**FACULTY SENATE MEETING**

**DECEMBER 12, 2017 – 3:30 PM – FERGUSON FORUM**

**UNAPPROVED MINUTES**

**ABSENT WITH ALTERNATE:** Silas Blackstock/Rainer Schad, Steve Bunker/Hilary Green, Julia Cartwright/Bryan Koronkiewicz, Ibrahim Cemen/Steve Burch, Rona Donahoe/Rainer Schad, Edward Sazonov/Keith Williams, Denise DeSalvo/Jason Blumenthal, Michelle Hale/Juanita McMath, Olivia May/Leslie Cole.

**ABSENT WITHOUT ALTERNATE:** Andrew Dewar, Ellary Draper, Bob Findlay, Bill Martin, Osiris Molina, Daniel Bachrach, Peter Johnson, Tom Lopez, Jeff Martin, Steve Miller, Kym Reddoch, Charlotte Herrin, Dominic Yeager.

**GUESTS:** Dr. Christine Taylor, Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Cresandra Smothers, Strategic Communications.

Dr. Christine Taylor began the meeting with comments and a power point presentation. Dr. Taylor quoted Carter G. Woodson, “For me education means to inspire people to begin with life as they find it and make it better”. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was also quoted, “We are faced with the fact, my friends, that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there is such a thing as being too late. Procrastination is still the thief of time”.

The diversity mapping process is completed with the following conclusions – there are many diversity activities on campus but are not centralized or connected, diversity on campus is directed at internationalization rather than domestic issues and there are learning opportunities for students and faculty but more should be available. Diversity listening sessions have been established with fifteen two-hour sessions and 320 participants. The sessions were divided into specialized groups for students, faculty, staff and graduate students. Three major points addressed were - “Because I Said I Would” which is a nation-wide project, conversations and diversity listening sessions will continue in 2018 and major themes established through those sessions. Collectively working together is a major priority on Dr. Taylor’s agenda. Distinct themes were the bias and hate reporting system and real time reporting. There will be a team meeting on Wednesday, December 13th to discuss the best way to implement the process with the existing Maxient system, how to route information to all who need to know and identifying areas of concern on the campus for pro-active measures. Respond, recover and rebuild from vandalism symbols and slurs will be the focus of Dr. Jamie Washington presentation on campus Tuesday, January 23, 2018. The Academic Diversity Council is being organized with representatives from each college to convene in January, 2018 to share best practices in many areas of diversity and inclusion. Dr. Taylor’s next steps include launching the diversity strategic planning process, establishing a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion web page, moving forward with listening sessions, establishing closer relationships with groups, education and development program opportunities, and meeting with the Faculty Senate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee monthly. Dr. Taylor will continue reaching out and encouraging participation in diversity issues, developing holiday recognition inclusion, simplifying systematic reporting, inspiring others to move forward, make a difference, and finding a way for faculty to receive credit for work done on diversity issues.

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

The Faculty Senate meeting minutes of November 14, 2017 were approved.

**President’s Report –** *(Donna Meester)* President Meester expressed appreciation for the senator’s time and service.

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

**Secretary’s Report –** *(Chapman Greer)* A faculty survey has been composed to determine interest in faculty member’s visiting their sister campuses in compliance with the charge of Chancellor Hayes. The survey will be forwarded to President Meester and then distributed by email to all three campuses.

**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee –** *(Ozzy Molina & Mirit Eyal-Cohen)* The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee met with the Mallet Assembly, a student honors residence program founded in 1961 to facilitate the integration of the University, for collaboration and direction concerning diversity issues. The committee will be meeting with Dr. Christine Taylor on a regular basis.

The committee submitted the proposed Faculty Senate resolution strongly urging the UA administration to place a Menorah next to the Holiday tree in front of the Rose Administration building this year and in coming years. Sending a strong message of unity, tolerance, and liberty broadening the commemoration of the holiday season in a more diverse, pluralistic, and celebratory manner of widely shared traditions is the essence of the resolution. Requests have been made multiple times in the past to display the Menorah next to the Holiday tree and were told a permit was needed. A permit is not required to display the Holiday tree. The University policy states there are five campus locations not open for displays. The Menorah has been displayed at the Ferguson Center. Equal treatment for all holiday commemorations throughout the year is the broader goal. The United States Supreme Court ruled the Christmas tree and the Menorah are secular symbols not religious symbols. Court rulings were quoted during the discussion of the resolution. The committee felt this resolution would abide by legal standards and strategically open the opportunity for change in the University’s policies. There should be some administrative structure directing students where to go with appeals. The Faculty Senate voted to approve the resolution.

