

FACULTY SENATE

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

APRIL 13, 2004 – 307 FERGUSON – 3:00 PM

APPROVED MINUTES

ATTENDING: John Mason, Mathew Winston, John Vincent, Bob Sigler, Margaret Garner, Karla Carmichael, Wolfgang Bertsch, Wythe Holt, Nick Stinnett, Mohammed Sharif **GUESTS:** Joanna Hutt, Dialog; Marlin Caddell, Crimson White; Gilbert Cruz, Tuscaloosa News; Merrick Weidrick, Crimson White

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of March 9, 2004 were approved.

The first action item on the agenda to be considered was the "**Resolution Honoring University of Alabama Student Members of the 2004 USA Today All-USA College Academic Team**". Suggested changes were to replace the word "hopes" with "plans" in the third "whereas" clause, to reorganize the information in the third "whereas" to correspond in each "whereas" clause with the names of the students being honored by the resolution and to move the information commending the faculty to the last "whereas" clause. It was stated that the accomplishments of these students should serve as an inspiration to others. The resolution was approved by the Steering Committee unanimously.

The "**Resolution on Religious Freedom at The University of Alabama**" proposed by the Academic Affairs Committee was the next item to be considered. A point brought up about the resolution was whether the "s" should be capitalized and the number spelled out in the phrase "section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment" in the second "whereas". It was decided to omit this phrase to make certain that the statements in the resolution were factual. It was suggested to keep the resolution short and omit all the "whereas" clauses and begin the resolution with the "Now, therefore, be it resolved" clause. The Faculty Senate passed a resolution in the fall concerning discrimination. It was also pointed out many resolutions had been passed by the Faculty Senate and that attention was diminished by the number of resolutions passed. If this resolution passes, it would be sent to President Witt and Chancellor Portera. It was suggested that the sentiment of this resolution could be relayed to the President and Chancellor in a meeting. In the past issues have been addressed by a letter from the Faculty Senate President to the appropriate people. The Faculty Senate President expressed his concern that the full Senate should have input. Mathew Winston moved that this resolution be returned to the committee. There was not a second to this motion. Karla Carmichael suggested a substitute motion stating that the Faculty Senate President be instructed to communicate the sentiments that came out of this committee to President Witt in a letter. It was expressed that this would be more powerful than a resolution. The affirmative action policy statement of The University of Alabama includes freedom of religion and decries religious discrimination. The substitute motion passed unanimously. John Mason will send an email to Marcus Brown, the composer of this resolution, detailing the actions taken by the Steering Committee.

A motion was made by Wythe Holt and seconded by John Vincent that a quorum was now present at this time and that the actions of the Steering Committee in this meeting be ratified. This motion passed unanimously.

The Faculty Life Committee proposed the "**Resolution Acknowledging and Apologizing**

for the History of Slavery at The University of Alabama". It was noted that the resolution does not mention placing a marker on the graves of the slaves buried near the Biology Building and it was recommended that this be included. Mathew Winston handed out information titled "Proposal for University Diversity and Inclusiveness" from the organization titled "Coalition for Change". This included a list of items requested by this group including calling for a memorial service this Thursday, April 15, at noon on the site of the graves of the slaves buried near the Biology Building. It was suggested to add "some faculty members" rather than "faculty members" in the third "whereas" clause since this would indicate that all faculty members had slaves. There was discussion about the word "prominent" in the last line of the "Be it resolved" clause. The Faculty Life committee members felt that "prominent" was preferred to "appropriate" and to omit specific suggestions as to the action the University should take to atone for this history. It was suggested that the phrase "be it further resolved that the University recognize the cemetery where the Pratt family and the slaves are buried with a historical marker" be added to the resolution. The Pratt family has markers on their graves but the slave's graves are unmarked. It was suggested to omit "to the world, and" phrase in the second "be it further resolved" phrase. Also suggested was to eliminate the phrase "heretofore not properly acknowledged" in the second "whereas" clause. In a walking tour the University acknowledges the slave quarters and the graves and has in publications and other ways acknowledged the contributions of slaves on campus. It was also suggested to change the word "commission" to "committee". A commission would be costly while the University is struggling for funding. It was accepted to eliminate the phrase "establish a commission of faculty, students, and administrators to study the connections between The University of Alabama and slavery, and to suggest what actions the University might take" in the last "be it resolved" phrase. Brown University had a two-year study of their historic ties and explained this history to their students. With the corrections the resolution reads:

Resolution Acknowledging and Apologizing for the History of Slavery at The University of Alabama

