

Shared Responsibility and University Governance

I. Shared Responsibility: Key To a Strong University

One of the best ways in which to maintain a strong university is to ensure that its academic citizens--the faculty--participate in making the decisions that shape the future of their educational community. They work together to teach and serve and produce high-quality scholarship. They want their institution to succeed. Faculty, therefore, are partners with administrators in the educational enterprise. If we are going to deal effectively with the complex challenges which will confront The University of Alabama in the future, we must come together to identify our needs and our strengths and share in making the decisions that identify joint solutions.

The success of this University depends upon all of us-- administrators and faculty. We must think systematically, drawing upon the knowledge and experience which reside in our university community, to develop well-informed solutions. We must work together in a spirit of cooperation if we are going to identify lasting solutions because none of us, working in isolation, will likely solve problems which cut broadly across our campus community. We must also act in coordinated fashion for we can ill afford the luxury of extended controversy and counter-productive actions.

In order to develop collaborative solutions, there must be meaningful faculty participation by faculty representatives in the decisions which shape the University's educational potential and which allocate its scarce resources. Whenever possible, implementation of this partnership between faculty and administration should be carried out within existing University structures for communications and decision making.

II. A Campus Partnership

The advice of faculty members concerning administrative leadership and academic programs is sought actively and systematically. Faculty and administrators are partners in the enterprise of education at The University of Alabama. Processes guiding all important decisions which shape the University's educational potential and which allocate its resources are the joint responsibility of faculty and administrators.

A. University Committees and Task Forces

- 1. Faculty Participation in the Selection and Review of Various University Officers** The President of the University ensures faculty participation in the selection and performance reviews of Vice Presidents and Directors who report to the President by appointing faculty members to each search or review committee. Additional faculty participation is provided by including a member selected by the Faculty Senate on each such committee. Similarly, Vice Presidents solicit and consider the views of faculty members in the selection and in performance reviews of Associate and Assistant Vice Presidents and Directors who report to them, and they appoint faculty members, including a member selected by the Faculty Senate, to any search or review committee for such officers.
- 2. Faculty Senate Representation on Search Committees**

The Faculty Senate nominates a member for each search committee for a University President, Vice President, Assistant or Associate Vice President, and director who reports to the President or a Vice President. If the President chooses not to accept such a nomination, the President will contact the President of the Faculty Senate in order to reach agreement. If agreement cannot be reached, the President will request another nomination.

3. University Committees

The University maintains a number of University Standing Committees, and appoints University Task Forces which deal with special matters not in the purview of a standing committee, to assist the administration in reaching decisions and to ensure representation of appropriate segments of the University community. These committees and task forces study and make recommendations on issues of concern to the University community, as well as working closely with the President, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, and other Vice Presidents, to oversee the University's planning process, and to help establish University budgetary priorities and allocations. The significance of their work is recognized by providing each committee with all the information relevant to the committee's mission and by giving committees timely written responses to their recommendations and inquiries. These committees and task forces make annual written reports which are filed in the Library to be available upon request and which are also transmitted to the President, the Committee on Committees, and the Faculty Senate.

4. Committee on Committees

The chairs and the faculty and staff membership of standing committees and, where appropriate, task forces and other committees are selected by the President from the nominees and alternates presented by the Committee on Committees (with the exceptions noted below). Faculty and staff are invited each spring to indicate to the Committee on Committees their preferences about service on University committees. Standing committees are described in memoranda which are distributed annually to every department or school and are available in the Office of the President and the Office for Academic Affairs. Appointments to standing committees are announced in the fall semester, and such committees are expected to begin their work promptly at the beginning of each fall semester.

5. Faculty Senate Representation on Committees

The Faculty Senate appoints one person to membership on each University Standing Committee and on other committees and task forces that are constituted by the President, the Provost/Academic Vice President, and other Vice Presidents.

6. The President of the Faculty Senate serves as a member of the Resources and Priorities Committee and of its Executive Committee, and on the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee.

7. Faculty Athletic Representative

The President chooses the Faculty Athletic Representative of The University of Alabama from a list of faculty members supplied by the Faculty Senate. If the President does not accept anyone on the list, the President will request another list from the Faculty Senate.

