

corrected minutes

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 - attempted to incorporate outreach/service doc in faculty handbook
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 - revised Merger document rejected by Provost & Council of Deans

- New Business

3:30pm - 101 Bevill Building

- Senate Roll Call --- (*Ray White*)
 - Senators absent: James Adams, Laszlo Baksay, William Doty, Ed Ellis, Sellwyn Hollingsworth, Harvey Kline, Charles Leathers, Norman Stein, Mindy Taggard, Marcia Winter
- Approval/Correction of March Minutes --- (*Tom Novak*) --- *e-mailed*
 - no corrections noted; minutes approved
- **President's Report** --- (*Margaret Garner*)

Funding and Faculty/Staff Salary Crisis

Clearly the single most important issue of the UA faculty this year has been the critical concern regarding funding for the institution and the deplorable position of our salaries. As President it has required a large portion of my time in making this situation known to the Trustees, the public and media, and, of course, our elected officials. In addition a concerted effort has been made to communicate with and gain the support of senate presidents at other higher education institutions through sending them via email many of the updates provided for our faculty. A number of other senate presidents have indicated to me that they have used our updates without editing for their own faculty. Our faculty have responded this year in unprecedented numbers in writing legislators about the dire effects of cuts and level funding over the last several years on our institution, the faculty and students, our programs and the long term costs of this neglect on our state and its people. Just a week ago the petition regarding the funding for higher education and sent to Lt. Gov. Siegelman contained 3000 signatures statewide, and 1000 of these came from the UA campus alone! This week the push was again strong as the conferees from the Al Senate and House began meeting to reconcile the different budgets for education. Not only were faculty and staff writing and calling to urge full support for the additions that the senate recommended to the higher education budget (\$11.6 million more), but also over 600 names obtained in an 18-hour time frame on a petition urging our local legislators to help us in this effort was sent. Related to this concern across the state, the Higher Education Partnership was formed and has as its charge advocacy for restoring adequate funding for all 15 four-year institutions in the state. We invited the Partnership to campus as an opportunity for our faculty and staff to be informed about its purpose and to have an opportunity to ask questions. The Partnership sponsored a Higher Education Day Rally in Montgomery in March which we supported with members of the faculty, staff and students attending and I was asked to represent you and other faculty in the state as a speaker.

University of Alabama PAC

The year has also seen the birth of the University of Alabama PAC. In January of this year an unprecedented press conference jointly sponsored by the state's two comprehensive research institutions, UA and AU, was held in Montgomery to declare a crisis in higher education funding to our elected representatives and the people of the state. For the first time representatives of the faculty, students, alumni, campus presidents, the Chancellor and trustees stood together in unity concerning the dire effects of the cuts and level funding history. These developments provide testimony to the critical state of funding for our institution and others in the state. At this early stage it is evident that our faculty and staff see these opportunities as necessary to secure a more stable funding from the state. It is regrettable that our elected leaders have not recognized the value of higher education enough to appropriately allocate a reasonable fair share of the Education Trust Fund to ensure a strong future. Our efforts will need to be ongoing. One year ago we frequently heard from legislators that higher education was just "not a player at the table" of influence in Montgomery. We are very appreciative of the efforts of the Legislative Agenda Committee and its chair, Scott Bridges, who will provide more detail of this University-wide committee's work this year. I believe it is safe to say that we have become a factor of influence. Education is our business and our passion. Education excellence is our goal. The State of Alabama needs to invest in the University of Alabama, truly one of its strongest assets in securing better opportunities for its citizens through economic development, strategic planning, and research and development. Reasonable tuition for a quality education is important to our citizens. If we are to be effective in the future, faculty, staff and students must go

to the polls in record numbers. Our elected officials need to know that we are committed to the best possible future for the state of Alabama and that translates into adequate support for higher education. The State of Alabama has stood out in the southeast and the nation in cutting higher education. It is time we stood firm in supporting higher education! Those legislators not pushing for strong support for higher education need to be visible to the state as out of step with those factors that make a state strong and provide its citizens with the preparation necessary for success in a career and family life. It needs to be politically expedient to support higher education. Your voices and votes will turn this around.

