

CORRECTED MINUTES

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

February 18, 1997

Bevill 101

3:30 p.m.

Highlights:

- [SLIS merger reviewed](#)
 - [Plus/minus grading still simmering](#)
 - [New College merger proposal anticipated](#)
 - [Legislative workshop a great success](#)
 - [UA's state outreach impressively broad](#)
 - [New firestation to displace University Press & Motor Pool?](#)
 - [New science building to be added to 5 year plan](#)
 - Resolutions:
 - [Align Faculty Senate committees with University standing committees](#)
 - [Protest over lack of Faculty involvement in Commencement changes](#)
 - [Support for Faculty Athletic Representative Gene Marsh's concern for the academic welfare of University's student-athletes](#)
 - [Proposed changes to Senate Constitution & By-Laws to further democratize Senate](#)
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The meeting was held in Bevill 101 due to construction which made the Forum unusable.

Members absent and not represented by an alternate: Harvey Kline, Paul Allen, Chad Hilton, Ray Carroll, Christine Thompson and Carol Drolen.

President's Reports ([attached](#))

In response to Ward's report, SLIS Senator Marion Paris said that the SLIS faculty felt they had been treated fairly and their concerns had been heard during the merger.

Wythe Holt asked about the Senate's recommended changes to the Faculty Handbook. They have been sent to the Council of Deans, who do not always agree with the Senate's point of view. Amy Ward will be meeting with Provost Barrett tomorrow (February 19) and will discuss this issue.

Reports from Senate Committees

Academic Affairs co-chair Ray White reported on their review of the SLIS merger. They are planning to put together a brochure outlining questions faculty involved in a merger may want to ask. They are still considering the issues involved in the plus/minus controversy. It is not clear to the committee that the faculty feels strongly for or against it. Nick Stinnett noted that the original faculty vote was a small number, and that another faculty vote might be welcome.

Inez Rovegno asked whether the Senate would have a chance to discuss the New College merger. White replied that

this was certain, even if we have to call a special meeting of the Senate to discuss it. The merger document specifies that the Senate should reply within 30 days. There is a problem getting all the information needed for a proper assessment at the beginning of the 30 days. The Academic Affairs Committee needs enough time to consider the information before bringing their recommendation to the full Senate. The question was raised of whether the Senate has or wants to have the power to endorse or not endorse a merger. We have not done so thus far, but we may want to consider it soon.

Financial Affairs reported that they had not met, but co-chairs Rona Donahoe and Lee Pike are following up on the revised computer plan with Dr. Priscilla Hancock, the new Associate Vice President for Information Systems.

Planning & Operations co-chair Bob Halli mentioned the resolution for New Business.

Research & Service and **Student Affairs** had no report.

Wythe Holt, co-chair of **Senate Operations**, mentioned the proposed changes in Constitution & By Laws with explanations attached. It will take at least two meetings of the Senate to amend By Laws and/or Constitution, and changes to the Constitution must be put to a vote of the full faculty.

Legislative Agenda chair Scott Bridges reported that the January 25 workshop was a great success, with over 150 faculty at the Bryant Center. Provost Barrett & President Sorensen contributed to the workshop. Senator Poole reported that the most mail he had ever received on a single issue was 75 pieces. With all our faculty & staff, we should be able to generate at least 75 pieces of mail. Bridges also reported that Bill O'Connor has resigned as the University's lobbyist.

Bridges noted that the Feb 10 rally only garnered about 150 people and very few students. Legislators present said that they would vote for an increase in higher education funding.

Margaret Garner went to Montgomery with UA President Sorensen to testify before the Ways & Means Committee. The invitation letter had specifically requested a representative from the faculty senate of each institution. They were given 10 minutes to share what their institutions were doing in outreach to the K-12 schools in the state. After Sorensen and Garner talked, there were only 4 counties in Alabama that UA was not directly touching. Several legislators were impressed by our outreach, and lots of the press picked up on it.

Reports from Senators on University Committees

Rhoda Johnson reported that the Campus Master Plan Committee met with Provost Barrett. With the restructuring of University committees, this committee now reports directly to Barrett, not to Bob Wright. The need and location for a fire station was discussed. It was proposed that it be put in the McMillan Building where the University Press and the motor pool currently are. The city of Tuscaloosa has yet to respond.

The University Boulevard redevelopment plan is expected to begin in August.

The location of the new Bevill building is not yet fixed, and a new science building will be added to the 5 year plan.

Wythe Holt responded that city councilman Gary Phillips was enthusiastic about the McMillan Building as a location for the fire station.

There was no **Old Business**.

