

FACULTY SENATE

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

MAY 13, 2003 – 3:00 PM – 307 FERGUSON

APPROVED MINUTES

Secretary Roy Ann Sherrod called roll and declared a quorum.

Attending: John Mason, Mathew Winston, Roy Ann Sherrod, Garry Warren, Bob Sigler, Mohammed Sharif, Francine James, Margaret Garner, George Franke, Catherine Davies, Wolfgang Bertsch, Norman Baldwin & Joanna Hutt, Dialog

The meeting began with a presentation from Hank Lazer, Vice President for Undergraduate Programs and Services. The first proposal concerned the establishment of a visible **site** on campus to **commemorate the academic accomplishments** of University students. The idea came about because Dr. Witt made a TV commercial about the five USA Academic All-American University of Alabama students and someone asked if they could place their hand and footprints in cement like the football players do at Denny Chimes. After more discussion, the idea grew that such a site would be a celebration of accomplishments of the entire University with the Library being the perfect location. A vision of the dedication ceremony would have all living Rhodes Scholars in attendance. Strong faculty participation is encouraged in setting the criteria and the development of this project. It was suggested to include citizenship, community service and other attributes in the selection of the recipients. The emphasis would be on undergraduates' accomplishments during their time as a student and honor them as academic stars. Margaret Garner made a motion to support the development of a physical site to recognize outstanding students and that the Faculty Senate participate in the formation of a committee to review those policies. Frannie James seconded the motion. During discussion it was suggested to determine the criteria before selecting a site. There was support for the motion expressed and a call to question. The Steering Committee voted to support this issue.

The second presentation came through Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. Bama Blast has been a social gathering and welcoming event for incoming students two days prior to classes beginning. A dignified **ritual and tradition for incoming students** to mark the beginning of their entry into college and a honorable community has been proposed. The activities of other institutions were researched. Students have been working on a Capstone Creed for four years. This is a statement about honorable behavior. At some campuses freshmen gather in a cathedral or have a procession through a gateway. The program suggested would be modeled on the Blount Initiative ceremony. In this ceremony, the students enter in a processional, have a brief ceremony, the student state where they are from as their name is called and they sign a beautiful book. There is a brief discussion of the ideals and values of the Blount program. It would be the goal to have the new ceremony dignified, brief, emotionally moving, memorable and individualized in nature. Students would possibly gather at the individual college in sub-groups, recite the Capstone Creed, learn what honorable conduct is expected at the University and learn some history about the University. They would then proceed to the Quad in a processional. They would be pointed toward the goal of graduation and acquire a sense that they are entering a community that has standards of honorable behavior and citizenship that is valued most highly. The President and one other speaker would address the students on the Quad and

then possibly at a reception on the President's Mansion lawn. August 19, the day before classes and the day after Bama Blast, would be the date of the first ceremony. Various groups have volunteered to participate – Campus Ministries, Alumni Association and others. Logistics may be a problem with 3,000 freshmen enrolled for Fall 2003, however, it is felt that those problems could be worked out. It was suggested to include music in the ceremony and perhaps next year have a contest for a composition to be used in the ceremony. Sound, lighting, physical presentation should be considered. The individualized identity of the student would be important. University students would be involved in the formation of this event. It could also be videotaped and used on the University web site. The Steering Committee was supportive of this proposal.

President John Mason presented copies of the signed **Tax Reform Petition**. A copy of Dr. Witt's letter concerning the "Proposal for Establishing and Maintaining Equitable Relationships in the Levels of Faculty Salaries" proposed by Marvin Johnson was handed out. Dr. Witt stated that he could not support this proposal, however, he has set the goal of raising the means of the salaries of our disciplines to the 75th percentile. To date, one response was received from the four government leaders (Governor Riley, House Leader Seth Hammond, Senate Leader Lowell Barron and Lieutenant Governor Lucy Baxley) who received the **Tax Reform Resolution** passed by the Faculty Senate. The response came from Lucy Baxley, Lieutenant Governor of Alabama, stating that she agreed with the assessment and now is the time to act on meaningful tax reform in our state. She stated that she is committed to working with Governor Riley and the Alabama Legislature to correct these systemic and serious problems with proper funding of education the first priority. The next issue for the Steering Committee to consider was the failure of Interim President Barry Mason to follow the procedure observed the last time a **Faculty Athletic Representative** was appointed. He chose to follow the written policy after being informed about the process used the last time a Faculty Athletic Representative was selected and that the Faculty Senate should be consulted. There was an agreement in 1996 between the Faculty Senate President Norm Stein, President Roger Sayers, Cully Clark and Gene Marsh for the Faculty Senate to nominate five candidates for the post of Faculty Athletic Representative with the University President making the final decision, however, no written record could be located stating such a procedure. When the Faculty Senate reaches an agreement with the President of the University, a written document should be made and kept on file and on the Faculty Senate web page under Policies. At the **SEC Faculty Governance Conference**, John Mason made a point to the current NCAA President that it is a misnomer to call a person a representative if there is an absence of input from those he would represent. The same point will be raised at the next conference held at the SEC headquarters in Birmingham, Alabama in the spring of 2004 hosted by the University of Arkansas. The Faculty Senate has the right to appoint the majority of the voting members of the **University Committees on Committees** and did not exercise that right for several years. Senate Operations is working on a timeline month-to-month document which would spell out the duties of the Senate and when those duties should be done.

