

## FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

FEBRUARY 12, 2002 – 3:30 pm - Ferguson Forum

### corrected Minutes

**Attending: Norm Baldwin, Steve Miller, Keith Woodbury, John Mason, Bing Blewitt, Don Desmet, Harry Price, Alvin Winters, Terry Royed, Wythe Holt, Scott Bridges**  
**Guests: James Perrien, SGA Representative and Joanna Hutt, Dialog**

The minutes from January 15<sup>th</sup> were approved.

The Planning and Operations Committee presented the Fall Study Break resolution. This would be a two-day break in mid-October. Half of the SEC schools have a fall break and 71% of our students voted to have a fall break. It has been determined that students are most stressed and burn-out in mid-October. The purpose of this break would be for students to catch up on their studies. It was suggested to restrict the break to Wednesday and Thursday rather than Monday and Tuesday because this would be more encouragement for the students to use this time for study. The suggestion was made to have this on an open football weekend. Other comments included this break could possibly interfere with labs, should every college/school be required to participate, and to coordinate the break with the city and county schools. The city and county schools do not always have their break at the same time. The Planning and Operations Committee voted to make no changes in the resolution and did not want to be overly prescriptive with details. It was decided to change the title to "**Fall Study Days**". The Steering Committee passed the resolution with one opposed and two abstentions.

The Faculty Life Committee presented the resolution proposing changes to the **Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination, and Diversity Policy** as stated in the Faculty Handbook. This resolution is attached and reflects the proposed changes. This would pledge the University to enforce this with all contracts. There is nothing on the first page of the University's web site that the University is an Equal Opportunity Employer. It was suggested to place that policy on the first page making access easier rather than going through several links to reach the information. The question was asked if this policy would interfere with the process of obtaining federal contracts, and the answer was that nothing in this policy would interfere with this process. It is not clear, at this point, if Dr. Sorensen will support these changes. Discussion included the definitions of "sex" and "gender" and which is appropriate for this policy. The resolution was approved by the Steering Committee and any Senate action was postponed until a meeting with Dr. Sorensen could be held to determine what support would be forthcoming. The issue would then be referred back to the committee for further considerations.

The agenda was suspended to allow Dean Pitschmann, Dean of Libraries, to speak concerning the new **Library Annex**. The annex will be located just off campus to store low-use materials and will have proper environmental controls and security in place. Construction will be completed by December of this year and materials will be moved January, 2003. Guidelines are being developed to determine the materials to be moved. All materials will be available on-line and delivery service will be provided. The maximum storage space will be 500,000 volumes plus archival materials. Staff will come from present employees. The dean will send a letter of information to all faculty members with more details concerning the Annex.

The Research and Service Committee has reviewed **abuses of the Library system** with over 100 faculty with books checked out for durations extending beyond five years.

Estimates are that more than 5,000 volumes are out of Gorgas alone with the probability that this estimate is low. Some of those volumes are presumably lost, and a formal policy should be determined to remedy this situation. The committee, with the Steering Committee's approval, wish to write a letter to the Provost stating their support for instituting fines for book replacement cost recovery and using payroll deductions to collect those fines.

Objections were expressed concerning the proposed definition of "regular" faculty member in the **Faculty Senate By-laws**. Including adjunct, temporary and part-time faculty as regular faculty unfair to those departments and programs who do not have such personnel. The point was made that the definition in the Faculty Senate by-laws is not the same definition stated in the Faculty Handbook.

The outline proposal made by Marvin Johnson concerning the definition of an **ombudsperson** included three ombudspersons with qualifications of having never been a member of the Faculty Senate or been in administration, ten or more years of service with the University, a full professor with tenure and male and female representation. It was suggested to send this out with the agenda with the statement that this is an alternative to the proposal brought forwarded at the last meeting. This will have a ten-minute debate time with a vote by the Senate based on the principles of the proposals.

Scott Bridges from the Legislative Agenda Committee reminded everyone about Higher Education Day on February 21 in Montgomery. Lobbying teams will be put together to visit individual Legislators during the day and the emphasis will be on education. Everyone was also encouraged to attend the Constitutional Reform Seminar on Friday, February 15 conducted by Bailey Thomson. A poll was published that stated that Alabamians were happy with the sales tax. Educating the public and government is critical to any success concerning this issue. The opportunity to change the Constitution has not happened since 1901.

The **System of feedback for Deans and Chairs** resolution was sent to the Provost and was not approved in a very brief letter citing that a change would have to be made to the Faculty Handbook. Several representatives of the Senate met with individual Deans seeking support for proposed system. Some Deans had no problem with the annual evaluation but would not impose this evaluation on their colleagues. Research based and generic documentation from South Missouri State University was handed out which provides examples of effective leadership evaluation. At this institution, the Faculty Senate assumed responsibility for obtaining feedback regarding deans and department chairs since their administration would not do so. The opinion was expressed that the five-year evaluation does not work and does not provide information in terms of effective leadership reform or positive leadership evaluation. Some colleges on campus do not comply with the Handbook regarding evaluations. This University's standing committee on the Selection and Evaluation of Deans and Chairs will request a response from the Deans again, and if no response is forthcoming, this issue will be returned to the Steering Committee for a determination of what further action should be taken.

The President of the University will address the Faculty Senate meeting next week. Restructuring his visits was discussed for better use of his, the Steering Committee's, and the Senate's time. Norm will request a 20-minute question and answer period rather than a presentation from the President. There is provided a fourth Tuesday, as needed, for an extra meeting. Also, five-minute time limit was set for committee reports. Gene Marsh, Marie Robbins, and Cornelius Carter will be presented resolutions at the next meeting. There was discussion of the merits of job performance of Marsh and Robbins with a consensus that an outstanding job was done by both concerning the NCAA compliance

investigation. The Marsh/Robbins resolution of commendation passed unanimously. These, plus the resolution of commendation for Cornelius Carter, will be presented at the next meeting.