Whereas, in the period from the opening of The University of Alabama in 1831 until the Civil War, a significant amount of the state's revenue came from a tax on slaves, some of which was used to support the University; and

Whereas, slaves made a significant contribution to The University of Alabama; and

Whereas, some faculty members of The University of Alabama owned slaves, supervised the labor and discipline of slaves, and in at least one case used a slave as a laboratory assistant; and

Whereas, the current Faculty Senate represents a link to the body of University faculty past, present, and future,

Therefore be it resolved, that the Faculty Senate of The University of Alabama respectfully expresses appreciation and gratitude to those persons who worked as slaves at the University; and

Be it further resolved by the Faculty Senate of The University of Alabama that we apologize to the descendants of persons who were slaves at the University for such exploitation of human beings; and

Be it further resolved that the University recognize the graves of the Pratt family and the two slaves buried there with a historical marker; and

Be it further resolved that the University take action to atone for that history and to memorialize the contributions of slaves to the campus in some prominent fashion.

Proposed by Faculty Life Committee

The Steering Committee passed this resolution unanimously as amended and will recommend it to the full Senate.

Margaret Garner presented the "*Resolution In Memoriam of Marc Andrew Armstrong, M.D. Associate Professor of Clinical Family Medicine, Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs, University of Alabama School of Medicine, Tuscaloosa*" for consideration. Marc Andrew Armstrong overcame many obstacles in his life and returned to The University of Alabama as Director of the Residency Program and Associate Dean for Medical Affairs. He led the initiative for a new building and provided leadership during a time of financial crisis. Dr. Armstrong passed away one month after his retirement. This would be presented to his family at the dedication of the new building in June. Discussion included whether this would be on the Senate webpage, concern that this would open up requests for resolutions for any deceased distinguished faculty member, the excessive number of resolutions passed by the Faculty Senate, adding the phrase "The University of Alabama Faculty Senate joins with The College of Community Health, etc." in the last "therefore, be it resolved" clause and dividing resolutions into business and courtesy. It was suggested that the President of the Faculty Senate from this point on write a letter of sympathy to families of the deceased. Mathew Winston made a substitute motion and it was seconded by Wolfgang Bertsch that the President of the Faculty Senate write a letter of sympathy to be sent to the family of Dr. Armstrong and the College of Community Health Sciences expressing the sentiments contained in the resolution. The discussion of this motion included the points that the Faculty Senate meetings are very limited in time and this should be guarded, that the policy of writing a personal letter of sympathy to families begin following this resolution and that the letter would not have the meaning of the resolution. The motion failed. It was suggested to eliminate the last "whereas" clause and the addition of "The University of Alabama Faculty Senate joins with The College of Community Health Sciences, the Family Practice Residency Program in expressing their deepest sympathy....." in the last "be it resolved" clause. The resolution passed with two abstentions. Mathew Winston made a motion and it was seconded that beginning May, 2004, the President of the Faculty Senate write a letter of sympathy to the families and the college of any deceased distinguished individual when the college communicates a desire to honor an especially distinguished individual. It was suggested to refer this issue to the Family Life Committee to determine the policy to be followed in these situations. A "courtesy" and a "business" section for resolutions was the suggestion for a model for the policy. Karla Carmichael made a substitute motion to refer this issue to the Faculty Life committee to establish a guideline for appropriate acknowledgement for deceased individuals. Certificates and framing was discussed with preferences being stated for a personal letter. This motion passed to refer this to the Faculty Life Committee.

President's Report – (*John Mason*) No report.

Vice President's Report – (*Mathew Winston*) No report.

Secretary – (*John Vincent*) No report.

Senate Liaison Reports

Mathew Winston is the Senate liaison to the CUC with the new members being accepted by Dr. Witt being Keith Woodbury, Marvin Johnson and Karen Steckol. Carol Prickett

was commended for an excellent job as head of the committee. John Mason, as Faculty Senate President, is the liaison to the Resource and Priority committee and this committee has not met this semester. Only the executive committee has met. The Faculty Senate President or another Faculty Senate member has been on the executive committee in the past.

Karla Carmichael has been meeting with the Recreation Committee every month. Also the Mediation Committee will be meeting next Monday. It was pointed out that it had been requested that the Mediation Committee revisit the Mediation Document to clarify some issues. Some of those issues are assigning the responsibility of paying the expense of a transcript and obtaining legal advice. There had not been a Tribunal in over twenty years.

There were no other committee reports.

Legislative Agenda Committee – (*Margaret Garner*) This committee is working on another Legislative Breakfast before the summer. There is great concern about the funding allotment from the state.

Meeting adjourned 4:45 PM