

## FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

JUNE 12, 2001 - 3:30 PM - ROOM 307

*(corrected minutes)*

**Attending:** Norm Baldwin, Steve Miller, Keith Woodbury, Margaret Garner, Bob Sigler, Jimmy Williams, Alvin Winters, Terry Royed, Bing Blewitt, John Mason   **Guest:** Dr. Ron Rogers, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Graduate School

**Dr. Ron Rogers** began the meeting with a discussion of **ACHE** viability issues. He indicated that The University of Alabama has discontinued 118 academic programs. This past year, 30 of our remaining 60 nonviable programs became viable. That leaves a small number of degrees for which mergers or waivers will be sought. We still have 15 programs that do not meet the viability standards for which we are seeking waivers. Waiver requests have been sent to the Board of Trustees for their June meeting. Following the Board's approval, waiver requests will be sent to ACHE to meet an August deadline. ACHE has four months to study the requests and make recommendations. We will have one month to respond. The final recommendation will be made to the commission for a final vote at their June or August meeting next year. If a waiver is granted, programs have three years to become viable. Permanent waivers are not granted.

Questions included "What happens to a program that continues to fall below the standard?" and "What happens if an ACHE recommendation is ignored?" No other institution has announced how many programs they have closed. The Commission's view is simple--if a program doesn't grant enough degrees, close it. The Commission has no prescriptions for earning the right to a waiver; however, the example of a German Master's degree program was provided. When the Mercedes Benz automobile plant located near Tuscaloosa, the demand for Americans with a Master's degree in German increased. The Commission has not been through this exercise before, so they have no precedents. ACHE will not consider any cost-savings argument for a waiver.

**Faculty Workload Database** - There is only one ACHE member that has the academic background to understand faculty workload and that member is attempting to enlighten the others. Further discussion of Faculty Workload Data included active and inactive dissertations and release time.

**Mediation and Grievance Document** - Dr. Rogers raised four issues with the Grievance documents. One issue is the definition of "petitioner." In recent years, a faculty member filed a grievance against a Dean who had terminated the faculty member's employment. In the proceedings, the Dean was the grievant. The Faculty Handbook states that in formal hearings the faculty member is the petitioner in cases involving grievances and the administrator is the petitioner in cases involving the administrator seeking to impose sanctions or attempting to dismiss a faculty member. There was further discussion of the definition of "petitioner."

Revisions concerning the selection of tribunal members by the Faculty Senate were proposed since the prior selection method was unsuccessful. It was felt that the Faculty Senate, with nothing to gain or lose, would select fair and understanding faculty members to serve on tribunals and that the Administration's selection of tribunal members would be a conflict of interest. Dr. Rogers agreed to leave the proposal as it is. One other point was that faculty members may obtain a transcript from a tribunal.

Another point of discussion centered on the tribunals having attorneys. In the case

referred to earlier, a phone call was made to the Dean of the Law School requesting names of individuals with legal expertise to assist the tribunal. Names were given, no one was appointed, and the Dean agreed that release time would be granted to the person assisting the tribunal. The concerns of the tribunal included personal liability and avoiding any procedural mistakes that might harm either party. The issue of paying the attorney was discussed with the strong opinion expressed that if the attorney was paid, then the Chair of the tribunal should be compensated for the time demanded to handle the procedures. It was noted that advice from University attorneys would be a conflict of interest and the funds to pay for an attorney for the tribunal are not available. With attorneys representing both parties in the procedure, the tribunal felt it certainly needed legal advice. The Tribunal had no precedent to follow since there had not been a Tribunal for fifteen to twenty years.

The Provost expressed the opinion that with attorneys involved, the process would become confusing, inefficient and distracting. On the other hand, is legal counseling needed for fairness and justice? If the faculty member is not happy with the outcome of the tribunal, the matter can be taken to civil court. The point was made that mediation and grievance processes were conducted by faculty members and are not a court trial.

It was suggested to disallow the presence of attorneys at the tribunal with consultation outside the tribunal allowed. The intervention of attorneys makes this a legal procedure rather than mediation and all power is taken away from the academic influence. As it is now, if the faculty member (petitioner) chooses to have (and pay for) an attorney, then everyone is allowed to have legal representation present. The University has its own attorneys and the administrator has access to free legal consultation. It was questioned whether the reference to compensating the attorneys from the Law School had been removed from the Mediation and Grievance document.

