

**FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
MAY 13, 2014 – 3:00 P.M. - #213 AIME**

APPROVED MINUTES

ATTENDING: Steve Miller, Donna Meester, Rona Donahoe, Charlotte Herrin, Marilyn Handley, Andreas Piepke, Mangala Krishnamurthy, Clark Midkiff, Joanne Hale, JoAnn Oliver, Reuben Cook, Rainer Schad, Pamela Payne-Foster, Ed Stephenson Patricia Parmelee, John Vincent.

ABSENT: Steve Burch.

GUESTS: Kathy Butler, Dialog; Carl Pinkert, VP for Research, Norm Baldwin, Faculty Senate Task Force.

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

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of April 15, 2014 were approved with one correction.

President's Report – (*Steve Miller*) President Miller reported improved faculty participation in the spring commencement ceremonies. Students with exams on Saturday morning were placed in the commencement ceremony as soon as they arrived.

The Ombudsperson will be relocated on the Faculty Senate web page.

Vice President's Report – (*Donna Meester*) No report.

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

Norm Baldwin, Facilitator of the Faculty Senate Task Force for Excellence in Equity, Inclusion and Citizenship, presented a report on the recent meetings of this committee. Many interviews were conducted. Input from many organizations and individuals were a priority of the committee.

Appendix A, "Diversity Activities and Initiatives of the Greek System During the 2013-14 Academic Year", gave an overview of actions taken for advancement of immediate and long-term diversification of the UA Greek community. Report II, "Building on Strengths and Capitalizing on New Opportunities to Realize Our Full Potential for Equity, Inclusivity, and Multicultural Richness", is composed of nine recommendations.

The first recommendation is a campus climate study conducted by external experts to explore the strengths and weaknesses of campus culture to better prepare strategies for excellence in equity and inclusivity.

The second recommendation is to conduct an inventory of all existing diversity and multiculturalism programs and internet activities by a task force of University representatives across University divisions.

The third recommendation would be the establishment of an office headed by an executive-level administrator directly responsible to the University president or provost to consolidate and elevate diversity and multicultural programs. This office would need proper funding and staffing to directly affect change.

The fourth recommendation would be to carry a unified and reinforcing message that UA is a cultural diverse institution with the expectation that students are respectful, inclusive and welcoming of UA's diverse students.

The fifth recommendation would include coursework focused on multiculturalism, diversity and inclusion and would be a core curricular requirement. There are only a few of the SEC institutions that do not require this coursework.

The sixth recommendation is to add gender identity to the University Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statement.

The seventh recommendation is to modify the Capstone Creed to read as follows:

“As a member of The University of Alabama community, I will pursue knowledge; act with fairness, honesty, and respect *for people from all backgrounds and cultures*; foster individual and civic responsibility; and strive for excellence.”

The eighth recommendation is to search for additional funding for minority scholarships. McNair Scholarship program is no longer in existence.

The ninth recommendation would create a center for diversity and inclusivity to house multicultural events, diverse organizations, programs and activities.

Discussion included the point that creating a central diversity office might consolidate too much and become isolated. The perfect situation would be to have a central office and continue to have other entities wishing to move to a more inclusive campus environment. Further action by the Faculty Senate was discussed including the possibility of a resolution in the fall, prioritizing the issues for focus, distributing the main points among the Faculty Senate committees and strategizing for the complete support of advancing a multicultural campus environment.

The Faculty Senate Task Force will continue efforts toward resolution of last fall's election problems.

Report III – “Entering a New Era: Coming Together to Achieve a Greek System With Sustainable Diversity” begins with a statement of appreciation to those assisting in bringing about systemic change through recommendations and policies establishing a new era of inclusivity in the UA Greek system. This report includes nineteen recommendations to help facilitate a lasting integration of the Greek system at UA. Those recommendations include a new student code of conduct prohibiting the boycott of other organizations that racially integrate, rules for arbitrary discrimination, annual records of racial and ethnic composition of Greek houses, develop resources for alumni recommendations, neutralize effects of legacy preference in evaluating minority rushees, develop a unified system of rush, unified rush functions, affordability, Greek housing parity, establish a University Standing Committee on Greek Affairs, chapter advisor's communication, Office of Greek Affairs expansion, convey welcoming

outreach to all students, sorority rush and fraternity bidding in spring or winter holiday break, expand diversity programs and multi-racial activities, reinstitute the Greek Emerging Leader Course, Greek system faculty involvement and reward, and endow scholarships for students interested in crossing racial barriers but cannot afford to join the Greek system. There was further discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of changing rush to a unified rush, minority ratios, and delaying rush to allow socializing to the University first. The Faculty Senate will follow and support the advancement of inclusion and multicultural richness for The University of Alabama. The Task Force will take the reports back, make adjustments and bring back a final report to the Faculty Senate. Minority student representation on the Task Force will be addressed. Several different sources make those appointments.

