of The University of Alabama in 1971, teaching here until his recent death in January, 2001; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Nichols served as associate professor of industrial engineering, acting chairman of the Department of Computer Science from 1983 – 1986, and

interim head of the Department of Industrial Engineering from 1999 – 2000; and WHEREAS, Dr. Nichols was active in the Tuscaloosa community, particularly the First Presbyterian Church where he served as elder, deacon and Sunday School teacher; and WHEREAS, Dr. Nichols was recognized as a compassionate and dedicated teacher who worked tirelessly and unselfishly with his students, peers, and administrators. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Faculty Senate of The University of Alabama that it extends to the family of Dr. William G. Nichols his wife, Claire Van Winkle Nichols, his daughter, Amanda Claire Nichols, and his son, William Frank Nichols its heartfelt sympathy and expresses gratitude for his many years of outstanding, dedicated service and let this resolution be so noted in the Minutes of the Faculty Senate.

Proposal for Funding of a Faculty Mentoring Grant Program

(Faculty Life Committee)

We request that the Office of Academic Affairs make available approximately \$50,000 each year for competitive grants to support faculty mentoring and development initiatives.

The money will be used to fund competitive grant applications from individual faculty and faculty groups.

Goals of the program include:

- Providing incentives for faculty to develop innovative and informal ways of enhancing the opportunities for success of non-tenured faculty.
- Providing a mechanism for bottom-up development of mentoring activities that will appeal to those who are served by these activities.
- Increase the opportunity for non-tenured faculty to obtain feedback on their work and to develop contacts with other faculty who may increase the likelihood that these faculty will succeed.
- Increase the rate of success among non-tenured faculty in achieving tenure.

Details of the application and selection process will be worked out with OAA; however, we envision the following:

- Proposals will be solicited near the end of the spring term for the following year.
- A limit will be placed on the amount of money available for each grant.
- A selection committee will include tenured and non-tenured faculty who will evaluate applications on the likelihood they will enhance career development and success of non-tenured faculty.
- Applications will identify the purpose of the grant, the intended audience, the grant period, and how the success of the activity will be evaluated.
- Grants may be renewed on an annual basis.
- Grants will be evaluated annually to assess the progress and success of each initiative.