Faculty Senate Web Pages and Electronic Mail--Enhanced communication.

The Senate has continued to develop its web page and encourages faculty and the administration to use it to keep abreast of our agendas and minutes, key documents and resolutions which identify positions the senate has taken. I have been pleased to learn that candidates to various positions, such as the current VP for Student Affairs, have reported visiting our web site to learn about things of interest and activities of the faculty. This year for the first time, everyone on the senate has had an email address. This has greatly enhanced our opportunity to provide quick updates between meetings as well as provide the agendas, reports and minutes in a more efficient manner. Finally having an e-mail distribution list for the UA faculty this year, thanks to the work of Ray White, we have been able to send information to approximately 70% of the UA faculty in a timely manner and to obtain feedback from them on issues of general concern. It is our hope that for the upcoming year not only will 100% of the faculty be available via this technology, but also there will be a staff list serve so that issues of concern to the entire university community can be disseminated uniformly and quickly.

New Senate Office & Secretarial Support

The senate reviewed the tremendous demands on the officers and the committee chairs of the senate standing committees. We have needed a permanent office staffed by a paid secretarial position dedicated to the senate. The support from the divisions where faculty reside is no longer feasible because the time demands on them are frequently so great. The work of the senate continues to grow. Supporting 16 steering committee members will soon be a .5 FTE secretary housed in the senate office in **Room 461 Alston**. We sincerely thank Dr. Sorensen for this important action in recognition of the value of the senate to the mission and effectiveness of The University. We also want to express thanks to Dean Barry Mason for offering space for the secretary's office and for providing classroom space in Room 123 Bidgood every Tuesday and Thursday from 3:30 to 5 p.m. for committees of the Faculty Senate to use for meetings as needed. When the new secretary is on board, the use of this room will be coordinated through that office.

Communication with Senior University Leadership

Throughout the year, including the summer, the Steering Committee has met monthly with the Provost, Dr. Nancy Barrett, to discuss pending issues and matters of general interest to the faculty. These are seen as mutually beneficial and offer opportunities to hear a variety of perspectives about current policies and emerging issues. Between these meetings the senate president also has meetings scheduled bi-weekly with the Provost. At times depending on current issues under study, other steering committee members accompany the senate president to discuss specific topics and obtain advice from the Provost. This has been very helpful this year. Monthly meetings by the senate president with President Sorensen have proved productive in the exchange of concerns and opportunities. Dr. Sorensen has been very open and straightforward in discussing issues. Early in the year he invited me to meet with the President's Executive Council on ways that the administration and senate can work more effectively together. Following my report on the recommendations I had gleaned from the steering committee and our need to revise an old Governance Document, he agreed that a written guide to our shared governance would be helpful to both new and continuing administrators as well as to faculty leadership. An outgrowth of that meeting is the Shared Responsibility Document which you approved at our last meeting and the final amended copy is in your minutes today. This document will now be shared with the Provost, who was the designated administrator to follow up on this with us. UA Faculty adopt revised Constitution and Bylaws. Last year considerable work was done to update the Constitution and Bylaws of the Faculty Senate. A University-wide vote through the Office of Academic Affairs in the fall led to their adoption. The documents are available on the senate web page.

Articulation and General Studies Act

This year the Faculty Senate took a leadership role in assisting the administration in informing the University faculty about the effects of the Articulation and General Studies Act and the interpretation by the Articulation and General Studies Committee (AGSC). In the fall we co-sponsored general faculty meeting along with the Provost concerning the history of the Act, its impact on the University and how we would comply. These meetings and updates to the faculty via email lead to a faculty-wide vote on changes to the core curriculum to comply with the law. Further both Amy Ward, former President, and I represented the faculty at some early meetings to provide testimony about protecting the mission, integrity and autonomy of our comprehensive research institution. In the fall I was very pleased that Amy Ward agreed to continue to be our representative to the AGSC. The Senate Standing Committees will report on more specific accomplishments of the year in their year-end reports today. I want to personally thank all of you for the tireless work you have done to make this an energetic and productive year. I look forward to working with you on continuing projects in the coming year.

