**FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

**OCTOBER 10, 2017 – 3:00 P.M. - #213**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**ATTENDING:** Donna Meester, Rona Donahoe, Merit Eyal-Cohen, Julia Cartwright, Barbara Dalbach, Ajay Agrawal, John Vincent, Seth Bordner, Brad Tuggle, Robert Findlay, Ozzy Molina, Clark Midkiff, Angela Benson, Amy Traylor, Dominic Yeager.

**ABSENT:** Chapman Greer.

**GUESTS:** Cresandra Smothers, Strategic Communications.

Roll call and quorum check by Faculty Senate Vice President Rona Donahoe.

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of September 12, 2017 will be brought forward for approval at the next Steering Committee meeting.

**President’s Report –** *(Donna Meester)* The University of Alabama’s Registrar’s Office has donated twelve robes and tams for the Karen Steckol Regalia Project. The regalia are available for loan to faculty members wishing to attend commencement ceremonies.

The December 12, 2017 Faculty Senate meeting will be held in the Ferguson Forum. The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting on February 13 will be in Room 111 Aime.

President Meester welcomed Merit Eyal-Cohen as the co-chair of the newly formed Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. Ozzy Molina is the other co-chair but was absent. Julia Cartwright was welcomed as the co-chair replacing Charlotte Herrin on the Faculty and Senate Governance Committee.

**Vice President’s Report –** *(Rona Donahoe)* No report.

**Secretary’s Report –** *(Chapman Greer)* No report (absent).

**Academic Affairs –** *(John Vincent & Brad Tuggle)* The College of Education has an appointed committee charged with rewriting the tenure-promotion rules allowing only a positive response or a negative response while eliminating the defer option for tenure track faculty applying early for tenure. This appears to be in violation of the Faculty Handbook. This would not prevent the provost or president from having the option to defer the tenure decision, making the votes on the limited options by the department, chair, college committee, and dean potentially meaningless. The feedback from the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee was less than positive.

The Faculty Handbook - Appendix B – was presented with some minor wording changes from the counsel hired to address Title IX. The recusing process has been shifted to a later point in the process so that fewer potential tribunal members would learn the names of parties involved. The Steering Committee voted unanimously to forward the “Appendix B” document to the Faculty Senate to review with voting at the November 14, 2017 meeting. President Meester will send an email with the clean “Appendix B” document as an attachment to the entire faculty inviting them to an open meeting of the Faculty Senate on October 17 for discussion of “Appendix B” revisions.

**Student Life –** *(Charlye Adams & Amy Traylor)* The Student Life Committee met with Dr. David Grady, Vice President of Student Life, concerning the SGA elections. The Election Board has resigned/stepped down/terms were ending. The Election Board is now open for anyone to apply and Dr. Grady will make the appointments. Election violations seem to be turned in from both sides trying to outdo each other. The charges against the SGA President for election violations have had sanctions imposed and are in force. Additional sanctions will be added if the imposed sanctions are not followed. UA will not release the nature of those charges or sanctions due to FERPA. The SGA President is free to share the information if he so wishes. All candidates sign a FERPA waiver in order to run for office. UA is not inclined to institute paper ballots to reduce any cheating during elections. The electronic voting process gives online and off-campus students more opportunity to vote in elections. Two reports have been turned in to the Department of Justice concerning integration of the Greek system with two more due over the next few years. The action plan is on the sorority and fraternity web site. Their recruitment begins with students in high school and does not follow a formal recruiting process like sororities follow. Sororities have four African American students in leadership positions. The Student Life Committee will follow up on acquiring information about the application pool.

