

FACULTY SENATE

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

MARCH 11, 2003 – 307 FERGUSON – 3:00 PM

MINUTES

ATTENDING: Steve Miller, John Mason, Keith Woodbury, Norm Baldwin, Subhabrata Chakraborti, Catherine Davies, Wythe Holt, Frannie James, Beth Macauley, Clark Midkiff, Harry Price, Bob Sigler, Garry Warren, Mathew Winston, Guests: Joanna Hutt, *Dialog*, Steve Reeves, *Tuscaloosa News*, Bill O'Connor, Chair, *Campaign for Alabama*.

Bill O'Connor, Chair, *Campaign for Alabama*, spoke to the Faculty Senate Steering Committee. Information about his background included that his grandfathers (1917 & 1919 football scholarships) and grandmothers, parents and five brothers and sisters are all graduates of The University of Alabama. Mr. O'Connor served the University in several capacities for eighteen years. Mr. O'Connor began his comments with the statements that the State of Alabama has known for some time that a financial crisis was imminent. Revenues and the Education Trust Fund growth have been flat for five years. Expenditures and mandated expenses have continued to rise. Last August, a group of businessmen gathered together in Birmingham and decided that they wanted to be a part of the solution to move this state forward, by developing a comprehensive reform plan to recommend to the Governor and Legislature for a long-term funding solution. The opportunity to be instrumental in moving Alabama into the future was so unique and strong at this particular time that Mr. O'Connor resigned his position at the *Business Council* and devoted his time to *Campaign for Alabama*. Alabama has strong leadership in the Senate and House and a Governor elected on the message of "change" produces the possibility to do something in Alabama that has never been done before. The people of Alabama do not have confidence in government and feel that if they invest more they will not receive good return. The first order of business to restore the public's confidence more effectively and efficiently is to make every effort to reduce waste and duplication. The greatest challenge is the General Fund with \$220 million dollars of one-time none-recurring money in a budget that only has \$1.2 billion dollars total. The services offered by the State of Alabama are not funded to fully serve needy citizens. Campaign for Alabama has moved across the state building a base of people that need to be a part of this movement to make sure this movement will be successful. There is a fundamental choice facing the State of Alabama – will a "stop-gap" temporary measure be implemented as has been historically done or will the State develop a long-term plan that will fix it forever? Business and community leadership support policies for long-term solutions. In 1980, Alabama and North Carolina were almost identical in agriculture, rural and urban areas and many other similarities. North Carolina made a decision that by 2010, they would rank in the top ten in education. They have reached their goal. Eighteen months ago they passed a bond issue for improvements in technology, infrastructure and other areas. This bond included \$3.1 billion for higher education alone and the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill received a check for \$498 million dollars. That is twice the money allocated by the State of Alabama for The University of Alabama since it was founded in 1831. The tasks before our State is to spend the money we have more efficiently, prioritize correctly, and have an agenda to restore public confidence. The public has questioned the high salaries being paid to the President of the University and the Head Football Coach. Interests opposing tax reform are extremely strong. Alabama per-capita tax payment is ranked 51st. It was pointed out that a

priority of businesses is to hire those specifically trained for their organization and not those with a comprehensive education and that our influence on the politics of closing schools and funding education is limited. The University has been accountable in prioritizing expenditures and has been very active in economic development for Alabama. Issues facing higher education include program viability, duplication of programs, productivity and graduating the right people and determining if the public is receiving a fair return on their investments. It was suggested to speak with the Legislators at Higher Education Day in Montgomery with the message that their help is needed. The point was made that political and financial support is lacking for higher education. It is the hope that through the *Campaign for Alabama* this will change.

The minutes of the February 11, 2003, Steering Committee passed with minor changes.

