

**FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
JULY 9, 2013 – 3:00 P.M. – 213 AIME**

APPROVED MINUTES

ATTENDING: Steve Miller, Rona Donahoe, Steve Burch, Ed Stephenson, Joanne Hale, Amy Taylor, Carol Duffy, Jeannine Lawrence, Melondie Carter, Sierra Turner, Reuben Cook, Donna Meester, Clark Midkiff, Mangala Krishnamurthy.

ABSENT: Charlotte Herrin, John Vincent, Rainer Schad, Margaret Garner.

GUESTS: Cresandra Smothers, Dialog.

Roll call and quorum check by Faculty Senate Secretary Rona Donahoe.

Faculty Senate Steering Committee minutes of June 11, 2013 were approved.

President's Report – *(Steve Miller)* The University Committee on Committees (CUC) is now actively in the process of selecting faculty members to serve on the CUC.

The Faculty Handbook is now under review by Interim Provost Joe Benson.

The Shepherd Bend Mine property issue was discussed by the Steering Committee. The “Proposed Exit Strategy: University of Alabama and the Proposed Shepherd Bend Mine” and the “CASE Abstract” documents were distributed and are attached to these minutes. The Shepherd Bend property is located approximately a mile from a major water intake for Jefferson County. The Coalition of Alabama Students for the Environment (CASE) is asking the University of Alabama write a letter requesting all UA property be removed from the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) permit to mine this property. UA administration states the University did not request University land be included in the permit and there are no plans for the property at this time. This issue will be discussed further with Interim Provost Joe Benson in a Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting on Thursday, July 11, 2013.

President Bonner will meet with the Faculty Senate Steering Committee for issue updates before the fall semester begins.

Dr. Carl A. Pinkert has been named vice president for research at The University of Alabama effective November 1, 2013. He will be available and on campus at times before assuming his official duties in November. Administration has decided an associate vice president for research is needed and this position will be reviewed in earnest following Dr. Pinkert's official assumption of his duties.

SACS reaffirmation will begin in the near future. A University representative will speak to the Faculty Senate meeting concerning this issue on August 20, 2013.

UA administration has requested the Faculty Senate Steering Committee review their mission statement. The Academic Affairs Committee was assigned this project.

There will be a UA financial mini campaign this fall with emphasis on endowing professorships.

Strategic planning will begin this year taking a good look at what the University is doing well and areas needing improvement.

President Bonner would like the Faculty Senate Faculty Life committee write a brief report about issues, challenges and situations faced by five campuses that have invoked a smoke free environment. Further discussion included the colleges on campus that have instituted a smoke free environment, collaborating with the SGA and steps to follow to see progress of this issue.

Vice President's Report – (*Donna Meester*) No report.

Secretary's Report – (*Rona Donahoe*) No report.

Financial Affairs – (*Reuben Cook & Rainer Schad*) Reuben Cook will be meeting next week with Vice President of Financial Affairs, Lynda Gilbert. Any suggestions or questions should be emailed to Reuben. He will ask for more meetings than have been scheduled in the past.

An issue of building materials used in construction of dorms was discussed and this will be addressed in the meeting with Joe Benson on Thursday.

Research & Service – (*Steve Burch & Ed Stephenson*) The Research and Service Committee will be planning a meeting with the new vice president of research, Dr. Carl Pinkert.

A friend of Ed Stephenson, a faculty member at another institution, has been charged with developing a policy describing the criteria for multi-author authorship. Who has ownership of the work with the right to publish is the primary question. This brought up the issue concerning UA's policy. In many fields of science papers have more than one author. For example: a graduate student does most of the work, a faculty member is involved in designing experiments and the issue of funding the laboratory. There are occasional conflicts between faculty and student and UA does not have a policy. There are gray areas, particularly varying from department to department and discipline to discipline, making it very difficult to have an overall policy that would apply to every situation.

The Faculty Senate web site conversion and update is complete with archives, minutes, roster, history and other information.

