

CORRECTED MINUTES

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

November 19, 1996

Ferguson Forum

3:30 p.m.

Highlights:

- [Ward reports on "Service Document"](#)
 - [Hiring procedures streamlined](#)
 - [Administrative computer software alternatives evaluated](#)
 - [Two search committees report: Museum Director and CIO](#)
 - [Mediation and Grievance committee members elected](#)
 - [Resolution on library funding](#)
 - [Service document considered](#)
 - [Faculty Handbook changes considered](#)
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Members absent and not represented by an alternate: Judith Kirkpatrick, Sharon O'Dair, Chad Hilton, Michael Roberts, Ray Carroll, William Gonzenbach, Carol Drolen and Paul Stuart.

The [minutes for October 1996](#) were approved.

President's Report

Senate President Ward reported the background of the "Service/Outreach Document" which would be presented at the meeting. This emphasis has grown out of President Sorensen's concern that the University serve the community, state and region. The draft document has been approved by the Senate's Research & Service Committee and the Legislative Agenda Committee.

Ward reported that the Senate Steering Committee met with Provost Barrett and discussed the revised "Hiring Procedures For Professional Staff.". Barrett has reduced the number of steps from 24 to 12, but search committees were not affected. Faculty may also be hired using the streamlined procedures. Barrett also discussed the Senate's resolutions concerning the University calendar.

Reports from Senate Committees

Ray White, co-chair of the **Academic Affairs** committee reported on their discussion of the "plus/minus" grading system which is being considered by the Task Force on Recruitment & Retention. Our approach is the standard one by most universities that use plus and minus grades. White noted that evolution of the core curriculum is being considered by another committee on campus.

With respect to the computer upgrade plan, White said that administrative software from competing vendors is being evaluated. The hardware decision is still being considered, with some arguments for retaining a mainframe while others favor a UNIX platform. Many crucial decisions await the new CIO.

Academic Affairs co-chair Peggy Jessee mentioned that many issues are being considered by other committees, and the Senate only hears by coincidence. She suggested that the Faculty Senate is probably the best avenue for communications.

Financial Affairs co-chair Lee Pike reported that the committee is concerned about the effects on the medical insurance system if an HMO is brought in. Mike Conerly addressed the committee and said that no HMO is currently under consideration. It was reported that the health care plan is currently running a fund surplus, and some modifications of payments or benefits is being considered. Conerly also stated that there are no plans to change the current TIAA/CREF retirement fund matching system. Pike announced that John Meier from the University of Texas will replace Hubert Kessler as Assistant Vice President for Human Resources in December.

Pike reported that Lynne April has been very helpful in the committee's investigation of travel reimbursement requirements. Pike stated that if some departments are too strict, Ms April could be of assistance. Next, the committee will begin to look at salary questions for University employees over the last several years.

Pike also noted that the committee has a resolution on University Library funding on today's agenda.

Bob Halli, co-chair of **Planning & Operations** reported that there has been no formal response from Provost Barrett on the recommended calendar changes, but discussions are being held. It seems that the exam schedule for Spring 1997 will be six days, as we asked, and the regular starting days for Fall & Spring seem to be agreeable. But Director of Admissions Randy Dahl wanted to leave the 1997 Summer Term starting at the same day, and shorten the calendar to move summer exams up by two days, Classes would be 10 minutes longer to accommodate the shorter calendar. Dahl's revision would still overlap the high school teacher in-service days. Dahl was concerned that certifying graduates would be difficult. Barrett is asking a task force to study the calendar issue.

Research & Service co-chair Nick Stinnett reported that the committee has been considering the role of service, which will be presented today. The committee also met with Provost Barrett about the resolution supporting the library. Barrett liked it and said that the resolution would be very helpful in getting more funds. Barrett wants to build an inflation rate into the library budget, and wants to centralize the funding of the library.

Jessica Matson reported that the **Student Affairs** Committee met with representatives of the Office of University Counsel concerning possible advisor liability for student activities. Counsel stated that the University provides comprehensive liability when faculty is within bounds of the job, but this coverage would not apply if the adviser was acting criminally and might not apply in cases of negligence. Inez Rovegno noted that liability is specifically for cases of presumed 'negligence.' That's what we need, and it is not easy to get it if you don't know what the University is providing. Matson stated that the University Office of Risk Management was very helpful interpreting the University's insurance policy.

Co-chair Wythe Holt reported that the **Senate Operations** Committee has completed proposed modifications to the Senate Constitution & By Laws. The Senate Operations Committee was appointed to work with the Committee on Committees on restructuring the University Committee system, and hopes to have a report by the next Senate meeting. Holt also asked that Senators who have absences from Senate meetings to communicate with him about the reasons for their absences.

Legislative Agenda chair Scott Bridges reported that state Senator Phil Poole will be here on campus at noon, December 5, to discuss proposed legislation relating to retirement funds for Alabama educators. Bridges reported that President Sorensen has met with 70 state legislators in the last few months. The Black Caucus of the Alabama Legislator will be invited to the campus for Martin Luther King Day, when an announcement concerning a joint lectureship with Stillman College in honor of recently deceased state legislator Michael Figures.

