

FACULTY SENATE

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

August 23, 2005 – 3:00 PM – Dean's Conference Room – Alston

APPROVED MINUTES

ATTENDING: Mathew Winston, John Vincent, Karen Steckol, Karen Burgess, John Mason, Priscilla Davis, Margaret Garner, Jim Hall, Steve Shepard, Bob Sigler, Jeanette Vandermeer **GUESTS:** Cresandra Smothers, Dialog; Louis Pitschmann, Dean of Libraries

The minutes from the Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting of July 12, 2005 were approved.

The meeting began with discussion concerning the number of faculty members employed by UA, and the number of faculty searches and vacancies. According to an article in The Tuscaloosa News, there are 63 new faculty members compared to 34 last year. Twenty-four faculty members retired, and 25 departed resulting in an increase of fourteen.

President Mathew Winston introduced Cresandra Smothers, new editor of Dialog, to the Steering Committee.

Dean Louis Pitschmann of the **University Library** addressed the Steering Committee. Prior to his arrival at The University of Alabama, the Faculty Senate passed a resolution encouraging the administration to fund the library on an annual basis in such a way that subscription cancellations would not be necessary. The yearly budget request for the library was granted. A small percentage of faculty members are retaining possession of library materials for an overextended length of time. A survey conducted by the library revealed that some colleagues were seriously abusing their library privileges. The solution of replacing missing materials is costly with the processing cost often equaling the purchase price. In the spring of 2001, the Library Faculty Committee recommended to a subcommittee of the Faculty Senate that faculty members be fined for overdue materials. Dean Pitschmann suggested that a committee be established to oversee the process of fines and appeals of faculty members. An alternate suggestion was to include this issue in the responsibilities of the Library Faculty Committee. The fine could possibly be the cost of the missing materials or a suspension of library privileges with registered mail notification sent to the faculty member. If privileges were suspended, a faculty member with dire need could obtain library materials with the understanding that missing materials would be returned. Dean Pitschmann will have the Library Faculty Committee make very specific recommendations and return to the Steering Committee for further consideration. Twenty-four boxes of books donated by a senator over a year ago have not been processed. Dean Pitschmann stated that there is a staffing problem at the library and that this matter will be attended to promptly. It was mentioned that some books are mis-shelved.

The **IRB** has split into two committees with Ken Wright continuing on the non-medical committee. Pieter Visscher was nominated to fill the vacant position on the medical committee. Susan Lucas will be the Professional Staff's representative to the Faculty Senate. Norm Stein was suggested as the Faculty Senate representative to the **Media Planning Committee**. Arts & Sciences are two senators short of the required eighteen senators for their college.

President's Report – (*Mathew Winston*) The announcement was made that the Faculty Senate administrative secretary will be in the Faculty Senate office on Tuesdays and Thursdays and any other hours that might be needed. The Faculty Senate Steering Committee will be meeting in 305 Ferguson. The Provost has agreed to cover the newly installed charges for Faculty Senate meeting space in Ferguson. The Provost will also cover the travel expenses for John Mason's trip to the state of Washington as the UA representative to the Coalition for Intercollegiate Athletics. The University of Alabama will host the meeting of the Alabama Council of University Faculty Presidents (ACUFP) to be held November 4 and 5, 2005. At that time information will be gathered comparing the Faculty Senate budgets at each institution. A major concern of the Faculty Senate for this year pertains to the number of filled and vacant faculty positions, and that this situation will intensify over the next few years. There was also discussion of health and safety issues and standards on campus.

