

**UNCORRECTED**  
**MINUTES**  
**FACULTY SENATE MEETING**

September 17, 1996

Ferguson Forum

3:30 p.m.

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Highlights:

[New Faculty Handbook under review](#)  
[Enrollment Decline reported](#)  
[LIS Interim Dean named, future pondered](#)  
[Recruitment Task Force named](#)  
[Chief Information Officer search](#)  
[Computer Plan Proposes to Spend 10 Times Too Much on Computers](#)  
[Core Curriculum Prologue and Goals Revision:](#)  
[Academic Probation, Suspension policy considered](#)  
[Legislative Agenda Plans announced](#)  
[University Library Budget depressing](#)

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Members absent and not represented by an alternate: Larry Clayton, Sharon O'Dair, Michael Roberts, Ray Carroll, William Gonzenbach, Jamie Satcher, Keith Woodbury, and Peggy Jessee.

The minutes for April and August were approved after a typographical correction.

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## **President's report**

### **I. Faculty Handbook Review:**

Process:

1. Steering Committee members are reviewing a document prepared by Wythe Holt that elaborates the changes made by Provost Taaffe on the Handbook version that was turned in to him from the revision committee. The Steering Committee members will then give their opinions to the Senate officers and Wythe with regard to whether they think these changes should be reinstated.
2. The Faculty Senate officers and Wythe will take this information and meet with Dr. Barrett on September 25 to see how she stands on re-instating any of these changes.
3. After these steps, we (steering committee) will attach a memo to the Handbook explaining the results from the above two steps and distribute this to the Faculty Senate through the committee co-chairs for discussion. We will also make available copies to the general faculty. I will also identify approximately 10-15 non-senate faculty to ask specifically to review the Handbook.
4. The Senate committee co-chairs will organize the concerns/comments from the committees and return these in written form to the Steering Committee for consideration.
5. The Senate Steering Committee will review written comments from the Senate committees and any other information from general faculty and construct a resolution/recommendation to be presented to the full Senate.

**II. Legislative Agenda Committee** met last week and talked about a proposal put forward by Bill Jones, the UA lobbyist, for a calendar of events over the next academic year. The executive committee of this committee (Scott, myself, Pat Whetstone, Janet Griffith, and the lobbyists) will meet tomorrow with Dr. Sorensen. Some of the goals of this meeting will include firm organization of the roles of the different components of the committee (faculty, lobbyists, alumni, University Relations) as well as coordinating the different groups in reinforcing and communication the mission of this campus. We're also trying to plot a path to find out and communicate faculty activities in community outreach.

**III.** I was in a meeting with chairs of the University Standing Committees. These committees are most interested in communicating with the Senate via the Senate representatives and urge senators to attend these meetings.

#### **IV. Enrollment decline reported**

The Steering Committee also met with Dr. Barrett last week. She talked describing enrollment declines in the University. The total number as of that time was 948, which included 709 decline in undergraduates, 208 decline in graduate students, and 31 decline in advanced professionals.

#### **Charles Osborn named interim dean of Library & Information Studies**

She also noted that she had appointed Charles Osburn as interim Dean of the School of Library & Information Studies. She is appointing a task force chaired by Ron Rogers, Dean of the Graduate School, to evaluate the status and future directions of that school. She expects that the task force will forward its recommendations to her by January 1. I have submitted the names of two faculty senators to her and she will pick one of those to serve on that task force.

#### **Recruitment Task Force named**

She has also formed a "Recruitment and Retention Task Force" chaired by Randall Dahl and charged with generating specific ideas for improving student recruitment and retention at the University. Selwyn Hollingsworth from the Senate is serving on that task force and he will also be the liaison to the Admissions and Retention standing committee, which he serves on as faculty senate rep. Salli Davis is also on the task force and is another faculty member who I recommended to Dr. Barrett to serve on that committee.

#### **Chief Information Officer Search**

Rona Donahoe is the Senate representative on the search committee for a new Chief Information Officer. This is a person who will report to the Provost and be responsible for the planning and management of the University's information services.

Dr. Barrett is in the process of information gathering before reviewing proposals for University computer upgrades.

I have also submitted names to Drs. Sorensen and Barrett as suggestions for faculty representation on the search committee for the person to replace Marion Peavey and also to serve on the Athletic Compliance Committee.

1. **The Resources and Priorities Committee** will meet Thursday of this week, and it is my understanding the Dr. Sorensen will describe in more detail the current budget situation in the University.

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## **Reports from Senate Committees:**

#### **Current Computer Plan Proposes to Spend 10 Times Too Much on Computers - Faculty Senate Task Force Identifies More than \$4 Million in Savings**

Ray White reported on the preliminary findings of the Faculty Senate task force (Ray White, Rona Donahoe, Marcus Brown & Pat Bauch) created last spring to assess the cost of the current University computer plan. The plan proposes to spend \$13.5 million over five years, with computing hardware comprising the single largest cost: \$4 million for the lease of a new IBM mainframe plus \$1 million for a smaller IBM computer.

The computer plan was precipitated by a two-part crisis:

1. Administrative software (which is the largest load on the current university mainframe computer) needs to be upgraded soon to add essential functionality and to accommodate the years 2000 and beyond (which currently cannot be entered properly);
2. The current mainframe is so overburdened that this essential administrative software upgrade cannot be done in place. A new mainframe would allow this upgrade to be implemented.

