**FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

**FEBRUARY 13, 2018 – AIME #111 – 3:00 PM**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**ATTENDING:** Donna Meester, Rona Donahoe, Chapman Greer, Ibrahim Cemen, Ajay Agrawal, Mike Kreger, Amy Dayton, Seth Bordner, John Vincent, Brad Tuggle, Clark Midkiff, Barbara Dalbach, Robert Findlay, Amy Traylor, Osiris Molina, Mirit Eyal-Cohen, Julia Cartwright, James Gilbreath, Dominic Yeager.

**ABSENT:** Angela Benson, Peter Johnson, Charlye Adams.

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

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

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of January 9, 2018 were approved with corrections.

**Faculty & Senate Governance** *– (Angela Benson & Ibrahim Cemen)* The Faculty and Senate Governance Committee reported the officer nominations for the election of Faculty Senate officers are Rona Donahoe, President; Chapman Greer, Vice President; and Barbara Dalbach, Secretary. Nominations may be made from the floor until the end of the Faculty Senate meeting on Tuesday, February 20, 2018.

Seth Appiah-Opoku is the only nominee for Ombudsperson.

**President’s Report** *– (Donna Meester)* President Meester reviewed the email messages concerning the joint meetings of UAH, UAB and UA Faculty Senate Steering Committees following the quarterly Board of Trustees meetings. This began with an effort to join all three campus Steering Committees in addressing issues. Chancellor Hayes charged the committees to visit each institution’s campus focusing on new faculty members and to find ways to work together. After this was discussed extensively in meetings and emails, it was determined to compile a survey to be sent to all three campuses to determine faculty interests. Without any progress being made the discussion included having a continuing governing body for this group and how to continue the meetings. Immediate attention is needed for some issues and meeting quarterly does not allow the time for this. The consensus is to continue with an informal meeting following the Board of Trustees meetings.

Bill Poole will speak at the Faculty Senate meeting in April.

Faculty Senate committees will be responsible for making year-end reports at the March 20, 2018 meeting.

There were questions concerning the composition of the search committee for the new Vice President for Research. Silas Blackstock is the Faculty Senate representative on this committee.

President Meester will follow up on this issue. Notify President Meester if there is a desire for John Higginbotham, Interim Vice President for Research, to speak to the Faculty Senate or Steering Committee. The Research and Service Committee is focusing on pertinent issues to bring before the new Vice President for Research.

Discussion included a need for an administrative flow chart clarifying reporting channels.

**Vice President’s Report –** *(Rona Donahoe)* Vice President Donahoe attended the annual meeting of the Alabama Council of College and University Faculty Presidents. Eight Faculty Senate Presidents or representatives attended. The second session concerned how to advocate for higher education. The Alabama Commission for Higher Education conducted the meeting and reported the time line for course approval has decreased from ten months to three months. Jim Purcell, President of ACHE, gave the same presentation he gave to the Alabama Legislature beginning with an overview of the Strategic Plan for Higher Education – a twelve-year plan. A display of the Board of Labor animated map revealed the collapse of jobs during the recession of 2008-09. The addition of 5.6 million jobs since 2007 has not benefited all states or all areas. By 2030 a quarter of mid to low level jobs will be replaced by automation. The failure to produce an adequate number of skilled workers could lead to another recession. Associate degrees will be insufficient to supply those workers without additional certification. A statistic in Purcell’s report revealed 34% of ninth-graders will pursue a higher education degree with only 42% acquiring degrees, associate or bachelor, in a ten year period. Only 12% of ninth graders would attain a degree in higher education. Immediately the important issue is funding for higher education which is on the same level as 1967. Tuition increases are vital and have only increased by 27%. The strategic plan includes two major goals – access to higher education and enhancing student success. Purcell recommends stewardship by universities including preparation of high school students, increasing AP courses, and offering dual enrollment for high school students in an effort to reduce remediation rates. Tuscaloosa County is ranked in the middle at 26%. Industry sponsored scholarships to assist high school students attending college would be beneficial. Purcell has set a goal of 65% of high school students attaining a higher education degree by 2025. He would also like to see a statewide agreement on “college ready” definition. Students with AP course scores of three or higher generally guarantee college success. There was 58 million dollars left in grants because forms were not completed. He is not in favor of the STARS articulation agreement guaranteeing junior college credit acceptance by four year institutions and wants faculty at four year institutions to be involved in course equivalency policy. Increasing State support and the number of qualified math and science teachers are priorities.