Based on the presentation at the last Legislative Breakfast, the University would receive from the state approximately 14 ½% budget increase for this year. The question was raised about the use of those funds. Dean Culpepper Clark was the chairperson of the Growth Planning committee. Some committee members believe that this committee will no longer meet. The limited action of the committee was establishing some philosophical standards such as the money should follow the students. The question is, "Who will now be addressing the growth and planning for the increased number of students?" There are more freshmen; thus, more courses and faculty are needed. The instructions were to increase the number of graduate students which has been done, but no funding has been provided for these additions. The Honors College is dealing with a 20% student increase. It was suggested to discuss with the Provost the usage of the extra funds generated by increased enrollment. The cost of increased enrollment to the faculty will include larger classes, larger teaching loads and the use of different teaching resources. The suggestion was made to form a caucus in the most affected college to meet with their dean and then a follow-up meeting with the Provost to address their particular problems. There are smaller numbers of students being taught in advanced major courses. Students could be added without major hardship in those situations. Dr. Witt has been consistent with emphasizing his goal of increasing faculty salaries to the 75% percentile of the SUG average. It was reported in U.S. News and World Report a few years ago that UA had an average of fewer than twenty students per classroom. Increased tuition in the short term would be for faculty salaries; however, as time goes on, no longer can that expansion be maintained without increased facility expenses. This is looking at the third year, and it is no longer short term. Now the University is looking at the transition and the expansion of resources. There is a huge deferred maintenance cost of over \$100 million dollars with some of those maintenance needs classified as "serious". There seems to be a tendency to delay filling some faculty positions since those funds can be used for operating expenses until the position is filled. There was discussion concerning the mismanagement of new dorm construction. Establishing Faculty Senate membership on the **University's Resources and Priorities Executive Committee** is being pursued. The "Faculty Participation in the Selection of Deans and Department Chairpersons and in the Evaluation of Academic Programs Committee" has not met in several years.

Jim Hall was commended for establishing an integrated arts course for freshmen as part of the Creative Campus program.

The statement was made that the University is not alone in the efforts to increase enrollment and research. Efforts all across the country are being made in that same direction. Recruiters have been hired for the states of Georgia, Florida and Texas. The number of students from Georgia has increased. The recruiters for Florida and Texas have just been put in place and are working on next year's enrollment. The University's

objective is to be academically competitive.

Each Faculty Senate committee was urged to notify Mathew Winston of the times and places of their meetings. He would like to sit in on one of their meetings.

Academic Affairs – (*Marcia Barrett & John Vincent*) Marianne Woods, Associate Vice President for Research, has made some changes in **Appendix H**. The Provost has sent the revised Appendix H to the deans.

Student Affairs – (*Priscilla Davis & Karen Burgess*) This committee should contact the President of the **SGA** to determine a schedule for their representative to attend the Student Affairs committee meetings and for a Student Affairs committee representative to attend the SGA committee meetings. This committee should also review the issue of graduate student medical benefits. The Viva insurance program is available for each **graduate student**; however, the cost is prohibitive to most graduate students. Graduate students' pay is unequal across campus. The insurance program is a good value, but the money is a problem to those students.

Financial Affairs – (*Jim Hall & Jeanette Vandermeer*) There is a meeting with the Associate Vice President of Finance, Reba Essary, Dr. Lynda Gilbert, Vice Chancellor for Financial Affairs, and the Faculty Senate Financial Affairs Committee and the Faculty Senate Steering Committee on September 27th in Room 11 of Bruno Library. Some issues to be discussed will be PEEHIP, mid-career faculty years of service for retirement and if this creates a faculty recruiting barrier, and an update on attaining the 50% percentile faculty salary goal.

Research & Service – (*Jenice "Dee" Goldston & Clark Midkiff*) No charge.

Faculty Life – (*Steve Shepard & Nick Stinnet*) There will be a video conference in the Moot Court Room at the Law School on Thursday, August 25 from 1:00-2:30 PM. The meeting with the Provost will begin at 3:00 PM.

Faculty & Senate Governance – (*John Mason & Kim Andrus*) This committee was charged to investigate the revision of the election process of Ombudspersons. There was a very low response in the last Ombudsperson election. The Faculty Senate **web page** should be updated. This committee should check the online Faculty Handbook to make certain it is the most recent version. John Mason will create a link on the Faculty Senate web page to an application for membership in **HEP and the UA Systems PAC**.

Legislative Agenda Committee – (*Margaret Garner*) Support should be placed in those candidates that advocate for higher education. HEP and UA Systems PAC membership is very important and will be mentioned by Mathew Winston when he addresses the faculty. These funds support media and other activities, and the membership fee is half what teachers pay for membership in AEA. Next year is an election year, and everyone was encouraged to support the candidate of their choice. Lucy Baxley will have a fund raiser on September 20. Notify Margaret Garner or Bill Jones if they wish to attend.

Meeting adjourned 5:00 PM