**Faculty & Senate Governance –** *(Angela Benson & Ibraham Cemen)* There are two nominations for the Mediation Committee vacancies. Cassie Smith and Joann Oliver were approved by acclimation. Two nominations are needed for the Merger and Discontinuance Committee and only one has been nominated.

**Student Affairs –** *(Charlye Adams & Amy Traylor)* The Student Affairs Committee is beginning a new project concerning student needs. Some are working jobs and struggling to remain in school. There is a campus food pantry in a 3x7 closet with limited supplies. Students should be made aware of the available resources. Other southeastern institutions have impressive programs for student assistance. Send any suggestions should be sent to the committee.

**Faculty Life –** *(Julia Cartwright & James Gilbreath)* The Faculty Life Committee continues to work on the day care initiative and parental leave policy. The committee was urged to write a letter to the Benefits Committee expressing support for the twelve month parental policy. The committee is working on temporary housing for new arrivals in Tuscaloosa. The committee met with Andre Love concerning free faculty access to recreational facilities. The committee is in the process of setting up a meeting with Linda Bonin, Strategic Communications, to create an informational web site for newcomers to Tuscaloosa. It would contain pertinent information important to someone moving in such as grocery store locations, pharmacies, etc. The Faculty Life Committee will be working with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee on harassment issues.

**Information Technology & Strategic Communication -** *(Clark Midkiff & Barbara Dalbach)* The University of Alabama Information Technology Committee had their first meeting. The focus is on measures on cyber security for UA campus. UA has cyber security insurance which would assist financially in the event of a security breach. Outside and internal assessments brought about a list of issues to be corrected which is now being implemented.

**Research & Service –** *(Ajay Agrawal & Mike Kreger)* The letter composed by the committee posing questions concerning faculty hiring was approved by the Steering Committee and has been forwarded to the Provost.

**Community Affairs –** *(Amy Dayton & Seth Bordner)* The Community Affairs Committee is working on a letter to be sent to Alabama’s legislators addressing the effects of a new tax plan. The plan would negatively affect students, families, faculty and colleges. The bill would increase the cost to students attending college by more than $65 billion between 2018 and 2027, if passed, the people with incomes below certain thresholds can no longer deduct up to $2,500 of student loan interest, employees of nonprofit universities would no longer be able to exclude from taxable income qualified undergraduate tuition reductions they or their dependents receive from their employer (this helped colleges recruit employees at lower salaries), parents would no longer be able to claim a deduction ($4,050 in 2017) for dependent children age 19 to 23 who are full-time college students, the standard deduction would be doubled for individuals and couples potentially lowering the number of people who would donate to colleges because they couldn’t itemize the donation, the bill would tax graduate students’ waived tuition as income resulting in students having to pay their taxes with money received from stipends paid for serving as teaching assistants and cutting two tax credits - the Lifetime Learning Credit and Hope Scholarship Credit - would be combined bringing in $17.3 billion dollars in federal revenue over the next decade. The tax bill would adversely affect private college endowments. There is nothing positive for higher education in this proposed tax bill. The suggestion was made to draft a letter containing specific situations involving UA students being adversely affected by this bill and circulate the letter to all higher education institutions in Alabama. Speed is of the greatest importance. The Ways and Means Committee is working on this bill this week and expects to send it to the full House next week. Senate Republicans are working on their own competing plan. Legislators hope to have a bill for the President Trump to sign by the end of the year. The Faculty Senate voted to suspend the rules – the committee will write the letter and send it to the Steering Committee to vote electronically, the letter will then go to the full Faculty Senate will vote electronically. The vote was unanimous to approve and move as quickly as possible.

**Academic Affairs –** *(John Vincent & Brad Tuggle)* Documents were not received from the Task Force in time to hold a special Faculty Handbook meeting. Hopefully “Appendix B” in the Faculty Handbook will be voted on in January.

**Reports from other Committees** –

The Campus Master Plan Committee met on November 27th. The master plan has been made public and was posted on the web page last week. The Campus Master Plan is a fluid document with ongoing changes being made. The latest plan was returned to the Board of Trustees. The plan included the proposed construction of a new academic building encroaching on the Peter Bryce property which is to remain a green space.

Senators were urged to formulate questions for Dean of Libraries, Donald Gilstrap, speaking to the Faculty Senate. He proposes removing some books to make room for more student study areas.

Posting syllabi and dead week policies were discussed.

Meeting adjourned 5:15 P.M.