

FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
June 12, 2012 – President’s Conference Room – Rose Administration Building

APPROVED MINUTES

ATTENDING: Steve Miller, Seth Panitch, Rona Donahoe, John Vincent, Margaret Garner, Melondie Cater, Donna Meester, Charlotte Herrin, Ian Stancu, Ed Stephenson, Carolyn Cassady, Reuben Cook, Carmen Mayer-Robin, Dwight Hooper, Jason Battles.

ABSENT: Marcia Barrett, Robert McLeod, Wesley Church.

GUESTS: Dr. Robert Witt, Chancellor of UA System; Cresandra Smothers, Dialog.

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

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of May 8, 2012 were approved.

President’s Report – *(Steve Miller)* President Miller established a website uapressearch@gmail.com for faculty input concerning the most important issues and traits to be addressed in the hiring of a new UA president. The information from the survey was compiled and forwarded to Dr. Robert Witt and the Presidential Search Committee. It was suggested to hold an open-forum/town-hall type meeting to discuss the type of leadership needed for the future of The University of Alabama. Future direction and definition of UA is needed.

Storage space has been secured in 402 Martha Parham West for commencement regalia. A meeting will be held to determine the process for regalia use. Commencement attendance was discussed.

President Miller plans to meet with Mark Nelson, Vice President for Student Affairs, to further discuss the issue of the provisional core course designation approval process. The question about the provisional core designation process was brought to the Senate during the spring semester when CSM 116 was approved as a core math course on a provisional basis without review by the Core Curriculum Oversight Committee. University policy states that for a course to receive the math core designation, students completing the course must demonstrate a certain level of math competency. No one qualified to judge whether the course met that condition reviewed the course proposal. For the most part, the Core Curriculum Oversight Committee adopted the State of Alabama articulation standards for core courses which should be broad and not specific. However, math courses must meet very specific requirements. The provisional core designation approval of this particular math course was granted by Academic Affairs. The Core Curriculum Oversight Committee should make decisions about provisional core designations and faculty with appropriate qualifications should help make those determinations. The Faculty Senate Steering Committee will continue to follow this issue.

Dr. Robert Witt, UA President, was named chancellor of the UA system in March. Dr. Witt met with the Faculty Senate Steering Committee concerning the ongoing search for a new University of Alabama president. The hiring process begins with a recruiting committee with representation from faculty, staff, students, community and UA’s Board of Trustees. A search consultant has been retained. The process began initially screening the top 100 public universities and top 100 private universities for individuals with the attributes developed by the Presidential Search

Committee. This group was reduced to slightly less than fifty and then screened down to a smaller group. The consultant made contact with each of these people to determine their interest in a manner leaving their current employment very secure. A select number of candidates from this group were discussed with the search committee. The next step will be bringing the final set of candidates before the full committee. The committee will then make recommendations to Dr. Witt to be reviewed and his recommendation will then be forwarded to the search committee. The search is a national search with no selection predetermination made in any manner. Dr. Witt believes the concerns of faculty members are being heard by the search committee and the Board of Trustees. Dr. Witt's summation of those faculty concerns included making the research program a higher priority, placing a greater emphasis on the graduate program and more fully engage in the academic discourse with faculty. Dr. Witt interpreted from the faculty survey the definition of the quality of the student experience was not adequately communicated to the faculty. This was not to elevate the student above the faculty. The survey is not a criticism of past accomplishments but a blue print to build on the established foundation. The University is financially strong, close to having physical facility improvements completed and has some of the finest students in the country. UA is attracting excellent students and faculty. The number one priority in selecting a new president of the University is to hire a sitting president. Progress has been made rapidly in the last nine years creating a momentum to be sustained in the future.

Dr. Witt reviewed his time allotment during his term as President of The University of Alabama. His efforts focused on financial security for the University, fund raising, recruitment of outstanding students and marketing the University to compete on a national basis. Dr. Witt discussed faculty employed primarily employed through grants and contracts and basing the University's research identification solely on research dollars is not inclusive of all research levels. All things considered the interviewing process and recommendations prepared for the Board of Trustees should be done by late August or early fall.

Vice President's Report – (*Seth Panitch*) No report.

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

Academic Affairs – (*Marcia Barrett & John Vincent*) The Academic Affairs Committee will continue to follow the math interim/provisional core course approval issue and discuss what changes should be implemented to avoid the improper approval of any proposed interim/provisional core course.

Dean Francko will be invited in the fall to meet with the Academic Affairs Committee.

Faculty Life – (*Wesley Church & Carmen Mayer-Robin*) Childcare is an important issue. The last meeting of the Steering Committee was held at the Childcare Development Center to investigate whether this facility would be conducive to childcare for faculty, staff and students. Other options discussed were a sick-child facility, building a childcare facility, exploring costs and fees, UA partnering with churches with students as teachers, researching other institutions for examples/ideas and the statistical faculty/staff birth rate average (100 per year). It was suggested to invite Cori Perdue, Coordinator for the Graduate Parents Support Program, to speak to the Steering Committee.

This committee is considering the continued pursuit of the maternity leave policy.

The Smoke-Free Campus issue, enforcement and recommendations were discussed. Implementation of a smoke-free campus presents problems with enforcement. Shelton State, Troy State and Auburn University implementation dates for a smoke-free campus have been delayed due to these problems. The University of Kentucky's smoke-free policy was brought about by progressive training before the policy implementation. There are smoking cessation resources available at UA. There is currently a ban on smoking within 30 feet of a building entrance on campus, although that ban is violated at times.

Financial Affairs – (*Reuben Cook & Robert McLeod*) The budget presentation made to this committee was open, condensed and informative.

Information Technology – (*Jason Battles & Carolyn Cassady*) The development of a new position in Information Technology was discussed. Carolyn Cassady and Jason Battles will develop a bulleted list of technology priorities for the Steering Committee to review. Four positions were to be developed at UAH allowing John McGowan's return to UA full time in August. The IT Committee will continue to follow up.

Research & Service – (*Ion Stancu & Ed Stephenson*) Joe Benson, Vice President for Research, forwarded a revised copy of the Conflict of Interest policy for this committee to review. The revisions were brought about by NIH and Federal guideline compliance with an August completion date. The committee submitted their questions to Joe Benson with no response as of this date. This will be part of the University policy in August and will be part of the Faculty Handbook. The full Faculty Senate does not meet until August 21. It was suggested the policy be introduced to the Faculty Senate Steering Committee in July and the Steering Committee vote on the policy in their August 14th meeting. This type issue must be introduced at one meeting and cannot be voted on until the next meeting.

Faculty Senate Governance – (*Charlotte Herrin & Dwight Hooper*) A faculty member had a grievance but in an effort to register the grievance found there was not an elected chair in place on the Mediation Committee. Due to a lack of communication and lack of notice to the Provost's office there was not an election of a new Mediation Committee chair to replace the retired chairperson. The Faculty Senate elects the members of the Mediation Committee and the Mediation Committee elects its own chair.

Student Affairs – (*Melondie Carter & Donna Meester*) The Student Affairs Committee will meet to determine their issue priorities for the fall.

Legislative Agenda – (*Margaret Garner*) The Legislative Advocacy Retreat will be held in Sandestin, Florida the second weekend of August. Anyone wishing to attend should notify Margaret Garner. President Miller will send the information and invitation to attend to each Faculty Senate member.

The Research Advisory Committee is seeking input from faculty concerning ways to invest energies.

Meeting adjourned 5:00 P.M.