

**FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 9, 2008 – 3:00 PM – 206F SHELBY HALL**

APPROVED MINUTES

ATTENDING: Karen Steckol, Clark Midkiff, Jeanette Vandermeer, Marcia Barrett, Melondie Carter, Carolyn Cassady, Rona Donahoe, Margaret Garner, Steven Hobbs, Deidre Leaver-Dunn, Michael Martone, John Mason, Ed Stephenson, John Vincent

GUESTS: None

Roll call and quorum check by Faculty Senate Secretary Jeanette Vandermeer.

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of August 19, 2008 were approved.

President's Report – (*Karen Steckol*) President Steckol read a letter written by **President Witt** in response to the Faculty Senate's letter to him expressing the appreciation of the Faculty Senate for a job well done. President Witt expressed his respect and admiration of The University of Alabama faculty and reiterated his pledge to serve UA's faculty.

The appointment to the **Assessment Council** is Ray White.

The names forwarded to fill the vacancy on the **Evaluation and Review of Deans and Chairs Committee** included Tom Zeiler of Engineering, Melondie Carter of Nursing, Elizabeth Aversa of Libraries and Roy Maize of HES. An assessment tool and guidelines has been completed by this committee.

As President of the Faculty Senate, Dr. Karen Steckol will be addressing UA's **Board of Trustees** at their next meeting in Sellers Auditorium in Bryant Conference Center on September 18th. The main points of the speech were reviewed with a request for any input or suggestions from the Steering Committee. Discussion included the advance planning by UA's administration for a decrease in state appropriations, a good working relationship between administration and faculty and the particular issues the Board of Trustees will be considering.

The vacancy on the **Mediation Committee** created by the retirement of Mary Alice Fields should be filled. Any vacancy on the committee can be filled on a temporary basis by a vote of the majority of faculty representatives remaining on the committee until the Faculty Senate elects a faculty member to fill the remainder of the unexpired term. The Faculty Senate normally has the election in November or December with the elected faculty member taking office in January. Due to the minimal amount of time before Faculty Senate elections, the Steering Committee agreed to allow the committee members to vote on a member to fill the short-term vacancy. The question was asked if a Mediation Committee member rotates off during the middle of a procedure what is the process to follow. This is not addressed in the Mediation Committee guidelines. The name of the faculty member decided on by the Mediation Committee would be put forward in the November/December Faculty Senate election.

A female faculty member brought up the issue of the use of “male only” gender pronouns in the **Faculty Handbook**. The Academic Affairs Committee made changes in the Faculty Handbook which were forwarded to the Provost. Those changes have not been incorporated at this time. Language verification of the Faculty Handbook was referred to the Academic Affairs Committee.

The **United Way** campaign is underway with the goal being \$250,000 for this year. This is an increase of \$25,000 over last year’s goal.

The **SGA** has forwarded a resolution requesting Faculty Senate support for a suspension of classes for students to attend Higher Education Day in Montgomery, Alabama on March 5, 2009. The President of the University would make that decision. The Senate encourages faculty to allow time for the students to participate without penalizing them.

The use of the P-card for grant purchases is encouraged rather than sending requests through the Purchasing Department. The Purchasing Department is developing guidelines and procedures. President Steckol will ask the Provost for clarity on this issue.

A brand new system involving Part-Time Temporary Instructors (PTTI) is in use with everyone having to input information pertaining to this only one time per instructor. In the future cut and paste can be used to roll over the information every year into the same group. If you have faculty teaching English 101 and you want to pull from the same pool you can roll it over into the next year without having to input the information a second time. Only information about new instructors will have to be entered. Instructional classes have been held for training in the new system with very few attending.

Vice President’s Report – (Clark Midkiff) No report.

Secretary’s Report – (*Jeanette Vandermeer*) No report.

Academic Affairs – (*Marcia Barrett & John Vincent*) This committee met last week and one of the topics they will be considering is pay for part-time temporary instructors. The stipends are different across campus and the variances were discussed. The student enrollment increase has the university using part-time temporary instructors and adjuncts to teach in the absence of funding to hire full-time professors. An example was given of a tenure track professor being paid more than an instructor with commuting expenses as part of the teaching situation. The length of contract time for an adjunct has been increased with a movement toward a permanent contract. In some higher level research institutions across the country, a full-time professor only teaches a class of senior-level students or in the graduate school. That is the trade off when the institution moves toward seeking a higher ranking. UA is a high level research institution with emphasis on reaching the next level with a higher percentage of full professors teaching more classes than the average research institution. More and more institutions are relying on PTTI’s and full-time instructors rather than full professors. The spousal hiring process was discussed. It was suggested to review the Duke model that was presented a few years ago. Academic Affairs will be considering several issues including Master Teacher and

will bring back recommendations concerning each of these topics. The Core Curriculum Oversight Committee is looking at revising the actual content of the core. The Academic Affairs Committee made the recommendation that the document containing the guiding principles upon which the core was originally founded be made publicly available since it would be of interest to faculty, parents and students.

Faculty Life – (*Deidre Leaver-Dunn & Lowell Baker*) Faculty Life will be looking at the maternity leave policy which is currently being administered inconsistently across campus. The Faculty Life Committee will be investigating ideas on ways to recognize faculty accomplishments. A resolution to partner with the Provost to recognize faculty with ten or more years of service will be considered. In Arts & Sciences when someone writes a book the cover is framed, displayed for several years and then presented to the faculty member was an example given.

Financial Affairs – (*Katrina Ramonell & Steven Hobbs*) No report.

Research & Service – (*Ed Stephenson & Laurie Bonnici*) Laurie Bonnici has resigned as co-chair of this committee. The Conflict of Interest policy is finished. Problems of grants accounting, overhead payments directed to departments bypassing colleges, individual overhead accounting, the various aspects and clarity of sabbatical policies, replacing/repairing funding for equipment and the obligation of centers to account for their expenses to center members are issues that will be addressed by this committee.

Faculty & Senate Governance – (*John Mason & Michael Martone/Marci Daughery*) Two members of the Mediation Committee, one member for the Evaluation & Review of Deans and Chairs Committee, Ombudsperson, two members for CUC and Senate officer **elections** will be held in the next few months. Some type training for the Ombudspersons was suggested and will be discussed with the Provost. Ombudspersons should be a resource for faculty members. An email with a description of the Ombudsperson's duties will be sent to the entire faculty requesting nominations.

Student Affairs – (*Melondie Carter & Carolyn Cassady*) The Student Affairs Committee will be meeting with Dr. Mark Nelson the first of October. This committee will be working closely with the SGA. The SGA President along with several other SGA representatives, the Student Affairs Committee and President Steckol will be having joint meetings to develop plans for the year. The solution of block seating will not be known until the end of the football season. The ticket-less plan for students seems to be working well at this point.

Legislative Agenda – (*Margaret Garner*) No report.

Reports from Other Committees –

The **Campus Master Plan Committee** will meet on September 26th. The Provost and Lynda Gilbert will attend this meeting. Rona Donahoe received and accepted a request to chair the Conflict of Interest Committee.

The **CUC** will meet October 31.

The **Intercollegiate Athletics Committee** will meet October 8th.

Ed Stephenson has been appointed to the **Core Curriculum Committee** with Mark Nelson as Chair. There has been no further word on any meetings.

Clark Midkiff is on the **Vice President for Research Search Committee**.

Margaret Garner is a member of the **Vice President for Student Affairs Search Committee**.

Rona Donahoe is chair of the **Graduate Policy Task Force**.

There was a discussion of a teaching situation on campus.

Meeting adjourned 4:55 PM.