The **nominating committee** for officers for next year, 2002-2003, will consist of Wythe Holt, Norm Baldwin, and Don Desmet.

Volunteers to obtain faculty and staff signatures for the Constitutional Reform banner included Steve Miller for the 18<sup>th</sup> and John Mason for the 20<sup>th</sup>. The hours will be 11:30-1:30.

**President's Report** – (*Norm Baldwin*) The time limit for debate on the proposed **Fall Study Days** is ten minutes. The suggestion was made that language be added to prohibit colleges with undergraduates from opting out of participating in the break. The Senate's **Ad hoc Committee on the Evaluation of Deans and Chairs** reaction to the rejection of the proposed system of faculty feedback was that the Faculty Senate could do conduct this independently. A leadership survey could be conducted every year by a group outside the Senate committees. The evaluation system would help good deans and chairs become better at their jobs and would provide constructive feedback for deans and chairs that are not performing well. The feedback would be given to the the one being evaluated and their superiors. It might also provide an overview of how well the college and department is operating. There would be no names mentioned in the feedback. The composition of the instrument was also discussed. The point was made since the faculty is opposed to posting student evaluations, how could feedback on deans and chairs be posted. The committee will bring a resolution forward.

The SGA has given a request to the Provost for **posting faculty grade distributions**. The Faculty Senate is opposed to this. The legal opinion submitted by Harry Hopkins, a labor law attorney, is that it is not in the best interest of The University of Alabama to post grade distributions.

**Information Items:** Dr. Sorensen's reasons for not supporting **Domestic Partner Benefits** included concerns about extremely limited funds, increasing co-pays and insurance premiums, and prescription drug cost increases. He made the point that TIAA-CREF benefits are not available to all staff and is concerned that faculty is not standing up for staff needs. The Benefits Committee has requested three times for TIAA-CREF benefits for everyone. The Faculty Life Committee will continue to address the Domestic Partner Benefits issue. Including the staff in the Faculty Senate was discussed. The Faculty Senate usually deals with faculty issues. The Governor has gone back to 28% funding disregarding his pledge to return to the 1/3-2/3 split. A letter was sent to the Governor protesting this and encouraging the original pledge to be honored. The on-line submission of grades was two to one positive. The process of using the password twice will be eliminated. The following issues have been brought to the attention of the President of the Faculty Senate and will be referred to the appropriate committee: concerns about the Arts & Science Dean refusing to hire an African-American for the post of Chair of the English Department, the Faculty Senate supporting the picketing by the Maintenance workers, and the NCAA investigation.

Academic Affairs Committee and Academics and Athletics Committee have requested the Faculty Senate to invite some of the coaches to talk about athletic academics. It was agreed to do so with a stipulation that a question and answer period be included. Test Services will change the backward Social Security number password by this summer.

The Provost requested the proposed addition by the Council of Deans be dropped from the

**Intellectual Property Rights** proposal. This committee will come up with a proposal to be brought before the Steering Committee before going to the Senate. Procedures for change to the Faculty Handbook would go through the Council of Deans, Faculty Senate, and a Faculty Referendum. The direction of this issue is that the faculty owns the rights with the exception of the University providing extraordinary resources or if the University commissioned it. The deans say that if you develop an electronic course, you have the right to take it with you and the University maintains the right to use it as they see fit. This is what the committee objected to. Part of the proposals gives the University rights, but there would be agreements between the faculty member and the University. This would give the faculty member some percentage of any proceeds from the sale of the property.

Meeting adjourned 6:00 PM

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**Resolution Proposing Changes to UA's Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination, and Diversity Policy**

"Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate requests that the Administration make the following changes to its Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination, and Diversity Policies, presently stated on pages ii and v of the 1999 Faculty Handbook:

(1) The second sentence of the first paragraph of the Equal Opportunity Policy, p. ii, be changed to read as follows:

"Consistent with this commitment, the University's equal opportunity policy expressly prohibits discrimination against anyone for reasons of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, sexual preference, political affiliation or views, or any other factor protected by law."

The requested change would substitute "gender" for "sex," and would add "sexual preference" and "political affiliation or views" as new categories.

(2) Delete the first sentence of the third paragraph of said policy, p. ii, and replace it with the following two sentences:

"This policy applies to all prospective employees, active employees, and students of the University. Each employee of the University will likewise apply this policy to all University functions, including selection of contractors and suppliers of goods and services."

The requested change makes more definite the broad application of this important policy.

(3) Change the first portion of the first sentence of the Nondiscrimination Policy, p. ii, to be consistent with the Equal Opportunity Policy (above) and thus to read as follows:

"The University of Alabama complies with applicable laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, sexual preference, political affiliation or views, or veteran status in admission or access to ...."

(4) Change the first sentence of the Statement on Diversity, p. v, to be consistent with the Equal Opportunity Policy (above) and thus to read as follows:

"Reflective of its academic mission, The University of Alabama is increasingly comprised

of persons of diverse racial, ethnic and cultural background, national origin, religious or political belief, age, gender, sexual preference, and physical ability."

This would change the words "women and men" to "persons," would substitute "or" for "and" between "religious" and "political," and would add "gender" and "sexual preference" as categories.

(5) State that the University is an Equal Opportunity Employer on the very first page of its website, and link this statement directly to the Equal Opportunity Policy as stated above.

(6) Alter all language appearing on the relevant pages of the Human Resources Department's portions of the University website, pertinent to the Equal Opportunity Policy, the nondiscrimination Policy, and the Diversity Policy, so that that language is totally consistent with the above changes."

Defining regular faculty who are eligible to serve in the Senate (see below)