

FACULTY SENATE

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

July 22, 2003 – 3:00 – Room 166 Rose Administration Building

ATTENDING: John Mason, Mathew Winston, Garry Warren, Roy Ann Sherrod, George Franke, Harry Price, Frannie James, Margaret Garner, Joanna Hutt, Dialog

The Steering Committee minutes of May 13 and June 10 were approved. The minutes will be done in 12-point font at the request of the committee.

Two supporting **resolutions** were presented regarding the **tax reform** package presented by Governor Bob Riley. The troubling issue to the committee is that there is no earmarking of funds for education in the proposed tax package. The shorter version of the tax reform resolution is modeled after the HEP resolution and the other resolution is modeled after the tax reform resolution passed by the Senate in April. The only difference in the resolutions is the wording – the basics are the same. The first "whereas" in the longer version states "whereas the citizens of Alabama continuously identify funding of public education as the highest priority of the state". The point was made that not all would classify funding of public education as their highest priority and that the HEP version would include more people supporting the same resolution. It was suggested to change "K-Ph.D." to "K-Higher Education" and would include all educational institutions in Alabama. The other changes to the resolution are adding "Riley" to the last paragraph and adding a comma after "public education" in the third "whereas". The Steering Committee agreed to bring the resolution, as amended, to the floor of the Senate for their discussion. This would be without any recommendation from the Steering Committee regarding approval or disapproval since there is not a quorum present today to officially conduct business. There is another Steering Committee meeting prior to the first full Senate meeting in August.

John Mason commended Margaret Garner on the outstanding work she and others have done regarding the **tax reform initiative**. Due to their efforts, The University of Alabama has taken the lead among educational institutions in promoting the tax reform. Bill Jones, Scott Bridges, Pat Whetstone and Charlotte Harris were also commended for their work in this area. A list of Student Initiatives, Faculty Initiatives, Staff Initiatives, Campus Wide Initiatives, Community Initiatives, Dates Identifies and Web Sites for additional information was given out. There will be a rally held August 27 on the Quad at 5:30 pm. There will be phone banks and four forums conducted with everyone encouraged to attend one of the forums. The Steering Committee was encouraged to volunteer for participation in the efforts to get the tax reform passed by the voters on September 9.

The proposed change to by-laws regarding nominations for **Ombudspersons** proposed by Marvin Johnson was presented. The current by-law regarding nominations for Ombudspersons states: "The three ombudspersons shall function as a nominating committee by identifying candidates for election each year. Every effort shall be made to nominate multiple candidates and to rotate representation through the various departments and colleges over a period of time."

Suggested Changes to Marvin Johnson's Proposed Change Regarding Nominations for Ombudspersons

(recommendation of Senate Operations Committee)

Below are suggested changes to the "Proposed Change to By-Laws Regarding Nominations for Ombudspersons" presented to the Steering Comm. On 5/13/03:

Changes are in parentheses.

"10) At least two months ... shall be sent to the (faculty senate) requesting ... The names of all nominees shall be ... Committee. (These will be reviewed by Senate Ops for candidates who meet the criteria. A slate of nominees will be distributed for election at the same time as Senate Elections)."

So, the changes are: 1) to strike "entire faculty" in the first sentence & replace it with "faculty senate"; 2) to strike all following "Senate Operations Committee" in the 4th sentence & all of the 5th sentence & replace it with "These will be reviewed by Senate Operations Committee for candidates who meet the criteria. A slate of nominees will be distributed for election at the same time as Senate Elections."

**Proposed Change to By-Laws
Regarding Nominations for Ombudspersons
(proposed by Marvin Johnson)**

10) At least two months prior to the review of nominees by the faculty senate, an announcement shall be sent to the entire faculty *Faculty Senate* requesting nominations for candidates for the position of Ombudsperson. Any member of the faculty may nominate a candidate. This announcement shall be accompanied by a copy of the guide-lines, a list of current Ombudspersons, their term limits, and the academic units they represent (A&S, Business and Engineering, All Other). The names of all nominees shall be sent to the President of the Faculty Senate and to the Chairperson of the Senate Operations Committee and shall be circulated to the entire Senate at least one month before the nominees are reviewed by the Senate. Any faculty member who nominates a candidate may attend the Senate Meeting during which candidates are reviewed and approved may speak on behalf of their nominee. *These will be reviewed by Senate Operations Committee for candidates who meet the criteria. A slate of nominees will be distributed for election at the same time as Senate Elections.*

Current By-Laws Regarding Nominations for Ombudspersons

10. The three ombudspersons shall function as a nominating committee by identifying candidates for election each year. Every effort shall be made to nominate multiple candidates and to rotate representation through the various departments and colleges over a period of time.

Discussion included the method that would be used for the faculty to nominate a candidate for Ombudsperson. One suggestion was for the representing senator of that college or school to ask his constituents for nominees and refer those names to the Senate Operations Committee. In that manner, any faculty member could nominate a candidate for Ombudsperson through their senator. The criteria for an ombudsperson would be a consideration and the number of votes (if there were 10 nominees, could they be elected with 11% of the vote) was discussed. This change to by-laws will be tabled until the August meeting.

