

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

MARCH 24, 2016 – 3:30 P.M. – 1092 SHELBY HALL

APPROVED MINUTES

ABSENT WITH ALTERNATE: Fred Whiting/Bob Findlay, Jim Leeper/Anne Halli-Tierney, John McDonald/Nelle Williams, Carol Donovan/Janie Hubbard, Miguel Mantero/Karen Spector, Steven Jones/Alan Lane, Clark Midkiff/Derek Williamson.

ABSENT WITHOUT ALTERNATE: Sheila Black, John Blitz, Steve Burch, Margaret Peacock, Theodore Trost, Emily Wittman, Jim Brown, Todd DeZoort, Richard Doherty, Steve Miller, Kagendo Mutua, Ed Back, Emily Mitchell, Brian Gordon, Michelle Lee, Jen Nickelson, Paul Horwitz, Amy Traylor.

GUESTS: Kevin Whitaker, Interim Provost.

PRESS: Cresandra Smothers, Dialog.

Interim Provost Kevin Whitaker began the meeting with comments about the progress of the Strategic Plan. The survey for strategic plan input was distributed in January with March 14th the ending date. The survey input, listening sessions and town hall meeting comments are being organized. The Strategic Planning Council is the group charged with developing a draft of the plan. Once that is in place there will be further review and an evolving process toward finalization of the strategic plan. One of the positive outcomes of the strategic plan has been the involvement of diverse entities all across campus. The crux of the plan is to determine where we are as an institution, where we are going and how to get there. Discussions need to continue in the future as priorities will change. Some of the main topics of discussion have been research, enrollment and growth, numbers and qualifications of faculty, community campus life and what it is like to be a student, staff or faculty member at The University of Alabama. The University of Alabama is a special place and how to maintain that status among the issues that have been brought forward is something to be seriously considered.

The committee, NTRC, is addressing a policy on appointment and promotion of terminal degree non-tenure track faculty. There will be town hall meetings in April for input and discussion concerning this issue. Medical withdrawal for students and religious holiday guidelines are among policies that have been moved forward.

Questions from senators included the timeline of issue consideration and implementation, comparison to other institutions, Bryce property usage and development, hiring a Chief Diversity Officer, strategic plan information availability, enrollment growth concerns, graduate program growth, research resource growth and a five year implementation of strategic plan.

Whitaker expressed his appreciation for the work done by the Faculty Senate and he and his office are entirely open and available for comments and suggestions.

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

The Faculty Senate meeting minutes of February 16, 2016 were approved.

President's Report – (Donna Meester) President Meester expressed her appreciation to the outgoing senators for their service.

A summary of activities and accomplishments by the Faculty Senate committees during the past year was presented and will be available on the Faculty Senate web page.

The UAH, UAB and UA Faculty Senate Steering Committee members will be attending the Board of Trustees meeting in Huntsville on April 8th. Discussion of common issues to each campus will continue.

The Faculty Senate Information Committee will take on additional duties by becoming the Faculty Senate Information and Communications Committee. The committee will be working with Linda Bonin, Vice President for Strategic Communications.

President Meester shared information on the UA web site which lists facts and figures about the impact the University has on the State of Alabama.

Vice President's Report – (Ed Stephenson) Vice President Stephenson distributed a summary of Diversity Task Force recommendations. Faculty Senate Student Affairs committee has been working on Report #1, Faculty & Senate Governance committee has been working on Report #2 and the Task Force Ad Hoc committee headed by Norm Baldwin has been working on Report #3 and parts of Report #4. The summary and the original report will be on the Faculty Senate web site.

Stephenson has been on the Faculty Senate as an officer, senator, web master, and mentor for ten years of commendable service. Negative comments from the Faculty Climate Survey regarding Faculty Senate accomplishments led him to compile a list of accomplishments and a long view of the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate is charged with representing the faculty.

The Senate pushed for and was successful in the addition of the anti-discrimination sexual orientation policy, the 30 foot no smoking zone around building entrances, banning of smoking on campus, creation of an office and officer of diversity, policies of tenure clock and clock extension policy, granting of benefits to domestic partners, assurances concerning no future mining at Shepherds Bend and notification if that policy changes, core curriculum policy, increase of age of majority, influencing the design of Malone-Hood Plaza, restoration of chairs of IOC and R committees, revision of per diem for international travel policy, conducting national searches for positions includes faculty membership, annual evaluations of deans and department chairs, standardization of course syllabi based on what is educationally appropriate, review of conflict of interest in research, misconduct in research, revision of post-doctoral policies, classroom design consultation, rewrote baccalaureate policy included in the student catalogue, and policy for non-tenure contract faculty. It is the case that the Faculty Senate was out front of all of these issues and provided leadership to push these forward. The Faculty Senate President meets with and speaks to the Board of Trustees and represents the Faculty Senate in many official capacities.

The Faculty Senate established the Karen Steckol Regalia Loan Program which has been very successful. The Faculty Senate organizes faculty response to Higher Education Day and Legislative Breakfast. The Senate partners with the Alabama Reach Program to assist those students with needs. UA faces challenges in the years ahead including too few faculty members for the size of the student body enrollment, day and elder care benefits, institutional discrimination particularly in the Greek

system, monitoring any attempts to discontinue tenure and continuing efforts to improve relations with administration. Stephenson wishes for the Senate to continue efforts to effectively represent faculty concerns and for much success for the future.

Secretary's Report – *(Rona Donahoe)* Senator and Ombudsperson election results are being reported slowly.

Academic Affairs – *(John Vincent & Chapman Greer)* The Academic Affairs Committee continues work on Faculty Handbook revisions, Honorary Degree edits, syllabi issues (Syllabus Committee appointment), core curriculum status, NTRC committee and OIRA issues.

