

CORRECTED MINUTES
FACULTY SENATE MEETING

September 19, 1995

Ferguson Forum

3:30 p.m

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Members absent without representation: Pam Parker, Kevin Whitaker, Atly Jefcoat, Martin Parker, Jerry Hoffman

Call to Order

The minutes for the [April](#) and [August](#) 1995 Senate meetings were approved.

President's Report

Don Crump Speaks to Senate...

Norman Stein asked for Unanimous Consent to allow Don Crump to address the Senate concerning impending budget cuts and to respond to questions. There were no objections.

7.5% Budget Cut

Dr. Crump reminded senators of the 7.5% budget cut for the 95-96 fiscal year. He said that every indication from

Montgomery is that next year will bring another similar cut. As a result of this, the administration is trying to cope with this year's budget while preparing for additional budget cuts next year.

Early Retirement Incentive

Crump said that the early retirement incentive is one attempt to create flexible resources for use in a variety of ways, such as salary enhancement. Some questions with regard to the incentive are still open. All the positions vacated by retirement will revert to the President's office. It is likely that some vacant lines will be discontinued while the rest may be apportioned according to need.

De-Emphasize 1st Two Years of College ??

Crump noted that many expect the trend to be for more students to complete the first two college years at community colleges, and then do more graduate work before entering the labor market. This suggests that it would be to our advantage to emphasize what the students cannot get at the community colleges.

Crump expressed the administration's concern for the University's infrastructure, including the library, the growing need in computing and networks, and departmental operating budgets.

Don Crump Responds to Senate Questions...

At this point, Crump invited questions from the Senators.

Chancellor's Office Cut by Same Percentage as University

Margaret Garner asked whether the chancellor's office takes a cut of proration. Crump replied that the chancellor's budget is typically cut the same percentage as the rest of the University.

Difference Between University Plans & Resources & Priorities Committees ??

Crump was asked to clarify the role of the University Plans Committee as distinct from Resources & Priorities. He responded that the University Plans Committee has not been as active over the last 12-18 months as it was previous to that time. Originally, the University Plans Committee was designed to develop the 'Strategic Plan' for the University. Once the basic plan was made, the committee went into hiatus. On the other hand, the role of the Resources and Priorities Committee is to make recommendations concerning the use of new resources such as budget increases and bond issues. The committee also recommends how cuts in resources should be apportioned.

Budget Crisis Will Be Long-Term Problem

Ginny Raymond asked whether the current budget crisis is due solely to the court case, or due to wider, more long range problems. Crump answered that this is not an isolated blip or a short-term take down. The mood in the state government offices in Montgomery (and in many other statehouses) is that higher education is no longer a priority. Higher education used to be one of the top two items in most state budgets. In the current situation, higher education has dropped to about fourth to sixth place. As an example, Crump cited the fact that the state of Florida just spent more money this past year on prisons than on higher education. For the first time, Medicare and Medicaid, crime, prisons, highways, and many other concerns are being given higher priority in the state budgets. Higher education must be ready for a long-term cut in resources.

Legislators Aligned with Governor on Higher Ed Cuts

Nick Stinnett asked if members of the legislature seem to agree with Governor Fob James' view on cutting the educational budget. Crump replied that there are some exceptions, but the general mood at the statehouse is in accord with Governor James. A follow-up question quoted Fob James' allegation that the state's universities have 'piles' of money laying around. Is this an accurate assessment? Crump answered in the negative. Governor James is referring to restricted gift funds in endowments which can't be spent except for very narrowly defined purposes such as research chairs or scholarships.

University Lands as Revenue Source ??

Crump was asked about the land owned by the University, and whether this could help the current fiscal crunch. He answered that the land is managed for stable income from sources such as timber over the long term. The

administration believes that this is a better course than trying to convert the resource to immediate cash, and lose the stability of the income in the future.

Zero-Sum Game for New Programs' Support ??

A senator mentioned reports of new programs at the University. Do new programs demand there be some reallocation of funds? Crump responded that flexible funds will be considered as a pool which might be reallocated, but that they are not necessarily committed to new and different programs. Some new programs may be based on external funding. There is no direct linkage between cutting positions and new programs.

Shouldn't Faculty Be Involved in Lobbying Efforts ??

Scott Bridges asked whether there were any plans for a counter-attack on the low view of higher education, perhaps trying to re-educate the public. Crump replied that the UA Chancellor's office is planning a media campaign about the benefits of higher education, emphasizing the linkages between higher education and kindergarten through the twelfth grade, and pointing out the economic development related to higher education.

Faculty Input to Resource Allocation ??

Gene Dobson asked when money is available from other sources or for reallocation, how will the faculty be able to provide input? Crump answered that the faculty has input in at least four specific ways. First, the plans that are made by the various deans' offices usually have some faculty input, particularly in the smaller colleges. Second, the Committee on University Plans has faculty members who can provide input. Crump acknowledged that this committee should be more active in the future. Third, the Resources and Priorities Committee has faculty members serving on it, and they have input. Finally, the Faculty Senate is able to express the opinions and concerns of the faculty.