There was a general consensus of the Steering Committee to omit the presence of attorneys during the tribunal procedure but attorney consultation outside these boundaries would be permitted. The suggestion was made that an exception might be cases involving dismissal of a faculty member.

If there are changes proposed for this document, the delay of final acceptance could be up to a year. It was suggested that the document remain as it is and changes could be made later. The President suggested that this document be sent to the Senate Operations Committee for further review as a courtesy to the Deans. Procedurally, the Faculty Senate at this point has sent the document to the Council of Deans and with their approval, it would be forwarded to the Provost. The Faculty Senate would technically only have to respond to the Council of Deans if it officially submitted a request for consideration.

**Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Initiative Committee - (Margaret Garner)** The executives of the Ad Hoc Committee met with Chancellor Meredith and Vice Chancellor Nash in January and rejected the four questions put forth in a January 4<sup>th</sup> memo from Nash to all three campuses. The basis for the rejection was that those questions could not be answered without a review of the entire thirty-page Strategic Initiative document. The outcome of that meeting was the formation of the Ad Hoc committee to look at the proposals of the three task forces. Following the meeting, Margaret suggested to the Chancellor that the Committee be allowed to follow through with their regular governance procedure which would include a review by the Ad Hoc Committee, a review by the Senate, and a review by a faculty-wide forum. A response was not received. The Ad Hoc Committee had three meetings and each time it decided that input from several standing committees was necessary. It was felt that a report by the Ad Hoc Committee could not be completed within a proper time for standing committees to submit reports, for the Senate to act, and for the University to hold a faculty wide forum. The Provost and Pat Bauch were notified and a

letter was written to Nash explaining the situation with a request to delay the faculty-wide forum until fall. No response was received.

The original Strategic Initiative task forces had concerns about the proposal prior to its release. Nash requested a detailed report from Margaret Garner regarding those concerns. No response was received from Nash. The Ad Hoc Committee composed a strong letter to Nash and a response has not been received to date. Margaret Garner, John Dolly, and Pat Bauch met with Nash on June 4 and expressed objections to (1) the implementation date of three weeks from the date of notification, (2) the length of time given for the Ad Hoc Committee to do its work, and (3) the lack of communication from his office. The greatest concern of the Ad Hoc Committee is that faculty governance should determine the direction of our academic programs. The committee requested a firm letter of support from the Steering Committee.

The Faculty Senate is being asked for two members to serve on committees addressing a system-wide data warehouse and a system-wide student information system. It was suggested that a meeting with the Provost be held before forwarding names for those committees. Names suggested were Ray White, Rob Ingram, Margaret Garner, and Bob Sigler. It was suggested that those people be instructed not to agree to confidentiality since they are representatives of the faculty. Norm will send e-mail to the Steering Committee confirming who will serve on these committees.

**Distance Education (DE) Task Force** - To expedite the admission of non-degree students, the DE Task Force initially proposed to allow the Graduate School to make those decisions. The following compromise language was proposed: "Approval for non-degree admission is granted by the Graduate School when departments and programs grant the Graduate School that right." Basically, this potentially eliminates some red tape involved with admissions. The Steering Committee agreed with the compromise language.

**Faculty Survey** ([attached](#))- This survey will be e-mailed to faculty to help the Faculty Senate determine its priorities for next year. It was suggested that the survey be sent during the fall because of the many faculty who are not on campus during the summer.

**Greek Desegregation** - It was agreed to continue to move ahead with desegregation efforts. A [resolution](#) was handed out with a request for the Steering Committee to provide input. The resolution was composed with four points in mind: candor (describing the Greek system as it is), balance (commend people for the positive steps taken), inspiration for change, and to encourage involvement. This resolution needs to be ready for a vote by the Senate at the August meeting. The Student Affairs Committee also will review the resolution. An appeal will be made to the Board of Trustees to provide a leadership role in bringing about Greek desegregation. There was further discussion of a unified rush and methods to bring about the integration of the Greek system.

6:00 PM Meeting was adjourned.