Community Affairs – *(Kim Severt & Amy Dayton)* The Community Affairs Committee during this past year established dialog with Tuscaloosa Mayor Walt Maddox, committee members attended the Higher Education Partnership Conference in August, HEP representative spoke to the Faculty Senate, Representative Bill Poole spoke updating education budget concerns, organized Legislative Breakfast for April 15th, attended Higher Education Day in Montgomery on February 25th, established communication with Dr. David Grady, Vice President for Student Affairs, and one of the committee members now sits on a committee for us to be better informed on community affairs initiatives. Continuing projects for this committee is to reach out to the community to create more relationships with the Faculty Senate and to continue to address education budget and funding concerns with Legislators.

Faculty & Senate Governance- *(Charlotte Herrin & Robert Riter)* The accomplishments for the Faculty and Senate Governance Committee for this past year of 2015-16 includes a review of the Faculty Senate Bylaws in coordination with the Faculty Senate Parliamentarian, surveying colleges/schools on campus as to election methods used for senators, preparing a manual to use for FS voting processes and procedures, evaluating electronic voting methods, conducted UA Mediation Committee and UA Merger and Discontinuance of Academic Unit elections, submitted candidates for UA Participation in the Selection of Dean, Department Chairs and in the Evaluation of Academic Programs, sought nominations for Faculty Ombudsperson, and made progress toward incorporation of recommendations in Task Force Report II. Specific information about the Task Force Report is available upon request. Continuing projects for the coming year will include testing electronic methods for voting, conducting elections in a timely manner, and continuing work on Task Force Report II recommendations and implementation. A close monitoring will follow the establishment of the Officer and Office of Diversity. The right to access UA data is an issue of concern and priority of the committee.

The Faculty and Senate Governance Committee conducted Faculty Senate officer elections. By unanimous vote Donna Meester was elected as President for a second term, Rona Donahoe was elected Vice President and Robert Riter was elected Secretary. President Meester's goal for the coming year is to combine the different pockets of interest promoting the same issues on campus.

Faculty Life – *(Pamela Payne-Foster & Brian Gordon)* The Faculty Life Committee accomplishments for the year 2015-16 includes the completion of a draft policy on Comprehensive Family Leave and the review and approval of the Religious Holiday policy document. The committee will join with UAB and UAH in a joint committee to investigate a system-wide child care.

Financial Affairs – *(Reuben Cook & Rainer Schad)* An extensive report was given by the Financial Affairs Committee covering activities of this past year. Some of the issues covered in the report were course fees; allocation of research funding, faculty position vacancies, overhead and indirect cost funding within a college; state and tuition funding; increasing costs for compensation, new faculty positions, scholarship funding, library support, PEEHIP and debt service.

The National Alumni Association's budget is approximately \$3.2 million with \$800,000 going to scholarships. There are approximately 115 chapters with each chapter a separate, self-governed, non-profit membership organization with the Director reporting directly to UA administration. UA car tag sales provide UA with \$48.75 per tag with this amount being split between 80% to Grad School and 20% to the National Alumni Association.

The committee met with the new Vice President for Advancement. The two top positions were vacated for a period of time. The size of the staff needs to increase. There is concern that the Athletic Department funding raising will encroach on mutual prospects from other sections of the University.

The Financial Affairs Committee investigated the 403(b) and 457 (TIAA-CREF) retirement account fee structure. The investigation resulted in changes to the fee structure for the UA system and was partially enforced in March of 2016. The committee met with Dr. Lynda Gilbert and Kevin Stevens concerning purchasing issues appearing overly complicated and/or costly, including issues such as: dry cleaners, desk purchasing, software and computer purchases.

The Financial Affairs Committee will continue to address financial issues as they occur.

Information Technology – *(Mangala Krishnamurthy & Clark Midkiff)* During the 2015-16 year the Information Technology Committee met with OIT staff on several occasions. John McGowan led a discussion on campus research and has formed a Technology Research Advisory Committee focused on resources and needs of the research community. The standardization of classroom technology needs was discussed with Ivon Foster-McGowan. Campus network improvements efforts and discussion was led by Scott Montgomery. Computer and data security services provided by OIT were detailed by Ashley Ewing. Network improvement projects and creating a process requesting and obtaining software licensing are ongoing.

Issues have been addressed following complaints concerning technology help desk problems. Other topics the Information Technology Committee pursued included Blackboard, classroom support, and variation in equipment across campus. Ongoing projects continue to be the encouragement of OIT in communicating with faculty and staff, providing training software access through Internet Explorer and more prominent announcements concerning shut downs for maintenance.

Research & Service – *(Steve Burch & Steven Jones)* The Research & Service Committee will meet on Thursday with the Strategic Plan Council co-chairs for research. The committee during this past year succeeded in opening up and broadening the discourse about campus research. Many faculty members attended the VPRED meetings once they were adequately publicized. Open discourse with the Vice President for Research remains a priority. Several paths remain open for the committee until the strategic plan is in place.

Student Affairs – *(JoAnn Oliver & Charlye Adams)* This past year the primary focus on the Student Affairs Committee was the Diversity Task Force Report which was completed. The committee met

several times with the Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. David Grady. The Alabama Reach gift card program was coordinated by the Student Affairs Committee. Feedback was provided by this committee on several documents.

NTRC – There will be a policy draft and town hall meetings which will be announced within the next week.

All committee reports will be on the Faculty Senate web site.

Renaming buildings on campus will be an upcoming issue for the Faculty Senate.

Meeting adjourned 5:00 P.M.