

**Corrected Minutes**  
**Faculty Senate Meeting**

**February 17, 1998**

**101 Bevill Building**

**3:30 PM**

The minutes for January 1998 were approved without corrections.

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**Faculty Senate President's Report**

Margaret Garner, Faculty Senate President, reported that she continues to hear many expressions of thanks for faculty who are writing to elected representatives concerning the financial needs of our institution in particular, and higher education in general. She thanked the Senate and asked the Senators to continue writing.

Garner stated that the faculty has been receiving frequent updates from her and Scott Bridges concerning the activities of the Alabama House. She also reported that a number of Senators have been attending the weekly teleconferences regarding the budget process. She then addressed the confusing information that has shown up in the media. She indicated that the System office is going to provide answers to the questions and those responses will be sent to all the campuses so that the information is both accurate and consistent.

Garner reported that Dr. Sorensen provided her with a copy of the unanimous statement of the Council of Presidents regarding Fiscal 1999 appropriations. She said that the momentum is strong and we must keep up the effort to inform our legislators of the value of higher education to our state and the critical need for improved funding. She asked the Senate to watch for regular updates and to help make a difference this year.

Wythe Holt commented that he saw John Roger on TV yesterday, and Holt questioned why UAB is being allowed to continue to hold up the budget. Garner replied that she sent questions to the UA System Office. The System Office is working on responses to these questions. Holt suggested that a fax be sent to Bill Jones office.

Garner informed the Senate that Higher Education Day is going to be held in Montgomery on March 5<sup>th</sup>. At this time the agenda calls for representatives from the student body, faculty, Presidents, Higher Education Partnership, and the business community to speak. Planned visits to individual legislators will occur afterwards. Garner urged Senators to attend if possible. She stated that all 15 four-year institutions are expected to support this effort.

Garner announced that ACCUFP will be hosted by UA on March 5-6<sup>th</sup>. However, the meeting will be held in Montgomery in order to take advantage of Higher Education Day. She indicated that she will update the Senate about that meeting next month. She expected to have presentations from Gordon Stone from the Higher Education Partnership and a visit from the Alabama Commission on Higher Education. She also stated that she has been sending legislative updates to the ACCUFP for their information.

Garner informed the Senate that a Search Committee for VP of Student Affairs has been formed and Dr. Jennings Bryant will chair the committee. Announcements have already gone out and applications are expected by March 6<sup>th</sup>. Garner is serving on this committee as the senate representative.

Garner stated that Marcus Brown will coordinate the formation of the Distinguished Service Awards Committee. Brown stated that the committee is already formed and includes: Marvin McKinley, Ginny Raymond, and Pieter

Visscher.

Garner reported that Bob Haynes will be the Senate representative on the Search Committee for Executive Director of Museums, and Tom Novak will form a nominating committee for the election of Senate officers.

Garner informed the Senate that the Steering Committee unanimously approved action to request support for a 0.5 FTE secretary and permanent office space adequately equipped to support the activities of the Senate. She asked for the Senate's input and support for this request. She reported that she has been discussing this need with President Sorensen over the past two months, and he seems to be aware of the importance. She stated her appreciation to Dr. Sorensen's commitment to shared governance with the faculty. She further stated that the availability of a secretary dedicated to service to the senate steering committee and its standing committees will be a tremendous asset.

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## **Reports From Senate Committees**

### **Academic Affairs Committee**

Peggy Jessee, co-chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, gave the following report.

#### **Academic Dorms**

The following information was gathered from Hank Lazer, Assistant Vice President for Undergraduate Programs Dale Taylor, Director, Auxiliary and Support Services, Coress Brandon, Director, Housing and Residential Life.

The Mallet Assembly, Women's Honors, the A&S Freshman Initiative, and regular Honors will be getting new dorm space. Regular Honors and Women's Honors will have 50 spaces each in New Hall with the remaining 50 spaces going to current residents. Parker/Adams and Byrd are being renovated for the A&S Undergraduate Initiative. The Mallet Assembly will be moved to Fitts Hall. At the present time C&BA students have a dorm, Friedman Hall, with 150 spaces and a waiting list, and Engineering has a floor in Paty Hall.

Housing has a renovation schedule for dorms. Primary renovation costs will be borne by Housing. Extras, such as computers, atriums, better furniture, etc., will be paid by the academic program using the dorm. Some programs, depending on physical proximity, are being invited to participate in academic dorms. These dorms will have dining facilities and a faculty apartment. There must be a commitment on the part of the department/college toward active participation in the out-of-class lives of the dorm students, as well as a guarantee to fill the spaces that were applied for. Any program/unit may submit a proposal to housing requesting a specialized dorm.

There are, however, some remaining concerns. The first concern is the Mallet Assembly which has been moved several times in the past years. Because of location and the particular design of Fitts Hall, Mallet's assignment to this dorm may be problematic for this group. There also is some continuing concern about the segmenting effect academic dorms may have on the campus as a whole.

Keith Woodbury asked Jessee to shed some light on the relocation of the Mallet Assembly. Jessee did not know the rationale behind the decisions. Wythe Holt stated that Mallet is the least favored of all honors programs by the administration. Ray White asked, "Who is the administrative sponsor for Mallet?" Peggy Jessee stated that the Provost is not aware of the faculty support for Mallet. Holt stated that the University wants Mallet to just go away. Jim Richardson said the committee needs more background information.

