

CORRECTED MINUTES
FACULTY SENATE MEETING

February 20, 1996

Ferguson Forum

3:30 p.m.

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Members absent and not represented by an alternate: Eugene Cooper, Edward Merrill, Selwyn Hollingsworth, Jamie Satcher, Will Schreiber, Marion Paris, Paul Stuart.

The minutes for January 1995 were approved.

President's report

UA PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

Faculty Senate President Norm Stein reported that the presidential search was continuing, with candidates expected to visit the campus later in the semester and a probable selection by the end of the academic year. Stein opined that there were some excellent candidates on the list.

HMO PLANS

Stein received a letter from Dr. Sayers regarding the Senate's Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) resolution passed in December. The letter stated that no decisions have been made on this matter, and that any decisions made would involve the entire University of Alabama community. Faculty and other employees can call Hubert Kessler about their concerns. Stein said he would make his letter to Sayers on this subject available to senators. (Copies of this letter were distributed to senators in early March.)

ADMINISTRATIVE PROMOTIONS

Stein reported that he and other senators had received a number of calls from faculty members about the

reported promotion of three senior administrators. This was particularly disturbing during a time when faculty are getting no raises. When Stein talked to President Sayers, the president said he would check into this and reply in a letter. One of the promotions involved a change in title with no additional salary, and one was done for a very strong reason. President Sayers did argue that since faculty are eligible for promotions and raises in non-raise years, the option should be open to promote administrators in those years.

LIBRARY FUNDING

Stein said that the library committee had passed a resolution in favor of additional financial support. Steering committee discussed the possibility of a dedicated user fee for the library for both students and perhaps for faculty.

LOBBYING EFFORTS

Stein and other senators met with Tim Parker about the legislative agenda. The local delegation seems to be for us in a generic sense, but it is not clear that many of the legislators understand the University's perspective on these issues. There may be some steps senators can take to help. Stein publicly thanked Scott Bridges for his work on influencing the legislative agenda. He believes that the faculty has had a significant impact due in large part to Bridges' leadership.

NEAREST FIREHOUSE GONE

The firehouse by the stadium has been torn down and many faculty members have expressed concern about the response time to possible fires if fire trucks had to come from further away. There were some rumors that the University had not been particularly helpful in providing a place to locate a new firehouse. Stein reported that late word is that the University has donated land to build a firehouse. A recent fire at Clara Verner Towers was responded to in 3 minutes.

Stein called for a nominating committee to suggest nominees for Faculty Senate officers for next year. Stein will not return as president.

Reports from Senate Committees:

TAAFFE'S PLAN FOR UNIVERSITY FUTURE

Margaret Garner, cochair of the **Academic Affairs Committee**, reported that the committee met with Provost James Taaffe on Jan. 13 for a discussion of Taaffe's ideas about the future of the University. Taaffe made available copies of his ideas and priorities on these issues. The Committee was very interested in planning for the future. Taaffe suggested getting back together after the Committee on University Plans meets for further discussion. The Academic Affairs Committee will probably meet with Taaffe again next week to review further developments and plan for significant faculty involvement in the furtherance of these plans. These discussions may have a very large impact on the future of this University.

Garner noted that the Chamber of Commerce is well suited to provide facilitators for faculty focus groups which could help set priorities for planning for the future. The Academic Affairs Committee wants the most broadly based input from faculty in setting new directions for the University.

Several senators expressed concern about the proposal to modify tenure. The initial proposal combined the probationary period with the tenure period for a total of twenty five years, after which the faculty member would be retired. Stein suggested that the proposed concept would place us at a major disadvantage recruiting against other institutions, and might place us in violation of legislation about age discrimination with respect to hiring and firing. There was also a strong feeling that such a move would make us a pariah among other universities.

Ginny Raymond said that she got the impression that nothing may actually happen as a result of this. Taaffe seems to have ideas, but not much is happening. Taaffe stated that he feels very powerless with respect to the Legislature, so he is focusing on what we can do to respond to the expected financial realities of the near future.

