

**FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 13, 2011 – 3:00 PM – 2002 SHELBY**

APPROVED MINUTES

ATTENDING: Clark Midkiff, Deidre Leaver-Dunn, Jeanette VanderMeer, Marcia Barrett, John Vincent, Rona Donahoe, Lowell Baker, Wesley Church, Robert McLeod, Carolyn Cassady, Brad Hodges, Margaret Garner, Ian Stancu, Ed Stephenson.

ABSENT: DoVeanna Minor, Karen Steckol, Katrina Ramonell, Melondie Carter, Seth Panitch.

GUESTS: Cresandra Smothers, Dialog.

Roll call and quorum check by Secretary Jeanette VanderMeer.

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee minutes of July 12 were approved and the August minutes were approved with one correction.

President's Report – (*Clark Midkiff*) The meeting began with a discussion concerning the annual reception for the Deans hosted by the Faculty Senate Steering Committee. Ed Stephenson suggested having the reception at the Gorgas House on campus. The date would be November 8th following the Steering Committee meeting.

Paige Miller, Coordinator of Campus Violence Programs, Women's Resource Center, has requested the Faculty Senate issue and endorse her submitted resolution proclaiming October Dating/Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The Faculty Senate policy is to address only issues related to University policy.

A professor brought up several issues via email to President Clark Midkiff. The first was problems caused by the **University Assessment Plan**. This plan is in place and is required by SACS although the point was made that there was no faculty input and the timing is not good. The second issue was the University's "**Online Syllabus Management**" plan. This is a suggested plan by the College of Arts and Sciences to upload syllabus online to UAOPS and ELEARNING. It is not mandated but the request could be made to load the syllabus in UAOPS would automatically load it into ELEARNING. The third was concern about the Alabama Ethics Law. The fourth was the **overtime payment issues** from the state which may affect retirement compensation. Discussion included whether overtime payment would affect salaried employees, summer school teaching, contract faculty members and whether supplemental salary would be considered overtime payment. The Faculty Senate Financial Affairs was asked to research the overtime payment issue.

Enrollment issues were discussed.

Vice President's Report – (*Deidre Leaver-Dunn*) No report.

Secretary's Report – (*Jeanette VanderMeer*) No report.

Academic Affairs – (*Marcia Barrett & John Vincent*) The Academic Affairs Committee submitted their proposed criteria for the SEC Faculty Award and the SEC Faculty Award.

(attached) The committee decided to go with the 50% research/50% teaching criteria. The colleges can nominate two individuals with a selection committee comprised of one full professor named by the college and the previous year's faculty award winner (after year one) to evaluate the nominees and forward three nomination packets to the President for selection based on the criteria. Research/scholarship/creative activities would be included in the criteria.

The committee will be addressing the criteria and selection process for the University Teaching Professor and University Research Professor Awards.

Faculty Life – *(Lowell Baker & Wesley Church)* This committee met on September 6th and continues to address the **maternity leave policy** disparities between nine and twelve month faculty. The maternity leave policy is not in the Faculty Handbook and should be on the Provost's web page. The committee will be looking into methods and recommendations to make the University an improved **Family Friendly Campus**. Recreation fees for faculty were discussed with the suggestion to invite Rebecca Kelly, Director of Health Promotion and Wellness, to speak concerning the connection between the use of the Recreation Center and campus health and wellness.

Financial Affairs – *(Robert McLeod & Katrina Ramonell)* The Financial Affairs Committee has an October 4th scheduled meeting with Lynda Gilbert, Vice President for Financial Affairs. Discussion will include plans for future funding if enrollment is capped and a budget update. Using the previous year's income to support the next year was the basis of the University budget in the past and the University has not returned to this plan. Other budget concerns were discussed.

Information Technology – *(Carolyn Cassady & Brad Hodges)* The Information Technology Committee co-chairs met with John McGowan, Vice Provost of Information Technology, on September 2nd and the committee met on September 6th. A **software license** primarily used by Engineering and Physics costs \$40,000 annually with the College of Arts & Sciences and OIT agreeing to provide part of the funding. The College of Engineering has declined stating that paying on an individual basis is more cost effective for them.

