

March 2016

Faculty Senate Task Force Report II Activity Report (2015-2016 Academic Year)

Faculty and Senate Governance Committee

The University of Alabama Faculty Senate

Summary Note

In evaluating and developing an action plan for investigating **Task Force Report II: Building on Strengths and Capitalizing on New Opportunities to Realize our Full Potential for Equity, Inclusivity, and Multicultural Richness**, our committee determined that the recommendations could be devised into four broad categories:

1. Recommendations regarding the development of data collecting mechanisms capable of supporting a comprehensive evaluation of The University of Alabama's campus climate and infrastructure (**Recommendations A, B, C, and G**).
2. Recommendations regarding policy revision/emendation (**Recommendation D**).
3. Recommendations regarding infrastructural/organizational development (**Recommendations C, G, H, I**).
4. Recommendations resolved during the 2014-2015 Senate term (**Recommendations E and F**).

Based on this evaluation, and within the context of the University's overall strategic planning process, the Faculty and Senate Governance committee determined that the most effective strategy was to ensure alignment between the recommendations contained in categories one and four and the strategic planning process. The data gathering apparatus suggested in Task Force Report II could be operationalized within the activity of the strategic planning process. Our Committee offered suggestions on how the data focused recommendations could be integrated into the strategic planning process, specifically, the assessment of the campus climate as it relates to equity, inclusivity, and multicultural richness.

Faculty and Senate Governance determined that **Recommendation D** could best be addressed through direct dialog with the Division of Student Affairs. We have worked closely with Dr. David L. Grady (Vice President for Student Affairs) in addressing the Task Force's recommended revisions to the University's *Capstone Creed*. A draft of this revision is currently under review by the Student Leadership Council (SLC).

Progress Status

Category One Recommendations (A, B, C, and G)

The Faculty Senate was successful in advocating for the centrality of the Task Force Report II data related recommendations to the strategic planning process. This is reflected in the questions underpinning this activity, and statements provided by University leadership. As this process begins to generate data, it will be critical for the Committee to evaluate the extent to which it will support an understanding of existing programs, activities, infrastructure, and campus climate. **The initial stage of this investigation has been completed, but ongoing evaluation will be required.**

Category Two Recommendation (D)

Dr. Grady was presented with the Task Force's recommended revision to the University's Capstone Creed. He supported these recommendations, but suggested that we contribute additional language to expand the concept of respect to include regard for the University's physical environment and the broader Tuscaloosa community. We provided this language, and the statement is currently under review by the Student Leadership Council (SLC). **Resolution of this recommendation is dependent on the results of the SLC vote/discussion.**

Category Three Recommendations (C, G, H, I)

President Bell has charged the University's Strategic Planning Council to offer recommendations regarding the creation of the Chief Diversity Officer position and the development of a comprehensive diversity plan. The authority and mandate given to this office, and the elements of this plan, will inform the assessment and evaluation of recommendations of C and G, and how programmatic and institutional change is managed. **The initial stage of addressing these recommendations has been completed, but ongoing evaluation will be required.**

2016-2017 Recommendations

As the strategic planning process progresses, and implementation begins, we recommend the ongoing assessment of the recommendations contained in categories one and three. First, it will be important to evaluate to what extent the strategic planning process captured the data categories identified in Task Force Report II. Secondly, as the office of the Chief Diversity Officer is formalized, ensuring that this office has the necessary authority and mandate to address the issues identified by the Task Force will remain a concern of the Faculty Senate. We recommend that Faculty and Senate Governance maintain responsibility for Task Force Report II during as the strategic planning process continues.