

**2015-16 Faculty Senate
abbreviated report of accomplishments and ongoing projects**

2015-16 accomplishments:

- Hosted two town hall meetings for faculty on behalf of the Strategic Planning Council, the Council is moving forward with the concerns presented through these meetings, as well as the on-line survey
- Developed relationships with senate steering committees at UAH and UAB
- Continued to make progress regarding issues raised by the Faculty Climate Survey
- Continued to make progress regarding the Task Force reports and recommendations
- Established direct communication with the Council of Deans and Vice Presidents

Continuing Projects:

- Continue work on the Strategic Plan, including implementation
- Continue work on the NRTC document, including implementation
- Continue implementing recommendations presented in the Task Force reports
- Continue improving communication between faculty senate, faculty and administration
- Complete faculty handbook review

Academic Affairs – *(Co-Chairs: Chapman Greer & John Vincent; Committee: Silas Blackstock, Martin Evans, Lori Greene, Paul Houghtaling (spring 2016), Paul Hubner, Jim Leeper, Miguel Mantero, Margaret Peacock, John Petrovic, Paul Puzinauskas, Theodore Trost, Brad Tuggle, Emily Wittman (fall 2015))*

2015-16 accomplishments:

- Sent a revised version of the NTRC document (Council of Dean's version) to the full senate
- Modified assigned sections of the faculty handbook
- Worked with the provost to address core curriculum issues
- Worked with the provost to address syllabi issues
- Investigated the on-line course return to department and colleges

Continuing Projects:

- Examining the NTRC document (NTRC version) for the senate when the NTRC committee's final version is released to the senate
- Continuing faculty handbook review
- Potentially continuing with the examination of on-line course, depending on what is found over the course of the rest of this senate year

Community Affairs – *(Co-Chairs: Amy Dayton & Kimberly Severt; Committee: Hilary Green, Olivia May, Merinda Simmons, Rita Snyder, Monika Wedgeworth)*

2015-16 accomplishments:

- Reached out to Mayor Maddox to create a working relationship between the UA Faculty Senate and the City of Tuscaloosa; Mayor Maddox spoke to the faculty Senate for the first time this year
- Members of the committee attended the Higher Education Partnership Conference in August
- Higher Education Partnership spoke to the faculty senate
- Invited Rep. Bill Poole to speak to the faculty senate to provide an update on the education budget concerns.
- Planning Legislative Breakfast for April 15th
- Attended Higher Education Day in Montgomery, Feb. 25th
- The committee has been in communication with Dr. Grady and one of the committee members now sits on a committee for us to be better informed on community affair initiatives

Continuing Projects:

- Continue to reach out to the community to create more relationships with the faculty senate
- Continue to address education budget concerns with legislators

Faculty & Senate Governance – (Co-Chairs: Charlotte Herrin & Robert Riter; Committee: Mirit Eyal-Cohen (absent in fall 2015), John Gross (serving in place of Eyal-Cohen in fall 2015), Paul Horwitz, Steve Miller, Kagendo Mutua, Fred Whiting

2015-16 accomplishments:

- Reviewed the Faculty Senate By-Laws in coordination with FS Parliamentarian
- Prepared a manual for use regarding senate and voting processes and procedures
- Investigated the use of BigPulse (electronic voting tool) to carry out select faculty senate elections; the result revealed the faculty senate elections warrant direct, hands-on control, while BigPulse requires coordination with other UA units outside of FSG's control
- Carried out faculty senate elections for UA Mediation Committee and UA Merger and Discontinuance of Academic Units
- Sent provost slate of candidates for UA Participation in the Selection of Dean, Department Chairs, and in the Evaluation of Academic Programs
- Sought nominations for Faculty Ombudsperson
- Made progress toward incorporation of recommendations listed in Task Report II (specific information is available upon request)

Continuing Projects:

- Test use of Qualtrics for electronic voting for select faculty senate Elections
- Carry out electoral responsibilities in a timely manner
- Continue work regarding Task Force Report II: Building on Strengths and Capitalizing on New Opportunities to Realize our Full Potential for Equity, Inclusivity, and Multicultural Richness (specific information is available upon request)

Faculty Life – (Co-Chairs: Brian Gordon & Pamela Payne-Foster; Committee: Grace Lee, Emily Mitchell, Jen Nickelson, Dana Patton, Amy Traylor

2015-16 accomplishments:

- Completion of draft policy on Comprehensive Family Leave
- Review and approval of Religious Holiday document

Continuing Projects:

- Investigate child care for UA system

Financial Affairs – (Co-Chairs: Reuben Cook & Rainer Schad; Committee: John Blitz, Joy Burnham, Todd DeZoort, Lesley Reid, Tom Lopez

2015-16 accomplishments:

- Investigated the 403(b) and 457 (TIAA-CREF) retirement account fee structure; the investigation was approved by all levels of administration, resulting in changes to the fee structure for the UA system and was partially enforced 03/2016
- Met with Dr. Gilbert and Kevin Stevens regarding purchasing issues that appeared overly complicated and/or costly, including issues regarding: dry cleaners, desk purchasing, software purchases and computer purchases
- An extensive report regarding funding within colleges, the university operating budget, related National Alumni Association issues, Advancement, and issues identified in the Faculty Campus Climate Survey is available upon request

Continuing Projects:

- Will continue to address finance issues as they occur

Information Technology – (Co-Chairs: Mangala Krishnamurthy & Clark Midkiff; Committee: Ajay Agrawal, Meredith Bagley, Sheila Black, Bill Henderson, Patrick Kung)

2015-16 accomplishments:

- Met with OIT staff and received a brief overview on OIT and their work/efforts to support campus with IT needs, including:
 - John McGowan led a discussion on campus research. He has formed a Technology Research Advisory Committee which will be focused on resources and need for the research community
 - Ivon Foster-McGowan discussed the need for standardization of classroom technology
 - Scott Montgomery talked about the campus network improvements
 - Ashley Ewing discussed some services that OIT is using to protect UA. This includes log analysis tools, network segmentation, research protection plan, and secure email.
 - Patty Benton stated that part of the network improvement project includes network switch replacement and non-standardized wiring replacement. Telecom is in the process of deploying VoIP to all new construction, large renovation projects and buildings where copper is damaged or being relocated.
 - Cathy Rainey announced the campus wide agreement for Office 365, Endnote and Nvivo. Cathy will be working closely with Dr. Sobecky to determine and create a process to request and get software licenses.

