

Faculty Senate Task Force for Excellence in Equity, Inclusion, and Citizenship
Follow-up activities during the 2015-2016 academic year

In the fall of 2013, following several disturbing incidents, the Senate convened and charged an ad hoc committee, the Faculty Senate Task Force for Excellence in Equity, Inclusion, and Citizenship. This committee met during the spring of 2014 and during the fall and spring of the 2014-15 academic year, and issued four reports with specific recommendations concerning the reform of institutional policies and structures, student elections, and the organization, policies and conduct of social clubs. This document summarizes the progress made by each of the committees.

Task Force Report 1 - WORKING AS A UNIVERSITY TO HELP SHAPE A MODEL OF EXCELLENCE FOR STUDENT GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Task Force Report 1, adopted by the Senate in August 2014, contained 14 recommendations. An addendum to this report was received by the Senate in October 2015. The recommendations of the original report and the addendum were prioritized by the Senate; the top eight recommendations appear below. Responsibility for studying these recommendations was assigned to the Senate Student Affairs Committee.

Recommendation	Progress	Status as on March 2016
1. Add language to the SGA Elections Manual that prohibits coercing students to vote.	Coercion is addressed in the Student Government Elections Manual, spring 2016 in Article II, Section 10, specifically in subsections B (2)-(6).	Complete.
2. Modify the SGA Elections Manual to add regulations aimed at preventing obstruction of SGA Elections.	<p>Obstruction of SGA Elections is addressed in the Student Government Elections Manual, spring 2016 in Article II, Section 10.</p> <p>On February 2, 2016, the Elections Board approved the following specific language requested in Task Force Report I to be added to Article II Section 10 of the Elections Manual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retaliation for reporting election violations is strictly prohibited • No person shall violate the right to privacy in voting by observing how a student votes • Requiring a student to produce evidence of voting or voting for specific candidates, for example, through voting in front of someone, producing a photo of one’s ballot or producing voter confirmation email, is prohibited. 	Complete?
3. Assign the more serious and complex election code violation allegations to the Office of Student Conduct.	<p>Addressed in the Student Government Elections Manual, spring 2016 as follows: Article III, Section 1; Article III, Section 2G; Article III, Section 3; Article IV, Section 5.</p> <p>Several recommendations were discussed with Dr. David Grady, Vice President for Student Affairs, and the Elections Board, including but not limited to establishing additional election violation reporting mechanisms, such as an online anonymous submission form; All reports of alleged violations be submitted to both the Elections Board and the Office of Student Conduct.</p> <p>Modifying the sanctions for Election Code violations will be addressed by the Elections Board Spring semester 2016 after their responsibilities for SGA elections are completed.</p>	On-going.
4. Encourage the Elections Board, or other relevant bodies, to establish mechanisms to monitor and enforce new and existing election codes.	<p>Addressed in the Student Government Elections Manual, spring 2016 in Article IV – Complaints and Alleged Violations.</p> <p>Further recommendations were discussed and made to Dr. Grady that a clear reporting system</p>	On-going.