A copy of the **SEC Faculty Governance Conference** held at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN on May 1 and 2 was handed out. The keynote speakers were Mike Slive, SEC Commissioner, and Myles Brand, NCAA President. This assembly will meet again next year. Some institutions had as many as five representatives but The University of Alabama had only John Mason, Faculty Senate President, present at the meeting. Myles Brand, NCAA President, is seeking support for academic reform in Intercollegiate Athletics. The new academic standards taking effect August, 2003, as stated in an Executive Summary – NCAA Academic Reform would encourage improved academic performance and progress toward graduation for all student-athletes. Specific rule changes include:

By start of year two – 24 hours with 1.800 grade point average.

By start of year three-40 percent of degree completed with 1.900 GPA.

By start of year four-60 percent of degree completed with 2.000 GPA.

By start of year five-80 percent of degree completed with 2.000 GPA.

Decrease number of remedial hours that can be used for eligibility.

All students must pass at least six hours each term to retain eligibility.

All students must pass at least 18 hours during the regular academic year.

*Increase the number of academic core courses taken in high school from 13 to 14; NCAA Division I Board of Directors will consider an increase to 16 core courses.

*Continued use of test score in determining initial eligibility, but adjustments made to rule

to improve accuracy and fairness.

If the student has a sufficiently high grade point average in high school, they will be allowed to sign a scholarship with no reference to their ACT or SAT scores. The increase in April to 16 in the core courses in high school will affect the retention rate. By year two, the student must have 24 hours with a 1.8 GPA and by year three, 40% of their degree must be completed. What happens if they change majors? By year four, 60% of the degree must be completed with a 2.0 GPA. By year five, 80 % of degree completed with 2.0 GPA. These requirements will affect athletes and they would possibly declare a less demanding major. The question was asked, "Is this demanding more of athletes than regular students?" About 60% of incoming freshmen graduate within six years and 61% of football players graduate within six years. An institution that graduates more could possibly receive more financial assistance and/or scholarships from the NCAA. If they are at the bottom of the list (there were 36 institutions that did not graduate a single basketball player in five years) possible penalties could be no bowl/tournament participation or loss of scholarships.

An **analysis of square footage** per student for the 31 SUG institutions should be available for the next Steering Committee meeting on June 10, Room 101F Student Services Center at 3:00 pm. It has been reported that the University has eight million square feet per 19,000 students and Florida State has eight million square feet per 36,000 students. An analysis of academic space usage will also be pursued.

The Tuscaloosa News contacted John Mason for comments concerning the Board of Trustees' stance regarding the Coach Price dismissal and is an ongoing issue. The Steering Committee supported John Mason writing a letter from the Steering Committee to Dr. Witt **supporting the dismissal of Coach Price** with copies to Chancellor Portera and the Board of Trustees. The opinion was expressed that this dismissal came on the heels of Provost Nancy Barrett, Sybil Todd, Bob Wright and John Dolly leaving their post and does this create a pattern and a message of fear and muscle management. It was expressed that in this instance it was appropriate for the President of the University to dismiss the coach since it was based on behavior and not on performance on the field. Margaret Garner made a motion for a letter from the Steering Committee, since the full Senate does not

meet until August, to be written to Dr. Witt expressing support and appreciation for the decision that reflects a commitment that character and integrity are of utmost importance and reflects that he has the best long-term interest of the University. Frannie James seconded the motion. A call to question resulted in a vote of support for this motion.

