

UA FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

**Uncorrected Minutes for November 14, 2000
3:30pm 204A Ferguson**

Attending: Pat Bauch (President), Norm Baldwin (Vice President), Don DeSmet, Deborah Martin, Bing Blewitt, Bob Sigler (Parliamentarian), Rob Ingram, Bill Keel, Keith Woodbury, Margaret Garner, Cornelius Carter

Guests: Joanna Hutt, Dialogue and Karen Lucas, Domestic Partner representative

Minutes of October 17 Faculty Senate meeting were approved.

President's Report

Pat attended the Alabama Council of College and University Faculty Presidents/**ACCUFP meeting** held in Troy, Alabama, November 10 and 11, 2000. The Council requested that The University of Alabama host the March 2-3 meeting. Pat will inquire if Dr. Sorensen will be available to address the group on that date. The ten Faculty Senate Presidents and their Executive officers of all member institutions would attend. There were no objections from the Steering Committee. Rob suggested that we make sure administration would underwrite the cost of this meeting. ACCUFP will donate \$500 to the host institution to be applied to the expense of this gathering.

The **Presidents and Chancellors** of all institutions in Alabama **are uniting** to give a message to the Legislature that the **1/3-2/3 funding split** be restored with the emphasis being placed on faculty salaries, which rank 44th in the nation, technology and maintenance. Regarding **ACHE**, it seems all the other institutions are on the same page as The University of Alabama and have the same questions concerning workload data such as what will be done with the data and the orientation of such data. Student data have been collected and it seems that we are waiting to see what will be done with that information.

Pat meet with members of the Student Government Association. It was decided jointly with the Faculty Senate to run a campus **membership drive for the Higher Education Partnership**. At The University of Alabama, there are 129 PAC members and 27 student members while Troy State has 90%, University of West Alabama has 100%, Montevallo has 100% and the remaining institutions have 80% or higher. It was reported that UAB is setting up its own PAC. The External Affairs Committee representative of the Student Government Association, Rebecca Grand, will work with Pat and the students in getting out flyers and posters about the membership rally. Gordon Stone of HEP will address a rally on Monday, November 27. The drive will continue until Friday, December 1. The organizers are seeking funding to serve food, create and distribute flyers, hire a band, and build a thermometer to show progress of membership commitments. Rebecca Grand will attend the Faculty Senate meeting next week and challenge the faculty to increase HEP/PAC membership.

The rate of registrations for the **anti-racism workshops** has decreased. It seems to be effected by faculty who have publicly stated that they are opposed to these workshops. This small group has written a 750-word editorial to be published in The Tuscaloosa News on Sunday. The News has requested that Pat write a 750-word editorial to be published in the News also. Points made during the discussion of the anti-racism workshops were: Length of meetings (2 1/2 days) as being difficult for some faculty, perceived controversial nature of the workshops; need to sponsor a lecture series, coordinate knowledge and support of this issue, tone down the position that everyone is a racist, research overlapping efforts in other groups being made toward same goal, and examine why the purpose of the workshops are not being totally understood. The enrollment for the workshops is approximately 30 for each of the meeting dates in December, January and February. The only dean enrolled is Cully Clark. Some UAB faculty members would like to attend. Pat encouraged them to assemble a small delegation.

Pat suggested a meeting of the 43 Diversity Leadership Council members to discuss and investigate the above concerns, to find out what other diversity groups are doing, and to list on our web page courses that incorporate diversity. All who are involved in diversity training should be supportive of each other's efforts. The end result of the

Faculty's workshops would be to have diversity teams in every college, faculty and administration with a goal of fighting racism everywhere it is encountered, and the importance of investing talent, time and effort toward this movement Rob Ingram is the chair of the Diversity Leadership Council.

Pat asked the Steering Committee members if they thought the Faculty Senate should look into matters regarding **staff evaluation and merit**. A staff member is requesting that the Senate investigate her concerns. This issue has come up in the past. Wythe Holt noted that there have been many complaints from staff that there is no evaluation and merit plan for staff. Pat asked the Research and Services committee to look into this matter. This committee will report back at next month's Steering Committee meeting.

Pat distributed the new **alcohol policy** that allows campus student organizations to serve alcohol on Thursday nights. It was noted that the Faculty Senate has dealt with this issue in the past and has made recommendations that the administration ignored.

