

FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

MAY 8, 2001 - 3:30 PM - ROOM 307

(uncorrected minutes)

Attending: Norm Baldwin, Steve Miller, Bill Keel, Bing Blewitt, John Mason, Pat Bauch, Beth Macauley, Anup Agrawal, Terry Royed, Don Desmet, Robert Winters.
Guests: Pat Hermann and Steve Reeves of the Tuscaloosa News.

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee minutes of April 10th were approved.

President's Report - (Norm Baldwin) A request was made for the sense or reaction of the Steering Committee toward the **executive officers initiating resolutions** or other issues for committees when time is an important factor. The feedback was positive with the only reservation being that there wasn't an expectation of "rubber stamping" the executive officers initiatives.

The committee was also asked whether they cared if a sample of faculty were surveyed over the Summer in order to discover their leading issues and concerns. A survey of Senators last year revealed that faculty salaries, computer and technological support, and the faculty having a strong role in institutional governance were their priorities. The faculty survey would help us take as much action as possible to address the most important concerns of the faculty. Actions taken recently concerning the most important issues identified by the Senate include resolutions asking for an increase in tuition and supporting Constitutional reform. A concern that the surveys would be too close together in time was raised. A committee member also suggested that the faculty should be informed about how the data would be used and what the responses were.

The length of Senate meetings was discussed. Placing limits on how long Senators can speak and having the most important items at the beginning of the meeting were discussed. Amending rules to allow additional time for debate was also raised. A decision will be made at the August meeting of the Steering Committee on the exact format to follow to avoid long meetings.

The **Evaluation of Deans and Chairs** proposal ([attached](#)) has been discussed in meetings with those deans who were opposed to the first proposal and with several of the deans of the largest colleges. This committee is addressing the concerns that the annual performance evaluation is threatening to deans and that executive-level individuals need a longer time frame for showing results. This proposal is an accommodation to win the support of deans and department chairs. The members of this committee, who are experts in personnel management, propose annual feedback, not annual performance evaluation. The Deans interviewed feel this is an improvement over the first proposal, but several say that the faculty does not understand what deans do in their jobs and that they would prefer the surveys be voluntary rather than mandatory. Some deans have had bad experiences with their five-year review. Annual "feedback" would enable the deans to determine if they are out of sync with the faculty and would allow them some time for adjustments. The next step is to elicit feedback from department chairs and to build their support. The Provost rejected last-years proposal based on the sentiments of the Council of Deans. Committee discussion addressed voluntary or mandatory survey responses, student evaluation of faculty, the deans' concerns about administrative burden, an electronic survey instrument, whether chairs should evaluate deans, survey response rates, the length of time between surveys, and the anonymity of responding faculty. These suggestions and discussion will be taken back to the Ad Hoc Committee on the Evaluation of Deans and

Chairs for their consideration.

The **SGA** passed a **resolution** stating they would like to have faculty teaching evaluations posted on a web site. The students want a way to review teaching evaluations before they decide to take a particular course. If faculty use the on-campus testing service to process course evaluations, that information is on a web site to which all deans and chairs have access. Privacy is a major concern in allowing students to have access to this information. It was noted that if a student disliked a particular professor, some damaging comments could be posted concerning the courses taught by that professor.

Greek system integration has been featured in The Tuscaloosa News and the Crimson White. A motion was made and passed by the Steering Committee that a letter be mailed to Melody M. Twilley with the names of consenting Steering Committee members. This letter would express admiration for her courage in going through rush at The University of Alabama and for her willingness to go public with her experience. After being rejected by all sororities, concern for her safety was expressed. Several faculty members have remained close to Melody through this situation, giving her advice and legal counsel. It was agreed to move forward with the Greek integration issue with meetings throughout the summer to determine strategy and plans for the future. Potential elements for a Resolution on Greek Integration were presented (*attached*) and discussion followed concerning sanctions to influence the acceptance of African-Americans by white sororities and fraternities. Discussion addressed black ball systems, unified rush, and the possibility of withdrawal of financial support of those objecting to Greek integration.

A delayed rush is scheduled for next fall. The report on delayed rush did not address the purpose of delayed rush, which was to give students the opportunity to get to know each other and to increase the opportunity for an African-American to be accepted by the Greek system. It was asked that a resolution be passed supporting unified rush and asking for sanctions that can be imposed on those sororities and fraternities that do not end segregation. Greek integration will be an issue on the Board of Trustee's agenda at the June meeting. Other organizations on campus have been targeted due to gender issues. It was stressed that the emphasis should be on desegregation, not on integration, and that an action timeline be formulated. The media was commended for their excellent work with the Faculty Senate.

Vice President's Report - (*Steve Miller*) No report.

