

Notes from The University of Alabama Faculty Senate

January 17, 2017

Remarks from Visiting Speakers

- R.B. Walker, Director of Governmental Relations (The University of Alabama System), addressed the Faculty Senate. Mr. Walker provided an overview of the national and state political environments, with specific reference to issues that concern higher education.
- Dr. Carl A. Pinkert, Vice President for Research and Economic Development, addressed the Faculty Senate. Dr. Pinkert provided an overview of the activities of the Office of Research and Economic Development, with specific emphasis on the current state of research activity, research support availability to faculty, and future research goals and objectives. Dr. Pinkert also provided an overview of recent strategic research initiatives, informed by the University's strategic planning process. Information regarding these initiatives and resources can be found on the Office of Research and Economic Development's website: <https://www.ua.edu/research/>

Officer Reports

- **President's Report:** President Meester reported that Provost Whitaker is interested in developing a working list of concerns and issues. President Meester provided updates addressing the Senate's work on the NTRC Policy, the Faculty Handbook, child care, and faculty life. The Board of Trustees next meets on February 3rd and 4th at UAB. Members of the Steering Committee will attend on the 4th and meet with representatives from UAB and UAH.
- **Vice President's Report:** Vice President Donahoe introduced a proposed Letter of Appreciation to Student Affairs leadership. This letter acknowledges their contributions to shared diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. The document will be discussed and voted on at the February meeting.
- **Secretary's Report:** Secretary Riter reintroduced the Faculty Senate Records Disposition Policy (unanimously approved during Faculty and Senate Governance's Report).

Committee Reports

- **Academic Affairs:** The review of the Faculty Handbook is ongoing, as is the Committee's evaluation of the emeritus status policy.
- **Community and Legislative Affairs:** The Committee is finalizing a date for a Legislative Reception to be held later this semester. Alabama Higher Education Day will be held on *February 23, 2017*. Please encourage your students to attend.

- **Faculty and Senate Governance:** The Committee will distribute an Ombudsperson election announcement shortly. FSG is seeking nominations for the Merger or Discontinuance of Academic Units Committee. Dr. Ana Corbalán (College of Arts and Sciences) was elected to the Mediation Committee.
- **Faculty Life:** No report.
- **Financial Affairs:** The Committee is currently investigating issues related to matters of faculty efficiency and use of faculty time in operational functions. Senator Schad acknowledged outgoing senator Dr. Reuben Cook for his years of service as Co-chair of Financial Affairs.
- **Information Technology and Strategic Communications:** No report.
- **Research and Service:** The Committee continues to meet with leadership in the Office of Research and Economic Development.
- **Student Affairs:** The Committee continues to investigate the establishment of a SANE program. Members will be meeting with DCH officials and Dr. David Grady, Vice President for Student Affairs.

Reports from Other Committees:

- **Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Search Committee:** The search process is ongoing. It is the goal of the committee to begin interviewing candidates by the end of February. The position description can be found at the following link: <http://staffjobs.ua.edu/?job=502209>
- **Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee:** The Committee is interested in receiving your comments and concerns. Please direct any messages to committee Chair Dr. Rona Donahoe (rdonahoe@ua.edu).