**Information Technology & Strategic Communication –** *(Clark Midkiff & Barbara Dalbach)* This committee met with Linda Bonin, Vice President for Strategic Communications; Monica Watts, Associate Vice President for Strategic Communications; and Andy Rainey, Director of Web Communications concerning the new web management system program titled Omni. Some of the advantages of this program will be to move everyone to the same format, accessibility, security, a uniform template for web pages and a more formal communication structure. There will be training sessions offered and a wave of introduction will begin in November. If there are web pages not on Omni, assistance will be available to convert. There are over 800 orphan web sites under *ua.edu* that no one claims. An example was given of a web site titled “*tater.ua.edu*” which only has a photo of a potato. There continues to be concern about OIT assistance during hours the University is closed and new mandates concerning ads for employment. There have been difficulties of access to administrate a web site associated with grant applications which the Information Technology and Strategic Communication Committee will follow up for more information. An issue concerns the amount of funding spent by a college for rebranding. Adherence to new strategic communication policies would make that spending wasteful and rebranding obsolete.

**Community Affairs –** *(Amy Dayton & Seth Bordner)* The Community Affairs Committee will be reaching out to those involved in establishing a historical race and memory record of the University.

**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion –** *(Ozzy Molina & Merit Eyal-Cohen)* The newly established Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee met, introduced themselves and asked their reasons they wished to be on this committee. The first issue addressed by the committee was to establish goals and a baseline to begin work and to get familiar with groups on campus working toward those same goals. The committee is reaching out to those groups to collaborate and work together and reaching out to other institutions for ideas. The diversity mapping report will be part of the committee’s focus. Steering Committee members made suggestions of diversity breakfasts, meetings and names of contacts and connections to extend their collaborative efforts toward diversity.

**Faculty Life –** *(Julia Cartwright & James Gilbreath)* The Faculty Life Committee is in the process of contacting various day care organizations to accumulate information about the number of children enrolled, affiliation, facilities, location, costs and waiting lists. Another focus of the committee will be parental leave policies which should be gender neutral. Leave policies are not consistent across departments with some giving more liberal benefits than others. There was discussion about what other institutions have in place, recommendations of the Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee and cost of covering work hours of those on leave. General housing for incoming new faculty hires is a problem. Those coming from a foreign country face more difficulties. One option would be to provide temporary, short-term housing for the new faculty members. Spousal employment was included in the issues being addressed. Free gym membership would be an enticement. New gym space in Barnwell Hall is being considered. A climate survey of the most recent faculty hires would include data that would assist in addressing the specific problems they faced as incoming new faculty members. A UA web site containing information about physicians, tips about being a new resident, real estate, general information about Tuscaloosa and Northport would be a good asset for newcomers. The charge from Chancellor Hayes for faculty members to visit each of the three campuses was generally based not research based and the Faculty Life Committee will be developing a plan to fulfill this charge.

**Faculty and Senate Governance –** *(Angela Benson)* The committee will elect a new co-chair to replace Charlotte Herrin. The committee has one nominee. They will also be looking at any revisions needed for Faculty Senate Bylaws.

There are nine nominees for Commencement Marshal. The Senate will vote for six nominees and those will be matched to the available slots. The election will be held electronically.

There will be two items to be voted on in the Faculty Senate meeting – the charge for the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee and the proposed change in committee attendance requiring an alternate attend in the committee member’s absence.

**Financial Affairs –** *(Robert Findlay & Peter Johnson)* No report.

**Research & Service –** *(Ajay Agrawal & Mike Kreger)* The Research and Service Committee are working on two items – the 2015 climate survey and the proposed letter/questions to the Provost concerning the new faculty hires.

**Reports from Other Committees --**

DUO roll out has revealed no after UA technical support.

The Sabbatical Policy has been distributed for review.

The November Steering Committee meeting will be followed by a reception for Vice Presidents and Deans at Gorgas House. The holiday card photo of the Steering Committee will be taken in front of Gorgas House.

The December 12, 2017 Faculty Senate meeting will be held at the Forum in Ferguson Center at 3:30 P.M.

There were questions concerning Medicare information and pertinent issues facing those retiring.

Meeting adjourned 5:05 P.M.