

**FACULTY SENATE MEETING
MARCH 24, 2015 – 3:30 P.M. - #110 AIME**

APPROVED MINUTES

ABSENT WITHOUT ALTERNATE: Nikhil Bilwakesh, Sheila Black, Andrea Cevasco, Osiris Molina, John Vincent, James Wang, Chapman Greer, Lenka Nolan, Walt Robbins, Dan Albertson, Ed Back, Glenn Tootle, Bill Henderson.

ABSENT WITH ALTERNATE: Pamela Melton/Amy Traylor.

GUESTS: Dr. Robert Witt, UA System Chancellor; Karen Brooks, President Pro Tempore of the UA System Board of Trustees.

PRESS: Cresandra Smothers, Dialog; Unidentified WVUA reporter.

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

The minutes of February 17, 2015 were approved.

Secretary Rona Donahoe made a motion to suspend the rules to allow UA Board of Trustees President Pro Tempore Karen Brooks and UA Chancellor Robert Witt to address the Faculty Senate. Motion was seconded and approved.

President Steve Miller introduced Karen Brooks and made a note that a member of the UA Board of Trustees had never addressed the Faculty Senate. President Miller also introduced Chancellor Witt.

President Brooks commented that she was delighted to have the opportunity to speak to the Faculty Senate. The UA Board of Trustees is in the process of a nationwide search for a new UA President. The Faculty Senate survey sent to all faculty members requesting their input on qualifications for a new president has been compiled and is in the hands of the Board of Trustees, the members of the presidential search committee and every candidate for the position. The primary attributes requested in the faculty survey included administrative experience and an academic background to help the growth of The University of Alabama. Part of that goal will be someone to lead UA in a ten year plan to make UA eligible for AAU. A variable list of nominations and applications has been submitted.

The next meeting will be April 1 and the hope is to narrow the list of candidates and begin interviews in the near future.

The UA Board of Trustees considers issues and then forwards that to one of ten committees. The emphasis is on transparency and President Brooks encouraged anyone with questions or needing clarification is more than welcome to call her. The Chancellor is not a gatekeeper in the UA system and his role is advisor and assessment. The Board of Trustees sees every issue in detail. Physical integrity, debt service, financial resources for new construction, physical appearance of campus has to be reviewed and approved by the Board, architectural appearance on each campus, resources and redundancy for any new academic program are the primary responsibilities of the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees reduced the per semester credit hours for additional fees several years ago causing problems for some departments. Up to 12 hours is one level of tuition, 12-18 hours remained the same. In recent years that upper bound after which you begin to pay tuition incrementally was reduced from 18 to 17 and then to 16. Dr. Witt made the recommendation to the Board because UA needed the incremental revenue.

The question was asked if the quality of being a strong and independent leader would be a priority characteristic for a new president or would being a “team player” be more important than pushing his own agenda. A new president could not be totally independent but has to be prepared to bring an idea to the Chancellor and perhaps the Chancellor does not agree with it. Would the new president be strong enough to push the idea forward any way. Hopefully a new president would be persuasive. If the issue was presented strongly enough to the Chancellor, he would agree to be supportive. Following dialog unless the Chancellor has a really major concern about the proposal and the president and faculty feel strongly about the issue, the Chancellor would be willing to take the issue to the Board of Trustees.

Dr. Judy Bonner was the first female President of the University of Alabama and the question was if there will be gender and racial equity in the presidential search. President Brook is the first female President Pro Tempore of UA’s Board of Trustees and is particularly sensitive to candidate equity. Dr. Witt assured that diversity would be an integral part of the presidential search.

Vice President’s Report – (*Donna Meester*) The progress of the Faculty Senate Diversity Task Force report continues to be monitored.

Secretary’s Report – (*Rona Donahoe*) Faculty Senate senator election results continue to be reported. A&S, CIS, HES, Ed and Nursing have completed their senator elections. A&S, HES and Ed have reported the results of their Ombudsperson election.

The election for the 2015-16 Faculty Senate was conducted with a voice vote – no paper ballots and the election will be determined by a majority vote. Donna Meester was elected Faculty Senate President, Ed Stephenson was elected Faculty Senate Vice President and Rona Donahoe was elected Faculty Senate Secretary. All were elected unanimously.

President’s Report – (*Steve Miller*) President Miller commented that the new slate of officers would make a great team. Clark Midkiff and Steve Miller are members of the presidential search committee. The search for a new provost has been slowed to coordinate with the naming of the new president. The Faculty Senate’s faculty survey has been instrumental in the presidential search.

A senator addressed the results of hiring Guy Bailey and was assured that a different procedure will be followed in this search. This has to be a great hire and there must be total transparency with many layers of research done before naming the next president. There are five faculty members on the presidential search committee and no one on the committee is shy about their view of who the next president should be.