	<p>be identified and publicized to ensure that all students are aware of how and where to report election/voter violations.</p> <p>Further recommended that instructions for reporting alleged violations be provided to each voting student in the form of a message embedded in the electronic voting polling system and that a form of acknowledgement be required prior to students being able to vote electronically.</p> <p>Recommendation that all alleged violations/complaints are reported to both the Elections Board and the Office of Student Conduct.</p>	
<p>5. Modify the SGA Elections Manual to extend the statute of limitations for being held accountable for voter fraud.</p>	<p>Voter fraud is defined in the Student Government Elections Manual, spring 2016 in Article II, section 9. The procedure for filing a complaint is addressed in Article VI, Subsection "Filing a Complaint," items (B) and (C).</p> <p>Recommended further consideration of a reasonable limitation be placed on alleged violations outside the voting period.</p> <p>On February 2, 2016, The Elections Board approved the following language to be added to the section titled Filing a Complaint of Article VI of the Elections Manual: Statute of limitations regarding filing a report of violation or complaint is 2 months from Election Day. It is important to note, a report may or may not directly affect election results based on when the violation is reported.</p>	<p>On-going.</p>
<p>6. Clarify in the SGA Elections Manual, in candidate and campaign staff orientation, and in dealing with interested parties on the evening of SGA elections that elections results are not official until certified by the Elections Board.</p>	<p>The procedure for announcing elections results is described in the Student Government Elections Manual, spring 2016 in Article I, section 7.</p> <p>Recommended for consideration of the benefit of adding language to the sentence in Section 8 that reads "If no complaints or appeals are registered by 4:30PM within two (2) class days of the announcement of the election results, all election results shall be deemed final."</p> <p>Additionally, recommend adding language to clarify whether the Elections Board shall issue a statement certifying the results of the election or announce that the elections results have been certified.</p> <p>Further recommended clarifying what happens if there is a complaint during the voting period to clarify whether the results remain sealed until a thorough investigation has concluded? Will an unofficial winner be announced until the investigation is complete?</p>	<p>On-going.</p>
<p>7. Modify the SGA Elections Manual to add language prohibiting mobile voting stations off campus.</p>	<p>Polling stations are defined in the Student Government Elections Manual, spring 2016 in Article II, section 7.</p> <p>On February 2, 2016, the Elections Board approved the modification of the language of Article I section 7c of the Elections Manual so that it reads as follows: No organized polling locations shall be allowed except those that may be administered</p>	<p>On-going.</p>

	by the Elections Board including mobile voting stations, laptops or polling locations on or off campus.	
8. Modify the SGA Elections Manual to increase the financial penalties for election code violations.	<p>Election contribution and expenditure reports are described in the Student Government Elections Manual, spring 2016 in Article IV, section 5.</p> <p>No document was found to clarify established or published fines. This was discussed with Dr. Grady.</p> <p>Modifying the sanctions for Election Code violations will be addressed by the Elections Board Spring semester 2016 after their responsibilities for SGA elections are completed.</p>	On-going.

Task Force report 2 - BUILDING ON STRENGTHS AND CAPITALIZING ON NEW OPPORTUNITES TO REALIZE OUR FULL POTENTIAL FOR EQUITY, INCLUSIVITY, AND MULTICULTURAL RICHNESS

Task Force Report 2 was adopted by the Senate in October 2014. Recommendations contained in report 2 are listed below as items A through I. Responsibility for these was assigned to the Senate Faculty and Senate Governance Committee, which further categorized the recommendations.

Recommendation	Progress	Status as on March 2016
<p>Recommendations regarding the development of data collecting mechanisms capable of supporting a comprehensive evaluation of The University of Alabama’s campus climate and infrastructure.</p> <p>A. Conduct a Campus Climate Study by External Experts.</p> <p>B. Conduct an Architectural Inventory of Existing Programs and Structures Addressing Diversity and Multiculturalism.</p> <p>C. Across Significant Student Socialization Activities, Present a Unified Message Reinforcing the University’s Commitment to Diversity and Inclusivity.</p> <p>G. Include Coursework Addressing Multiculturalism, Diversity, and Inclusion as a Part of the Core Curriculum.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>The initial stage of this investigation has been completed, but ongoing evaluation will be required.</p> <p>Expected to be addressed in the Strategic Plan, currently being written. It will be important to evaluate to what extent the strategic planning process captures these data categories.</p>	On-going
<p>Recommendations regarding policy revision/emendation</p> <p>D. Modify the Capstone Creed to Include Respect for People from All Backgrounds and Cultures.</p>	<p>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 <i>Capstone Creed</i>. A draft of this revision is currently under review by the Student Leadership Council (SLC).</p> <p>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</p>	On-going.

