

FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

OCTOBER 13, 2015 – 3:00 PM – 213 AIME

APPROVED MINUTES

ATTENDING: Donna Meester, Ed Stephenson, Rona Donahoe, Chapman Greer, John Vincent, Kimberly Severt, Brian Gordon, Pamela Payne-Foster, Rainer Schad, Mangala Krishnamurthy, Clark Midkiff, Steve Burch, Steven Jones, Joanne Hale, JoAnn Oliver, Dominic Yeager

ABSENT: Amy Dayton, Reuben Cook

GUESTS: Cresandra Smothers

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

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of September 8th, 2015 were approved with one correction.

President's Report – (*Donna Meester*) Interim Provost Kevin Whitaker will remain in this position to continue work on a strategic plan for the University.

Linda Bonnin has been named Vice President for Strategic Communications.

Issues from the climate survey have been sent to the Steering Committee for a review.

Donna Meester, Rona Donahoe, Kimberly Severt and Steve Katsinas had a luncheon meeting with Alabama State Representative Bill Poole. Poole will speak to the Faculty Senate at a spring meeting. His goal is to keep education at the forefront of political issues.

President Meester is working to communicate the workings and accomplishments of the Faculty Senate to the faculty as a whole. Meetings with Cresandra Smothers of Dialog and Associate Vice President of University Relations, Deborah Lane, to facilitate the distribution of topics and information have been conducted. One of the duties of a senator is to take back to his/her department/school information about the issues being considered by the Faculty Senate. Ed Stephenson will post the Faculty Senate agenda on the Faculty Senate web page.

There will be an Academic Impressions Webcast on Monday, October 19th from 12:00 until 1:30 P.M. in G-54 Rose Administration Building with an overview of common problems with Faculty Handbooks. Anyone can register to participate. If there are problems accessing Skillport or registration, please contact HR learning and Development at 348-9700 or hrlearninganddevelopment@ua.edu for assistance.

President Meester met with Interim Provost Kevin Whitaker and the NTRC committee.

President Meester met with UAB and UAH Faculty Senate presidents to establish lines of communication and to discuss issues facing each institution. A joint meeting in February is in the planning stages.

Vice President's Report – (*Ed Stephenson*) Academic Affairs and the Faculty and Senate Governance Committees have Diversity Reports one and two. Norm Baldwin is the chair for Diversity Report number three. The committee will be meeting with students in the next few weeks and are in a data gathering mode at this time. SGA elections, sororities, fraternities and their national organizations and block seating were discussed.

Secretary's Report – (*Rona Donahoe*) Secretary Donahoe will email to the full Senate a survey to reprioritize the Diversity Task Force Report recommendations. The survey will include the eight prioritized recommendations from Task Force Report #1, add to that the recommendations from the addendum, the second survey will include the prioritization of the recommendations from Task Force Report #4. Reports two and three are ready to go. It was suggested to place the reports online with indications of those issues in place and those issues still in progress.

Academic Affairs – (*John Vincent & Chapman Greer*) The Academic Affairs Committee met with Dean Craig Edelbrock, Dean of Continuing Studies, to discuss the expense to rent space in the Bryant Conference Center. Use of the facility has been limited due to the cost and this issue will be reviewed with lowering rates as a goal. Distribution of funds from Continuing Studies among the colleges was discussed.

Issues concerning SOI included the number of students filling it out. A few years ago OIR determined better students were the highest number of participants. Methods of participation included using cell phones.

This committee continues to review the Faculty Handbook and sections will be assigned at their next meeting.

A tour to assess audio-visual functionality in the new academic classroom building was scheduled during prime teaching hours limiting those faculty members available to attend. There was further discussion about audio-visual details. Lloyd and Russell Hall had totally unusable audio-visual capacities. Faculty is now being consulted in AV implementation in classrooms.

Community Affairs – (*Kimberly Severt & Amy Dayton*) There was a meeting with Tuscaloosa Mayor Walt Maddox to begin dialog and collaboration between the city and the Faculty Senate. Mayor Maddox will speak to the Faculty Senate in January.

The committee has also met with Dr. Samory Pruitt and will meet with him regularly to discuss pertinent issues.

