

**FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES
FEBRUARY 10, 2015 – 3:00 PM - #213 AIME**

APPROVED MINUTES

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

ABSENT: Kim Severt, Joanne Hale.

GUESTS: Cresandra Smothers, Dialog.

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

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of January 13, 2015 were approved.

President's Report – (*Steve Miller*) President Miller reported the Legislative Breakfast meeting this morning was well attended. Senator Gerald Allen, Representative Chris England, UA System Vice Chancellor for Government Relations and Economic Development, Josiah Bonner attended and following brief statements answered questions from senators. Among subjects addressed were age of majority, educational funding and mental health services. Legislative Agenda Co-chair, Kim Severt, did an outstanding job organizing the meeting.

There are two or three candidates visiting in the first round with two candidates added in the search for the Vice President for Development position. Craig S. Edelbrock has been named Dean of Continuing Studies. Dean Louis Pitschmann of Libraries is stepping down and will remain on faculty. Michel George, Registrar, is stepping down with Kevin Whitaker heading the search committee for that position. The search for a new UA President is ongoing. Bob Riter has been elected as a senator and will need to be replaced as Faculty Senate Parliamentarian.

President Miller gave a report of the Board of Trustees meeting. Controversy continues at UAB over lack of communication and shared governance among administration, faculty, students and others.

Vice President's Report – (*Donna Meester*) Vice President Meester, Clark Midkiff, Charlotte Herrin, Osiris Molina, Mangala Krishnamurthy, Joanne Hale and JoAnn Oliver will meet at noon on Thursday with Stephen Hood to discuss the diversity task force reports. The lack of participation/communication in Faculty Senate subcommittees was discussed.

Secretary's Report – (*Rona Donahoe*) The final head count of regular faculty has been received from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment to be used for senator elections. There will be an additional three senators. Human Environmental Sciences adds two and the Law School adds one senator bringing the total number of senators to seventy-three. The Faculty Senate Secretary submitted the data request in December and results were received in January. Letters will be sent to the Deans with information concerning the number of senators to be elected, those with excessive absences and the nominees for Ombudsperson election. A larger meeting space will be sought with inquiries being made this week.

Faculty & Senate Governance – (*Charlotte Herrin & Marilyn Handley*) The Faculty and Senate Governance Committee is pursuing electronic voting for the Faculty Senate. Bigpulse.com is a system used by the University and would provide a secure site for voting with no fee since it is under UA contract. The Faculty Senate constitution states that voting must be by secret ballot but does not specify by paper or other means. Methods of voting to be used and the specific elections for the new system were discussed. The parties having access and ownership of the data was questioned. The sense of the Steering Committee was to pursue this issue with proposals to come.

Faculty Senate officer nominees are: Donna Meester for Faculty Senate President; Ed Stephenson for Vice President; and Rona Donahoe for Secretary. Letters of intent have been turned in by the candidates. Nominees will be taken from the floor at the February Faculty Senate meeting and the election will be held at the March Faculty Senate meeting.

The Faculty and Senate Governance Committee proposed amendments to expand the role of the Faculty Senate Parliamentarian to serve as *ex officio* member of the Faculty and Senate Governance Committee. Also proposed is the creation of a new committee titled “Faculty Senate Community Affairs Committee”. The change in the Faculty Senate Bylaws would be one sentence under Section #13-Parliamentarian – “The Parliamentarian shall serve as an *ex officio* member of the Faculty and Senate Governance Committee of the Faculty Senate”. The proposal includes reducing the percentage of faculty senators appointed to the Financial Affairs Committee to 10% and allotting 10% of faculty senators as members of the Community Affairs Committee. The committee description of duties would read, “The Community Affairs Committee works with internal and external stakeholders of the university community including legislators and other groups and organizations to develop and maintain open communication channels for the purpose of exchanging information on matters of mutual interest”. A specific motion will be presented at the next Faculty Senate meeting with a final vote to be held at the March meeting. Adding another co-chair to the Legislative Agenda Committee was discussed. Excessive absences have been reviewed and addressed by the Faculty and Senate Governance Committee.