President's Report – (*Steve Miller*) In a meeting with the Chancellor, Faculty Senate reps suggested a 12% increase in tuition although the Faculty Senate was on record for a 15% increase. The percentage of faculty staff raises is negotiable on the faculty side with a negotiable tuition increase on the administration side. Staff advisory/council groups have moved toward organizing and the channel of communication for them will be directly to the President of the University. In conversations with President Witt, it was determined that “accountability” on the University campus must have a definition. It was suggested to Dr. Witt to form a committee to look at this issue. Pic-a-prof is continuing to be an issue and the line is being held at this time to prevent the availability of class grade distribution information to this group. Norm Baldwin will forward information concerning the legality of this position to President Witt. Susan Hamill, a proponent for tax reform based on Judeo-Christian beliefs, is under personal attack for her stance and it was suggested that the Faculty Senate write a resolution on her behalf. The point was made that there is freedom of speech, however, you cannot slander. Wythe will compose a resolution and circulate it to the Steering Committee for feedback with the final resolution to be presented at the next Senate meeting. Dr. Nancy Barrett, Provost of the University, has resigned. Dean Judy Bonner will be the Interim Provost.

Senate Operations – (*Harry Price & Frannie James*) A letter requesting Faculty Senate committee preferences will be sent to new and remaining senators. A reference was added to the letter with information about the duties of each committee. The Senate Operations committee presented a “**Proposed Procedure for Selecting Faculty Members of the Committee on University Committees**”. A motion was made and seconded to adhere to the procedures stated in this document. The Steering Committee voted to accept. The procedure will have the Chair of the Committee on University Committees formulate a list of interested faculty and staff and deliver that list to the Faculty Senate representative, John Mason. It is then given to the Senate Operations committee. After consideration by this committee and the Senate Steering Committee, a list of names will be given to the Chair of the CUC to present at the full meeting of the CUC. The number of names can be increased or decreased by the Faculty Senate Steering Committee. There are two open slots this year. The motion was made, seconded and approved to forward the names of Rona Donaho and Wythe Holt to fill those vacancies. It was suggested to write a resolution that the President never appoint high level administrators to those committees. This issue will be pursued and developed. The viewpoint of committee members was discussed – whether they are biased toward certain issues and are placed on a certain committee for that reason. The Senate Operations Committee also presented “**Proposed Change by the Senate Operations Committee to Item 8 of Protocol for the Selection of Ombudspersons for the University of Alabama, and a description of their Responsibilities**”. The change would strike the phrases, “or former” (administrators), and strike “except former Department Chairpersons”. This would only eliminate current administrators. There is an Ombudsperson vacancy with Amy Ward’s term ending this

year. One person is elected per year. The change would read:

Proposed change to item 8 of

**“PROTOCOL FOR THE SELECTION OF OMBUDSPERSONS FOR THE
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA, AND A DESCRIPTION OF THEIR
RESPONSIBILITIES”
Senate Operations**

7) Candidates shall have the following qualifications:

a) tenure, b) rank of associate or full professor, *and* c) at least ten years of service as full-time faculty members with teaching and research responsibilities

8) Candidates shall not be:

a) current members of the Faculty Senate, b) current members of the Mediation Committee, *or* c) current ~~or former~~ administrators, ~~except former Department Chairpersons~~

It was moved, seconded and approved to move this forward to the Senate. By-law changes go before the Senate at one meeting and are voted on at the next meeting. The ombudspersons serving nominate a person to fill the vacant position. One name has been nominated and an electronic vote of the faculty will be administered.

The slate of nominations presented by the nominating committee for **2003-04 Faculty Senate officers** for 2003-04 are: President, John Mason and Marvin Johnson; Vice President, Mathew Winston and for Secretary, Roy Ann Sherrod. A printed ballot will be handed out at the Senate meeting with these names listed and blanks available for other nominations.

Academic Affairs – (*Beth Macauley & Garry Warren*) The Academic Affairs committee felt very strongly that the decision to take **scholarship enhancement fee** off the table should be reinstated. A proposed revised resolution recommends that a scholarship enhancement fee be added to all University of Alabama ticketed events. Overhead rates were increased for auxiliaries but omitted an increase for athletics. With budget cuts and reallocations to be faced, this fee would provide actual dollars and revenues for academic divisions and programs by more than \$1.5 million dollars. The revenue from athletic tickets sales was approximately \$14.5 million dollars. “Uniform rate” was stated in the original resolution. “All purchased tickets” or “all paid ticketed events” was a phrase proposed since this would include out of state football games. The Steering Committee approved the revised resolution and, with some rewording, will be brought forward to the Senate. The committee is addressing the no-credit policy in English and Math, withdrawal date of the tenth week, grade inflation and disparity and the scholarship enhancement fee proposal. A **faculty survey** drafted by the Academic Affairs committee was approved by the Steering Committee and the committee will proceed. It was suggested to send to the faculty more information about grade inflation along with the survey.

