

**FACULTY SENATE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 16, 2014 – 3:30 PM - #110 AIME**

APPROVED MINUTES

ABSENT WITHOUT ALTERNATE – Rona Donahoe, Osiris Molina, Karen Salekin, James Wang, Tom Downs, Chapman Greer, Karen Spector, Paul Pouzinauskas, Bill Henderson, Paul Horwitz.

ABSENT WITH ALTERNATE – Sky Shineman/Jennifer Purvis, Karen Spector/Cecil Robinson, Heath Turner/Sushma Kotru, Pamela Melton/Amy Traylor.

GUESTS – Cresandra Smothers, Dialog; Andy Clay, SGA.

Roll call and quorum check by Faculty Senate Vice President Donna Meester.

The minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting on August 19, 2014 were approved with one correction.

President's Report – (*Steve Miller*) Report 1 from the Faculty Senate Task Force for Excellence in Equity, Inclusion, and Citizenship was emailed to the Faculty Senate for prioritization of issues.

In the first Task Force Report, fourteen recommendations were made. The Faculty Senate then surveyed itself, with Qualtrics, to establish the six most important recommendations. They are:

1. Modify the SGA Elections Manual to add regulations aimed at preventing obstruction of SGA Elections.
2. Add language to the SGA Elections Manual that prohibits coercing students to vote.
3. Encourage the Elections Board, or other relevant bodies, to establish mechanisms to monitor and enforce new and existing election codes.
4. Modify the SGA Elections Manual to extend the statute of limitations for being held accountable for voter fraud.
5. Modify the SGA Elections Manual to increase the financial penalties for election code violations.
6. Modify the SGA Elections Manual to add language prohibiting mobile voting stations off campus.

Bernadette Chavira-Trull and Ashley Newman met with the Faculty Senate Steering Committee to address the shortage and incorrect ordering of text books. Along with the problem of moving out with all their inventories and moving back in their space in Ferguson Center for renovations, a new computer book ordering system was installed. Those problems have or will be corrected.

Norm Baldwin of the Faculty Senate Task Force for Excellence in Equity, Inclusion, and Citizenship Reports 11 and Report 111 was emailed to President Miller. The reports will be emailed to the Faculty Senate for consideration at the October 21 Faculty Senate meeting.

President Miller introduced Joe Benson, UA Provost, for a question and answer period. In his opening statement Provost Benson expressed his opinion that The University of Alabama is better than ever before in its history. Faculty and student body is stronger than ever. There are two students in the freshman class entering the University as seniors. Tremendous strides have been made with the future looking very bright for the institution. Statistics gathered for the SACS accreditation process included publications, articles and book chapters. Even with the increase in enrollment, UA faculty members have been very productive. In the top tier of SUG ranking doctoral programs including the strongest institutions, UA rankings include - Books Published (21/31); Journal Articles (25/31); Citations (22/31); Awards (28/31); Grants Received (25/31); Grant Dollars (28/31); Conference Proceedings (22/31). Among the ninety-six doctoral Carnegie High Research Institutions including some schools with medical schools, UA rankings include – Books (12/96); Journal Articles (12/96); Citations (7/96); Awards (28/96); Grants Received (24/96); Grant Dollars (28/96); Conference Proceedings (17/96). Among the top 110 research schools in the United States including Harvard, Stanford and John Hopkins, UA rankings are – Books (91/110); Journal Articles (96/110); Citations (96/110); Awards (103/110); Grants Received (102/110); Grant Dollars (105/110); Conference Proceedings (88/110). UA's faculty is significantly smaller than many of these institutions. Provost Benson praised faculty for their accomplishments. These rankings pertain to The University of Alabama only. The goal of the University is to move forward in the very high research institution rankings. UA is considering a new classification of contract faculty allowing the hiring of assistant clinical professors, assistant teaching professors and assistant research professors. UA would like to continue to increase graduate student enrollment and it has increased over 40% over the last twelve years. The focus will be on Graduate Research Assistants. The question was asked about a long-range plan to move UA into a high research institution other than focusing just on students. Dr. Carl Pinkert, Vice President for Research, is responsible for those efforts. In the past the research stimulation program to bring in more post-doctoral fellows was tried and brought in more fellows but did not have much impact on research productivity. UA has a plan to increase research productivity by allocation of resources in those areas that have been most productive. The first priority of the University is to serve its students and take care of its faculty. An example was given concerning the personnel needed to operate research equipment and lack of maintenance support. Other questions included retaining and providing stipends for graduate students; faculty workloads including additional delegated paperwork, ordering books and monitoring budgets; support for clinical faculty including tenure, salaries, promotion and recruitment; faculty research leave and faculty turnover. A new policy concerning contract faculty structure will be coming to the Senate in the next few weeks and will require a faculty-wide vote since it involves a change in the Faculty Handbook.

There are infrastructure problems with older buildings and if they are not properly addressed, Provost Benson asked to be contacted directly.

Vice President's Report – (*Donna Meester*) Appreciation was expressed for all the good wishes sent during Donna Meester's mother's illness.

New Business – The University’s Quality Enhancement Plan Committee exists and is a part of SACS reaccreditation process. An area of focus for improvement is experiential learning. This is a learning process whereby learners participate in activities enabling reflection and application and putting the learning into practice. A survey will be sent out to faculty electronically for input. Contact Silas Blackstock with any suggestions and ideas.