- Reports & Annual Summaries from Senate Committees:
 - Academic Affairs --- (*Jim Richardson & Peggy Jessee*)
 - Annual Report--- [*see [attachment](#)*]
 - Financial Affairs --- (*Rona Donahoe & Lee Pike*)
 - Annual Report --- [*see [attachment](#)*]
 - **Gender equity & salary compression reviewed**

The Financial Affairs Committee met on March 25. The Committee reviewed data from the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) which provides information useful to the Committee's examination of the issue of gender equity. On April 14, the Committee co-chairs received a more complete data set from OIR which will be useful in examining the salary compression issue. The Committee will study the data and consider the relevance of the information as the Committee brings forth a recommendation to the Steering Committee on the distribution of raises.

- Planning and Operations --- (*Bob Halli & Rob Ingram*)
 - Annual Report--- [*see [attachment](#)*]
- Research and Service --- (*Bing Blewitt & Nick Stennett*)
 - Annual Report --- [*see [attachment](#)*]
- Student Affairs --- (*Bob Brooks & Bob Sigler*)
 - Annual Report --- [*see [attachment](#)*]
- Senate Operations
 - Annual Report --- [*see [attachment](#)*]
- Reports from Senators on University Standing Committees
 - Faculty/Staff Benefits Advisory Committee
 - Ruby Morrison reported that alternative dental plans are being reviewed which may be more attractive than the current Blue Cross Blue Shield plan
- Reports from other Committees
 - Legislative Agenda --- (*Scott Bridges*)
 - **Resolution** on Board of Trustees Membership --- [*[attachment](#)*]

Scott Bridges introduced a resolution (see [attachment](#)) protesting the recent appointment to the University of Alabama Board of Trustees, an appointment which would deprive Tuscaloosa of residential representation on the Board. The resolution passed unanimously.

- OLD Business
 - **Resolution** Recognizing Summersell Awardees --- (*M. Garner*) --- [*[attachment](#)*]
 - update on revised Merger document
 - Margaret Garner reported that the Provost was concerned that the revision to the merger (of academic units) guidelines recently proposed by the Senate would prolong the process. The Council of Deans felt that the proposed revision would make an already cumbersome system even more cumbersome. The Steering Committee will be bringing the proposed revision back to the Provost for additional discussion.

- Research and Service recommended additional language in the Faculty Handbook to emphasize that variable teaching loads should be taken into consideration in tenure/promotion/raise decisions. The proposed revision was rejected by the Council of Deans & the Provost, who felt that existing language was sufficient.
- NEW Business
 - Margaret Garner recommended Wythe Holt as the Senate Parliamentarian, which was unanimously approved
 - adjourn to preliminary Committee meetings & select co-chairs/convenors
 - orientation for new Senators --- (*Margaret Garner, Rob Ingram & Ray White*)

Attachments:

Academic Affairs -- Annual Report (1997-1998)

The following points were addressed by the Academic Affairs Committee during the 1997--1998 academic year:

- The AA Committee reviewed five recommendations from the Council of Assistant and Associate Deans concerning proposed changes in academic policies. The Committee agreed with four of the five proposed changes.

1. Minimum Scholastic Standards Policy

- Place decision-making regarding readmission after probation/suspension with the deans.
- Establish rules for second or subsequent suspensions.
- Change the Scholastic Progress Standard scale to be more rigorous.

2. Academic Second Opportunity Policy

Reduce the number of years a student must separate from the University to return with a “clean slate”.

3. Failing and Incomplete Grades Policy

Incomplete grades will no longer be calculated in a student’s GPA as an “F”, unless the student omits to have the “I” removed within 12 months. After originally approving this policy, the committee later voted to amend the policy to continue to give no quality points for an “I” grade based on additional information involving NCAA eligibility rules.

4. Withdrawal Policy

The committee voted to not change the current withdrawal policy. Later in the academic year, the SGA gave a new proposal to the AA committee regarding the withdrawal policy. The committee voted not to approve the SGA’s proposed extension of the withdrawal period from the current four weeks to nine weeks.

5. Forgiveness Policy

The Committee did not agree with changing the forgiveness policy as proposed by the Council of Assistant and Associate Deans.

