

## FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

FEBRUARY 11, 2020 – 3:00 PM - #213 AIME

### APPROVED MINUTES

**ATTENDING:** Barb Dahlbach, Rona Donahoe, Chapman Greer, John Vincent, Andre Denham, Joy Burnham, Andrea Glenn, Ibrahim Cemen, Ignacio Rodeno, Rainer Schad, Christopher Lynn, Matthe Hudnall, Dan Meissner, Ajay Agrawal, Si Blackstock, Amy Traylor.

**ABSENT:** Jenni Cox, Mirit Eyal-Cohen, Janie Hubbard, Steven Yates, Kabe Moen, Past-president Donna Meester, Parliamentarian Rob Riter.

**GUESTS:** Dr. Michael Walker-Jones, ACHE; Cresandra Smothers, Strategic Communications.

Dr. Michael Walker-Jones, Alabama Commission on Higher Education Director of Outreach, gave a presentation to the Steering Committee. The Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) is the coordinating board for higher education in the State of Alabama. ACHE's role is coordination, facilitation and support and operates under the Governor and Legislature of Alabama. The primary project of ACHE is the Workforce Development and Opportunity Act which includes workforce development, certification, credentials and degrees. Tax breaks and a prepared workforce would be the primary incentives for attracting businesses to Alabama. Education, job skills and training are critical to bringing in new industries. A global poll revealed the priorities of workers are (1) to have a job to sustain my family, (2) a willingness to forgo personal freedoms for that job and (3) to forgo the rule of law. Globally 375 million workers will switch occupations by 2030 with 1/3 of that number, 166 million, will be in the United States. Automation and technology will likely displace workers making less than \$20 an hour and those making more than \$40 dollars an hour face virtually no chance of displacement. ACHE is encouraging higher education to look at more work-based opportunities, personal growth, accreditation, sustainability and learning in their curriculums. ACHE will be collecting valid data about faculty workloads and salaries to make cost comparisons and determine return on investment allocations. ACHE is required by Alabama Code Title 16 Ed 16-5-7 to collect this data. Further discussion concerned the use of collected data, institutional and research skewed data, granular data and availability of information. ACHE is visiting every educational institution in Alabama to acquaint faculty with ACHE's mission and goal.

Email address for Dr. Walker-Jones is [michael.walker-jones@ache.edu](mailto:michael.walker-jones@ache.edu) and 508/208-4858.

Roll call and quorum check by Faculty Senate Secretary Barb Dahlbach.

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of January 14, 2020 were approved.

**President's Report** – (*Rona Donahoe*) President Donahoe attended the UAB institutional Board of Trustees meeting in Birmingham, Alabama. UA System's Chancellor commended UA President Stuart Bell for research and institutional funding. UA System Faculty Senate officers met following the meeting. A letter will be written to Clay Ryan to present to Senator Shelby asking intervention concerning publishing costs and contracts. UAB has asked the State of Alabama for \$50 million for a Genomic Medicine Center. They have faculty in this area, want to hire more and have a building which needs renovating.

There will be discussion concerning work force certification and shortened certification degrees. UAH has work force certification courses but enrollment decreases after the initial registration process. Georgia Tech has cut their online MS technical degree tuition.

The Vice President for Student Life should be named sometime later this week or the early part of next week.

The Alabama Water Institute is interviewing two candidates for the director's position.

The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is having a workshop event titled "Diversity Educators Summit" to be held on Friday, February 21, 2020 in G-55 Rose Administration Building from 12:00 until 3:00 PM to address DEI workshops, new topic areas and upcoming train-the-trainer workshop.

The deadline for soft applications for Provost is February 24, 2020. Applications should be available to the search committee by February 17<sup>th</sup> with their meeting scheduled for March 2, 2020 to select top tier candidates. Airport interviews will be March 11 and 12 with on campus interviews after spring break and early April.

A Legislative update reveals the Governor's budget includes a 7.95% operations and maintenance allocation for UA and includes an increase of \$34.4 million dollars over the fiscal year of 2020. The supplemental appropriation which includes technology advancement and education for UA is almost \$17 million dollars. The budget will go through the Legislature for approval.

The 2020 Alabama Affordable Conference will be attended by Joy Burnham and Babs Davis.

The response of the Council of Deans to the Faculty Senate's request for revision of the paragraph in the Faculty Handbook relating to grandfathering a requirement for promotion to professor from associate professor and instituting a time limit of seven years. Tenure and promotion guidelines and requirements could change affecting the standards in place for those applying. Part of the Dean's response was "Not all departments across campus have the same standards for promotion to full professor. Very few departments have updated their graduate faculty requirements. This combined with vague promotion standards, in some cases, lower standards for promotion to full professor. We could be removing them from graduate faculty eligibility at the same time". A meeting will be held with the Provost, President Donahoe, John Vincent, Chapman Greer, Andre Denham and three of the deans to come to a resolution of the differences.