Reports from Senators in University Committees

Wythe Holt reported that the Staff Advisory Committee is meeting once a month. This committee is the staff version

of the Senate. They elect representatives to hear staff grievances. Holt reported that there are many problems with the system. The administration is considering changes to that system.

Rona Donahoe reported on the activities of two search committees. The Museum Director search committee is beginning to interview candidates. The interviews will begin before Thanksgiving and should end before the Christmas holidays. In the search for an Associate Vice President for Computer Systems, 52 applications were received. This has been narrowed to 9 top applicants following phone interviews. The search committee will meet Friday to narrow the list. Plans call for an open forum with faculty late in day when the candidates come to campus. Donahoe suggested that Senators should watch for email announcements and the Senate web pages for resumes and interview schedules of the finalists. [**Note:** The web page listing the five finalists, their resumes and interview itineraries can be found at "<http://www.ua.edu/cio/>" or from the Senate web page.]

Donahoe also reported that the: Committee on University Plans met and questioned whether our use of classrooms was efficient. The committee is in data collection mode at this point.

Harvey Kline reported that the Library committee was informed of the meeting with Barrett and they were pleased with the proposed resolution on library support. However, the library staff is still concerned about permanent funding.

Pat Bauch reported that the Intercollegiate Compliance has been informed that a new University compliance officer has been hired.

There was no **Old Business**.

New Business

Nominations were requested for two new members of the Mediation & Grievance Committee. Pat Bauch (Education) and J.W. Harrell (A&S) were nominated and elected to a three year term.

A resolution was presented from the Research & Service and Financial Affairs Committees concerning library funding. An amended version was put forth and accepted by the Senate. The amended resolution is as follows:

Whereas, the Faculty Senate applauds the recent effort of the University Administration to make further serials reductions unnecessary this fiscal year by making special provision for the use of endowment funds, but

Whereas for many years the University Libraries materials budget has not kept pace with inflation, because of a lack of increase in continuing monies, and

Whereas, the cost of periodicals, books, and computerized database resources has risen faster than general inflation over the last decade, and

Whereas, the University Libraries is forced to allocate an ever-increasing proportion of its budget to maintain the serials collection, even after canceling some \$250,000 worth of serials this past year, and

Whereas, departments which are serial dependent are especially adversely affected, and

Whereas, due to the decrease in purchasing power for all materials because of inflation, the University Libraries is not able fully to support academic programs, and

Whereas, the demands for a full range of traditional and electronic services are continually increasing, and

Whereas, with the high cost of electronic access our capability has lagged behind other research universities, and

Whereas, the University Administration aims to make this University a research institution of higher rank, and

Whereas, the University Libraries is ranked near the bottom of the members of the Association of Research Libraries, and its membership could be endangered with this continued low level of support, now therefore

Be It Resolved, that the University Administration should explore all possible avenues for revenue by which increased continuing funds are made available to support teaching and research with the acquisition of both traditional and electronic materials and with the expansion of library service and information technology capabilities at a level consistent with a research university, and

Be It Further Resolved, that the University Administration should aim to advance the ranking of the University Libraries among the members of the Association of Research Libraries.

The resolution passed without dissent.

Wythe Holt moved to suspend the rules by unanimous consent to consider the Steering Committee's recommendation on Service. The motion passed and the rules were suspended. This proposal has endorsed by the Steering Committee, the Legislative Agenda Committee, and the Research & Service Committee. Margaret Garner presented the proposed document on faculty service. The first page was taken largely from Sorensen's public statements on outreach. The current document (attached) is not in final form for insertion into the Faculty Handbook, but is meant as a platform for discussion with the administration.

It is expected that different divisions and departments will define their service requirements and needs very differently. For example, CCHS would handle it in a differently manner than A&S or Engineering.. At present, many faculty feel that service is punished. It is hoped that this new approach would lead to rewarding service rather than punishing it.

In discussion of this document, Barrett was reported to suggest that we shouldn't get too involved in putting everything into neat categories. There may be some overlap between categories. This service should be valued in promotion and tenure decisions and in awarding merit raises.

After some discussion, Mark Weaver moved that this document represented the sense of the Senate and that it should be pursued. Wythe Holt seconded, and the motion passed without dissent.

Wythe Holt moved to suspend the rules by unanimous consent to consider the Steering Committee's recommendations on the Faculty Handbook. The motion carried.

Holt asked to take up the second of the six recommendations first. He stated that the first sentence states what is already established practice, but the second sentence was deleted by former Provost Taaffe. Holt suggested that the Senate should recommend a single name rather than a list of names for search committees, and moved to amend the recommendation to so read. After some discussion, the amendment was approved. The amended recommendation reads:

1. [Addition to Page 15, Item C, line 41] The Faculty Senate appoints one person to membership on each appropriate University Standing Committee. In addition, the Faculty Senate provides a member for each search committee for a University President, Vice President, Assistant or Associate Vice President, and Director who reports to a President or a Vice President.

After the amendment was voted on, a quorum call revealed that the Senate no longer had a quorum, so the Senate was declared to be adjourned at 5:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcus Brown, Secretary

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