The task force investigated whether the administrative software needs can be met more cost-effectively. Since the largest single budget item is the computer hardware expense, the task force estimated this independently. To do this, Ray White called four competing vendors of administrative software (including our current vendor) and talked to technical people who estimate the hardware needs for universities about to implement their software. These technical people were asked a variety of questions, including:

1. What hardware platforms are universities our size (or larger) choosing to run their administrative software ?
2. How much do these hardware platforms cost ?

The cost queries were restricted to just the raw computing hardware, including processors, memory and storage required to accommodate the administrative software needs, for easier comparison to the current plan. A total of six estimates were collected from different technical people: many universities our size are choosing UNIX workstations which cost about \$500,000 +/- \$100,000. This is to be directly compared to the \$4-5 million cost of the raw computing hardware in the current plan, which is literally ten times greater.

The task force therefore strongly recommends that our computer plan be rethought, since the consideration of alternative hardware platforms offers savings of at least \$4 million relative to the current plan. The task force compiled a series of recommendations in a report sent to the provost. This report documents the hardware estimates cited above and provides an outline of an implementation plan to migrate university computing off of the mainframe and onto much more cost-effective UNIX servers. Shortly after the October Faculty Senate meeting, members of the university Information Technology Committee and the Faculty Senate computer plan task force will meet with the provost to discuss the computer plan.

#### **Core Curriculum Prologue and Goals Revision:**

The **Academic Affairs Committee** is reviewing some changes to the Core Curriculum Prologue & Goals, as proposed by the Core Curriculum Task Force. The AA committee is currently soliciting more background information from the Core Curriculum Task Force; more changes are expected from an upcoming meeting between the provost and the Task Force.

Lynda Harrison commented that if proposed changes to the Core Curriculum are 'structural changes,' then the changes must be decided by a full faculty vote. If they are 'procedural changes,' then the Core Curriculum committee can vote on the changes without submitting it to the full faculty.

The **Financial Affairs Committee** will have a meeting next week. Items on their agenda include faculty salary issues, library funding, possible plans for an HMO, TIAA/CREF matching contributions and questions about travel reimbursement requirements.

Bob Halli reported that **Planning & Operations Committee** is considering a resolution about the relationship of Senate liaisons to University standing committees, but this is on hold until possible revisions of the University standing committee structure are complete. The committee is also considering modifications to the University calendar, particularly with respect to scheduling final exams over six days rather than the current seven days and guaranteeing that classes always have the required 2250 minutes of contact time each semester.

Nick Stinnett reported that the **Research & Service Committee** is reviewing the updated Faculty Handbook. President Sorensen will meet with the committee on October 15th to discuss his expectations about research, service and related issues. Stinnett invited faculty members to share their concerns on these issues with the committee to get Sorensen's

feedback.

### **Academic Probation, Suspension Policy Considered**

Bob Brooks reported that the **Student Affairs Committee** met on September 3. Issues of concern include a proposed modification of the academic probation, suspension and restitution policy. The committee is also investigating an allegation of improper medical withdrawals late in the semester as well as the recent controversy over the requirement that all students purchase non-refundable 'Dining Dollars' for use in the refurbished campus dining facilities. The committee is concerned over an apparent shortage of faculty advisors for student groups and organizations. Moral and ethical standards for student activities on campus are also under consideration.

Margaret Garner recalled that in the past, some faculty had been hesitant to sponsor a student organization due to the question of faculty advisor liability if the student group serves alcohol or other drugs at their activities. It was not clear if the University would hold advisors responsible in such cases.

The **Senate Operations Committee** had no report.

### **Legislative Agenda Plans Announced**

Scott Bridges reported that the **Legislative Agenda Committee** is planning workshops on campus beginning in October for faculty and staff to meet with legislators. There will be a rally on campus in January similar to the rally we had last spring. A 'Higher Education Day' will be held at Montgomery in March and a Student Day in February. The new president of the SGA will be added to the committee. New efforts are being made to get alumni across the state involved in these issues. The committee is looking at bringing Black Caucus to campus and exploring a deeper involvement with K-12 education. The committee hopes to give faculty adequate advance notice about upcoming events, so that more faculty can be involved. President Sorensen has indicated a keen interest in these matters, and will be working closely with the committee.

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## **Reports from Senator on University Committees**

### **University Library Budget Depressing**

Harvey Kline reported that the **Library Committee** met yesterday and expressed thanks to the Senate for the support last year which led to additional funds. For this year, 713 subscriptions were canceled in August, while 86 new subscriptions were added. The library expects to be forced to cancel another \$307,000 of journals. Kline reported that 28% of the library budget is one-time funding. However, \$35,000 was allocated by the administration to help pick up the raise in the minimum wage. Current library salaries rank 106th out of 108 university research libraries. The current UA median salary is \$10,000 less than the median salary of the other 108 universities. The libraries don't have a alumni base, so capital campaign isn't really helping much at this point. A student fee for library use may be under consideration.

There being no further business, the Senate adjourned at 4:26PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcus Brown, Secretary

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