**FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**APRIL 11, 2017 – 3:00 pm - #213 Aime**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**ATTENDING: Donna Meester, Chapman Greer, Rona Donahoe, John Vincent, Brad Tuggle, Amy Dayton, Seth Bordner, Robert Findlay, Peter Johnson, Charlotte Herrin, Angela Benson, Bill Martin, James Gilbreath, Clark Midkiff, Barbara Dalbach, Ajay Agrawal, Mike Kreger.**

**ABSENT: Amy Traylor, Charlye Adams.**

**GUESTS: Cresandra Smother, Dialog; Monica Watts & Andy Rainey, Strategic Communications.**

**Roll call and quorum check by Faculty Senate Secretary Chapman Greer.**

**The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of March 7, 2017 were approved.**

**President Meester introduced Monica Watts and Andy Rainey from the Division of Strategic Communications to discuss UA’s web page content. Some of the concerns expressed were the UA “branding” marketing mechanism, alphabetical listings on the web page header, absence of faculty/student interaction, lack of correlation to UA’s strategic plan, lack of recognition of teaching, research & service, excessive direction to athletics, lack of faculty/staff swift specific internal communication or channel for campus emergencies and the mandatory template for email identification. Watts and Rainey expressed appreciation for the input and explained the web page structure and content. Benchmarks, analytics, other institutional web sites and studies were consulted by the Strategic Communications department to determine the most informative format, visitor interests and efficient usability of UA’s web page. The order of the navigation items does not reflect the priorities of the institution. Alphabetical order, most users reading left to right corners and bottom-line messages are used to make it easier to find subjects since these are the most common processes used by those seeking specific information. The main purpose of the navigation process is to reach those students interested in attending The University of Alabama and to give them a perspective on campus life. The MyBama web site is managed by OIT. There is content rotation on the web site. Constant reviews are made to improve and update the structure, framework, content, navigation and marketing effectiveness of UA’s web page. There was further discussion concerning access, placement, links, consistency, centralization and flow of information.**

**President’s Report *– (Donna Meester)* This is the last Steering Committee meeting with the outgoing senators. President Meester expressed appreciation to each one for their service and dedication to the Faculty Senate.**

**The Faculty Senate Steering Committee met with UAB’s and UAH’s Faculty Senate Steering Committees following the Board of Trustees meeting in Huntsville. Chancellor Hayes requested input concerning new faculty visitation to each of the three campuses. Several suggestions included extending the visit to more than one day, collaboration and methods to put this initiative into action. The University of Alabama campus in Tuscaloosa will host the combined meeting in November.**

**Dean Milla Boschung nominated Coach Bill Battle, retired Athletic Director, for an honorary degree which was approved by The Board of Trustees. The degree will be presented at the Saturday evening graduation ceremony.**

**A reception will be held this fall to honor former UA President Judy Bonner and commemorate the naming of a campus street in recognition of her past service.**

**President Meester nominated/appointed Dominc Yeager to continue as Faculty Senate Parliamentarian.**

**A list of Faculty Senate, Faculty Senate Steering Committee and Faculty Senate Steering Committee/Provost meeting dates was distributed.**

**The April 20, 2017 Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting with the Provost will be a campus tour beginning at the Gorgas House.**

**Josh Rothman requested support from the Faculty Senate in establishing an official University commission to research The University of Alabama’s role in the history of slavery. Questions from the Faculty Senate included what is the end result/goal of the research, how would this differ from research and material already available and what would happen with the research material. Rothman expressed his opinion that those questions were not relevant at this point since the information which possibly could be revealed by the research does not exist at this point. Legitimate questions to request funding would be what goals are set, where the information would be archived and how would the research result be used. The Faculty Senate does not have the ability to fund any project. This request will be referred to the Provost.**

**The ad hoc committee established to address the immigration ban law and sanctuary issue was to be convened by Paul Horwitz. The committee is reviewing a resolution draft with comments to be returned as quickly as possible. The committee is not in consensus creating a possibility of two resolutions being submitted to the Faculty Senate to choose between the two. The Steering Committee will have to review the resolution before being presented to the full Senate. Since the resolutions were not presented at this last Steering Committee meeting before the last full Senate meeting until August, the issue cannot be addressed until August. This will be communicated to the ad hoc committee.**

**In view of the University hiring a Chief Diversity Officer, it was felt this is the appropriate time to establish a Faculty Senate Diversity Committee. The Faculty Senate committee assignments will include names marked by an asterisk to serve as committee members upon approval by the Faculty Senate.**

**Vice President’s Report – *(Rona Donahoe)* Corrections were noted on the committee assignments and changes made. Making the University Bicycle Safety Committee standing committee or for the committee to come under Campus Safety or Parking and Transportation was a suggestion.**

**Secretary’s Report *– (Chapman Greer)* The Faculty Senate Standing Committees and Faculty Senate University Committee representative assignments will be presented at the Faculty Senate meeting for approval and will be attached to the agenda. The committee will break out into groups to choose co-chairs. The new senator orientation will be held at 2:45 P.M. in Room #1010 North Lawn Hall prior to the full Faculty Senate meeting.**

**Financial Affairs – *(Robert Findlay & Rainer Schad)* The committee had no report. A suggestion was made for the committee to place the new method of travel reimbursement on their list of issues.**

**Community Affairs *– (Amy Dayton & Rita Snyder)* No report.**

**Information Technology – *(Clark Midkiff & Darrin Griffin)* New email proposals are being organized and this committee will bring that information as soon as it is available.**

**Faculty & Senate Governance – *Charlotte Herrin & Steve Miller)* A proposed amendment to the Faculty Senate bylaws (Section 3) will be presented to the Faculty Senate to approve changing the name from Faculty Senate Student Affairs Committee to Faculty Senate Student Life Committee and to approve the establishment/addition of a Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Committee.**

**Student Affairs *– (Charlye Adams & Amy Traylor)* A resolution from this committee was sent to President Meester but there was not a co-chair present to speak to the SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners) issue. A student election issue report/presentation is needed.**

**Academic Affairs – *(John Vincent & Chapman Greer)* The Academic Affairs met yesterday to review the final Mediation and Grievance document which is Appendix B in the Faculty Handbook. The proposed changes to the document are very large and comprehensive. The entire Title IX change is incorporated into the structure of the document. The Mediation Committee has a list of different but important items to review. These are weaker standards than the Tribunal. One simplification in the Tribunal is reducing sixty committee members to five. This would change to begin with eleven reducing to five members. Training in mediation procedures is required. The procedure to bring issues to action is clarified and the language is more straightforward. There has been only one Tribunal in the last forty years but the Tribunal process to dismiss a faculty member has been extremely burdensome. The process would apply to full-time faculty. There is no procedure/document for NTRC faculty. This policy must be followed if the University wishes to fire a faculty member before their contract expires. The committee will compose a synopsis of this document and suggests opening up the Faculty Senate meeting for questions and answers. This would be open for all faculty members with special consideration for meeting space. The document will be presented to the Faculty Senate at the April 18th meeting for study over the summer with presentation at the Faculty Senate August 22 meeting and voting at the September 19th meeting. A summary will be sent to faculty during the summer. The Steering Committee voted unanimously to present this to the Senate at next week’s meeting. Revision intentions are to protect and encompass all faculty members. The defendant and grievant have equal appeal rights. This document is the only piece of Faculty Handbook revisions requiring a faculty-wide vote. Other changes were reviewed and following the approval and finalization the Faculty Handbook revision will be complete. The last revisions of the Handbook were done in 1997.**

**Meeting adjourned 5:20 P.M.**