Faculty and Senate Governance – (*Charlotte Herrin & Marilyn Handley*) The Faculty and Senate Governance Committee will be looking at the process of on-line course development. Any comments and input should be emailed to the co-chairs.

Coming elections will be to fill vacancies for the Merger and Discontinuance Committee and for the Faculty Participation in the Selection of Deans and Department Chairs.

Financial Affairs – (*Reuben Cook & Rainer Chad*) The Financial Affairs Committee will meet with Dr. Lynda Gilbert, Vice President for Financial Affairs, following budget approval by the Board of Trustees. Debt service and other issues will be discussed at their meeting in October.

Student Affairs – (*Joanne Hale & JoAnne Oliver*) The Student Affairs Committee will focus on the priority list based on the Faculty Senate survey of Task Force Report 1. An email will be sent to the involved parties requesting a meeting.

The second issue the Student Affairs Committee will address is the request for a graduate and professional student organization apart from the Student Government Association. The committee is exploring and gathering information concerning the ways the SGA interacts and supports those students. The next step will be to talk to the SGA about their graduate student association, talk to the Graduate School about their support for graduate students and, as appropriate, survey the graduate students.

The Student Affairs Committee will continue the Alabama Reach gift card program for needful students.

Research & Service – (*Steve Burch & Andreas Piepke*) This committee will have their second meeting next week. Some issues this committee will address will be internal grants, tenure-track versus associates, and interdisciplinary research plausible where needed.

Faculty Life – (*Pamela Payne-Foster & Ed Stephenson*) Ordering books by the Book Store was an issue the Faculty Life Committee had on their agenda. Following the meeting with Book Store representatives the committee felt those problems were being handled appropriately.

A faculty climate survey was composed in 2009 but was never administered. The 2006 faculty climate survey mostly addressed Tuscaloosa community climate. The administration is supportive of conducting a survey but is not in a position to compose such a survey. The Faculty Life Committee will compose the current faculty climate survey in such a way that the same questions can be used in two or more years for productive statistical comparisons.

The committee has split up among its members focus issues such as child and elder care, commuter options, and spousal recruitment. There is an elder care program on campus named Age Ready. A survey of other institutions regarding commuter options revealed most of it is done online. UA has a Ride-Share program to connect people needing regular commutes to other cities. It does not have very much usage. An official ua.edu address is needed to participate.

Academic Affairs – (*John Vincent & Patricia Parmelee*) The Proposed Military Credit Policy recognizes the educational value of military training and experience for undergraduate academic credit. Motion and second was made with the Faculty Senate voting unanimously to accept the policy.

A non-math course was approved for core math credit raising concerns whether the course was reviewed properly to guarantee it has the course requirement to make the mathematic designation. The online CCOC guidelines wording about math courses, with no dated approved changes, has been changed. There is a specific process within the guidelines about how the guidelines can be changed. Several years ago a finance course was admitted after the regular deadline for core curriculum proposals and an administrator approved the course without any input from faculty. The guidelines have now been changed so that the appropriate subcommittee must be consulted. The concern of the Academic Affairs Committee is to assure someone competent review any math course to confirm the basic content is the level of MA110 or higher course and students receive a certain level of math in the course. Kevin Whitaker has been invited to attend the next Academic Affairs Committee meeting to address the discrepancies in the guidelines wording and questions concerning the course content. This meeting will hopefully make clear these critical issues.

The Faculty Conduct and Compensation, Section V11. Supplemental Compensation Policy of the Faculty Handbook was distributed. This section of the Faculty Handbook was inaccurate because it contained references to staff compensation. Those references and “and member” have been deleted. The word “supervisor” was changed to “administrator”. There was no change in content of the section. The reference to using federal funds in Section C. (d) applies to federal funds only. Under Section B. Supplemental Compensation, “no report or prior approval is required concerning a one-time external compensation activity if the activity takes less than half a day or if the compensation is no more than \$100” refers to State law. The Faculty Senate voted unanimously to accept these changes.

Information Technology – (*Clark Midkiff & Mangala Krishnamurthy*) President Miller, Clark Midkiff and Mangala Krishnamurthy met with John McGowan and other representatives of the Office of Information Technology on September 2, 2014. The University is gradually moving toward everyone being on the same email exchange service. There are several departments not in favor of this. BamaMail was to be phased out but that does not seem to be the case. The Information Technology Committee would like to conduct a technology information survey and this is a work in progress. Ashley Ewing would like to make an online security presentation to the Senate. The University has invested more funding to bring wireless up-to-date. Classroom technology is a challenge since the technology needs change from classroom to classroom.

Legislative Agenda – (*Kimberly Severt*) **Higher Education Day** will be April 9, 2015 in Montgomery, Alabama. This is a gathering of advocate voices to be heard for promotion of higher

education. Transportation is provided. A Legislative Breakfast will be held in mid-November with the date to be announced in the near future.

Other Committee Reports -

The **Interim Program Committee** representative, Steve Bunker, reported the committee met on September 10 in Rose Administration Building. The offerings for winter interim and the logistics for both winter and spring interim semesters were discussed. This winter nineteen courses are being offered, mostly online or involving domestic travel. The course offerings included more 100 and 200-level courses from American Studies, Psychology, Political Science and History in response to student requests. The due date for spring interim course proposals will be December 1 and the all for proposals will go out soon. Finally, they are tweaking the website to make information more accessible to students.

President Miller encouraged the senators to report back to their colleagues the issues the Faculty Senate is dealing with and to keep them informed.

Meeting Adjourned 5:05 P.M.