

FACULTY SENATE

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

May 12, 2004 – 307 Ferguson – 3:00 PM

APPROVED MINUTES

ATTENDING: John Mason, Matthew Winston, John Vincent, Karen Steckol, Marcia Barrett, Caryl Cooper, Clark Midkiff, Robert Moore, Tatiana Takiropoulou-Summers, Jerry Weaver, Margaret Garner Guests: Joanna Hutt, Dialog; Marlin Caddell, Crimson White

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee Meeting minutes of April 13th were approved.

The Strategic Plan for The University of Alabama 2004-2010 was the first item presented for discussion. One area at a time was discussed with a request for objections, corrections or deletions. All were encouraged to provide input concerning this document. The subject sequence of the document is (1) research, (2) faculty and staff, (3) students and (4) the State of Alabama. The order of the subjects was questioned. The opinion was expressed that leadership was not on the level of importance as the other goals. The definition of leadership and the most effective methods to teach leadership was discussed. The document presents the efforts, effects and goals of The University of Alabama. One of the goals is for The University of Alabama to play a key role in performing these tasks or delivering these products to the state of Alabama. The *Mission Statement* was discussed with the following points being made: the grammatical correctness of the statement was questioned, the narrow limits of the statement "people of the State", "and beyond" should be added, referral should be made to The University of Alabama's mission statement, "bright and best" phrase was questioned and the grammar of the entire document should be reviewed. The "traditional 18-24 year old students" eliminates other groups of students. It was suggested to say "undergraduate students" or add "non-traditional" to the phrase. It was decided to communicate that the Steering Committee feels that non-traditional students are omitted in this phrase and that it should be reworded and grammar should be reviewed. Under section one the phrase "sharpen assessment activities of all campus functions" was replaced by "increase the efficiency and effectiveness of assessment activities for all campus functions". Section one basically is directed toward providing the resources necessary to be competitive for contracts and grants. It was suggested that the sequence of the document be more effectively organized. Under Section one the phrase "increase the recognition of the University's service priorities that enhance the quality of life for all Alabamians" was questioned. The question was asked if the University does have service priorities. HEP has a "did you know" newsletter with examples of services performed by faculty, staff and the University. The phrase "effectively use course offerings and class size to support priorities" means a class of three is not an effective use of course offerings. It also means that the course offerings and class size will be made to support the priorities of the institution. Low enrollment classes could be essential to academic programs, however, the point was made that the low enrollment course could be offered only one semester a year. Justification and need can be offered for low enrollment courses.

Section Two points of discussion were: the need of part-time faculty members and their benefits and status, concern about people being pushed away from old-fashion curriculum toward more innovative teaching, filling vacant faculty positions and the difficulty of

finding qualified faculty to teach combined courses. There were no suggested changes for Section Two.

Section Three points were: to increase the number of Graduate Teaching Assistants and funding for GTA's. It was decided to place this issue under Section Two (4) "Increase the number of graduate research and teaching assistants and provide competitive salaries and benefits".

Section Four points were: the suggestion was to move the fifth item up to item number three and add "reward" to the phrase, "develop and *reward* leadership skills", add "civic" to "produce scholars who will be come academic and *civic* leaders in their disciplines", the recommendation to either omit the phrase "provide leadership in the performing arts in Alabama" or broaden the statement to include all other academic areas. It was also suggested to move the leadership phrase up one space placing it before the "support our alumni" phrase.

A letter containing these suggestions will be sent to John Dew, CQI Director and Provost Judy Bonner by President John Mason.

The possibility and methods of raises and merit raises were discussed. There are concerns about the criteria that will be used for merit raises. There was also discussion of accountability, policies, legal aspects, monitoring and financial output concerning computer privacy. It was explained that the policy is broad and there is concern about bogging down the network of the institution. There was no action taken on these two items.

Bob Sigler presented *Issues on Teaching*. The Provost has requested comments from the Steering Committee. The opportunity to have input should be taken and any responses should be forwarded to the Provost. The difficulty of measuring the success of students following the completion of a course would be very difficult. The opinion was expressed that teaching can be evaluated. There are hours put in by the faculty outside the classroom and in research. The question was asked about how graduate students are evaluated and supervised in their teaching duties. Some methods would be to talk with the students taking the class and to evaluate the response of the students to the teacher. John Mason asked the Academic Affairs committee to present a recommendation for the Steering Committee to consider at the next meeting on June 22. Everyone was encouraged to respond to the Provost if they are so inclined. There was a Senate committee with Rob Ingram as chair that gave a report. The secretary will look in the files to locate and share that information with the Steering Committee.

There was discussion of students attending **summer school** at Shelton Community College rather than the University. Cost and teacher/student ratio and contact were some reasons given.

The **Black Faculty and Staff Association** will install the Officers of its Executive Board for the 2004-06 term at its Spring Retreat, Saturday, May 16, 2004, at the C. A. Fredd Unity Center. The newly elected officers are: President, Dr. Amilcar Shabazz; Vice President, Mr. Gregory Singleton; Treasurer, Ms. Felicia Linton; Parliamentarian, Dr. Bobby Wilson; Secretary, Ms. Brenda Elliott and Past President, Mr. Carlton McHargh.

John Mason has been appointed to the Search Committee for the Vice President for Advancement. There is not a chair of this committee and there is one candidate to consider.

Dr. Witt mentioned placing a cap on the amount a faculty member would be paid per

course for teaching in the summer. Some faculty members do not teach a course during the regular semester so they can teach it during the summer. Faculty members are paid 7 ½% at the University.

Vice President – (*Matthew Winston*) No report

Secretary – (*John Vincent*) No report

Academic Affairs – (*Marcia Barrett & John Vincent*) This committee was requested to present a recommendation to the Steering Committee at the next meeting concerning teaching issues presented by Bob Sigler.

Financial Affairs – (*Wolfgang Bertsch & Karen Steckol*) This committee will monitor the actions of the Benefits Committee. Goals and issues are being determined for this year.

Research & Service – (*Clark Midkiff & Tatiana Tsakiropoulou-Summers*) No report

Faculty & Senate Governance – (*Robert Moore & Jerry Weaver*) There are various elections coming up. This committee will be talking with the CUC. There were discrepancies in this area and a report will be presented at the next Steering Committee meeting. Rona Donahue is the Chair of the CUC.

Priscilla Davis is the new co-chair of the Student Affairs committee replacing Lori Messinger.

Legislative Agenda Committee – (*Margaret Garner*) This committee continues to monitor the activities of the Legislature. This committee was requested to circulate to the Steering Committee the increase in funds from the state and the increase in imposed cost by the state for PEEHIP from Teacher's Retirement.

The University took possession of Shelby Hall last Friday at 5:00 PM. There are problems with the air handling in the building, building code violations and other problems that prevent moving in this building that cost \$60 million dollars. There is construction and management of 14 projects going on at this time on campus. There have been many major problems in the buildings that have been constructed in the last few years including insulation and roofs falling in. There are critical issues concerning the maintenance costs involved and the oversight of these projects.

Meeting adjourned 5:05 PM