Faculty Senate Governance – (*Charlotte Herrin & Robert Riter*) There were 78% of the senators voting electronically in the Mediation Committee vacancy election. Steven Hobbs was elected receiving 85% of the votes to fill one of the two vacancies on the Mediation Committee. Another ballot will be emailed on Wednesday, October 14th with the other four candidate names on the ballot with seven days to vote – Wednesday, October 14th through Monday,

October 19th at 5:00 P.M. The candidate with the highest number of votes will fill the other position on the Mediation Committee. Dr. David Grady will be consulted on the cost of using Big Pulse for Faculty Senate elections. A review of proper voting methods (roll call, paper ballot, voice/standing/ballot) was given by Dominic Yeager, Parliamentarian. There was discussion concerning the application of Faculty Senate Bylaws to electronic voting. The Bylaws do not specifically address electronic voting or method but just states ballots which would cover the electronic voting.

A review/revision of the Faculty Senate Bylaws is being conducted by the Faculty Senate Governance Committee and Dominic Yeager, Parliamentarian. A draft will be submitted to the Senate at the November meeting. Feedback will be requested with the goal of a December vote.

Term limits for Faculty Senate members was an issue brought forward by the Climate Survey. Robert Riter conducted a survey of thirty-five Faculty Senate Bylaws which showed a small percentage stated term limits ranging from officers only to senators only. Term limits might be good in theory but preserving institutional knowledge should be a consideration. The Faculty and Senate Governance Committee had no particular recommendation but opened the subject for discussion. Several were in favor of term limits. Points discussed: some difficulty in getting faculty to serve, lack of communicating the role, operation, work and impact of the Faculty Senate, mentoring young faculty through serving in the Faculty Senate, all members are elected, review the election process, colleges/schools with very small number of faculty, placing a **Frequently Asked Questions** section on the Faculty Senate web page, educate new faculty, posting the climate survey issues indicating those completed and those continuing, and senators relaying issues to their constituents. Faculty Senate meetings are open to anyone wishing to attend.

Faculty Life – *(Brian Gordon & Pamela Payne-Foster)* The Faculty Life Committee is gathering data and will give a report in November. Dr. Mike Parker will make a presentation to the committee concerning elder care.

Financial Affairs – *(Reuben Cook & Rainer Schad)* The Financial Affairs Committee met with Lisa Rhiney, Associate Provost & Academic Affairs, to discuss distribution of funds. The UA Board of Trustees approves course fees. C&BA charges \$30 per course, Nursing \$20 per hour and residents are \$10 per hour. There are special fees that can be approved only by the Provost based on supplies. The course fee funds go to the Deans. Research funding was discussed – when research funding pays for all or part of faculty position, the permanent funding stays within the college. These funds go to the school/college and can be used at their discretion. Allocation of overhead or indirect cost from research, grants, etc., 60% goes to UA central office where half is used for startup costs and half is allocated to the Office of Research. The other 40% goes back to the college to be used at the discretion of the Dean. College operating fund amounts have not changed in 25-30 years. In the past Continuing Studies was allowed to retain 100% carryover of those funds. Now it is only 5-10% of last year's budget. The excess money

goes back to the UA central office and is allocated for big renovation projects. Each college negotiates their allocation or split with Continuing Studies. For colleges without research funding or foundation funding, Continuing Studies is a major source of funds to fill the “gap” for Deans, especially to pay for the increased operation costs.

Funding for vacant positions stay within the college and are used to help the Deans cover startup costs for new positions, recruitment costs, moving expenses, other costs within the college. There is no UA policy or rule on how long a position can remain open. Some colleges try to fill as soon as possible. One college filled a position before the position was vacated. One college has a rule or understanding that you wait a year and then begin the search process which means a position could be vacant for two years.

Raises are allocated by groups such as tenured faculty, renewed faculty, staff, etc. and funds cannot be used for raises from one group to support raises for employees not in the same group. The minimum salary for full-time faculty (renewal) is \$38,000 which may be something the committee chooses to address.

Any big State funding cuts (\$10 million or more) will be hard to handle in the future. Undergraduate tuition has been a major funding resource for UA in the past. It will not be in the future unless there is research funding growth and increases in gifts and donations. By State law out-of-state tuition has to be double in-state tuition. The largest increase in enrollment has been in Engineering and C&BA which Engineering can handle better than C&BA based on faculty-student ratio.