Dr. Carl Pinkert, UA Vice President for Research, began his RGC report stating for the last few years the awards mechanisms in place amounted up to \$6,000 that could be requested. Generally there are three different areas represented that go through nominations and approval of a campus wide committee. The \$6,000 cap did in some ways energize some faculty members and some programs to grow activities. It has been static the last two years to have \$149,000 set aside each year or a line item for this activity. More than that amount has been awarded but it pulls money from other sources to help facilitate those needs. Dr. Pinkert wanted to take this to another level and has talked with various sources to get greater support from the colleges, obtain greater awards in 2015 and revisit how this is done. One of the things done this year is to provide feedback on every application whether it was successful or not successful. Getting reviewers on board to provide that information has provided some applicants with multiple pages of comments and some received one or two lines of comments. That should be standardized in the coming year. A target of support for individual faculty and interdisciplinary efforts of instrumentation equipment needs on campus will be a priority. Possibilities are to continue the \$6,000 awards just as they are now but add \$50,000 to \$100,000 in collaborative research and target external revenue streams. Another possibility is to get cost share partnering with departments and colleges. Maximizing cash amounts to the applicants is the goal. There is not an incentive on campus for interdisciplinary inter-college activities. If it is within a given college and it is a priority of that college, the college could sponsor those activities. If the cost share is in place rather than the applications going directly to the Research Office, it would go through the normal internal review process with signoffs of the department head and the dean's office. This becomes a teaching and training opportunity starting with the ICS sheets, web based grants, applications and approvals and certifications for submissions. Early stage faculty members can learn about the process of external funding. Some applications have great ideas but are not expressed properly and do not meet the criteria or the expectations. Associate deans for research within the various colleges or schools can provide that extra level of assistance if the department head is not as involved along the way. Constructive interaction prevents faculty from disillusionment and helps them succeed. Feedback from various applications, getting colleges and schools to provide assistance to help faculty be more competitive based on grant proposal outcomes will be beneficial. Comments from senators included getting more funding for introductory research and grant opportunities for faculty, funding resources, incentives, research collaboration, opportunities to cross boundaries and cost sharing, instrumentation equipment sharing and utilization, breakdown of junior and senior faculty (40 awards this year, 31 to early career faculty, 9 to senior/tenured faculty, 111 applications-91 last year), guidelines and review processes. The vast majority of senior applications were not funded.

Comments from Senator Andreas Piepke included the following:

1) The low cap of \$6,000 for RGC essentially constitutes a pre-selection mechanism as this amount makes grant applications uninteresting for those disciplines attracting substantial external funding. These disciplines, probably responsible for a large fraction of the external funding coming into UA, would benefit too from seed funding allowing to pursue unconventional or even risky new concepts. I am afraid that \$6,000 grants in the sciences can achieve very little. Because of this it seems to me that this program is more like a grant in aid program than a true research stimulant.

2) The new higher funding level program is conceived, from the beginning, for a narrow clientele. This is due to the restrictions implied by the requirement of work being interdisciplinary. This is a buzz word and I am not sure what the intent is behind this restriction. There is certain research that lends itself to being interdisciplinary. In such case binding different colleges into such seed grant is a good thing as it strengthens the work and probably enhance for external funding later on. However, there are other more specialized disciplines where collaboration over the boundary of colleges does not add much. Out of my experience certain aspects of physics fall into this category. Nonetheless work in fundamental sciences does attract substantial external funding. Again from my own experience, interdisciplinary work is not something that typically strengthens grant applications e.g. to the Department of Energy as it does for the NSFG. In my view such seed grants, as a primary goal, should attract follow-on external funding and for that the boundary conditions laid out by Dr. Pinkert seem more designed to foster the local nature of research instead of looking at revenue increase in the broadest sense.

Faculty & Senate Governance – (*Charlotte Herrin & Marilyn Handley*) The Faculty & Senate Governance Committee is preparing a model to follow during Faculty Senate elections.

Research & Service – (*Steve Burch & Andreas Piepke*) No report.

Faculty Life – (*Pamela Payne-Foster & Ed Stephenson*) No report.

Academic Affairs – (*Pat Parmelee & John Vincent*) The Academic Affairs Committee continues work on Faculty Handbook revisions.

Information Technology – (*Mangala Krishnamurthy & Clark Midkiff*) There are continued complaints about email.

Financial Affairs – (*Reuben Cook & Rainer Schad*) No report.

Student Affairs – (*JoAnn Oliver & Joanne Hale*) Funding has been provided for the student scholarship application.

Meeting adjourned 5:00 P.M.

ATTACHMENT:

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