

# CORRECTED MINUTES

## FACULTY SENATE MEETING

January 21, 1997

Ferguson Theater

3:30 p.m.

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### High Points:

- [Sorensen addresses the Senate](#)
  - [Legislative session and funding prospects](#)
  - [Grants and contracts up 46% over last year](#)
  - [Gifts to the University up significantly](#)
  - [Tuition increases considered](#)
  - [Sorensen discusses commencement](#)
  - [Martin Luther King weekend activities](#)
  - [Possible restructuring of administration](#)
  - [Enrollment looks to be up for next year](#)
  - [Resolution on faculty salaries passes](#)
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The meeting was held in Ferguson Theater due to construction work which made the Forum unusable.

Members absent and not represented by an alternate: Larry Clayton, Robert Sigler, Sharon O'Dair, Michael Roberts, Subhabrata Chakraborti, Philip Johnson, Nick Stinnett, Jerry Hoffman, Lynda Harrison.

The President's Report was distributed on paper at the meeting. The report of the Financial Affairs Committee, accompanied by tables and figures detailing faculty salaries and administrative salaries compared to national and regional averages, and Alabama cost of living indices, was also distributed at the meeting.

Senate President Amy Ward introduced UA President Andrew Sorensen, and asked him to address the Senate.

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### President Sorensen's Address

Sorensen began by discussing the Legislative session that begins on February 4. Last year, the state allocated \$102 million which made up 35% of the total University budget. Sorensen expects that our budget will increase faster than the state increment, so he believes that we must increase funding from all possible sources. Sorensen submitted a proposed budget of \$111 million, representing an increase of \$9 million. The increase was based largely on the need to improve the abysmally low faculty and staff salaries. In compiling his statistics, Sorensen looked at salaries by professorial rank. In all ranks, we are below the weighted average of the Southern University Group (SUG). Some ranks are above the SUG 50th percentile, while others are not. None are close to the 75th percentile which has been our stated goal. Sorensen looked at staff salaries in three groups: Secretarial & clerical, professional, and service-maintenance. All three groups are below the Tuscaloosa/Birmingham corridor commercial average salaries. The secretarial and clerical staff are very badly underpaid. Sorensen summarized by saying that the faculty and staff are enormously underpaid, and he plans that the entire \$9 million increase would go to salary increases. The Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) cut our request from \$111 million to \$107 million. Our lobbyists currently expect a 3 to 4% increase, if all goes well.

Sorensen noted that grants and contracts are another source of the University's funding, and gave a resounding vote of congratulation to the faculty response. Faculty response has been tremendous. From July 1, 1995, to December 31, 1995, faculty received 96 awards totaling \$7.8 million, while the same period in 1996, faculty received 115 awards for \$11.4 million for a 46% increase. Sorensen called this increase 'Phenomenal' and 'Extraordinary' and commended the faculty for their efforts. The Provost is working out a way for to use indirect cost recovery to fund research across the University, particularly in areas where external funding may not be as plentiful.

Sorensen noted that the University also receives funds from philanthropy. These gifts have risen from \$11.5 million in the last half of 1995 to \$15 million in the same period of 1996. This does not include the funding for the new Bevill building. Sorensen expects that philanthropic gifts will continue to grow in the future.

Tuition is also a source of revenue, and the Provost is running models trying out different alternatives, and wants faculty feedback.. As an example, should different colleges have different tuition rates? How should the in-state and out-of-state tuition ratio be adjusted? Sorensen would like faculty input on issues like these. The President reiterated that his top priority for increased funding is to raise faculty and staff salaries. He expects that administrator's raises should be 'cost of living' raises, but that they should not expect big raises while the faculty and staff salaries are so low. Staff are dramatically underpaid.

Sorensen next addressed the issue of the commencement exercises. Sorensen wants to cultivate a sense of community on the campus, and is looking for opportunities to increase that sense of community. It is his hope that joint commencement held more often during the year will celebrate that sense of community across the campus. The Senate Planning and Operations Committee will work on this.

Sorensen commented on the Martin Luther King weekend, as he met with black and white legislators, then went to the Moody Music Building for Maya Angelou's concert. He commended Scott Bridges for an excellent job on the weekend. Sorensen had Vivian Figures, the wife of the late Michael Figures, at the President's Mansion for the announcement of the 'Michael Figures Leadership Initiative' to identify leaders in 10th grade around the state and bring them to the UA campus for a 3 day conference to develop leadership. These are kids who are not leaders now, but who have been identified by teachers and school counselors believe *could be* leaders. This initiative has been warmly received by legislators, and should be funded. He also noted that the "Tuscaloosa Consortium for Higher Education" was announced to promote cooperation among the three campuses.