The Financial Affairs Committee also met with Calvin Brown, Executive Director of the Alumni Association. The Alumni Association is a self-governed (non-profit) membership organization which has a board and the director reports directly to UA administration. There are 115 chapters divided equally between in-state and out-of-state. There are about 185,000 living alumni and current membership is approximately 34,000 members with about 25% of this total are non-graduates of UA. The association has 22 staff members which are UA employees but funding comes through association membership dues. The national association budget is around \$3.2 million dollars with \$800,000 to a million dollars going to scholarships. Approximately 75% of funding is from dues with others from royalty income (International travel program) fees from Nat Association credit card. Each chapter is a separate entity. The National Association provides assistance in chapter development. The partnership between the National Association and Chapters provide major scholarship funding. There is about \$40 million endowment. The combined groups provide about \$4.7 million in scholarships each year. UA National Association is one of the top programs (along with Penn State and Texas) in providing scholarships.

The UA car tag brings UA \$48.75 of the \$50.00 fee – 80% goes to the Graduate School and 20% to the Alumni Association which is used for a match (80%) last year for people creating scholarships through the chapters. This year’s match was a little under \$1 million dollars. The

amount of the match can change each year. It is a mathematical calculation based on the proceeds from the sale of car tags and the amount contributed to endowments from the chapters. They have about 500 permanent scholarships. To obtain the match it must go through a chapter and the minimum amount is \$25,000 within 5 years and a memo of understanding must be signed. Last year over \$2 million dollars was given to first-time recipients of about 1,000 students. AA gives the President's office about \$100,000 each year. The Outstanding Teaching Award (4) is given each year with a stipend of \$2,500 (total \$10,000). The Association also gives one-on-one student tours. The biggest challenges of the Alumni Association are a lack of members under the age of 35 years of age and establishing mentoring/networking events and service projects.

The Financial Affairs Committee will be meeting with Dr. Lynda Gilbert, Vice President for Financial Affairs, to discuss the procurement process. They will also be meeting with Bob Pierce of the Advancement Office.

Over one-third of UA's freshmen class made 30 or higher on the ACT which qualifies them for free tuition. An ACT of 26 qualifies for free tuition at some Alabama junior colleges. This will be reexamined.

Information Technology – *(Clark Midkiff & Mangala Krishnamurthy)* The Information Technology Committee will solicit any technical problems from the Faculty Senate. Issues included receiving answers to questions when calling the support desk, lack of communication concerning length of time for scheduled maintenance and lack of equipment.

Research & Service – *(Steve Burch & Steven Jones)* The Research and Service Committee met and began their meeting with the information from the climate survey. The committee members echoed agreement with the main issues of teaching load, lack of funding, sabbaticals, research assistants, etc. The main issue seems to be the lack of vision concerning research. Dr. Pinkert agreed a year ago there was no research vision for the University. The committee is trying to set up a meeting with Dr. Pinkert to determine a timeline to establish a research vision. These issues could be included in the strategic plan statement being developed by President Bell.

Student Affairs – *(Joanne Hale & JoAnn Oliver)* The Student Affairs Committee will be working on setting up a meeting with Dr. David Grady, Vice President of Student Affairs. The Diversity Task Force Reports will be discussed in this meeting. Faculty training as a student organization sponsor is a concern for the committee.

The Gift Card Drive is ongoing and is sponsored by the Faculty Senate and the Office, Clerical and Technical Staff Assembly. Gift cards in \$25 increments are preferred or checks may be made payable to the University of Alabama or cash may be donated with November 20th the deadline. Donations will be distributed among the program's 52 students helping foster students reach their potential.

The Non-Tenure-Track Renewable-Contract Faculty Committee (NTRC) has twelve members with three actual NTRC faculty members. The group felt the proportions of the committee did not correctly reflect those impacted by the NTRC policy. Suggestions were requested for names to be added to this committee who are passionate about advocating, creating and implementing a supportive policy for NTRC faculty. The next thing that is particularly important, it currently states the policy is appropriate and covers faculty with terminal degrees and appropriate professional experience. Lisa Rhiney clarified that appropriate professional experience is an exceptional person who has won the Nobel Prize. It is not someone with twenty years of working experience and a non-terminal degree. These faculty members are not covered by this policy. Going forward with terminal degree faculty only would disenfranchise a large number of people on whom the University relies. We would like to move forward with a sense of urgency. Small correct steps are needed rather than incorrect big steps. The committee would like to move two parallel policies forward with one policy that is now in effect and one policy with changes to address those without terminal degrees.

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee will host the yearly Reception for Deans on Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at Gorgas House from 5:00-6:30 P.M.

Meeting adjourned 5:05 P.M.