**FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MARCH 6, 2018 – 3-00 PM - #213 Aime**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**ATTENDING:** Donna Meester, Rona Donahoe, Chapman Greer, John Vincent, Brad Tuggle, Asiris Molina, Julia Cartwright, James Gilbreath, Angela Benson, Ibrahim Cemen, Robert Findlay, Clark Midkiff, Barbara Dahlbach, Mike Kreger, Charlye Adams, Amy Traylor.

**ABSENT:** Mirit Eyal-Cohen, Peter Johnson, Ajay Agrawal.

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

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

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of February 13, 2018 were approved with corrections.

**President’s Report –** *(Donna Meester)* President Meester reminded the Steering Committee co-chairs that year-end reports should be ready to present at the next Faculty Senate meeting on March 20. Senator election reports from colleges/schools are due.

**Vice President’s Report –** *(Rona Donahoe)* TIAA is selecting certain universities to cooperate in the 100 Days of Service project. Available to participating organizations will be $5,000 to be used in activities connected to community or university service. We are partnering with the Professional Staff Assembly (PSA) and the Office/Clerical/Technical Staff Assembly (OCTSA) in moving this project forward. The Faculty Senate has historically supported the Alabama Reach program. PSA has traditionally supported Brewer Porch has their service activity. A draft proposal will be submitted to TIAA by Friday, March 9, 2018. Some possible service projects might be planting a garden, painting hallways, decorating classrooms and fundraising. The idea is for this service project to be continuously supported. A web site will be set up for volunteers to register.

**Academic Affairs –** *(John Vincent & Brad Tuggle)* The co-chairs of the Handbook Task Force have given updates on the revision of the faculty handbook. A university-wide vote will be held for Appendix B of the faculty handbook. The Academic Affairs Committee examined the grade exclusion policy, got opinions on writing letters of recommendation for students interacting with the Office of Disability Services, composed the emeritus policy resolution, reviewed academic policies/calendar for the Provost, and commented on Core Curriculum membership. The completion of the Faculty Handbook revisions will be the priority item for this committee in the coming year.

**Community Affairs –** *(Amy Dayton & Seth Bordner)* The Community Affairs Committee has been in the process of drafting a committee to oversee the preservation of UA’s history. This will be presented to the Steering Committee upon completion. A letter was drafted to send to Federal authorities concerning proposed changes that would be harmful to graduate students. The letter was not sent because the proposed changes were withdrawn at the last minute. The Community Affairs Committee will be involved with the 100 Days of Service project. Proposed legislation regarding firearms does not include carrying firearms on campus. Recognition was given to Amy Dayton’s work on this committee.

**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion –** *(Osiris Molina & Mirit Eyal-Cohen)* The committee organized in October composed a resolution regarding the placement of a Holiday Tree and a Menorah. Hopefully this will change UA policy in the future. The enhancement of curriculum to promote diversity, equity and inclusion is being emphasized with bringing curriculum experts to determine how this was accomplished at other institutions. Dr. Christine Taylor, Vice President for Diversity, has secured Reverend Jesse Jackson as a lecturer.

**Faculty Life –** *(Julia Cartwright & James Gilbreath)* Some of the issues being investigated by this committee are establishing a day care facility on campus, examining child care during weather/situation suspensions, discussion of designated smoking areas, free access to Rec Center for faculty, conducting a survey, visiting faculty housing, establishing an informative web site for incoming faculty and others and reviewed 2015 climate survey.

**Faculty & Senate Governance –** *(Angela Benson & Ibrahim Cemen)* The Faculty and Senate Governance Committee has overseen the election of six Marshals – one for fall commencement, three for upcoming semesters and one for summer semester. Nominations were solicited and members were elected to the Merger & Discontinuance Committee, Mediation Committee and Ombudsperson (election ongoing at present). Bill Martin and Dominique Yeager reviewed the Faculty Senate bylaws and brought forward recommendations to be presented to the Steering Committee. Suggestions were made to have new senator orientation on a different day to emphasize the importance of serving and to remind senators they are to take information back to their colleagues about the issues being discussed and accomplished by the Faculty Senate.

**Financial Affairs –** *(Bob Findlay & Peter Johnson)* The Financial Affairs Committee addressed complaints about the Concur financial computer system in a meeting with Kevin Stevens, Executive Director of Procurement Services. The Concur system was implemented to move from paper to electronic processing of financial transactions. Some of the complaints dealt with the excessive amount of time faculty spends to process reimbursements, particularly travel expenses and procurement, improving training sessions and to remain open to faculty feedback concerning the system. A user/advisory group has been formed to meet regularly with Mr. Stevens. Another issue of concern for the committee is the inadequate startup funding within the STEM disciplines. Biological Sciences provided information concerning their departmental costs per year. If any additional reports are received, they will be inserted into the committee’s year-end report.

**Information Technology & Strategic Communications –** *(Clark Midkiff & Barbara Dahlbach)* The committee met with Linda Bonin, Vice President for Strategic Communications, for an update and discussion concerning web page construction, content and formats. A tour of the Library Annex was conducted with some of the Steering Committee members attending. The committee continuously monitors OIT actions and proposals and is working with the Faculty Life Committee to establish the informational web site for incoming faculty and hires. President Meester will assist in setting up a meeting with John McGowan, Office of Information Technology. Video conferencing is now in place and progress has been made in the availability of software packages.

**Research & Service –** *(Ajay Agrawal & Mike Kreger)* The Research and Service Committee has composed and presented to the Steering Committee a draft version of a faculty survey. There are twenty-four questions in six categories with multiple options provided for each question. Discussion included the points that the survey was too long, reword/same grammatical format and consolidate questions, include statement of purpose and the timing was questioned since President Bell will be sending out an extensive survey. It was suggested to have this survey ready to go and distribute a few weeks following President Bell’s survey. The primary intent is to have the survey information ready to present to the new Vice President for Research. Forward any feedback to Mike Kreger.

A letter from John McGowan, Office of Information Technology, was received by several faculty members stating their email accounts had been compromised including social security numbers and identification information by a phishing attack. These letters were received through postal mail at their residence and took several weeks to deliver. According to an announcement on the OIT web site only seven people had accounts attacked but 2,500 identification pieces of information was obtained. President Meester will request John McGowan attend the Steering Committee’s Thursday meeting with the Provost.

**Student Life -** *(Charlye Adams & Amy Traylor)* The Student Life Committee has been meeting regularly with Dr. David Grady, Vice President for Student Life, to maintain communication on ongoing issues. They have also been meeting with SGA officials to keep a working relationship with them and to determine if there are any projects the committee and SGA can work on together. One of those projects is the SGA student health and well-being endowment. The committee monitors sorority recruitment and there was an increase in minorities this year. Efforts will continue to secure fraternity recruitment data. The Student Life Committee played a primary goal in the establishment of the SAFE (sexual assault forensics examination) program. The committee has supported the Alabama Reach program. This program assists students in need. Funds donated online have not been received and this will be investigated. Student poverty and security will be priority items in the coming year concentrating on lessening the stigmatism associated with the use of food bank provisions and resources. The Alabama Reach has merged with the student food bank resources causing a decrease in donations and problems with the Alabama Reach students. The gift card drive will continue at other times of the year rather than just at Christmas when so many requests for donations increase. May be a “back to school” drive or fall festival for example. Returning to the former separation of these programs will be discussed with the Provost.

President Meester reminded the co-chairs to have a bullet-pointed end-of-year report ready. The final Rondini settlement was discussed.

Meeting adjourned 5:15 P.M.