

# FACULTY SENATE

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

## FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

May 21, 2002 – 3:00 PM – 307 Ferguson

### MINUTES

ATTENDING: Steve Miller, John Mason, Keith Woodbury, Bob Sigler, Margaret Garner, Norm Baldwin, Frannie James, Subhabrata Chakraborti, Jim Eddy, Clark Midkiff, Nick Stinnet, Beth Macauley, Garry Warren, and Joanna Hutt, *Dialog*.

April and May minutes will be reviewed at next meeting.

The **Ombudsperson** election results were: 165 ballots cast – Philip Johnson 122 votes (will serve a three year term), Bryan Fair 107 votes (will serve a two year term) and Amy Ward 64 votes (will serve a one year term). The person with the largest number of votes will serve three years, second largest will serve two years and the third largest will serve one year. One Ombudsperson will be elected each year. These names with contact information will be posted on the University web page. The election was conducted by paper ballot. Electronic voting, as Steve Miller was told by numerous sources, was not possible. For future situations, this issue and solutions will be discussed with Priscilla Hancock.

The **Senate elections** from Arts & Sciences have been completed. Steve Miller will meet with the A&S administration to discuss methods to avoid this delay next year.

Copies of a letter to **Alabama Scholars Association** signed by eight present and former Faculty Senate presidents were distributed. The letter reaffirmed the "Resolution on Faculty Support for Diversity", academic rights to speak out on any topic, support for openness, good will and a climate of mutual respect and civility.

**President's Report (Steve Miller)** - President Steve Miller reported on meetings with the Chancellor and the Provost. Prior to the public announcement, the Chancellor contacted Steve to inform him that Dean Barry Mason would be serving as **Interim President of The University of Alabama**. The Faculty Senate steering Committee endorsed Provost Nancy Barrett for this position. It has been stated publicly that Dr. Mason will not be a candidate for the President's position. There will be a special meeting of the Steering Committee with Dr. Mason on Thursday at 2:00 PM. Reported during the meeting with the Provost was a survey of students conducted by John Dew of CQI revealing a **major problem with class attendance** in large classes. Several classes comprised of 417 students had a 73% absentee rate the day the survey was conducted. It was suggested to invite John Dew to speak to the Steering Committee to address some questions about how the survey was conducted and other issues. It was suggested that the University and student environment is in need of improvement and that the Faculty Senate should take a leadership role. The percentage of graduating students from the University is 61%.

The Dean's Council voted to accept all the changes in the **Intellectual Property Rights** policy. The members of the Steering Committee have not seen the final changes and the consensus was to review the policy in detail. This ad hoc committee appointed by the Provost was comprised of two deans and two faculty members. Terry Royed, a former senator, will be consulted by Keith Woodbury, and this policy will be brought before the

Steering Committee at the next meeting.

The University Bama Server pulled the **Coalition for Diversity Inclusiveness web site** at the instigation of a faculty member. There were some technicalities involved and Steve Miller wrote to Priscilla Hancock asking for an explanation for the removal. After Dr. Hancock consulted with attorneys, the Provost, and with the proper paperwork in place, the situation was resolved with the reinstatement of the CDI web site.

At the suggestion of the Faculty Senate, beginning this fall, the class roster provided on the web for faculty will include the **student e-mail addresses**.

Steve Miller asked for a consensus of the Steering Committee concerning benefits, salary inequities, treatment and other issues concerning 2500 working **staff members** of the University. The process of grievance was discussed, with the Ombudsperson duties being redefined as a resource for staff members, the creation of a staff senate or inclusion of staff in Faculty Senate being some suggestions. The Steering Committee was wholly supportive of the University staff, and this issue was referred to the Faculty Life committee.

Conducting a **Salary Compression Study** over the summer was suggested, but if that study was not done to take a position that money should be set aside for equity raises. A complaint was expressed that the option of taking a nine-month salary over twelve months is not available. This issue will go to Financial Affairs.

The **Faculty Leadership Review Committee** reported that a review instrument will be developed over the summer and hopefully be implemented this fall. There is some opposition to the Faculty Senate moving forward with the review. There is a five-year review policy in the Faculty Handbook. The resolution proposed that the leadership review, if successful, may end up replacing the five-year review.

The **Data Warehouse** discussion included the points that a year had been spent trying to decide what software to use. UAB had 20 million dollars allocated for this project. The software was not problematic but how the information is processed is the critical issue. The University can obtain the same system at a cost of 1.75 million dollars, which has been set aside through a bond issue, because the development has already been done at UAB. Paperwork of all three campuses will be adapted to this system. This transition will be an tremendous burden on staff. Doubts were expressed that the cost will remain at the \$1.75 million level and there were concerns about the transition. There are definitely some questions that have not been clearly answered by those in charge of this project. Through this system, financial and student records will be kept in the same manner at all three campuses.

The Faculty Senate President and a representative from each division will be included on the **Presidential Search Committee**. The request has been made that each representative from each division be elected rather than appointed. There has not been a response to that request at this point. The qualifications of a new President of the University was discussed with the points expressed that it should be someone with academic and business background and public institution administration qualities. Norm Baldwin will address this in his remarks to the Board of Trustees in June.

A conference titled "**Healthy Campus 2010**" was presented to various constituents on campus, this being the third seminar this year presented by Student Affairs. Methods to combat alcohol and drug abuse, low class attendance, a decrease in enrollment and other problems including minimal intervention by University agencies were discussed. There is no determination of the cause for the drop in enrollment. The suggestion was made that

high school students with slightly low GPA scores be admitted. It was agreed that the Faculty Senate should take a prominent leadership role to address these problems and to discuss this at each Steering Committee meeting during the summer with some plan outline determined by the end of the summer.

**Legislative Agenda Committee** – *(Margaret Garner)* A plea was issued for everyone to review the candidates and support only those that support education. The present governor has signed a "no tax plan" and this will be a blow to monies for education. The governor has also re-proposed a lottery for Alabama.

Meeting adjourned 5:00 PM