Committee Reports --

Academic Affairs - (*Desmet & Macauley*) A copy of a letter from the Provost received by this committee stated that the academic changes have been approved. The mid-term grades for freshmen, if handled correctly, will be extremely helpful to the freshmen and their parents.

There were no other reports from the remaining committees.

Legislative Agenda Committee – The ACUFP has filed a "friend of the court brief" supporting the Chancellors and Presidents requesting that K-12 and Higher Education be treated equally in proration.

A point was made that the Board of Trustees web page is password protected. Pat Bauch will check on this.

Meeting adjourned 5:15 PM

A PROPOSED SYSTEM OF FACULTY FEEDBACK FOR DEANS AND CHAIRS

(from the Ad Hoc Task Force on the Evaluation of Deans and Department Chairs)

- A. The consensus of our committee is to propose a system of faculty feedback for the purpose of professional development, or to help deans and chairs improve their performance. This system will *not* be used as a system of performance evaluation for the purpose of determining retention or salary raises. As such, deans or chairs will have exclusive rights to their faculty feedback. However, a dean or chair may elect to share their feedback with their superior, and a superior may ask to see faculty feedback with the understanding that their subordinate may refuse to share the feedback.
- B. The consensus of our committee is that the system of faculty feedback should be administered annually to all faculty. However, to reduce the administrative burden of processing enormous volumes of written comments by Arts and Sciences faculty, a sample of A&S faculty should be surveyed or all A&S faculty should be surveyed and a sample of their written comments word processed.
- C. We propose that a base, or core, feedback instruments be developed by the experts serving on the Ad Hoc Committee on the Evaluation of Deans and Department Chairs. This includes experts in public sector performance evaluation, private sector performance evaluation, continuous quality improvement, and psychometrics in education administration. These experts will develop instruments with the input and insights of the Provost, deans, chairs, and faculty. To tailor the instruments to the unique nature of different dean and chair positions, deans and chairs will be invited and encouraged to make additions and modifications to the base instruments.
- D. We further propose that feedback instruments be administered in one of two ways: (1) on-line or (2) according to the administrative mechanisms currently used to administer over 150,000 annual student evaluation instruments. We feel that a pilot study should determine which mechanism yields the highest response rate and the most valid and reliable data. A pilot study should also be administered in order to determine the questions that will ultimately be used in the base instruments (i.e., questions that provide deans and chairs the most meaningful information).
- E. Finally, our committee feels that faculty feedback surveys should be administered in the spring or, to reduce administrative burden and overloading faculty with surveys, should be administered in the fall and spring (e.g., deans in fall, chairs in spring). However, we also feel that the issue of when to administer a faculty feedback survey should not stand in the way of acceptance of the feedback system. Hence, we propose that the deans and chairs can decide when they want to have faculty feedback surveys administered.

Factor	New Proposal	Old Proposal
Purpose of the evaluation	professional development	determine raises & retention; professional development
Nature of the information generated	performance feedback	performance evaluation
	private feedback only for	information is for the

Publicness of the feedback	the chair, not the Provost; private feedback only for the chair, not the dean	evaluated dean and the Provost and the evaluated chair and his/her dean
Faculty to be surveyed	a sample of A&S faculty and all faculty in the other colleges/schools	all faculty
Who develops the	UA experts in performance evaluation, quality, and psychometrics	unscientific instrument feedback survey borrowed from another University
Frequency of the administration of the survey	annual	annual

POTENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A RESOLUTION ON GREEK INTEGRATION

The resolution that would address the following topics:

1. Black ball systems that allow a racist minority to override the majority sentiment in selections.
2. Segregated rush systems.
3. Selection systems that require a recommendation from an alumni when the undergraduate chapter desires to pledge a racial minority.
4. Threats by donors to withdraw funding to the University if efforts to integrate the Greek system proceed.
5. Threats by Greek organizations to socially boycott a fraternity or sorority that pledges a racial minority (i.e., refuse to date members of or to have social functions with integrated Greek organizations).
6. “Financial viability” objections to alternative forms of rush (e.g., rush delayed for two weeks or deferred until winter semester). In other words, the desire to place short-run financial inconveniences over the creation of a truly inclusive Greek system.
7. Creating a Greek system that has a lasting and thorough racial inclusiveness. Avoiding token integration of the Greek system.
8. Reinstating Greek accreditation. Adoption of prompt timelines for integration and eventual sanctions for Greek organizations that don’t make reasonable progress toward racial inclusiveness.

Note: To enhance our credibility, I also feel that we should appear to be balanced. Therefore, I believe that it would be appropriate to commend positive efforts and intentions of groups and individuals and to offer our help and morale support.