Speakers for the February Faculty Senate meeting on February 18 will be Bobby Prince and Mary Lawhorn from Advancement, Jay Haley and Carolyn McVicar from Benefits, March speakers will be from Alabama Counts! Census Committee and April's speakers will be Chancellor St. John and Dr. Tonjanita Johnson.

**Vice President's Report** – (*Chapman Greer*) – Andre Denham will be making a presentation to the Council of Deans on Wednesday, February 12 concerning the General Education Taskforce. Their mission statement, guiding principles, learning aims and objectives will be a part of that presentation. The taskforce is beginning work on three or four models to be ready by the end of this semester for review and feedback.

Questions asked by the General Education Taskforce were:

What does the UA community expect all graduates to have gained from their undergraduate experiences at UA?

What are the fundamental skills, abilities, and behaviors that every UA student should develop as a result of completing the general education requirements?

What are the purposes of a general education program?

What is the process for revision, ratification, implementation, ongoing review, administration, and assessment of a comprehensive plan for general education?

Questions in the survey conducted by the taskforce were:

\*How important should developing each of the following behaviors, skills, or attitudes be in UA's general education program? The answers were ranked in this order: critical thinking, ability to find and evaluate information, oral & written communication, ethical deliberation and cultural awareness.

\*How effective do you feel the current UA core curriculum is in developing the following behaviors, skills, or abilities of the undergraduate student population? Answers rated in this order: digital literacy/computer science, ability to employ the scientific method to understand the natural world, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, ability to work effectively with others in groups.

\*In your opinion, what percentage of a four-year undergraduate college education should be devoted to courses focused specifically on general education? The answer was 44.3%/53 credit hours. (This is almost exactly what UA has).

From listening sessions and benchmarking, the taskforce looked at 82 colleges and universities with at least one from each state. Examples were given concerning Virginia Tech, University of Virginia, Radford University, Stanford and University of Central Florida.

In answer to the question "What are the purposes of a general education program?" was answered with the following statement –

"The University of Alabama's General Education program empowers undergraduate students to be socially conscious, ethical, and well-rounded leaders with the knowledge and skills to live productive, responsible, and rewarding lives in a diverse and rapidly-changing world. The program challenges students to develop their logical and creative capacities by providing transformational and integrative learning experiences that complement the undergraduate major".

The nine guiding principles developed by the taskforce are:

1. Be learner-centered, accessible, inclusive, and equitable.
2. Span the undergraduate experience.
3. Focus on shared student learning outcomes.
4. Include curricular and co-curricular experiences.
5. Encourage involvement and participation throughout the faculty and staff.

6. Employ best practices in teaching and learning.
7. Encourage exploration and student ownership of general education.
8. Accommodate non-traditional, transfer, and high-credit entry students.
9. Meet accreditation requirements.

\*What are the fundamental skills, abilities, and behaviors that every UA student should develop as a result of completing the general education requirements?

In completing the requirements of The University of Alabama general education program, all undergraduates should demonstrate the fundamental skills, abilities, and behaviors that readily identify them as: (a) critical and ethical thinkers, (b) effective communicators, (c) problem solvers, (d) individually and socially responsible citizens and, (e) culturally competent individuals.

The Taskforce has a goal of the fall freshman class of 2024 for implementation. In the process models will be reviewed, tweaked and approved.

**Secretary's Report** – (*Barb Dahlbach*) Nominations have been called for with census results already received. Letters to the Deans will go out this week – A&S and Engineering increased by one senator each.

**Faculty Life** – (*Jenni Cox & Andrea Glenn*) The Faculty Life Committee has completed collecting information for developing the new Faculty Website. Some checking will be done concerning approval of the content of the web site.

President Donahoe will arrange a meeting with Vice President Matt Fajack, Vice President for Financial Affairs, and others to address parental leave policy.

**Academic Affairs** – (*John Vincent & Andre Denham*) The Academic Affairs Committee is looking into the excused absence policy. A suggestion was made to the committee to make the policy more specific. The committee thought that adding specifics would create more problems than they would solve. However, the committee recommends policies in the syllabus template on attendance and religious observance and pregnancy be added to the undergraduate and graduate catalogs. This suggestion will be discussed in the next meeting with the Provost.

**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion** – (*Mirit Eyal-Cohen & Ignacio Rodeno*) This committee hosted the affinity groups at the Crossroads breakfast. The affinity group for Veterans is moving along and a North African affinity group has met. The Muslim faculty and staff will be reaching out to see if there is interest in meeting.