New Business

Resolution from Planning and Operations:

To make the operation of The University of Alabama Faculty Senate more productive and efficient, and to streamline and strengthen the Senate's relation to the University's standing committees, each committee of the Senate, other than Senate Operations, shall be aligned with the appropriate University standing committees. Each Senator appointed to a University standing committee by the Faculty Senate will serve on the appropriate Senate committee, and choices of both committee assignments will be made immediately after the Senate elections. The Steering Committee will construct a roster relating Senate and University standing committees, which must be approved by the 1996-97 Senate, and this resolution will be implemented with the Senate elected in Spring 1997.

Bob Halli introduced the above resolution. He said that its purpose is to align Senators internal committee assignments with their Senate assignment as liaison to a University standing committee.

Wythe Holt spoke in favor of the resolution. It represents a rationalization and coordination of the assignments. It should speed up the passage of information to the Senate. Bob Brooks spoke to the possibility of a senator's divergent interests, and wanted to allow exceptions to be made. Margaret Garner mentioned the occasional need to move specific people around for special interests or needs.

The resolution passed without dissent.

Bob Halli then introduced the matter of the changes to commencement, and the Planning & Operations Committee's report on the matter. The current plan calls for all PhD degrees and bachelors and masters in some colleges to be in the morning. These students will pick up their diplomas in afternoon, while the students from the rest of the colleges will walk the stage in the afternoon. It is uncertain whether a morning and evening ceremony will be needed only once, or all three times a year.

Halli said that most input to the Planning & Operations Committee was from faculty, not students. Jessica Matson said that most of her students wanted the separate divisional exercises. Some spoke against sending the report due to strong language, and the possibility that we don't have all the information we need, including all the president's reasons. However, Bob Sigler said that he thought the language was not strong enough! This is a substantial change in our job, and we had no input. He said that parents usually want to take lots of pictures of students and faculty in their robes, and this approach will work against that. Peggy Jessee reported that her college was very much against it. Nick Stinnett felt that this will depersonalize the graduations, and the smaller divisional exercises will be very hard to arrange. One senator noted that for faculty who rent the cap & gown, this would triple the expense. Will faculty attendance be required or optional? Wythe Holt stated characterized it as 'very dangerous' that the faculty was not consulted about something as important as commencement. Loy Singleton expressed concern that the whole scheme will do more overall harm than good for the University as a whole. Margaret Garner noted that when the University went to divisional exercises from one universal commencement, the participation from students went up remarkably. She speculated that perhaps this change would move *away* from a customer orientation, toward a more de-personalized ceremony.

The resolution to send the report on to Sorensen passed with 1 dissent. Amy Ward will send a cover letter.

Resolution from the Steering Committee

The Faculty Senate of the University of Alabama expresses its approval of and support for the efforts of Faculty Athletic Representative Gene Marsh to care for the academic welfare of our University's scholar-athletes, to implement President Sorensen's standard that no collective GPA of the scholarship athletes on any of Alabama's athletic teams be below 2.0, and to encourage the coaches of those teams whose scholarship athletes do not at present meet this standard to develop a meaningful strategy to achieve the standard. We agree with Professor Marsh that "we owe it to our students and their families to set standards at a level which will allow most of them to get their degrees."

Wythe Holt spoke in favor of the resolution, saying that Gene Marsh is the first Faculty Athletic Representative in

many years to really be concerned about the grades and academic progress of the student-athletes. Holt was appalled that any student could play with less than a 2.0, but this effort to raise the team average is a step in the right direction. Holt stated that Marsh could use the help. One coach has not responded to his letter on this issue. Bob Sigler and Inez Rovegno remarked that NCAA only tracks the scholarship athletes, not the non-scholarship athletes.

Holt stated that this resolution will support Marsh by copies that will be sent to Sorensen & Bockrath with a cover letter asking for a specific response.

The resolution passed without dissent.

Holt then addressed the proposed amendments to Senate Constitution and By-Laws. Amendments to either cannot be approved in the same meeting that they are initially presented, and changes to the Constitution must be voted on by the full faculty.

Major changes include: (Copies of the [Constitution](#) & [By-Laws](#) with the proposed changes are attached.)

- Officer elections (President, Vice President and Secretary) will be contested, and will be elected from the outgoing senate, rather than the incoming meeting. This is meant to insure that the senators voting know the candidates well, and that all candidates not be novitiates.
- The officers would take their seats in April after being elected in March.
- Candidates should send a one page outline of their reasons for desiring the office.
- Senate Committees would be required to meet the 1st Tuesday of the month.
- Clear alternatives for second 'regular' Senate meeting date each month are spelled out and regular meetings would end at 5:00 PM.
- Senators must meet with their standing committee meetings.

There being no further business, the Senate adjourned at 5:13 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcus Brown, Secretary

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