The University contracts with an outside company to provide **after-hours computer support**. They handle about 100/200 calls per month charging per call providing computer support by phone unless there is a dire emergency demanding on-site assistance. There is a new help desk cryptic **ticket system** going into effect around January, 2012. Determining a formal policy regarding the **termination of email** for departing faculty is in the process. A plan for research and **data storage** is underway. **Campus-wide wireless** was completed in January, 2011. Locations not receiving this service should be communicated to John McGowan. There continues to be a large **classroom issue** concerning too many devices not being able to connect. Providing more and improved wireless access is being established. **Departmental web site** development assistance is provided by OIT, however, there is a small group handling this and they have been overwhelmed with requests so it is first come/ first served with a definite waiting period. There have been **email problems** and it was a bigger problem than was first thought and is being addressed. Some of the **Crimson email** account difficulties cannot be stopped completely. Information technology **future plans** include about two million dollars a year being spent on the network build out, newer and more wireless access points, high performance computer initiative for undergraduates being implemented, more secure email and wireless, new help desk ticketing system and the installation of the new emergency information system.

Research & Service – (*Ed Stephenson & Ian Stancu*) Ed Stephenson gave a report concerning the relocation of EHS including the condition of Nott Hall Annex and the Biology Building. Since that tour a decision has been made to relocate EHS to 35 West - Bryce Property except for radiation storage in Nott Hall Annex. The Annex does not have running water and needs a new roof. The Radiation Safety Committee, Research Advisory Committee, Biological Safety Committee, Laser Safety Committee, Chemical Hygiene Committee and other committees should have been included and informed concerning the relocation plans of EHS but were not.

Raises for **post-doctoral students** are restricted to the years when raises are given to faculty in general. Post-doc salaries come from grants but grant money comes to the University. Salaries are stated in the grant proposals. Post-doctoral appointments are restricted to three years. The suggestion was to extend the appointments one or two years on a case by case decision.

The **per diem rate** for international travel is more than inadequate. The per diem rate is set by the State of Alabama Legislature. It was suggested to send this issue to Joe Benson and continue to monitor.

Faculty & Senate Governance – (*Rona Donahoe & Karen Steckol*) The Faculty and Senate Governance Committee met last week. The Faculty Senate bylaws were not clear during last year's elections when nominations from the floor were accepted at the beginning of the March meeting. The intent was for all nominations to be made at the February meeting and the March meeting is for the election. **Revisions** made by the committee will be presented at the Faculty Senate meeting on September 20 for discussion and voted on in the October meeting.

The **definition of a regular faculty member** in the Faculty Senate Constitution is a very inclusive definition. It is possible that the definition of a faculty member in Section 8 of the Faculty Senate Bylaws was intended to eliminate administrators serving on the Senate. The revisions to the bylaws will bring it in line with the constitution.

The **orientation of new senators** has not followed the procedures outlined in the bylaws. The orientation has been well attended when it was held an hour before the full Faculty Senate meeting. The bylaws state to hold the orientation the first Tuesday. Anyone other than an alternate attending the meeting would result in the senator being counted as absent.

The **Mediation Committee** is overdue for an election for two members rotating off last December. An email will be sent to the entire faculty for nominations. A nominee cannot have served on the Mediation Committee in either of the last two years. No more than two can serve from the same division. The nominees cannot come from the College of Education since there are currently two from Education currently serving on the committee. The two rotating off are from the Business College and Arts & Sciences. It is important to have those two represented on the committee since they are among the largest on campus.

Student Affairs – (*Melondie Carter & Seth Panitch*) No report.

Legislative Agenda – (*Margaret Garner*) Margaret Garner was congratulated on being the recipient of the 2011 American Dietetic Association's highest honor, the Marjorie Hulsizer Copher Award.

Reports from Other Committees –

The Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee met last week. This committee's sub-committee is investigating the finances of the health plan to determine if the reserves are adequate. Any increases would not be instituted until January. The rates for dental and vision insurance will remain the same. The critical care insurance available for a limited time would provide \$50,000 to use for any expenses.

New Business – A Chemistry Department has been told there is no money for startups for new faculty hires. The department has been chosen by the Provost to be the test case for the teaching faculty member equivalent to the clinical faculty member which will be contract positions renewable for multiple years.

In the Animal Care Committee four of the eleven committee voting members are employees of the Office of Research creating a conflict of interest. The committee voted in November to send a letter to Joe Benson detailing problems in the animal care facility including equipment so old that replacement parts are not available. The letter has not been sent due to committee problems. This will be brought up in a meeting with the Provost.

Meeting adjourned 5:30 PM.