Chuck Hobby suggested that nothing will happen until we have a new president, and until he has settled in.

Perhaps the plans of the Provost will not matter in the long run.

Provost Taaffe was reported as saying that he wants more input. Garner says we need to be sure that we do give input. If we do not provide input now, even if nothing is done, that may be seen as reason not to ask for our input later.

Hobby reminded the Senate that there is an official University policy on how to discontinue or merge an academic department or program. If the administration decides to cut off a department/program, they must follow a set of specific steps as defined in the policy.

UNIVERSITY FINANCING

Charlie Haynes, co-chair of the **Financial Affairs Committee**, reported on a presentation made by Bob Wright and Reba Essary from the Office of Financial Affairs. Wright described his philosophy and strategies for managing the University's funds. Many of the fund balances are specifically designated for specific purposes, specific needs. The Financial Affairs Committee was satisfied that their approach was appropriate, and that there is no need for further investigation at this time.

Barney Cargile, co-chair of the **Financial Affairs Committee**, called attention to the resolution in the agenda from that committee.

The **Planning & Operations Committee** had no report.

FACULTY WORKLOAD

On behalf of the **Research & Service Committee**, Nick Stinnett reported that Drs. Crump and Taaffe had reviewed the draft on Faculty Workload and their comments are being incorporated. The final report should be reported to the Senate at the March meeting.

Student Affairs Committee cochair Bob Sigler noted the resolution in the agenda.

Matt Winston, co-chair of the **Senate Operations Committee** reminded senators of their responsibilities of attendance, etc. He suggested that new senators be specifically reminded of the importance of these duties.

LOBBYING EFFORTS

Scott Bridges reported on the work of the Legislative Agenda Committee. He distributed several handouts to senators and commented on each of them. Specific attention was drawn to information put together by the Mobile Register and the insert in the University Dialog. Bridges listed some of the bills which would be presented to the legislature this session. Bridges recommended specific actions which would help our case in the legislature:

1. Write Don Seigelman as soon as possible regarding the need for supporting higher education.
2. Write other legislature members, especially Bill Fuller & Hank Sanders.
3. If faculty members or other interested voters have a personal relationship with legislators, they should use that forum to communicate their concerns.
4. Faculty members must be active in pressing our concerns. If we sit quietly, we deserve to have our budgets cut.

Bridges listed upcoming events:

Feb. 23 - Faculty members would meet with President Sayers and lobbyists.

Feb. 28 - Open meeting for interested faculty with Janet Griffith.

March 5 - Education Day in Montgomery. Any faculty members who can are encouraged to go.

March 12 - Governor James meets with the Board of Trustees.

Bridges said there would be various other meetings and editorials around the state in March and April. The alumni association has put together eight support rallies around the state. In addition, there will be additional meetings with the local legislators.

Reports from Senator on University Committees

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADMISSION CHANGES

Ali Iran-Nejad reported that the International Student and Scholars Committee had approved a major change in the admission of international students: For undergraduate students who meet academic and financial requirements, the final TOEFL will no longer be required. It is believed that this will not reduce standards, but that it will increase the number of student admissions.

STUDENT HEALTH HEAD RESIGNS

Ruby Morrison reported that the head of the Student Health Center had resigned, and that Dr. Charles Brown is now acting as interim head. There have been some complaints about relatively long waits for service.

STUDENT ACADEMIC SUSPENSIONS

Atly Jefcoat reported that the Admissions and Retention Committee decided that academic suspension appeals should start in the department. In the first semester a student goes on probation, the student should be given one semester to get off probation, or be suspended.

There was no **Old Business**.