The next item for discussion was **recreation fees**. A copy of a letter from Dr. Witt to Kathleen Cramer and Reba Essary dated July 7 regarding the increase in pool fees and a letter from Dr. Witt to Kathleen Cramer dated July 14 regarding University Recreation Committee Recommendations was handed out to Steering Committee members. The recreation fee increase was less for the summer with the major increase coming in the fall becoming effective August 31. Some changes in the increases have been made slightly improving the rate increase situation. The University of Alabama recreation fee in comparison with other SUG institutions is at the high end and the discussion with Dr. Witt should include the inclusion of Healthy Campus initiative. John Mason will revisit this issue with Dr. Witt. There were comments concerning the depth of the kiddie pool leading to a larger number of younger children swimming in the larger pool used by adults. The alumni membership rate has been eliminated. The use of the tennis courts was discussed.

Margaret Garner gave an update on the progress of the **tax reform initiative**. Fliers were included in the envelopes with football ticket order blanks. Web sites that are of particular assistance are [Campaign for Alabama](http://www.campaignforalabama.com) <http://www.campaignforalabama.com> and [A Better Alabama](http://www.abetteralabama.org) www.abetteralabama.org. Those interested can enter their information on these web sites and find out what taxes they will be paying if the tax reform is approved by voters on September 9. The radio broadcast call-in program concerning the tax reform proposal was primarily negative. It emphasized that there is a particular group of people that should be targeted to educate regarding the impact of the proposal. The tax reform would impact landowners and farmers. There are 47,000 farms in Alabama with 35,000 under 200 acres with the implementation being the current use above 2,000 acres. This would be 5% of the farms in Alabama. Howell Raines, then with The New York Times, stated in his UA graduation address the names of those CEOs and corporations that, in his opinion, had prevented the progress of the State of Alabama. There was further discussion of the lack of earmarking in the proposed tax plan. Trusting and holding the Governor and Legislators accountable for the direction of the funding is the compelling factor that every effort will be made to distribute those funds fairly. There is a projected \$500 million dollar shortfall predicted if this tax plan does not pass. This will certainly have a negative effect on faculty – young faculty would decide to move away to other states with a better financial situation. The Faculty Senate can assist by becoming well informed and assist in the effort to assure a positive result of the vote in September by volunteering for manning the 34 phone banks requiring 68 people, writing letters to the editor, encouraging colleagues and civic/religious organizations to become advocates for the tax plan. There will be buttons, bumper stickers, brochures and handouts distributed. It was suggested to have a sign up sheet at the Faculty Senate meeting with a sample message for post cards and letters. There will be informative brochures and talking points handed out at the meeting. The Steering Committee can organize and mobilize the Faculty Senate to support this tax plan. If anyone has questions concerning this issue, please call Margaret Garner.

The Steering Committee was asked what in their opinion should be the **goals and objectives for 2003-04**. The Senate Operations Committee plans to go through the **Senate by-laws and committees** for possible restructuring. They also plan to clarify and improve articulation between Senate and all University committees and develop a time line to reduce the need for institutional memory. There was a suggestion to have a retreat to present all issues at one time when those changes are developed and ready by the Senate Operations Committee. They are also discussing linking committee membership to Faculty Senate representation on University committees. Not all committees would articulate but there are some that would link with the Faculty Senate. **Leadership Review** is also on the main agenda this year for the Faculty Senate. Norm Baldwin, in consultation with Barbara Talmadge of Testing and Data Management Services, is in the process of developing the method of faculty voting. Issues include how to allow faculty to vote twice if they are under two different Deans. Norm will meet with the Steering Committee on August 19 to

give an update on the progress of this project and everyone will be better prepared for the full Senate meeting on August 26. The process of posting information on the **Faculty Senate web page** was discussed. Keith Woodbury is the Webmaster with John Mason as President of the Faculty Senate and Roy Ann Sherrod as Secretary responsible for the information posted on the Faculty Senate web page. All listings should be current and resolutions are linked on the web page. A new Steering Committee member questioned the number of resolutions passed by the Senate and the priority given to faculty issues. A statement was made that the number of resolutions written reduce the impact of resolutions and the number of email/correspondence to faculty should be reduced. Is the Faculty Senate really representative of the University? In the discussion, it was pointed out that the person has to be willing to serve. A faculty survey was clear on the issues that should be addressed by the Senate. The senator can ask colleagues for input and if that input is not forthcoming, good representation is not possible. Each college conducts elections as they choose. It was suggested to look at the method other universities use to elect senators. Unfortunately, it sometimes comes down to someone willing to serve. Two years ago, the results of the faculty priority survey was used as a guideline for issues considered by the Faculty Senate. It was suggested that those issues should be deeper and fewer. Comments included that the Faculty Senate has made progress in the last few years and that communicating with the administration and representation of the faculty is vital to continued success. It was suggested that Dialog publish more articles concerning the activities of the Senate and that effort to keep the faculty informed be accelerated. It was suggested that the senators assigned to committees have a specific and expressed interest in that area which would certainly make them more representative of the faculty.

There will be a meeting on Thursday, July 24, 3:00 pm in 254 Rose with John Schmidt concerning re-accreditation and a meeting with the Provost at 3:30 pm. Some of the issues on the agenda for the meeting with the Provost are the Leadership Review, the Faculty Participation in the Selection of Deans and Department Chairs Committee, and any issues the Provost would like to bring to the meeting.

Meeting adjourned 5:00 pm