As discussed in the Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting, Pat asked Dr. Sorensen to review the University's **Nondiscrimination Notice** on page ii of the Faculty Handbook regarding the omission of "sexual orientation" and replace the word "sex" with the word "gender." The Handbook states:

"The University of Alabama complies with applicable laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability or veteran status in admission or access to, or treatment of employment in, its programs or services, including Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Executive Order 11246, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Inquiries and concerns regarding this policy may be directed to Dr. Kay Staub, University Compliance Officer, 201 Rose Administration Building, Box 870300, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0300, 205-348-5855 (voice/TDD). This notice is available in alternative formats upon request."

Dr. Sorensen's comments in his letter stated that the wording legally could not be changed. Wythe Holt suggested that an addition to the statement could be made such as "We do not condone discrimination based on gender or sexual orientation." Dr. Sorensen seemed to be concerned with the legal liability in the absence of state laws that cover these omissions. The options suggested were 1) a resolution by the Senate, 2) a letter from Pat to Dr. Sorensen, or 3) Pat approaching the President again about this issue. It was suggested to avoid an "in your face" approach or to place pressure on the President concerning this matter. It was decided that Pat would continue conversations with Dr. Sorensen concerning this. If this is not satisfactory, the matter will be referred to a committee.

The Evaluation of Deans and Department Chairpersons proposal did not pass the Deans' Council. It seems that the deans see a mandated annual evaluation as a threat to their positions and an undue administrative burden. The Faculty Handbook states that an evaluation is an option every five years. The College of Human and Environmental Sciences recently voted not to review their dean since they were very satisfied with her. Due to that decision, there will be no documentation in the Provost's office stating the positive progress this dean had made. Also, there now will have been no evaluations of that Dean for fifteen years. The Provost's letter stated that the President and Provost review the deans and that deans review annually the department chairs. It appears that the administration is satisfied with this process. Employees can be reviewed and evaluated annually but deans can only be reviewed every five years, if their faculty so elects. Some members of the Steering Committee expressed strong resentment considering that administration requires students to evaluate professors for every course they teach. Pat will appoint an ad hoc committee, chaired by Vice President, Norm Baldwin, to come up with a sensitive and sensible plan to allow faculty to provide feedback to Deans and Chairs on an annual, formal basis.

The **Resources and Priorities University Standing Committee** formed three sub-committees, of which two relate primarily to the Finance Committee of the Faculty Senate. The third is a technology committee. The Chairs of the sub-committees of Resources and Priorities Committee have been instructed to contact and work with the equivalent chairs

and committees of corresponding ones of the Faculty Senate and University. If that contact is not forthcoming, please contact the chair of the equivalent committee: Tuition (Harold Elder), Budgeting Information (Rona Donahoe).

Resolutions

The **Domestic Partner Benefit Resolution** brought forward by the Faculty Life Committee supports providing benefits to domestic partners. This is similar to what other universities are doing; however, Alabama would be the first public southern institution to approve this. Private institutions such as Emory, Rice, Vanderbilt, do have these benefits in place. It was suggested to put the number and names of institutions that have these benefits in the resolution. It was felt that this could possibly be a problem since there is no uniformity in the benefits provided. Some of those that could be named provide only minimal benefits. This resolution is proposing all benefits be provided. There were several objections: 1) to the 12-month waiting period, 2) this issue not being brought forward by the Faculty Staff Benefits Committee, and 3) the leaving the criteria to the parties who implement this resolution. It was determined that the criteria be listed on the second page with the title "Suggested Criteria" and that this page accompany the resolution. The word "current" (benefits) was deleted. In response to an objection, it was noted that The University of Alabama is self-insured and would not have the difficulty of trying to locate an insurance company to provide these benefits. The point was made that a written ballot might be requested so that senators who oppose it could hidden behind the written ballot. A review of the by-law "written ballot" policy will be made before the meeting next week. The Faculty Senate Steering Committee and the Faculty Life Committee recommend that this resolution and "suggested criteria" be brought forward to the Faculty Senate.

The **Resolution Assessing the Probable Financial Impact of Adoption of Domestic Partner Benefits for The University of Alabama Community** also was placed on the Faculty Senate Agenda after discussion and an explanation of how the figures were reached.

There were no other resolutions from committees.

Announcements

Bob Sigler will be unable to attend the Faculty Senate meeting on November 21. Wythe Holt recommended that Jim Walters, retired faculty member, be invited to preside as Parliamentarian.

Rob Ingram suggested that action items be placed first on the agenda for Faculty Senate meetings.

The Senate History written by Wythe Holt is on the web page. All suggested revisions and corrections have been made.

The breakfast meeting with Howard Hawk, Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee, will be on Nov. 19 at Four Points Hotel. Representative Hawk will speak about budget allocations for higher education.

The meeting with the Provost will be at 11:00 AM on Wednesday, November 15, 2000.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM.

Posted 11/20/00