The **University Libraries Committee** proposed on 11-5-02 to charge faculty the same as students for lost books. This is a replacement cost of \$45 plus a \$10 processing fee. The Library is waiting for the Faculty Senate to approve this policy. This issue came to light after Betty Bryce sent an email to Mathew Winston stating that she had been on a Faculty Senate committee that addressed this issue several years ago. It seemed to have ended in the Research and Services committee and was not addressed by the full Senate. Mathew Winston made a motion to endorse the University Library policy to charge faculty and students a replacement fee of \$45 plus a \$10 processing fee. A friendly amendment was accepted after the motion was seconded by Margaret Garner. It was suggested to question what would happen if a very valuable book were not returned. The Steering Committee approved the motion with the friendly amendment. An email will be written by John Mason and sent to Dean of Libraries Louis Pitschmann, Debra Nelson-Gardell, Betty Bryce, Janice Simpson, Head of Circulation at Gorgas Library, and all members of the Steering Committee. This issue will be tracked as a decision made during the summer and during the absence of a full Senate meeting. Catherine Davies will obtain the complete policy and present it during the June Steering Committee meeting.

A proposal regarding **reallocation of an academic unit's allocated physical facilities** will be turned over to Planning and Operations committee. Space reallocation decisions have been made and the department chair was not notified. There is space usage by the College of Education in Foster Auditorium for handicapped children, classroom space and faculty offices. This usage seems to have been disregarded in making a decision about Foster Auditorium. Mathew Winston will draft a document addressing this issue. More information will be obtained concerning this. It was suggested to discuss this with the Provost in their next meeting on May 14 with the Steering Committee. An email will be sent to the Provost stating that this question will be asked in their meeting. If further action is needed, the Steering Committee will do so in their June meeting.

A number of emails received by the President of the Faculty Senate concerns and **protests the increase of Recreation Center membership fees**. This will be assigned to Faculty Life. Information about the SUG average fees and facilities will be obtained and shared with the Steering Committee. Parking fees are also being increased.

There is a proposed change to the by-laws regarding nominations for **ombudspersons**. The proposal would allow others to nominate candidates. The present policy is that the current ombudspersons are the only ones who can nominate a candidate for a vacancy. This will be turned over to the Senate Operations Committee. It was suggested to have posted on the Faculty Senate web page the duties and functions of the ombudsperson.

Norm Baldwin gave a report on **Faculty Feedback and Review**. Over two years ago, the Faculty Senate passed a proposal for a system of feedback for Deans and Chairs. The feedback system was not accepted by the Council of Deans. A new proposal had the feedback kept private which was not accepted. Finally, the Faculty Senate decided to act and compose a survey instrument. The final draft will be given to the Steering Committee this summer with possible approval by the full Senate in the fall. The survey will be implemented in September following approval by the Senate.

Academic Affairs – (*John Vincent & Garry Warren*) No report.

Faculty Life – (*Karla Carmichael & Nick Stinnett*) No report.

Financial Affairs – (*Catherine Davies & George Franke*) Committee members have been asked to think ahead to the issues that should be covered in their next meeting.

Planning & Operations – (*Mohammed Sharif & Mathew Winston*) A written report was turned in reviewing the actions of this past year. The issues included: parking space at Ferguson for Post Office, campus recycling, establishing and maintaining equitable relationships in the level of faculty salaries which was proposed by Marvin Johnson, the academic calendar, consideration of changing the name of the Planning and Operations Committee to Resources and Priorities Committee to replace the University's existing Resources and Priorities Committee which was opposed by the Deans and the reallocation issue.

Research & Service – (*Wolfgang Bertsch & Don Hooks*) John Mason will email the co-chairs a copy of their assigned duties.

Senate Operations – (*Harry Price & Frannie James*) This committee is working on a calendar for actions to be taken by the Senate and the time and date that should happen.

The question was asked concerning the qualifications for faculty to serve in the Senate. The point was made that when changes are made in the by-laws, a copy should be sent to the Senators to copy and place in their handbook.

Student Affairs – (*Caryl Cooper & Steve Miller*) No report.

The 40th Anniversary Celebration of "Overcoming the School House Door Stand" will be held June 9, 10 & 11.

C&BA will induct Lena Pruett into the Hall of Fame in May.

Legislative Agenda Report – (*Margaret Garner*) The Legislature is facing a Special Session. A chart was handed out demonstrating the groups that are instrumental in the campaign for tax reform in Alabama. There is a media, citizens and education campaign and commitment in support of tax reform. The Governor has called in the HEP chair on every single point for the last couple of weeks and seems to recognize the leadership and participation of this group. Everyone was asked to be alert for any request concerning the Special Session.

Meeting adjourned 5:20 pm