

CORRECTED MINUTES

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

March 18, 1997

Bevill 101

3:30 p.m.

Highlights:

- [Steering committee discusses changes to the sexual harassment policy.](#)
- [Sorensen receives Senate memo on commencement.](#)
- [Academic Affairs committee discusses New College merger proposal.](#)
- [Recruitment/Retention report discussed.](#)
- [Future of computing on campus is planned.](#)
- [Non-scholarship athletes also get academic help.](#)
- [Legislative Agenda recounted.](#)
- [Evaluation of dean postponed.](#)
- [Changes to Senate Constitution and By Laws discussed, passed.](#)

Members absent and not represented by an alternate: Harvey Kline, Pat Cotter, Paul Allen, Jamie Satcher and Tom Hebert.

The minutes for January 1997 were approved after one sentence was deleted which stated that the Senate Academic Affairs Committee had at that point reached a conclusion concerning plus/minus.

President's report

Faculty Senate President Amy Ward reported that the administration's suggested changes to the sexual harassment policy (to go in the new faculty handbook) were discussed by the steering committee. The new version seems much improved. The steering committee approved of the changes and sent their recommendations on to Provost Barrett. The updated policy is posted on the Senate Web page.

Ward announced that neither she nor Senate secretary Marcus Brown would be continuing as officers next year, but both would serve on a nominating committee. Any other interested senators were invited to join them on the committee.

Ward reported that conversations continue with President Sorensen about the University's Commencement exercises. Sorensen took the Senate's memo seriously, and is now aware that this issue should have come to the Senate's Planning and Operations Committee first. Ward expressed optimism that this type of error won't be repeated.

President Sorensen and Provost Barrett met with the Resources & Priorities Committee and presented a spreadsheet showing the major University budget items for the coming year. Barrett later presented the same model to the Senate Steering Committee, and discussed the impact of possible tuition increases, enrollment changes, and the dean's

payback of last year's salary raise as different options in planning. The Steering Committee suggested that the spreadsheet be presented to a larger faculty audience.

Reports from Senate Committees:

Peggy Jessee, cochair of the **Academic Affairs Committee**, reported that they were meeting with the Provost Wednesday and New College faculty member Ed Passerini on Friday, and had questions for both. The Committee is looking for information from the A&S committee headed by Richard Diehl. She noted that the "Principles & Procedures" document is not really clear on what information is needed. In both previous mergers: the first information submitted was sent back for clarification, and even the first documents submitted with the proposed New College merger did not have everything necessary. Therefore it is the opinion of the Academic Affairs committee that the "Principles & Procedures" document needs to be reviewed and revised in order to clarify what information should be available at each step. It is not at all clear what the committee is supposed to receive, or exactly what it is supposed to do with that information.

Ray White, cochair of the **Academic Affairs Committee**, brought up the second major issue before the Committee. The report of the task force on retention/recruitment addresses several issues that are clearly academic in nature. The Committee is concerned that due process is followed. As an example, the report speaks to the 'plus/minus' grading policy. White reiterated that any changes to this policy need to go through the same process, including a vote of the faculty, that the original policy went through. White reported that there seems to be a problem getting direct marketing mailouts sent to prospective students. White also said that Dean Yarborough is now our representative to the state-wide committee on the Articulation & General Studies Agreement in the place of Don Crump. There was a report that the state committee was beginning to specify textbooks for some courses.

Financial Affairs Committee cochairs Lee Pike and Rona Donahoe recently met with Dr. Priscilla Hancock, new Associate Vice President for Information Technology to discuss administrative and academic computing. Hancock said that a new mainframe computer would be secured by June 1, with the goal of solving the year 2000 problem by January, 1999. The new mainframe would be an MVS system, but not necessarily an IBM system. The software would be a 'plain vanilla' system, and have no local customization, since it is expected to be replaced by a client-server system after the turn of the century. Academic users will be moved off the mainframe by 1999. We still don't have a good sense of all the software being used by the various academic users, especially the statistical packages. When asked about hardware and software standards all across campus, Hancock expressed no plans to standardize, but to get campus-wide or system-wide site licenses for some software packages, and to provide centralized email service for all students. Hancock is also looking toward a centralized campus-wide hardware and software replacement plan, but this would require lots of money each year. Hancock announced no plans to restructure the Seebeck Computer Center dramatically, but does plan to retrain many operators when the mainframe is gone.

Don DeSmet, cochair of **Planning & Operations Committee** called attention to the two resolutions on the agenda.

On behalf of the **Research & Service Committee**, Nick Stinnett noted that the commencement schedule and the Senate's service document continued to be discussed.