- **Plus/Minus Grading Policy**

The Committee recommended that the current plus/minus grading policy not be changed at this time until at least one class which entered the University under the policy has graduated. The Committee continued to collect pertinent data regarding this policy throughout the academic year.

- **Applicable Catalog**

The question of which catalog applies to students returning to the University after extended absences was deferred to the registrars office through the Assistant to the Provost (Hank Lazer).

- **“C” vs “D” as Passing**

Due to the complexity of establishing a university-wide policy on a minimum passing grade, our committee

recommended that no changes be made until a more urgent needed arose.

- **Merger of Languages Departments**

The committee agreed that the criteria for merger of the Department of Romance Languages, the Department of German and Russian and the Critical Languages Center, as stated in the Principles and Procedures for Merger and Discontinuance of Academic Units, were met.

- **Move of Mallet Assembly**

With the increasing numbers of honors dorms on campus, the AA committee strongly supported the renovation of Fitts Hall to accommodate the needs of the Mallet Assembly.

-- *Jim Richardson & Peggy Jessee*

Financial Affairs -- Annual Report (1997-1998)

Agenda items addressed by the Financial Affairs Committee included issues related to faculty salaries, a proposal to fund the Development Office, the service of the Benefits Office, the Provost's White Paper, and several queries directed to the Committee for investigation. Key items of business included:

- **Salary Issues**

As the Senate year ends, the Committee is completing a study of compression equity and gender equity issues. Also, the Committee has been asked to submit a recommendation for the method of distribution (across-the-board, merit, etc.) of anticipated 1998 salary increases. The Committee will present its recommendation, along with a summary of salary compression information, at the May meeting of the Steering Committee.

The Committee prepared a resolution, which was approved by the Senate, on the State funding impact on The University of Alabama. The resolution detailed salary comparisons with the SUG, showed a 10 year average of faculty salaries adjusted for inflation, and referenced the factor of housing affordability. The resolution, sent to the President and the UA Legislative Liaison, supported the University of Alabama System Office's legislative request.

- **Plan to Fund the Development Office**

The Committee investigated a plan, proposed by the Development Office and the Office for Financial Affairs, to fund the Development Office using unexpended interest on endowment income. The Committee polled the Deans as part of its investigation of the matter. The Committee issued a unanimous opinion opposing the plan. The Senate approved the forwarding of the Committee's position statement to the President. The proposed funding approach was abandoned by the President.

- **Benefits Office**

In response to several queries from faculty, the Committee addressed concerns and prepared a resolution, approved by the Senate, related to Faculty and Staff Benefits. The resolution commended the Benefits Office for extending coverage with no increase in premiums; urged the Office to update the published coverage information to clearly detail BC/BS coverage; and reminded the Office that, in addition to being interpreters of BC/BS policies, they must serve as advocates for faculty/staff concerns to BC/BS.

- **White Paper**

The senate unanimously passed the resolution proposed by the Committee as a response to the White Paper. The resolution contained both positive and negative statements and four recommendations. The recommendations related to

- the use of any available revenues for faculty/staff salaries;
- the Library being given first consideration when funds for infrastructure improvement are available;
- broad faculty participation and consensus in the development of guidelines for selecting Ph.D. programs

for enhancement; and

- the cost savings which should result from the strengthening of existing faculty with international expertise and interest rather than the hiring of new international faculty.

The committee had a busy and productive year, with members making active contributions.

-- *Rona Donahoe & Lee Pike*

Planning & Operations -- Annual Report (1997-1998)

The two things the Committee worked on most during the year were

1. the completion of the University calendar by getting our summer school recommendations in place (which were accepted to finish the calendar) and
2. the consideration of out-of-state tuition policies being applied to off-campus education. That started out when the Provost wanted the External Degree program to charge out-of-state tuition where appropriate. When we pointed out that no other off-campus program charged such tuition, the word came down that all such programs should do so. The general perception was that this would do more harm than good to the programs, and we learned that the legislature had not intended to include such programs in its push for out-of-state tuition. The Provost then decided that it should not be charged for off-campus courses.

We also responded to the lease-lease back arrangement proposed by the University to raise money for capital improvements. The proposal was tabled and appears to have died.