Under the topic of 'restructuring,' the president noted the hiring of Dr. Priscilla Hancock, the new Associate Vice President for Information Services. He hopes that she will be able to set some standards so computers across campus to talk to each other. He noted that the Provost is restructuring her office: one person has left, others may leave, so Rose Hall is not expanding, and may even decrease.

Sorensen wants to see greater integration across campus. He sees no reason why there should be two different 'International Student' offices, and feels that the Center for Teaching and Learning should be in Academic Affairs, not Student Affairs. He expects that the School for Library and Information Sciences will probably migrate into the College of Communication. He would prefer to take that Dean's salary and improve faculty salaries. He finds it difficult to tell legislators that we need a dean for a group of nine faculty, though he asked for arguments he may not have.

On the subject of 'Outreach,' Sorensen wants to reach out to the Tuscaloosa community, to people of the county, of the state, and even of the nation. We need to scale down the amount of effort devoted to 'in-reach' and internal committees, to have the time to spend on outreach. He commended the Senate's work on the Service document. Sorensen insisted that we cannot neglect research and teaching for service activities. A faculty member cannot avoid research and become a full professor. We must reward teaching without forgetting our commitment to research and service.

On enrollment, Sorensen said that applications for Fall of 97 are up 1000 over the same period the previous year, and that acceptances are up 850 so far this year over last year. But the cohort effect says that the decrease last fall will lead to a lower total for the next three years. Sorensen also wants to recruit more junior college and community college transfers. He commented on Governor James' plan to put all the junior colleges under the UA and Auburn systems. He

expects a lot of opposition in the legislature, and is not yet willing to commit himself to the plan.

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## New Business

Resolution from Financial Affairs Committee:

**Whereas**, faculty salaries at The University of Alabama have not kept pace with the rate of inflation since 1988; and

**Whereas**, faculty salaries at The University of Alabama historically have been below both the 50th percentile for the Southern University Group (SUG) and average national salaries at all ranks; and

**Whereas**, the statement that "It is cheaper to live in Tuscaloosa" is no longer valid with respect to the cost of housing; and

**Whereas**, administrative salary data show that many University administrators receive salaries that are at or above the 50th percentile for the SUG and Nation; and

**Whereas**, given The University of Alabama's stated goal of attaining Carnegie Research II status, which will require attracting and retaining faculty at salaries that are competitive within the SUG and Nation; now therefore

**Be it Resolved**, that the University of Alabama reaffirm, and take immediate steps to achieve, the goal of raising faculty salaries to the 75th percentile for the Southern University Group.

The resolution was amended to read "mean" in the place of "50th percentile" in the second and fourth 'Whereas' clause. The amended resolution now read:

**Whereas**, faculty salaries at The University of Alabama have not kept pace with the rate of inflation since 1988; and

**Whereas**, faculty salaries at The University of Alabama historically have been below both the mean for the Southern University Group (SUG) and average national salaries at all ranks; and

**Whereas**, the statement that "It is cheaper to live in Tuscaloosa" is no longer valid with respect to the cost of housing; and

**Whereas**, administrative salary data show that many University administrators receive salaries that are at or above the means for the SUG and Nation; and

**Whereas**, given The University of Alabama's stated goal of attaining Carnegie Research II status, which will require attracting and retaining faculty at salaries that are competitive within the SUG and Nation; now therefore

**Be it Resolved**, that the University of Alabama reaffirm, and take immediate steps to achieve, the goal of raising faculty salaries to the 75th percentile for the Southern University Group.

The amended resolution passed.

Wythe Holt reported that he and two other faculty members went to Montgomery last Thursday to talk with legislators. All legislators mentioned that the 3-4% increase estimate was soft: We may get 3%, but will have to work to get 4% or more. Faculty and staff need to lobby the legislature for increased funding. Scott Bridges emphasized that this will be the first year of a fight lasting several years. This is not really a 'rational, logical' discussion. Amy Ward noted that we have made extraordinary progress since this began last year, but it will continue to be an uphill battle.

There being no further business, the Senate adjourned at 5:08 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcus Brown, Secretary

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