

FACULTY SENATE

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

July 9, 2002 – 307 Ferguson – 3:00 pm
Minutes

ATTENDING: Steve Miller, Keith Woodbury, Margaret Garner, Beth Macauley, Harry Price, Jim Eddy, Subhabrata Chakraborti, Wythe Holt, Frannie James, Catherine Davies, Norm Baldwin.

Guests: Joanna Hutt, Dialog, Richard Keeling & Eric Engstrom, representatives of Ascend Student Health Services, and Delynne Wilcox, Healthy Campus 2010 Coordinator from Russell Student Health Center, Dr. Nancy Barrett, Provost

The June 11 Steering Committee minutes were approved with one correction.

Dr. Rich Keeling, representative and consultant for Ascend Student Health Services, began his presentation, "Healthy Campus 2010," with his background and credentials. Dr. Keeling, a physician, has been involved in college health services for 25 years at the University of Virginia-Charlottesville and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He began consulting work three years ago. The purpose of this initiative is to support the academic mission of the University. Generally, universities do not offer health services, however, it is a way to support academics and create a better environment for learning and addressing the whole health concerns of the broader campus population. This is considered more an intervention than a service. The viewpoint is that learning and health are closely connected. Students experiencing health and well being, both internal and external, will learn more easily. Social and cultural conditions among students such as patterns of behavior like binge drinking, or patterns of prejudice or attitude could be improved by systemic changes or initiatives. The effort will be to bring together existing and new resources to contribute to a healthy campus. A steering committee of twenty people has been chosen and charged with the responsibility of assessing data, determining priorities and stimulating a number of projects. These projects need to be focused on health issues that matter in this process. Some of those health issues are things that keep students from graduating, things that make them feel uncomfortable and things that prevent them from attending class and impair relationships. These were questions asked: What kind of success have you had at other places? What intervention strategy do you recommend? Have you given thought to the dominance of the elite here on campus? Examples of past successes included Wisconsin intervention that did not waste time telling students to say "no". That doesn't work. Their concentration was on changes in policy, increased and enforcement of university conduct standards and through community and institution efforts, a reduction hours that alcohol was served at outlets near the campus. The problem at Rollins College was recruiting, retaining and graduating African American students. In interviews, the students felt the campus was unhealthy, dangerous and "toxic." After researching those issues, it was found that the students felt "swindled". Among other things, recruiting brochures and publicity portrayed a much higher African American student population than was actually attending Rollins. The resolution was to truthfully represent what the campus is like and give the students a more realistic view of what to expect when they arrived on campus. Many of the interventions that could possibly be used would be academic. The first six to ten weeks of freshmen on campus can be filled with negative situations. Students should be linked as soon as possible with a faculty

member, not as a counselor or mentor, but an academic contact from whom the students would be comfortable seeking information. Most Alabama students come from a more privileged and traditional background. The worst mistake the university could make would be to ignore the importance of dealing fundamentally with those concerns. Discussion points were the perception that the public has of Alabama, whether true or not, are very serious issues and must be addressed. The question was raised concerning at times high faculty demands of students crossing the line of abusing student's time and commitments was raised. This initiative would look at that situation and many others. Money and time cannot be wasted. Efforts by faculty to prohibit some drinking situations were not successful. This consulting firm is being paid by Student Affairs. The Steering Committee will need to decide what avenue the Faculty Senate will take – support this consulting effort or go in another direction.

President's Report – (*Steve Miller*) John Mason has been assigned to Dean Olin's **University-wide Budget Planning Committee**. Dr. Mason and the provost would like feedback concerning **posting mid-term grades**. Reminders about posting grades need to be sent to Graduate Teacher Assistants. One faculty member stated that a parent called him regarding her daughter's grade and arranged a face-to-face meeting. It was the first time in twenty years of teaching that a parent had contacted him. The faculty member was concerned what he could say and not say. A sheet needs to be provided with information about what a faculty member can divulge to a parent. This and other points will be discussed with the Provost at our next meeting. Student Affairs members of Dean Green's **Enrollment Task Force** have inquired about the possibility that faculty members wear an "Ask Me" button during the first two weeks of school to inform students that they can ask them for assistance. The Steering Committee endorsed this idea. **Grade inflation** is an issue to look at closely this fall. This topic was assigned earlier this summer to the Academic Affairs Committee to study. People have believed in the past that student retention falls at the feet of the faculty. That is not the reality. Connie Diggs of the Russell Student Health Center was quoted recently in the Crimson White that students complain classes are boring and that is the reason students do not attend class, and whose fault is that... After being contacted, she said she had been misquoted. **Class capacity** is also being reviewed. This is considered a redistribution of resources and is interrelated with increasing faculty salaries along with other issues being considered. All three campuses are reallocating internal resources. The Steering Committee feels strongly that the Board of Trustees must take a more active role in obtaining increased funding for higher education. The new **Student Information System** will be in place by 2006. Mal Moore, Athletic Director, will be invited to a Steering Committee meeting to discuss the budget of the Athletic Department and methods for faculty and athletics to work together for the enhancement of the university. It was also suggested to invite Pat Whetstone, Director of Alumni Affairs, to a Steering Committee meeting to discuss the decrease in alumni donations.

The next **Steering Committee meeting** will be held in the Conference Room, 4th floor of Alston Hall, on August 20th. This will be for the August meeting only.

The Provost has asked for feedback considering the "**Super Archive**" project. A Super Archive would be "institutional repositories" maintained online, with copies of research papers, data sets and other work both ongoing and finished. Proponents say this would increase communication among scholars with the power of science being in shared ideas. It was suggested and approved that a "wait and see" position be taken.

Senate Operations – (*Harry Price & Frannie James*) The Senate Operations committee has proposed that the Graduate Student Association be asked to select a delegate to the Faculty Senate. If accepted by a vote of the faculty senate, inclusion and a voice in the

Senate for the GSA would result. This change would need a revision of the Senate By-laws. A letter will be sent to each group (Retired Faculty Association of The University of Alabama, Professional Staff Committee, Office/Clerical/Technical Staff Committee, Maintenance Personnel Committee, Student Government Association, Office of Alumni Affairs and Graduate Student Association if added) informing them of the opportunity to participate in the Faculty Senate this fall. It was proposed and approved to eliminate a seat on the Steering Committee for these groups.

The Steering Committee agreed to invite Dr. Barry Mason, Acting President of the University, to the first Faculty Senate meeting on August 27, 2002.

Further discussion of the "**Healthy Campus-2010**" project concluded with a proposal that each Senate committee look at issues and bring forward new ideas and suggestions pertaining to a healthy campus. It was suggested that the lack of details in the presentation was deliberate. Any specific suggestions at this point would possibly raise objections, and more information and data needs to be gathered. The Faculty Senate charges each committee with specific issues to discuss and make recommendations. There was a concern that a University full-time employee has been assigned to this project in addition to their other full-time duties. There are questions to be resolved before the University moves ahead with this project.

Legislative Agenda Committee – (*Margaret Garner*) The Legislative Agenda Committee met with Dr. Robert Bentley (running against Jeanette VanderMeer) and John Merrill (running against Gerald Allen). The committee will be meeting with other candidates. An article will be published in *Dialog* stating where many candidates stand on issues. If you are willing to assist with a membership drive for HEP, please contact Steve or Margaret.

New Business – Wythe Holt has had his article stating the reason we have the federal court system adopted unanimously by the Supreme Court. Kudos to Wythe!

Old Business – None

4:50 PM Meeting adjourned