Consensus on University Plans a Utopian Fantasy

Margaret Garner expressed concern that the Committee on University Plans should develop a regular procedure for the review of the plans from the deans, and Chuck Hobby commented that the Committee on University Plans usually did not get a real chance to compare different plans. Crump responded that planning is never easy in a large and complex university. If there are (say) 78 different departments, this leads to 78 different plans and dreams. To assume that we can arrive at a high level of consensus, particularly at the departmental level, is probably assuming too much. Changes from these plans and dreams are not usually obvious in the short term.

No Current Plan to Involve Faculty in Lobbying Effort

Another senator remarked that we should have plans to go on the offensive in terms of publicizing the benefits of higher education through a concerted media campaign. It seems that public schools usually have teachers and principals who go to the legislature and walk the halls asking legislators for support. Is there a plan to get faculty members down to Montgomery to explain our position? Crump felt this may have some merit. He observed that the two year colleges have a significant influence in Montgomery while the four year and graduate institutions typically do not.

No Current Plan to Eliminate Specific Program or Department

Crump also commented that there is no current plan in the administration to eliminate specific programs or departments in the University.

There were no further questions for Dr. Crump, and he left the meeting.

Did Pres. Sayers ask Trustees for Permission to Eliminate 27 Faculty Positions ??

Norm Stein resumed his report to the Senate, reporting on a conversation with Roger Sayers. He asked President Sayers whether he asked the Board of Trustees for permission to terminate 27 faculty members, and whether he has already laid off CCHS faculty. Dr. Sayers responded that if the entire cut of \$2.5 million came from faculty lines, we'd have to lay off 27 faculty members. The two CCHS lines that were terminated were vacant.

Resources & Priorities Committee Has Too Few Faculty

Stein expressed concern that Resources and Priorities Committee membership has too few faculty, and that a large percentage of those counted as faculty are department chairs. Sayers replied that there are questions about counting the committee members who are faculty, but there is supposed to be a majority of faculty members on that committee, and he will appoint more faculty. Senators are invited to give suggestions and nominations to Senate President Stein. Stein would like to see at least 6 more faculty members appointed to that committee.

Ginny Raymond suggested that the most critical committee in this budget crisis will be the University Plans Committee, and that perhaps the Senate should pass a resolution to this effect.

Stein will be writing an op-ed piece to appear in Alabama newspapers describing how higher education is a good investment for the state.

Whence the "Center for Manufacturing Excellence" ??

Stein reported that the 'Center for Manufacturing Excellence' which Sayers described to the Board so far only has plans that allow interested faculty to contribute effort. Current plans do not call for a major investment of University funds.

Reports from Senate Committees

Academic Affairs

Gene Dobson reported that Margaret Garner was named as co-chair of the committee. The Academic Affairs Committee will be examining summer school operations and monitoring the computer policy now being developed. The committee has an interest in the service load and course load policy being developed by the Research and Service Committee. The committee is also considering revisions to the Core curriculum.

Financial Affairs

The committee met with Bob Wright to discuss the budget, and with Lee Pike concerning library funding. The committee is also looking at proposed HMO plans.

Planning & Operations

No report.

Research & Service

The committee has been charged with reviewing the new Conflict of Interest Policy which must go into effect on October 1. Federal funding agencies such as NSF and DHHS have had problems with the misuse of funds at some institutions, so they are pushing for a very strong policy. While the new policy is in response to a federal policy, it will apply to all future grant proposals, regardless of the funding source.

The Research and Service Committee has recommendations (see attachment). They are generally in agreement with the policy proposed by the administration, but suggest a few small changes affecting issues such as the privacy of the disclosures. The new policy needs to be widely distributed to faculty.

One senator suggested that we should require the most stringent regulations only where such is required by the granting agency. The committee chairs were authorized by the Senate to make the minor adjustments suggested and present our concerns to the administration.

Student Affairs

No report.

Senate Operations

No report.

There were no reports from Senators on University Committees.

There was no Old Business.

New Business

Claudia Johnson reported on the new mentoring program. Responses from the new faculty members are all positive, though many have not yet been returned.

It was noted that the Senate needs to elect replacements for Senate representatives to Mediation & Grievance Committee. There have been two recent resignations from that committee. The Mediation & Grievance Committee is empowered to name a temporary replacement, and Carl Westerfield has been serving as a temporary replacement.

Carl Westerfield and Sharon O'Dair were nominated to fill the two positions. There being no other nominations, the Senate elected them by acclamation.

Next the Senate considered the matter of appointing faculty members to the committee to oversee the merger and/or discontinuance of academic units. Three members are to be appointed by the Senate with staggered three year terms. Stein began by opening nominations for the three year term.

Nick Stinnett nominated Becky Ladewig. Some senators noted that she is a department chair, and expressed concern that the Senate should not name too many administrators to positions on the committee that are designated as 'faculty' positions.

Norm Stein nominated Hobson Bryan.

A vote was taken, and Hobson Bryan was elected to the three-year position.

Stein then opened nominations for the two year term. Amy Ward nominated Bill Darden, and noted that he had been deeply involved in merger which formed the Biological Sciences Department.

Becky Ladewig was also nominated.

A vote was taken, and Becky Ladewig was elected.

Nominations for the one year term were opened. Wythe Holt was nominated and there were no other nominations, so Wythe Holt was elected. However, after the meeting was adjourned, it was discovered that since Wythe Holt already serves on the Mediation & Grievance committee, he is ineligible to serve on this committee.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Marcus Brown, Secretary

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