Faculty Life – (*Wythe Holt & Nick Stinnett*) The proposed resolution recommending all administrators be appointed from the ranks of tenured UA faculty came from the Faculty Life committee. A survey of the faculty with 400 responses so far has revealed very little support for this policy. This issue will be revisited at the Senate meeting with more results from the faculty survey available at that time.

Student Affairs – (*Clark Midkiff & Jeff Richetto*) A resolution, “**2003 USA Today All-**

USA College Academic Team Resolution” commending five UA undergraduate students was proposed. The discussion included the process of selection of these students. The suggestion was made to invite the students to the Senate meeting in April for a presentation following a vote by the full Senate at the next meeting. This was approved by the Steering Committee.

The resolution pertaining to publishing class averages on transcripts was discussed. It was suggested to have a faculty survey and send faculty accurate information concerning this. The decision was that John Mason and Keith Woodbury will work together and a link will be placed on the Faculty Senate web page.

The changes made on the University web page have not received complimentary comments. The Faculty Senate link was redone and any suggested changes should be sent to Scott Webster, the web master. It was stressed that the Faculty Senate should be consulted and review any changes made to the web page. Planning and Operations committee should handle this issue. Catherine Davies will visit Scott and discuss this issue.

Ad Hoc Faculty Leadership Review Committee – (*Norm Baldwin*) Much data has been collected and a survey report will be taken to the deans and department chairs. A projected date for implementation would be fall 2003.

Planning & Operations – (*John Mason & Mathew Winston*) The proposed change of the Resources and Priorities Committee was not approved. This committee is also reviewing a change in the summer school schedule to have two four-week semesters. It was decided to put this issue on hold for the present time.

The results of the **Faculty Life survey** concerning the most vital issues considered by faculty to improve the quality of life of faculty on the UA campus will be emailed for comments and feedback. The committee will have a report to be sent out to the entire faculty and copies to be sent to the President and Provost and the committee will make recommendations. Some of those recommendations would pertain to child-care, a welcoming atmosphere and an improved UA image.

President Steve Miller, Vice President John Mason and Secretary Keith Woodbury were applauded and commended for an exceptional and outstanding job this past year.

Meeting adjourned 5:00 PM

Proposed Procedure for Selecting Faculty Members of the Committee on University Committees

Senate Operations

The Chair of the Committee on University Committees (CUC) will:

Survey the University of Alabama full time faculty and staff to learn who is interested in serving on CUC, as part of the regular annual survey for all University Standing Committees (usually in the latter half of January); faculty and staff will indicate their level of interest in serving on CUC.

Receive the lists of interested people when all Standing Committee interests lists are compiled and distributed (usually in early February).

Within a week of receiving the CUC interest list, deliver a copy to the Faculty Senate representative to CUC, attached to a list of continuing CUC faculty members and the number of faculty vacancies for the coming year

Work independently to determine appropriate nominees for any available nonfaculty positions on CUC.

The Faculty Senate representative to CUC will:

Receive the CUC interest list, the list of continuing faculty members, and the number of faculty vacancies for the coming year

Deliver the list to the Co-Chairs of the Senate Operations Committee, which in consultation with the Senate Steering Committee, will arrive at a list of faculty members for CUC. This list may range further than the original faculty interest list.

At least 3 working days prior to the annual CUC meeting (usually in March) in which recommendations for all University Standing Committees are determined, give the CUC chair a written list of faculty selected by the Faculty Senate or its representatives.

The Chair of the Committee on University Committees will then:

Add the Faculty Senate's faculty recommendations to those for nonfaculty positions on CUC.

Present the full slate of recommendations at the full meeting of CUC in which Standing Committee members are negotiated.

Communicate any questions or problems that might arise after the recommendations go forward to the Faculty Senate representative.