Margaret Gunter, ACHE Communications and Government Relations, gave a 2018 Legislative session update. The Governor’s proposed budget which will be modified reflects an increase of 3.5% increase for operations and maintenance, 51% ($1.5 million dollars) increase in student assistance, 126% increase in math and science education funding, and $250,000 increase for student assistance pursuing automotive training. Several bills were mentioned including HP179 proposing supplemental appropriations from Educational Trust Fund, Advanced Technology fund, $7.6 million for two year institutions and $9.6 million for four year institutions to support automotive type training. HP20 proposes scholarships for medical students committing to rural practice. Other bills include notifying students of their Miranda rights, ballot measures and assigning free associate degrees. Medicaid requested less funding this year.

**Secretary’s Report***- (Chapman Greer)* Secretary Greer reported near completion of data for senator appropriations for colleges and schools.

**Research & Service***- (Ajay Agrawal & Mike Kreger)* The Research and Service Committee is working on developing questions for their research survey and to have priority issues ready for presentation to the new Vice President for Research.

**Community Affairs**  - *(Amy Dayton & Seth Bordner)* The Community Affairs Committee is working toward the establishment of a commission on race, slavery and civil rights at The University of Alabama. This commission would be responsible for preserving UA’s history and documents including the background of slaves and civil rights. Dr. Christine Taylor, Vice President for Diversity, is doing research on other institutions concerning the establishment of such a commission and the Community Affairs Committee is collaborating with Dr. Taylor. The final proposal will be brought to the Steering Committee at the next meeting and presented to the full Senate at the August meeting.

A suggestion was made to write a letter addressing legislation concerning forgiveness of student debt. It was suggested to write a letter and have it ready until some final decisions are made.

**Academic Affairs** *– (John Vincent & Brad Tuggle)* A rough draft of the entire Chapter 2 of the Faculty Handbook is ready. Small details will need to be made as soon as information is received. There was discussion of promotion and tenure policy.

**Information & Strategic Communications** *– (Clark Midkiff & Barbara Dalbach)* No report.

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

**Student Life***- (Charlye Adams & Amy Traylor)* No report.

**Diversity Equity & Inclusion** *– (Ozzy Molina & Mirit Eyal-Cohen)* This committee has several issues to address and have met with Vice President for Diversity, Dr. Christine Taylor. Discussions included the topics of the courses offered on diversity at UA and how to enrich classroom discussion concerning diversity. Provost Whitaker would like to discuss the core curriculum including such topics.

**Faculty Life** *– (James Gilbreath & Julia Cartwright)* The Faculty Life Committee is working on a proposal to bring to the Steering Committee concerning free access to the UA Recreation Center during low usage hours.

Child care remains a critical issue and the committee will be doing some data gathering in this area. Child care during University closings was discussed with Provost Whitaker. There were several suggestions concerning available space for temporary day care during University closings. Those closing type problems should be addressed with consideration and leniency. The committee will follow the suggestion for the Faculty Senate to compose a resolution stating the importance of establishing a day care facility and space is the critical element. Vice President Donahoe, Chair of the Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee, gave an update on this issue. The School of Business is drafting a business plan for a child care facility, a request has been made to have child care facility funding placed in the Capital Campaign, will be meeting with the new Vice President for Research as soon as possible, and the Benefits Committee is pushing hard for the establishment of this facility. A Faculty Senate resolution would certainly be of assistance and will be drafted by the committee to present to the Steering Committee, Provost Whitaker and to President Bell.

The University and day care closings due to weather or other conditions cannot be coordinated in such situations. There were some suggestions concerning resources on campus and that better coordination of child-care could be done. The committee will follow up on those suggestions.

Setting up a meeting for further development of an informational web site for new faculty/visitors is being done.

There was a review of available lodging and the costs involved for visiting and new faculty.

A suggestion was made to have someone speak to the Steering Committee concerning the priorities of the Capital Campaign. This could be done during the Steering Committee’s meetings with the Provost.

President Meester requested agenda items be sent and to prepare a year-end report.

Meeting adjourned 4:50 P.M.