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## FACULTY SURVEY

Dear Faculty,

Even if you take only a minute, please hit reply and answer the following two questions in order to provide the Faculty Senate some direction. Your answers will be *confidential*.

Thank you!

Norm Baldwin, President

Faculty Senate

1. What issues or concerns would you like the Faculty Senate to address next year?
2. Are there any existing University policies that you would like changed or any new policies that you would like the Faculty Senate to advocate?

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**A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR DESEGREGATION OF THE GREEK SYSTEM AND THE MEANS TO ACCOMPLISH THIS END**

**Whereas** integration of the student body at The University of Alabama has not ensured that the structures and organizations *within* the University are desegregated, and

**Whereas** the most egregious failure to achieve desegregation within the University occurs in a system of 36 all-white Greek social fraternities and sororities, and

**Whereas** desegregation of the white Greek system was addressed in Student Affairs in the 1970s and has been focus of Faculty Senate legislation in the mid-1980s, the early 1990s, and the year 2000. And whereas the Greek Accreditation Program mandated an end to segregation in the Greek system by 1996, and

**Whereas** none of these efforts or other efforts by the Administration have resulted in a single African American joining an all-white fraternity or sorority, and

**Whereas** a segregated Greek system is especially offensive to and discriminatory of African American citizens and students who, as taxpayers, share in the ownership of the state property on which these race-exclusive organizations reside, and

**Whereas** a segregated Greek system is especially pernicious and threatening to the rights of minorities because the system exists on *state* property, thus giving race-exclusive organizations the implicit approval by the state, and

**Whereas** failure to desegregate the white Greek systems relegates African Americans to a second class citizenship through denying them the equality, freedom, and respect called for in the Constitutional, moral, and theological frameworks that shape our country, state, culture, and University, and

**Whereas** the Faculty Senate believes that the majority of our students are not actively racists; that students desire an integrated Greek system; that a *minority* of racist students, alumni, citizens, and administrators obstruct desegregation of the Greek system; and that various structures, policies, traditions, and practices of the Greek system cause an “institutional” racism that inhibits the desegregation of the system, and

**Whereas** desegregation of the Greek system affords The University of Alabama a rare, profound, and historic opportunity to turn the page on our racially divided past and to write a new chapter in the racial history of our University.

**Therefore be it resolved** that the Faculty Senate calls for a desegregated Greek system at The University of Alabama that transcends token integration to realize a racial inclusivity that will bear the test of time and serve as a model of excellence for other institutions of higher learning. We call for a Greek system that will be a beacon to all that the University of Alabama is a sanctuary where minorities are welcomed, included, protected, and celebrated in all aspects of university life.

To this end, the that Faculty Senate advocates the following approaches to achieving a desegregated Greek system:

## **MEANS TO ACHIEVING A DESEGREGATED GREEK SYSTEM**

### **A. Unified Rush.**

Be it resolved that the Greeks and Administration work together to develop a system of unified, or integrated, rush that ensures that African Americans are exposed to the White fraternities and sororities and that Whites are exposed to African American fraternities and sororities. Such a system will enhance appreciation and understanding of the diversity of Greek organizations, identify who is interested and capable of pledging, broaden choices for rushees, and make a clear statement that the University has *one* Greek system, not two racially bifurcated systems.

Be it resolved that racial differences in rush systems, rush traditions, and threats to the financial viability of fraternities and sororities are unacceptable justifications for failing to develop and implement a unified system of rush. Let the Administration make clear that allowing minorities to realize their social equality, freedom, and self worth overrides short-run inconveniences and other morally shallow objections to a unified system of rush. Let the Greeks make clear that the success of unified system of rush is contingent upon their meaningful participation in the development of the system.

### **B. Modifications to Blackball Systems and Recommendation Systems.**

Be it further resolved that fraternities and sororities implement modification to selection practices, such as blackball systems, that would allow a small number of racially motivated Greeks to prevent a worthy minority from receiving an invitation to join a fraternity or sorority. Be it further resolved that sororities implement modifications to the practice of requiring recommendations from alumni in order for a prospective minority to receive a bid to join a sorority. Given that African Americans and other minorities have *never* been a part of the white Greek system at the University of Alabama, they cannot be expected to have the network of Greek alumni support that white rushees have.