	<p>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).</p> <p>Resolution of this recommendation is dependent on the results of the SLC vote/discussion.</p>	
<p>Recommendations regarding infrastructural/organizational development</p> <p>C. Across Significant Student Socialization Activities, Present a Unified Message Reinforcing the University's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusivity.</p> <p>G. Include Coursework Addressing Multiculturalism, Diversity, and Inclusion as a Part of the Core Curriculum.</p> <p>H. Consolidate and Elevate Diversity and Multicultural Programs into an Office headed by an Executive-Level Administrator.</p> <p>I. The Dream: A Center for Diversity and Inclusivity.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>The initial stage of addressing these recommendations has been completed, but ongoing evaluation will be required.</p> <p>The Senate should ensure that the office of the Chief Diversity Officer has the necessary authority and mandate to address these issues.</p>	On-going.
<p>E. Add Gender Identity to the University Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Statement.</p> <p>F. Re-apply for the McNair Scholarship Grants and Search for Additional Funding for Minority Scholarships.</p>	<p>These recommendations were resolved during the 2014-2015 Senate term.</p>	Complete

Task Force report 3 - ENTERING A NEW ERA: COMING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE A GREEK SYSTEM WITH SUSTAINABLE DIVERSITY

Task Force Report 3 was adopted by the Senate in October 2014. Recommendations contained in report 3 were prioritized by vote of the Senate and are listed below as items 1 through 9. Responsibility for these was assigned to the Information Technology Committee for the 2014-15 academic year, and to an ad hoc committee composed of interested members of the Senate for the 2015-16 academic year..

<p>1. Enact a new Student Code of Conduct rule prohibiting organizations from socially boycotting other organizations that racially integrate.</p>	<p>The OFSL (Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life) feels that social boycotting is not a problem and that UA's statement on diversity handles this problem. Our committee feels that social boycotting is still a problem (threats during the 2015 Homecoming Queen election) and that an unambiguous policy in the Code of Student Conduct empowers sorority women, helps prevent further racial discrimination, and provides essential clarification needed to facilitate the adjudication of allegations of social boycotting. VP Grady is open to Dean Hebson and the leadership in the OFSL working with our Ad Hoc Committee on this recommendation and any other recommendations where we have differences. He feels that there should be compromises on both sides.</p>	On-going
<p>2. Implement clear, reasonable diversity criteria and track the progress of individual Greek houses through the collection of data.</p>	<p>The University now gathers data on the diversity of Greek houses. However, the OFSL raised concerns over the difficulty of measuring diversity progress given the limited number of minorities interested in joining traditionally White Greek organizations. We are sympathetic to this concern and desire the gathering of additional data and information to ensure Greek houses</p>	Partially implemented - requires further action.

	are evaluated fairly. Though they might not yield immediate results, we support including the following criteria to determine diversity progress: (1) data on the number of minorities invited to and attending rush functions and (2) accounts of diversity-related programs and activities.	
3. Require an explanation and activate an alternative selection rule when arbitrary discrimination occurs.	The OFSL contends that a designated Student Affairs representative resolves allegations of discrimination, as do inter/national headquarters. Our committee members believe that a provision in the Student Code of Conduct provides an unambiguous statement that enhances the power of the Office of Student Conduct to effectively address discrimination in selection. VP Grady is open to Dean Hebson and the leadership in the OFSL working with our Ad Hoc Committee to resolve our differences on this issue	On-going
4. Predicate University funding and lending for new Greek housing on the basis of diverse and affordable membership and a commitment to inclusivity.	We applaud the effort of the OFSL and Financial Affairs for adding diversity requirements to the <i>Student Organization Construction Project Guidelines</i> . Only one minor suggestion would be to place the diversity language before the financial language in the <i>Guidelines</i> .	Implemented - closed.
5. If necessary, loosen or forgo alumni recommendation requirements for minorities who otherwise meet a sorority's selection criteria.	No information. Similar to recommendation 8.	On-going.
6. Continue to develop resources for alumni recommendations, and conscientiously contact and track minority rushees to help ensure that they have needed alumni recommendations. If necessary, loosen or forego alumni recommendation requirements for minorities who otherwise meet a sorority's selection criteria.	In 2015, Panhellenic added a generic, supplemental academic letter of recommendation from a teacher, guidance counselor, or principal who does not have to be a member of a Greek organization. However, the OFSL claims that, because sorority rush begins before school starts, they do not know the minority status of rushees for the purpose of tracking their rush experience. The Ad Hoc Committee believes that the minority status of rushees could be collected on application forms or through the photos submitted by rushees. We believe that monitoring the rush experience of minorities provides a needed safety net to help ensure equal opportunity in selections. A standing committee on Greek affairs might help in this monitoring effort. VP Grady is open to Dean Hebson and the leadership in the OFSL working with our Ad Hoc Committee to resolve our differences on this issue.	Half implemented - requires further action.
7. Charter New Greek organizations predicated on affordability, diverse charter members, and a commitment to inclusivity.	The OFSL provided information on new Greek organizations and reported that they are actively engaging multicultural and special-interest organizations about expansion opportunities at UA. However, the information provided did not address whether chartering new Greek organizations is predicated on affordability, diverse charter members, and a commitment to inclusivity.	Unknown. Further information is necessary for assessment.
8. Neutralize the effects of legacy preference in evaluating minority rushees.	The OFSL contends that legacy preference is no longer a problem and that the University and Panhellenic do not have the authority to disregard inter/national membership policies. Our committee wants to prevent backsliding and believes that neutralizing legacy preference reduces discrimination, empowers Greek women in membership selections, strengthens organizations through allowing them to select the most meritorious new members, and (4) justifies Greeks refusing to pledge less qualified legacies when experiencing pressure from alumni. VP Grady is open to Dean Hebson and the leadership in the OFSL working with our Ad Hoc Committee to resolve our differences on this issue.	On-going
9. Establish a University standing committee on Greek affairs.	OFSL research on similar committees on other campuses reveals mixed results. We feel the mixed results provide instrumental information for structuring an effective committee on Greek	On-going