Research & Service – (*Steve Burch & Andreas Piepke*) Last fall the Research and Service Committee met with Dr, Carl Pinkert, Vice President for Research and Economic Development. Following meetings and discussions the goals and visions for research at the University has reached a clear and definable agreement. According to the committee a successful research institution requires four main ingredients: (a) the right people (startup funding), (b) faculty time available to perform creative work, (c) for some disciplines appropriate lab space, and (d) funding for personnel, equipment and travel. Other topics discussed were grants, incentives, faculty involvement in planning and time for faculty to focus on research. The committee will follow up with a spring meeting to address further issues.

Academic Affairs – (*John Vincent & Pat Parmelee*) The Academic Affairs Committee met with Kevin Whitaker, Associate Provost. The official Core Curriculum guidelines will be the December, 2008, version. There is no provision for late or emergency proposals. There are no provisions in the document for a process to correct any mistakes made by the Core Curriculum Committee. The Academic Affairs Committee reiterated their wish for Provost Benson to declare in a statement/memo that the current procedure for reviewing core courses other than W and CS designations (which does not agree with what the faculty voted on in 1997) be formally adopted.

No policy exists to clear a student to return to the University following a medical withdrawal. They just register when they are ready to return.

A student due to unforeseen circumstances was scheduled to graduate with no UA GPA. UA has a policy allowing a student to leave the University and return to attempt a successful academic career. The student did that and took courses elsewhere transferring those credits to the University and had everything needed to graduate. The policy should be changed requiring at least one grade in a UA course before graduating.

Student teaching evaluations online can be viewed and saved as a web page but cannot be saved as a PDF. Whitaker is looking at shifting the evaluations from Institutional Research to the Registrar's Office which has in place all the updated software to handle the process.

The Academic Affairs Committee has had three meetings to address the personnel policies for Non-Tenure Track, Renewable Contract Faculty document. The committee has reviewed the document line-by-line. One of the changes was to shorten the title "Non-Tenure Track, Renewable Contract Faculty" to "NTRC". The changes fall into two categories – the Dean of the college in which you were hired could change the job description and make other changes in the faculty's contract without consulting or informing the faculty member. Under **II Terms of Appointment** the following was deleted in the first paragraph, fifth line "and" and the phrase "and the needs of the department and College" on the sixth line. Under **VI Responsibilities** the phrase "faculty member and" was added to the last line under "A". This change would allow the faculty member to have knowledge and input for any changes affecting their contract. Under **V. Searches** – the word "follow" was added. Under **X. Promotion Evaluations and Promotion** – "the department and college/division criteria for promotion" and "annual" was added and "reference to the criteria for promotion as described by" was deleted. Under **III. Qualifications** in the third paragraph "man" was stricken from Chair with the addition of "evaluation" and "written" added on two lines before recommendation. Under **A. Promotion to Associate Teaching/Research/Clinical Professor** "effective, /or, strong" was added to the paragraph. "Advising, /or, commas, creative activity, and/or, beyond their assigned duties" were deleted. Under **B. Promotion to Senior Teaching/Research/Clinical Professor** "to" and "teaching" was added to the third line and "/or" added to the sixth line. "Teaching, research, or practice related" was deleted on the sixth and seventh line. "High quality" was added to the ninth line and "creative activity, and/or" and "beyond their assigned duties" was deleted. There was extended discussion concerning the phrase "senior professor", "full professor" and "clinical professor", faculty rankings, defining retirement benefits and corrections to the Faculty Handbook. The document will be discussed in the meeting with the Provost on Thursday. The maternity leave issue will be referred to the Faculty Life Committee. The revised NTRC document will be presented to the Faculty Senate at the meeting on February 17th.

Financial Affairs – (*Reuben Cook & Rainer Schad*) The Office of Development staff members dismissed in October are still being paid their salaries.

Faculty Life – (*Pamela Payne-Foster & Ed Stephenson*) The Faculty Life Committee has composed a faculty climate survey. There are 67 questions and should take 15-20 minutes to complete. The Provost's office will arrange electronic distribution of the survey to all faculty members.

Meeting adjourned 5:00 P.M.