Faculty Life – (*Pamela Payne-Foster & Ed Stephenson*) Provost Benson has sent the faculty climate survey to OIRA and a link has been put up for Faculty Life committee review. Following their approval the survey will be sent to all faculty members.

Academic Affairs – (*John Vincent & Pat Parmelee*) Associate Provost Kevin Whitaker has made the 2008 version of the Core Curriculum guideline official. The Academic Affairs recommends Provost Benson declare the current procedure for reviewing core courses other than Writing and Computer Science designations be formally adopted.

Legislative Agenda – (*Kimberly Severt*) Higher Education Day in Montgomery will be April 9th. Faculty members are encouraged to be considerate of students attending this event. The SGA has two busloads of students scheduled to attend.

Student Affairs – (*Joanne Hale & JoAnn Oliver*) The Student Affairs Committee has taken the Faculty Senate Diversity Task Force report issue concerning SGA elections (voting stations and statute of limitations) to Interim Director of Student Affairs Steven Hood. These will be readdressed when a permanent Director of Student Affairs is named. Several meetings have been held concerning the separate graduate student government association issue. Graduate students have very little or no voice concerning activities and events. The goal is to be more inclusive of graduate students. The hope is to present this issue to President Bonner for some action. The committee requested President Miller bring this up in his meeting with President Bonner.

President Miller was hopeful to have the recommendations of the Task Force in place but multiple changes in leadership have complicated progress. The recommendations will continue to be pushed and monitored.

Research & Service – (*Steve Burch & Andreas Piepke*) The Research & Service Committee had many issues to bring forth in their meetings with Vice President for Research, Dr. Carl Pinkert. They decided to prioritize those issues to the most important and broader ones for discussion. One of the main issues is the lack of a research vision for the University of Alabama. Other issues include lack of announcements of hires, purchasing issues, time allotted for faculty research and research grant money. Keeping and encouraging research faculty and collaboration between research entities are issues. These issues will continue to be followed in meetings with Dr. Pinkert.

Information Technology – (*Mangala Krishnamurthy & Clark Midkiff*) The Information Technology Committee composed questions to be included in the faculty climate survey. The committee has met with John McGowan, Vice Provost for Information Technology. There seems to be fewer information technology problems.

Financial Affairs – (*Reuben Cook & Rainer Schad*) The Financial Affairs Committee will meet with Dr. Lynda Gilbert, Vice President for Financial Affairs, for the mid-year financial report that is presented to the Board of Trustees. There is concern that the Athletic Department is \$215 million dollars in debt. Reuben Cook is a member of the Vice President for Advancement search. This department lost the top three administrators and the interim president is the President of the Alumni Association. The new hires should be experienced in fundraising since a financial campaign will begin in the near future. Interviews will begin next month with a diverse list of candidates.

Faculty & Senate Governance – (*Charlotte Herrin & Marilyn Handley*) The Faculty Senate approved unanimously the following changes to Faculty Senate Bylaws: Page 2: Financial Affairs (20%) reduced to (10%) and the addition of Community Affairs Committee (10%). Page 3: #13. **Community Affairs Committee**. 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. Page 4. Section 6. Parliamentarian It shall be the duty of the Parliamentarian to attend all meetings of the Senate and of the Steering Committee **including meetings with the Provost. The Parliamentarian shall serve as an *ex officio* member of the Faculty and Senate Governance Committee of the Faculty Senate.**

The Faculty & Senate Governance Committee continues their work on the Diversity Task Force report. Faculty members are encouraged to get involved and collaborate on the issues.

New Business – To do mandatory compliance training, some computers have to be programmed and retooled. The suggestions included setting up one computer in each department/college for this purpose and to send all the training documents at one time. This will be discussed at the meeting with the Provost on Thursday.

Reports from other committees and announcements...

Research Advisory Committee – The Research Faculty Day will be April 8th from 3:00 until 5:30 P.M. at the Bryant Conference Center. Child care and refreshments are provided. All faculty members are invited.

A new Parliamentarian will need to be assigned since Bob Riter is now a senator.

Research Grant Committee – This committee reviews RGC grants. A total of 61 were submitted which is down from 101 last year. There were 21 down from 39, Arts & Humanities had 11 down from 36 last year. There seems to be some confusion about matching funds. Dr. Carl Pinkert makes the final decision. Some wonder if it is worth the time to submit applications and whether the Research and Service Committee has a clear vision for research funding dispersal. These issues will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting with Dr. Pinkert.

Appreciation was expressed to those senators not returning for another term for their hard work and dedication to the Faculty Senate.

Meeting adjourned 4:45 P.M.