New Business

RESOLUTION RE: EXPLORE ADDITIONAL LIBRARY FUNDING

Barney Cargile introduced the resolution from the Financial Affairs Committee:

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

Whereas, the Libraries budgets have not kept pace due to a lack of increases in continuing monies, and

Whereas, the libraries have allocated an ever-increasing proportion of its budgeted monies to preserve the serials collection, and

Whereas, due to the decrease in purchasing power, there is little money earmarked for new books to support academic programs in the coming year, and

Whereas, the University is ranked near the bottom of the members of the Association of Research Libraries, and will likely lose its membership under the anticipated level of support, and

Whereas, the demands for library services are continually increasing, and

Whereas, the Libraries are currently undertaking a devastating cutback in all types of material acquisitions with continual cutbacks imminent, and

Whereas, across-the-board cancellations, as currently being implemented, adversely affect academic programs,

particularly those that are serials-dependent, and the University's ability to achieve its teaching and research goals, and

Whereas, The Libraries Committee has advocated either a dedicated tuition increase or the creation of a student fee to support the Libraries on a continuing basis, and

Whereas, the Libraries Committee has urged that the University's central administration establish academic program priorities to be used as a basis for allocating library materials funds, now therefore

Be It Resolved that the University's central administration should explore all possible avenues for revenue and allocate a larger continuing budget to the Libraries for the acquisition of materials to support teaching and research and for the expansion of the Libraries service and information technology capabilities, and

Be It Further Resolved that the University's central administration establish academic program priorities to be used as a basis for allocating continuing funds for library materials, and

Be It Further Resolved that in the coming year, any revenues derived from give-backs from colleges' operating budgets to support library material acquisitions be matched with new funds from the University.

LIBRARY'S RESEARCH STATUS

Atly Jefcoat asked about the library's status with the Association of Research Libraries. Lee Pike responded that the currently projected cuts would probably put us on probation with the Association. Jefcoat observed that the stated desire of the University is to move to the next level of research. However, if the currently proposed cuts come to the library, we'll never reach the next level of research. Scott Bridges asked "How can we call ourselves a *Research University* if we don't have a *Research Library*?" Ray White responded that our library does not measure up to the standard of a 'Research Library,' even if it is called that at present. Some senators spoke in favor of a library user fee.

The resolution passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION RE: FACULTY ADVISING OF STUDENT GOVERNANCE

Bob Sigler presented the resolution from the Student Affairs Committee:

Whereas, the Constitutional Convention, the Student Elections Board, and the Student Life Committee have developed or reviewed a proposal for a constitution so that a representative student government association can be reestablished at the University of Alabama, and

Whereas, the Faculty Senate supports the concept of a representative student government if it is structured to assure responsible representation of the student body, and

Whereas, it is the responsibility of the faculty to participate in the preparation of students for successful pursuit of their professional interests, including participation in extracurricular activities, and each branch of the student government could benefit from the advice and counsel available from faculty advisors, and

Whereas, responsible political activity includes the development of and participation in organized political action groups, and

Whereas, although the faculty supports and encourages the involvement of students in the various decision making processes which determine the nature and quality of the educational process, some of these processes address sensitive and confidential issues, and

Whereas, the timing and manner of student involvement should be determined by the academic unit responsible for the implementation of decisions made in the respective processes,

Be it resolved that the expression of the right to participation in the student bill of rights would be more accurate if it did not include the word "all" and read:

d. The right to receive prior notification, to provide input, and to be informed of University decisions, including those involving academics, affecting students.

Be it resolved that faculty advisors be appointed by the Vice President for Student Affairs for each branch of the student government, and

Be it further resolved that any group of students which chooses to promote any candidate, proposal or issue to be submitted to the student body for approval through the electoral process should formally organize, register with the Office of Student Life, and have a faculty or staff advisor, and

Be it further resolved that the Faculty Senate supports the changes in the constitution recommended by the Student Life committee.

The resolution passed without dissent.

There being no further business, the Senate adjourned at 5:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcus Brown, Secretary

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Please send suggestions to Marcus Brown: mbrown@cs.ua.edu