8. Faculty Membership on the Committee on Committees

The faculty membership of the Committee on Committees will constitute a voting majority of the Committee. The President will fill faculty positions, including vacant faculty positions, on the Committee on

Committees from a list of faculty provided by the Faculty Senate. If the President chooses not to accept such a recommendation, the President will contact the President of the Faculty Senate in order to reach agreement. If agreement cannot be reached, the President will request another recommendation.

9. Membership on Standing Committees

Membership on standing committees will rotate in order to involve different members of the University community in University governance. Normally one-third of a committee's membership will rotate off the committee each year, and normally at least one year will intervene before a person can be reappointed to a committee. Members should be selected to reflect the diversity of disciplines, race, and sex of the Faculty and staff. A faculty or staff member will not ordinarily serve on more than two University committees or task forces at any one time. A term of service for a committee member usually will not exceed three consecutive years.

10. Other Committees

Divisional, departmental, or area committees also assist the University by making recommendations on aspects of divisional and departmental activities. The faculty in the divisions, departments, and areas should select their own representatives.

B. Faculty Senate

1. Membership and Purpose

The Faculty Senate consists of faculty members elected from the various divisions. The Senate aids the University in making decisions on issues of policy, development, and operations by:

- a. Offering advice and suggestions on matters of general faculty concern; and
- b. Providing a channel for communications between the faculty and University officials.

2. The Representation of Faculty Opinion at Large

The Faculty Senate's deliberations and recommendations should reflect the opinion of the faculty at large. Service in the Senate is a high honor, carrying with it responsibility to report to one's division about the Senate's activities, to solicit the opinion and advice of divisional colleagues on issues before the Senate, and to represent divisional colleagues in Senate debate and votes. Meetings of the Faculty Senate and of its committees are normally open to all who wish to attend.

C. Consultation

1. Meetings of the Faculty Senate President with the Vice Presidents and Council of Deans

The President of the Faculty Senate can request of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs to meet with the Council of Deans or of the President to meet with the Vice Presidents on specific occasions to discuss issues that are of mutual importance to the faculty and these groups, with the intent to streamline processes of input on these issues to the Provost or the President.

2. Faculty Involvement in the Selection of University Administrators

All Vice Presidents, Directors who report to the President or to Vice Presidents, and Associate or Assistant Vice Presidents are selected through a process that includes substantial involvement by the Faculty.

D. Planning Process

1. Standing Committee on University Planning

A standing committee on University Planning, a majority of whose members are faculty members, should be established by the President of the University to recommend and oversee University planning and to develop Five-Year Plans for the University. This Committee will consult closely with the Resources and Priorities Committee.

2. Consultation with Faculty over Program Changes

No substantial alteration, initiation, expansion, reduction, or relocation of any University program will be made without extensive consultation with the faculty concerned (with regard to the merger or discontinuance of academic units, see the Principles and Procedures for Merger or Discontinuance of Academics Units document). Normally, these consultations also include consideration by the Resources and Priorities Committee.

3. Faculty Involvement in all Stages of the Planning Process

The Faculty is involved in all stages of the planning process. The planning process should begin at the operational level of each discipline, whether that is at the divisional or the departmental level, and normally should involve a committee of all the faculty. Planning at each successive stage within the University should include faculty members selected by the faculty in the disciplines or divisions involved.

E. Accountability to the University Community

1. Reviews of Vice Presidents and Directors

Vice Presidents and Directors and the programs for which they are responsible are reviewed through a regular schedule of evaluations that includes appropriate faculty participation. The review of each administrator is based in part upon the performance and effectiveness of all offices and officers reporting to that administrator.

2. Timely Responses to Committee and Faculty Senate Recommendations

Standing committees, task forces, the Faculty Senate, Faculty Senate committees, and other University committees shall receive a timely, written response (normally within two months) to any recommendation, annual report, or other report requesting a response that is submitted to the President, other University officers, or the Council of Deans.

3. Credentials of the Provost/Academic Vice President

Any person appointed as the Provost/Academic Vice President shall possess credentials commensurate with a tenured appointment at the rank of professor in an appropriate academic discipline.

4. Presidential Reversal of Tenure and Promotion Recommendations

Decisions by the President on matters of tenure and promotion which reverse recommendations made by departmental or college committees shall, at the request of the candidate, be communicated by the dean to the faculty bodies who made the recommendations.

Submitted by the Faculty Senate Operations Committee:

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--- Marcus E. Brown

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Accepted by the Faculty Senate, March 24, 1998:

--- Margaret P. Garner, President