#### **Extending Withdrawal Period**

An SGA committee is proposing to extend the time a student can withdraw unconditionally from a class. Currently,

students can withdraw up to the end of the fourth week of class. The SGA wants to extend this deadline so that a student can gain a sense of how the professor is going to grade the student's work before the withdrawal deadline. Since many courses do not grade student work until midterm, the SGA is proposing extending the withdrawal deadline to nine weeks.

The general response from the Academic Affairs to extending the withdrawal period was negative. Our committee tabled further discussion of the student proposal until such time it is voted on and approved by the full SGA senate. In the meantime, the committee co-chairs will talk with registrars from individual colleges on campus to determine the administrative impact of extending the withdrawal period.

Wythe Holt sarcastically suggested that the withdrawal period be decreased to one week.

#### **+/- GRADING**

The SGA is reportedly conducting a survey of all faculty on the grading policy to determine the level of faculty support for changing the current +/- grading policy (back to the former grading policy of straight letter grades or perhaps to a new variant). Hank Lazer in the Provost's office would like a faculty vote on the issue.

Last fall, the Academic Affairs committee recommended postponing such a vote until the current policy had been in effect for at least one full class of student. The +/- grading policy went into effect Fall semester 1994. Students who entered the University in the fall of 1994 (who graduate on time) will graduate this May.

The committee agreed that data regarding the effects of the +/- grading should be collected this summer and fall semester. After collecting the data, the senate can decide whether to request a vote of the full faculty to change the grading policy. The committee agreed that a vote, if it is held, would occur no earlier than spring semester. The committee is currently working with the Office of Institutional Research to begin collecting data regarding the effects of the +/- grading policy on student GPAs, fellowship offers, and admittance into graduate and professional schools.

#### **Financial Affairs Committee**

Lee Pike, Co-Chair of of the Financial Affairs Committee gave the following report:

The Financial Affairs Committee met on February 3rd. The co-chairs informed the committee that President Sorensen has responded that he is abandoning the idea of using the earnings on unspent endowment interest to fund the Development Office and that he would look for additional money elsewhere. The committee had taken a unanimous position opposing the idea.

Other discussion revolved around several salary issues. The committee held an information-sharing discussion of the recently revealed salary equity adjustments for 1997-98. The committee has been asked for recommendations on the method of distribution of an anticipated 1998-99 salary increase, in terms of possible across-the-board or merit increases, or mix of approaches. A discussion of the issue was begun and will continue at the next meeting. The committee agreed that it would incorporate into its recommendations an opinion regarding limiting application of any increase in state appropriations to salary and other expenditures funded by state sources as opposed to expenditures funded by non-state sources. The recommendations will take the form of a resolution and will be brought forward for Senate consideration at its March meeting. Finally, the committee will request salary data from the deans to look at the issues of gender equity and compression equity.

#### **Student Affairs Committee**

Bob Sigler, Co-chair of the Student Affairs Committee, gave the following report:

The committee met and discussed several issues related to integration. Jim Taylor was absent since he was

representing the senate in the budget hearings in Montgomery. Jim asked the committee to table the resolution until he could be present. The committee will address the issue at our next regularly scheduled meeting. The committee discussed the need to be more sensitive to the needs of international students. In particular, it appears that they believe that the recent changes in FAC awards reflects a lack of interest in international students by the University. We also noted that minority students might be receiving the same message. The committee will monitor the progress made by student life, the Student Government Association, and the Task Force on the Freshman year, all of whom have indicated an awareness of the problem and a willingness to address the issue.

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## **Reports From Senators On University Committees**

### **Intercollegiate Athletics Committee**

Rhoda E. Johnson, Senate representative on the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee, gave the following report:

The Intercollegiate Athletics Committee met on Monday, January 26, 1998 from 4-5 p.m.

In keeping with the decision made by the committee to have a meeting on each of the four self-study principles, Marie Robbins, Associate Athletic Director in Charge of Compliance, met with the committee to discuss changes in compliance policies at The University. Robbins reported on NCAA & SEC violations from September 1996- July 1, 1997 and from July 1, 1997 (when she started her position) until the present. The committee was presented with a summary of the violations. Robbins has developed a manual which outlines procedures and policies. The policy is to have immediate notification of a violation and a resolution.

There has been a definite decrease in the number violations since Robbins accepted the position. The most frequently occurring violation involves recruitment. Robbins reported that this violation involved a coach contacting a potential recruit by phone before the student is a senior. This violation is likely to happen for team sports (like volleyball) that may not be regulated in the high school environment. Here a coach might contact a coach who tells him that the student is a senior, but later it is discovered that the student is not.

Additional meetings will focus on the the next three self- study operating principles:

1. academic integrity,
2. fiscal integrity, and
3. commitment to equity (gender and minority issues and student-athlete welfare).

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## **NEW BUSINESS**

Wythe Holt registered his concerns about bond issues for school funding that will be paid back from the education trust fund. He feels that this could significantly affect future raises. Bob Ingram echoed Holt's concern. Holt stated that Paul Hubbert also shares this concern.

Bob Halli suggested some Senate House keeping was necessary with respect to elections, etc.

Margaret Garner solicited responses from the Senate with respect to administrative support for the Senate. Wythe Holt stated that the President of the Senate needs release time and that the present policy only permits release time if the dean agrees. Holt also suggested that we need to be careful requesting money if it is taken out of our raises. Marcus

Brown indicated his support for administrative support. Bing Blewitt said that office space for the Senate should not be a problem. Chuck Hobby suggested that the Senate not request a fixed budget. The overall Senate showed strong support for administrative help.

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The senate adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas Novak, Secretary

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