	affairs at UA. Our committee supports this recommendation because it is designed to help advocate for an OFSL that is understaffed and under-supported.	
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Task Force report 4 - COMING TOGETHER TO DEVELOP MODEL CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY CITIZENS

Task Force Report 4 was received by the Senate in September 2015 and assigned for study to the ad hoc committee that was also studying Report 3. This committee was able to study some but not all of the recommendations in report 4.

1. Prohibit campus organizations from requiring students to produce evidence of voting or voting for specific candidates, referendums, or Constitutional amendments in local, state, or national elections.	Toward the end of Spring semester 2015, the OCS will review adding this regulation to the Code of Student Conduct.	On-going
2. Prohibit campus organizations from punishing students who refuse to participate in local, state, or national elections.	Toward the end of Spring semester 2015, the OCS will review adding this regulation to the Code of Student Conduct.	On-going.
4. Clarify in the Code of Student Conduct that the use of coercion or incentives of any physical value to induce students to vote or vote for specific candidates, referendums, or Constitutional amendments in local, state, or national elections is prohibited.	Toward the end of Spring semester 2015, the OCS will review adding this regulation to the Code of Student Conduct.	On-going
5. Establish in the Code of Student Conduct that student conduct affiliated with a non-registered student organization can constitute violation of the Code of Student Conduct. (Clarify that students organized to affect elections and other political outcomes, including student groups representing Greeks or independent students, must register with Student Affairs and be supervised to meet and function on campus property).	This recommendation was not directly discussed.	On-going
6. Support administrative efforts to enforce Code of Student Conduct violations in areas of emerging challenge, such as local, state, or national elections.	To help prevent the problems revealed in the 2013 local school board elections, VP Grady sent an email to all students on campus that provided instruction on (1) how to register to vote in Tuscaloosa, (2) residency requirements for voting in Tuscaloosa, and (3) how to obtain an absentee ballot.	On-going
12. Support Theta Nu Epsilon (The Machine) coming above ground. Call on Administration, influential/respected Greek alumni and student leaders to support this effort. If efforts to bring Theta Nu Epsilon above ground fail, work with the Greek umbrella organizations and sympathetic Greek houses to develop a new Greek political organization	In a one-on-one meeting, Dr. Baldwin was pleased to learn that VP Grady had been working with the Greeks, that progress has been made, and that the problems with the local school board election in 2013 would not recur. VP Grady is also open to Dean Hebson and the leadership in the OFSL working with our Ad Hoc Committee to resolve any differences on this issue.	On-going