### **C. Zero Tolerance for Alumni Threats**

Be it further resolved that the University should not accept financial donations to the University that are contingent upon maintaining a racially segregated Greek system or not pursuing the desegregation of the Greek system. We recommend that the University adopt a policy of zero tolerance for the bigotry of those who attempt to hold the University hostage by threatening to withdraw their support if the University proceeds with efforts to desegregate the Greek system or any other structures within the University.

### **D. Sanctions for Racial Discrimination in Selection and for Social Boycotts**

While sanctions should be reserved for extreme and recurring problems, denying an individual admission to a fraternity or sorority because of their minority status is an invidious act that should be met with University sanctions. Threats to socially boycott (e.g., refuse to date members of or hold social functions with) fraternities or sororities that want to integrate and actions that coerce individuals to socially boycott fraternities or sororities that do integrate are also invidious acts that should be met with sanctions.

### **E. Greek Accreditation**

Be it further resolved that the University re-institute the Greek Accreditation Program in which fraternities and sororities are expected to make progress toward racial inclusiveness within a timeframe. Timeframes should be sensitive to the genuine efforts and progress of Greek organizations and to the historical passivity of some Greek organizations. Failure to make efforts or progress within reasonable timeframes should result in measures commensurate with the seriousness of the failure. Measures might include increased Student Affairs assistance in and oversight of desegregation efforts, more aggressive plans for desegregation, reductions in social functions (parties), limits on participation in intramural sports, and suspension from campus. Suspension from campus should be reserved for fraternities and sororities that are the most passive and resistant to desegregating the Greek system and for fraternity and sororities that arbitrarily discriminate against minorities. Although the Faculty Senate prefers that Greek desegregation occurs without force or sanctions, we recognize that, without such means as a final resort, desegregation has not occurred and minority students such as Melody Twilley have been subjected to racial discrimination.

#### **F. Faculty Involvement and Rewards for Involvement**

Be it further resolved that we the faculty extend ourselves beyond our admonitions to desegregate the Greek system to become a part of the team to help implement the changes necessary for desegregating the Greek system. We implore the faculty to attend Greek functions, to become advisors to Greek houses, to help identify students who might be interested in integrating fraternities or sororities, and to inspire inclusiveness by setting an example of inclusiveness. We further encourage the administration to demonstrate its commitment to the desegregation of the Greek system by rewarding faculty and staff who become involved in this important cause.

#### **G. Commendations for Outreach**

Recognizing that Greek organizations at the University of Alabama have increased their interracial outreach in recent years, the Faculty Senate commends the interracial Greek Week and Homecoming competition teams, the interracial philanthropic activities, and the interracial dinner swaps among Greeks. We commend Alpha Phi Alpha, Delta Kappa Epsilon, Omega Psi Phi, and Phi Pi Kappa Phi for their interracial social events. We commend the white sororities that participated in National Pan-Hellenic Council step show. We also commend the Dean of Student's Office for its advice and inspiration for many of these activities and for conducting diversity training of Greek Presidents and recruitment officers over the past two years. However, we *especially commend* the racial integration that has occurred in the African American fraternities and sororities in past years and the Dean of Students' Office efforts to identify and cultivate existing Greek organizations that are committed to integration, students who might be willing integrate the white Greek system, and new fraternities and sororities that would colonize at UA as a racially integrated organizations.

#### **H. Concluding Charge**

Believing that the majority of our student are not actively racist, the Faculty Senate implores our Greeks to let their conscience rise to the level of voice and action against the individuals, policies, and structures that prevent African American and other minorities from realizing their rightful status on our campus. We implore the Greeks to stand tall against the forces of racism in the Greek system and to let no one stand alone in this struggle. And to this end, the Faculty Senate pledges its support and calls on Greek alumni, the national Greek organizations, University administrators and staff, and the citizens of our State to stand alongside the Greeks who step forward to bring about the changes necessary for desegregating the Greek system. Let us unite to open *all* the doors

*within* the University of Alabama so that no student will fear or experience rejection because of the color of their skin or any other arbitrary physical characteristic. Let us unite to show all the people that the racially divisive forces that tarnished the image and reputation of the University of Alabama in the 20<sup>th</sup> century will not be permitted to restrain the open arms and warm embrace of The University of Alabama in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.