Addressed issues identified by faculty climate survey including:

1. Help Desk-nice but not knowledgeable
 - a. CIT-Audio/Visual Solutions (AVS) relies heavily on student assistants for answering phone calls and “triaging” calls from the 200+ classrooms supported by AVS, but there is always a full-time staff member nearby and students are trained when to get other AVS staff involved. Some calls are too complex to solve on the phone, although more than 60% of calls are successfully resolved this way. We continue to add remote access/support capability to classrooms so we can troubleshoot systems remotely. While not all equipment can be accessed remotely, all AVS imaged classroom computers (~200) are able to be managed this way.
 - b. Faculty Resource Center (FRC) -- IT Service Desk requests related to Blackboard and other instructional technologies are forwarded to the FRC where the FRC graduate student assistants and professional instructional technology support staff resolve questions as quickly as possible when they can be solved at the local level. We forward complex application or system questions to vendor support staff when necessary. One way to receive help with instructional technology applications more quickly is to include the course number and the MyBama user name for those who are experiencing the issues.
2. Evening/weekend hours -
 - a. CIT-AVS offers classroom support until 6:30pm. Over the past three weeks there has been one call between 4:45 and 6:30, and over the course of a year we average 25-30 calls after hours. In 2010 AVS began staffing the classroom help desk until 9:00pm Monday through Thursday. Signs were posted near the classroom phones and on the podiums. Due to the limited number of calls received after hours in the first 1.5 years, by spring 2012 the classroom support hours were reduced to 6:30pm to account for the beginning of evening classes. These hours remain in effect.
 - b. The FRC seldom has voice messages left after hours or on the weekend (2-3 per semester). Some of these calls are related to online courses and we forward the information to CCS Tech Support.
3. Variation in equipment across campus - This is in reference to classrooms, primarily the difference in the user interface. Yes, equipment will constantly change, but it shouldn't matter whether we use a NEC or Panasonic projector. We need to focus on the user interface. There are several reasons for the wide variation across campus:
 - a. Classroom technology has been implemented over at least the past 10 years. Technology changes, fast.

- b. Initially each college designed and installed their classroom technology. It wasn't until Dr. Bonner promoted more centralization by funding classroom technology that this began to change.
- c. Even with the greater focus on centralization, the funds went to the colleges and some colleges wanted to stretch their funds by installing Extron control systems (push button) instead of the more modern and flexible, but costly, Crestron systems (touch panels).
- d. Lastly, in 2010/2011 UA adopted the high definition/digital video capabilities. All new classrooms and any room installed since 2011 meets new standards for this technology. However, rooms prior to that point (about half of all rooms) will have to be completely upgraded to do so. This year we will be upgrading 15 older classrooms. We continue to roll out a simpler user interface as we upgrade older rooms and install new classrooms. AVS is also currently upgrading manuals in classrooms and including a simple troubleshooting guide as well.

Continuing Projects:

- Encourage OIT to turn up its volume and presence in communicating with faculty and staff.
- Provide training software access using IE/Chrome – the OIT people often use Chrome when they are presenting things. But since we live in a world dominated by Microsoft, our training software ought to work on Internet Explorer, and should not be sensitive to which version of IE or Java is installed. Or there should be clear up-front instructions on which software should be installed with links to the downloads.
- More prominent announcements on the website about shut down for maintenance is needed - regarding displaying a message on OIT website or on UA website whenever the system is down for maintenance.

Research & Service – *Co-Chairs: Steve Burch & Steven Jones; Committee: Jon Benstead, Jim Brown, Jody DeRidder, Carol Donovan, Darrin Griffin, Ruth Ann Hall, Michelle Lee, John McDonald, Osiris Molina, Andreas Piepke, Peter Schulte, Jason Senkbeil*

2015-16 accomplishments:

- Encouraged (and succeeded) the office of the Vice President of Research and Economic Development to open up and broaden discourse about campus research, many faculty attended VPRED meetings one they were adequately publicized

Continuing Projects:

- Open discourse with the Vice President of Research remains a priority
- Specific recommendations and actions await the outcome of the report from the Strategic Planning Council

Student Affairs – *(Co-Chairs: JoAnn Oliver & Charlye Adams; Committee: Ed Back, Norm Baldwin, Richard Doherty, Dean Townsley)*

2015-16 accomplishments:

- Lead successful co-sponsored Alabama REACH Gift Card Drive
- Met with Dr. David Grady, Vice President for Student Affairs to dialogue/follow up and maintain open communication to address student issues/concerns and Task Force I report recommendations.
- Met with Elections Board to communicate and discuss Task Force I report recommendations
- Completed Task Force I Report recommendations (details are available upon request)
- Review and provided written feedback on proposed Religious Holiday document
- Review and provided written feedback on proposed Medical Leave Policy revisions

Continuing Projects:

- Continue to monitor and follow up on Graduate Student/SGA representation concerns
- Continue to keep open dialogue and meet with Dr. David Grady, Vice President for Student Affairs at least once a semester.