

**FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 12, 2006 – 3:00 PM – 206F SHELBY HALL**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**ATTENDING:** John Vincent, Karen Steckol, Clark Midkiff, Carolyn Cassady, John Mason, Jeanette Vandermeer, David Arnold, Lowell Baker, Karen Burgess, Martin Evans, Douglas Lightfoot, Steve Shepard, Shane Street

**GUESTS:** Meghan Stringer, University of Alabama student

The minutes of the August 22, 2006 Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting were approved.

A University of Alabama student, Miss Meghan Stringer, presented details about the **Anti-apathy Campaign**, a student organization. The campaign is an effort to get people thinking, talking and considering the issues that are important to them. Through a response card or email, students may communicate concerns. With that information, relevant events and forums will be planned. Wearing the YourBand, a green arm band, signifies a willingness to discuss concerns and issues. Arm bands and pamphlets were given to the Steering Committee members. The campaign kickoff party will be held October 6.

**President's Report** – (*John Vincent*) Increased enrollment at the University has caused some **text books** to be in short supply. Discussion included the ordering process used by the Book Store, books in reserve for students, and historical class data. The Academic Affairs Committee will follow up on this situation. The Provost has invited the Steering Committee to lunch on Tuesday, September 19, at Mary Burke Hall. An email reminder will be sent with the time included. Gordon Stone, **Higher Education Partnership** Executive Director, has requested time to speak to the Faculty Senate. The **Evaluation of Deans and Chairs** is an item on the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee agenda. Information, opinions and interest concerning the evaluation process is being sought by the committee. Non-CUC recommended committee assignment letters have not been sent at this time.

**Vice President's Report** – (*Karen Steckol*) No report.

**Secretary's Report** – (*Clark Midkiff*) No report.

**Academic Affairs** – (*Marcia Barrett & Martin Evans*) A review of the **Faculty Handbook** is in process by this committee. An invitation will be issued to a University Book Store representative to speak concerning the unavailability of some **text books** for this semester.

**Faculty Life** – (*Steve Shepard & Lowell Baker*) Health care for retired faculty through **PEEHIP** is under consideration by this committee. The insurance rates are determined by the Alabama State Legislature. A yearly bill is presented to the University with no control options in place for the institution. The cost is minimal for the individual and high for the institution. A single retired person on Medicare pays \$1.14 a month for coverage with the University paying the approximate balance of \$600. If not on Medicare, the individual pays \$78 a month. Under the new retroactive retirement system, the PEEHIP fee must be paid by the individual, plus 2% a year each year of what the University pays for every year under 25 years of service. Those with over 25 years of service have an additional 2% reduction a year in their payments. A faculty

member retiring with 13 years of service would pay 24% of the employer's portion. Insurance costs will definitely increase in the near future becoming an important consideration for those faculty members hired in mid-career. The opinion was expressed that those hired before the new retirement system should be grandfathered in with those hired after the implementation of the new system given clear information about this issue. The options available to change this situation are very limited. The suggestion was made to make certain new faculty members are fully informed. It was also suggested that the Legislative Breakfasts would be a proper place to question the political candidates about their position on this issue. The Faculty Life committee will continue to research the **Family Friendly Campus** benefits. There are some maternity policies implemented differently from department to department. In an effort to unify the administration of those policies, the undertaking expanded to include the issues of family leave benefits, automatic tenure clock-stoppage for pregnancy and other benefits.

**Financial Affairs** – (*David Arnold and Jeanette Vandermeer*) Dr. Lynda Gilbert, Vice Chancellor for Financial Affairs, and Reba Essary, Associate Vice President for Finance, will give a **budget presentation** in a meeting on November 7, 2006, at 3:00 PM in Room 34, Bidgood Hall. More detailed budget information has been requested.

**Research & Service** – (*Shane Street & Clark Midkiff*) The proposed **Public Access Act** requires federal agencies that fund over \$100 million in annual external research to make electronic manuscripts of peer-reviewed journal articles that stem from their research publicly available on the Internet at no charge. The proposal has the backing of many research library associations, particularly in the western U.S. The Provost has asked for a recommendation from the Faculty Senate Steering Committee regarding support of this bill. Further discussion included the cost of making the information available, effect on the publishing industry, copy usage, copyright implications, publication and access time frames, and the peer review process. The Steering Committee feels that it has the potential to be a positive for the university; however, publishers discontinuing the publication of journals could be a long-term problem. It was recommended to have a university attorney review the bill for legal implications. President John Vincent will forward the recommendations to the Provost.

**Faculty & Senate Governance** – (*John Mason & Douglas Lightfoot*) – A box lunch meeting will be held October 3 at Ferguson Center at 11:30 to plan committee's agenda for the year.

**Student Affairs** – (*Carolyn Cassady & Karen Burgess*) This committee will meet on Monday, September 18.

**Steering Committee moved into Executive Session**