The following syllabus diversity statement was proposed by the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee:

Diversity and Inclusion Statement: The University of Alabama supports an intellectual community enhanced by a diverse population. We respect the different identities, experiences, beliefs, perspectives, and values expressed by faculty, students, staff, and guests that are a benefit in this course. Each student has a voice and a right to share unique opinions that build classroom discussion and knowledge transfer in a respectful and open manner.

In accordance with the values of the University of Alabama, the instructor of this course values the commitment to diversity and inclusion, and strives to engage in equitable verbal and non-verbal

behavior with respect to differences arising from age, background, citizenship, disability, sex, education, ethnicity, family status, gender, gender identity, geographical location, military experience, political views, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

If you see or suspect unethical, biased, or **unlawful** behavior related to any area of diversity, you may report your concerns here: <https://diversity.ua.edu/incident-reporting/>.

**Faculty & Senate Governance** – (*Ibrahim Cemen & Janie Hubbard*) Nominations for the Mediation Committee are due on February 28<sup>th</sup>. The Faculty Senate Officer nominations will be at the February meeting with the election held at the Faculty Senate March meeting. Nominations for Ombudsperson will be closed February 21. Nominees cannot be from A&S, Engineering or Business.

- Prof. Edward Merrill will be Marshal at the 6:00 PM ceremony on Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Prof. Beth Todd will be the Commencement Marshal both the 9:00 AM and 1:30 PM ceremonies on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Prof. Jeremy Butler will be Marshal at the 6:00 PM ceremony on Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Prof. Alexander Hainen will be Marshal at the August 1<sup>st</sup> 2020, Commencement ceremony at 9:00 AM

**Research & Service Committee** – (*Ajay Agrawal & Si Blackstock*)

**Faculty Senate Research and Service Committee  
Meeting January 28, 2020  
VPR Update**

**Alabama Research Institutes**

- ALRI
  - ALRI faculty fellows, rural and underserved communities, phase I
  - Phase II space (AIME Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor) – planned use currently under consideration
- ATI – Allen Parrish, starting on 2/17/2020
- AWI – 2-3 finalists coming to campus within next few weeks
  - USGS-HIF moving to UA
- Cyber Initiative – developing seed funding grant program RFP

**ORED senior leadership hires**

- Assistant VP for Research and Technology Agreements – Lauren Wilson (started 11/1/2019)
- Associate VP Economic and Business Engagement – Dan Blakley (started 1/6/2020)
- Assistant VP for Research and Executive Director – Jennifer Camp (start 2/17/2020)
- Chelsea McKenna, ORED Marketing & Communications Manager (started 12/1/2019)
- Director, Office for Innovation and Commercialization – search underway

**ORED Initiatives**

- Launched Tide-Research Partnership program (October 1, 2019)
- Advanced and In-Space Manufacturing; MOU with Marshall Space Flight Center; news release (11/8/2019)
- UA Rural Health Commitment
- UA MRI Suite proposal (BOT 2/6-2/7 meeting)
- State-of-the-Art Research and Creativity Conference Program –4 proposals funded to date
  - SURC 2020, MINT conference, Comic Renaissance, International Conf on Medieval and Renaissance Language
- Federal Priorities FY2020 update: 11 projects (7 funded; \$45M total)
- Federal Priorities FY2021 update: 19 total (\$141M): 1 special, 3 ATI, 2 AWI, 1 Cyber, 5 ALRI, 7 Defense
- Comprehensive review of IRB policies and procedures underway; survey coming

### **UA Research Funding**

- FY 2018-2019: up 33.6% to \$132.5M
- FY 2019-2020 YTD (Q1): up 42.5% YTD

### **National Issues**

- Foreign Influence, COI, IP issues
  - JCORE Summit at White House in November 2019
  - Two meetings with ADRs; Meeting with Provost and Deans
  - Next Steps led by VP ORED

**Community & Legislative Affairs** – (*Joy Burnham & Steven Yates*) The Faculty Senate will have a speaker in March concerning the census. Jerry Crawford will serve on the UA Census Committee. The Legislative reception hosted by the Faculty Senate Steering Committee will be Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 until 6:00 PM at the Gorgas House.

**Student Life** – (*Kabe Moen & Amy Traylor*) There will be a Director of Greek Affairs hired by the Greek Life Office.

**Campus Culture Taskforce** – (*Barb Dahlbach*) There will be an Open Forum held on Wednesday, February 19 from Noon until 1:30 in Room 2019 Gorgas. Dan Meissner will be retiring June, 2020.

Meeting adjourned 5:25 PM.