Information Technology – (*Mangala Krishnamurthy & Clark Midkiff*) Steering Committee members were encouraged to forward information about Office of Information Technology service problems. There will be a meeting with John McGowan next week.

Faculty Life – (*Carol Duffy & Jeannine Lawrence*) The Faculty Life committee requested numbers rather than the average from the smoke free campus survey.

Cori Perdue has been moved to the Graduate School. The Faculty Life Committee will follow up on the very important issues Cori was pursuing such as day care and faculty benefits.

Student Affairs – (*Melondie Carter & Joanne Hale*) The Student Affairs Committee is pursuing getting the Alabama Reach gift card project online making it easier to receive donations. The committee would also like to see a water fountain on the Quad.

Faculty & Senate Governance – (*Charlotte Herrin & Amy Taylor*) No report.

Academic Affairs – (*John Vincent & Sierra Turner*) The Academic Affairs Committee will be addressing the SACS reaffirmation and monitoring the progress of the Faculty Handbook.

New Business - The question was asked if UA has any audit system or review policy in place to follow when the positions of deans change. This question will be asked in the Steering Committee meeting with Joe Benson.

The Steering Committee will meet with the Provost on Thursday, July 11, 2013 in 254 Rose at 3:00 P.M.

Meeting adjourned 4:30 P.M.

Proposed Exit Strategy: University of Alabama and the Proposed Shepherd Bend Mine

Context:

In 2007, the University of Alabama issued a Request for Proposals for strip mining at a 1,250+ acre property at Shepherd Bend, and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) issued a permit for Drummond Coal to mine on this property. UA was quickly pulled into a controversial public situation, with students, citizens, and media from across the state asking the UA Board of Trustees to remove themselves from this situation. For over five years, UA has been subjected to negative publicity due to their connection to this proposed mine, which has never begun operations, and which UA has never granted mineral rights for mining to.

In recent conversations with high-level members of the UA Board of Trustees' Executive Committee, a Trustee expressed their concern over the fact that ADEM allowed the listing of UA-owned property on a mining permit, even though UA had yet to approve the leasing of said property.

The official UA property leasing process requires administrative review from multiple members of the UA President's Cabinet before even presenting the issue for consideration by the UA System Board, a comprehensive process which can take up to a year to complete. When ADEM listed the UA property on this mining permit, that process had not even begun, and was on the 2nd step of an 8-step process.

If the University of Alabama does not address ADEM's administrative error, then UA will continue to be associated with the Shepherd Bend Mine proposal. We believe that it is in the best interest of UA to not be publicly associated with any proposal for lease of UA property that has not flowed through all the official channels.

Proposal:

The exit strategy here is clear and straightforward: **one formal letter from a member of the UA administration, requesting that all UA property be removed from the ADEM permit, will remove UA from their public attachment to this issue.**

A written letter of this form **would not prevent** the UA Board of Trustees from reviewing or considering this issue in future, **but would send an important message that all project proposals seeking to include UA-owned property within their purview must flow through all the official channels before Board approval or disapproval.**

By not addressing this issue, a bad precedent will be set where ADEM or other state institutions may try to once again disregard the official UA property leasing process. This precedent must be avoided in order to maintain the primary authority over university lands for future UA Boards of Trustees.

CASE Abstract:

The Coalition of Alabama Students for the Environment (CASE) is a statewide network of student environmental leaders from multiple grassroots environmental organizations at eight college campuses across Alabama, including all UA System schools, Auburn, Montevallo, Birmingham-Southern, Samford, and Jacksonville State. Coalition members work individually and collectively with public, private, and non-profit organizations to achieve legitimately beneficial collaboration on environmental issues within Alabama communities. **CASE** is dedicated to the economic and ecological sustainability of the state of Alabama.

CASE's most recent work has been in establishing [a new \\$1 million grant program](#) for UA student/faculty/staff projects for on-campus environmental sustainability and conservation. CASE retains [an active presence in the Alabama State Legislature](#), writing and advocating for a clean resolution to the Shepherd Bend Mine alongside Republican, Democrat, and Independent legislators from across the state.