Student Affairs Committee cochair Bob Sigler noted that some of the information expressed in the last meeting may have been in error: Non-scholarship athletes have exactly the same access to academic student services as scholarship athletes, except for their eligibility for post-graduation scholarships, which difference is mandated by NCAA rules. Thus, athletes who lose their scholarships due to academic reasons still have access to the academic student services. Sigler said that the Committee had considered the proposed medical withdrawal policy and noted that it seems more restrictive than necessary with regard to emotional problems, but that the policy had been sent to the Academic Affairs Committee. Sigler also mentioned that one reason some student groups do not have faculty for their advisors is that not enough faculty are willing to advise student groups.

Scott Bridges reported on the work of the **Legislative Agenda Committee**. The state budget for higher education came out of the House Ways & Means committee with a 1% increase. It is now in Senate committee chaired by Hank

Sanders. Faculty are urged to write letters encouraging a higher increment. There is a Higher Education rally planned for April 8 in Montgomery. Additional information is available on the Governmental Relations web page. Committee members are continuing to have small meetings with individual legislators, and President Sorensen is continuing to meet with Governor James.

Reports from Senator on University Committees

Margaret Garner reported that the committee on Evaluation of Deans & Department heads met. Only one dean was scheduled for review this year, but this was deferred by the provost until next year. About 4 department heads were up for review this year, but the faculty in those departments voted that no review was needed at this time. The committee reviewed its charge and concluded that oversight of this process could be done by a Senate committee, which might suggest an ad-hoc committee if the whole policy seemed to be functioning poorly.

Rona Donahoe reported that the Committee on University Plans met Monday and discussed the committee's mission, particularly with respect to the possibility of disbanding or merging with Resources & Priorities.

It was reported that SGA Executive Vice President Brad Elliot would like a faculty member to sit on the board selecting student judges. Senate President Amy Ward will take suggestions.

Old Business

Wythe Holt commented on the proposed changes to the Constitution and By Laws. He proposed that the changes to the By Laws which depend on changes to the Constitution should not take effect until the changes to the Constitution are approved by a vote of the full faculty. Holt commented that he has had very little feedback on the proposed changes. The only change which drew questions was the one that would have one year's Senate electing officers for the next year's Senate. It was pointed out that this would only apply to the President, Vice President and Secretary. The committee cochairs would still be selected by the new Senate.

Holt suggested considering the changes in logical groups. The first group to be considered were the changes to the election of officers, contained in By Laws Article 1, and Constitution Article 5. This passed without dissent.

(The new text of the Constitution and By Laws may be found on the Senate web page.)

The second set of changes were those dealing with the election of Senators in Article 4 of the Constitution, and the Senate orientation in April, in By Laws Article 2, sections 1 & 3. In discussion of how soon committees must choose their chairs or cochairs, the Senate decided on the language "By the end of April," in section 3.3 of By Laws Article 2. The last sentence of section 3.3 By Laws Article 2 was changed to read "Each standing committee will normally meet on the first Tuesday of each month from September through November and January through March, and at other times as desirable." The amended version passed.

The next section considered (By Laws Article 3 section 1) set clear & regular meeting times & attendance policies. The Senate chose to set the fourth Tuesday as the day for possible extra meetings of the Senate when the business exceeded the time allotted on the third Tuesday. These changes were approved.

In By Law Article 3 section 2, the proposed language was changed to read "Regular Senate meetings normally last until 5:00 and may last longer. Senators should clear their calendars until 5:15 on regular Senate meeting days upon such an expectation. Senators are expected to maintain their attendance until 5:00, or until the meeting is adjourned prior thereto." The amended changes passed.

In By Law Article 2 section 5, the proposed language was changed to read "Senators are expected to attend meetings of their standing committees. The absence from a regularly scheduled committee meeting of a Senator may be referred by the chair or co-chair of the committee to the Senate Operations Committee. Senators who regularly fail to attend committee meetings and do not provide for the attendance of alternates may be replaced on the committee." This language was approved.

By Laws Article 2 section 7 was approved to allow a Senate webmaster, and Article 3 section 4.4 was approved to allow on-line agendas and minutes, using email and/or web pages.

By Laws Article 2 section 3 paragraphs 7, 8, 9 and 10 were approved, allowing each of the Senate committees to describe their own activities and their normal reporting channel in the By Laws.

By Laws Article 3 section 7 describing Senate appointments to University committees was accepted.

Constitution Article 5, the fourth paragraph contained language which did not allow the Senate to meet in interim term. This language was removed.

By Laws Article 3 section 3 paragraph 4's proposed changes allow representatives of the staff to attend Senate meetings. This was approved.

By Laws Article 2 section 6 was amended as proposed to allow the parliamentarian to be a retired member of the faculty.

By Laws Article 2 section 8 was changed to recognize the current situation that the Senate has an office which is used in part to store records.

This completed the discussion of all the proposed changes to the Constitution and By Laws. Proposed changes to the Constitution must now be approved by a vote of the full faculty, and the By Law changes which depend on those Constitutional changes will not be deemed to be in effect until the Constitutional changes have been so approved.

In view of the late hour, the Senate adjourned at 5:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcus Brown, Secretary