A proposal by the Student Senate calling for a two day fall break remains pending for Committee consideration.

-- *Bob Halli & Rob Ingram*

Student Affairs -- Annual Report (1997-1998)

The Student Affairs subcommittee devoted most of its energy in the 1997-98 academic year to two issues:

1. segregation of the greek system and
2. policies for the consumption of alcohol on campus.

We reviewed a number of other complaints and issues but choose not to offer a formal opinion or position statement on these issues. The committee deferred action on the segregation issue pending the receipt of the report of the task force which is addressing greek life.

-- *Bob Brooks & Bob Sigler*

Research & Service -- Annual Report (1997-1998)

The committee worked largely on two issues over the last year:

1. Incorporating the outreach/service document into the faculty handbook
 - the Council of Deans rejected the proposed changes.
2. Recommending that the Faculty Handbook be revised to emphasize that varying teaching loads should be taken into account in tenure/ promotion/ raise decisions
 - the Provost & Council of Deans rejected the proposal, insisting that existing language was sufficient

--- *Bing Blewitt & Nick Stennett*

Senate Operations -- Annual Report (1997-1998)

The committee worked on two issues this year:

1. revising the Faculty Senate Constitution and By-Laws to further democratize Senate functioning
2. revising the shared governance document

-- *Bill Andreen*

RESOLUTION

Regarding Proposed University of Alabama System Board of Trustee Appointment

WHEREAS, by long honored and well established tradition, a Tuscaloosa resident of the 6th Congressional District has been appointed to the University of Alabama System Board of Trustees; and,

WHEREAS, said Board of Trustees consist of two members for each of the State's congressional districts, except for the district in which the University of Alabama In Tuscaloosa is located, which traditionally is represented by three members to Insure a Tuscaloosa resident is on the Board; and,

WHEREAS, currently two 6th Congressional District Board members reside In Birmingham and not In Tuscaloosa, and the third Board member who was a resident of Tuscaloosa recently resigned; and,

WHEREAS, the Legislative Agenda Committee has been advised that the System Board of Trustees has appointed as a replacement for the resigning Tuscaloosa Board member, a resident of Birmingham rather than a resident of Tuscaloosa.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA COMMITTEE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA that the Tuscaloosa County Legislative Delegation take whatever steps necessary and available through confirmation procedures to defer or delay confirmation and/or to pursue a substitute nominee who represents the Sixth Congressional District as a resident of Tuscaloosa County.

Adopted by the Legislative Agenda Committee Endorsed by the of the University of Alabama Steering Committee of the April 13, 1998 Faculty Senate April 14, 1998

---B. Scott Bridges, Chairman

--- Margaret P. Garner, Faculty Senate President

RESOLUTION

Recognizing Steve & Camilla Johnson for Summersell Award

Whereas the Frances Summersell Award is given annually to those who have made significant contributions to the educational mission of the University and/or raised the quality of life in the State of Alabama,

And Whereas Steve and Camilla Johnson have been generous supporters of The University of Alabama and the community through:

The endowment of the University Symphony Orchestra, providing it a lasting financial foundation and establishing much needed scholarships, and providing security for an important cultural resource to the community and the University,

Important financial contributions for much needed renovations to the Alabama Museum of Natural History and the Jones Archaeological Museum at Moundville as well as contributing their time through serving as volunteers at the museums,

Extensively working to protect and preserve the state's historical and cultural resources through groups such as

the Jemison-Van de Graaff Mansion Foundation, the Heritage Commission of Tuscaloosa County, and the Arts Council of Tuscaloosa,

And Whereas Steve and Camilla Johnson have been honored by The University and the College of Arts and Sciences by naming the orchestra the Johnson Symphony Orchestra,

And Whereas The University has selected Steve and Camilla Johnson as the recipients of the 1998 Frances Summersell Award,

Be it therefore resolved, the Faculty Senate expresses deep appreciation to Steve and Camilla Johnson for their outstanding support of this University and the community and congratulates them as the recipients of the Frances Summersel Award.

--- Margaret P. Garner (President, Faculty Senate) --- April 17, 1998
