

## FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

MARCH 10, 2020

3:00 PM - #213 AIME

### ATTENDING:

### ABSENT:

### GUESTS:

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

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting minutes of February 11, 2020 were approved.

**President's Report** – (*Chapman Greer in Rona Donahoe's absence*) Faculty Senate committee year-end reports are due on or before Friday, March 8, 2020.

The parental leave policy was presented to the Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee on February 27, 2020. The Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee will consider releasing a supporting resolution. The Faculty Life Committee is working on a meeting with UA administrators in early April. The Professional Staff Association and the Office, Clerical and Technical Staff Associations will produce statements in support of the proposed Paid Parental Leave policy.

The Professional Staff Association and the Office, Clerical, Technical Staff Associations have joint service projects. The REACH program will be stuffing cram bags for students for Dead Week. A job readiness workshop is another project being developed by these organizations. These two organizations will sponsor a Brewer-Porch Children's Center teacher/staff luncheon to be held on May 5, 2020. In conjunction with the luncheon will be a school supply drive.

The Provost Search Committee will conduct airport interviews on March 11 and 12, 2020 with fourteen candidates vying for the position.

Rona Donahoe, Chapman Greer, John Vincent and Andre Denham met with representatives from the Council of Deans to discuss a resolution 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. John Vincent was asked to rewrite the sentence in question.

The speakers for the March meeting of the Faculty Senate will be representatives from the Alabama Counts! Census Committee. The April Faculty Senate meeting will have UA Chancellor Finis St. John and the newly appointed Vice Chancellor for Academics and Student Affairs, Dr. Tonjanita Johnson.

**Vice President's Report** – (*Chapman Greer*) There is some confusion about the guiding principles and learning objectives stated in the General Education mission statement. The vote will be to approve the direction and spirit of the taskforce to continue moving forward, not approval of the statement itself.

**Secretary's Report** – (*Barb Dahlbach*) Seven colleges have reported senator election results with Arts & Sciences, Engineering, Law and Social Work results expected within the next few weeks.

**Community & Legislative Affairs** – (*Joy Burnham & Steven Yates*) The Faculty Senate Steering Committee and the Community and Legislative Affairs Committee hosted a reception for State Legislators Bill Poole, Tuscaloosa County; Rodney Sullivan, Pickens County; Kyle South, Fayette County; and Charlie Taylor, Director of Governmental Affairs and Economic/Workforce Development on Monday, March 9, 2020 at Gorgas House from 4:00 – 6:00 PM.

**Faculty & Senate Governance** – (*Ibrahim Cemen & Janie Hubbard*) Ombudsperson and Mediation Committee elections are in process. Faculty Senate officer nominees will be presented and voted on at the March 24, 2020 meeting.

**Faculty Life** – (*Jenni Cox & Andrea Glenn*) The Faculty Life Committee continues to work on the development of a website for new employees and arranging a meeting with administration to discuss the proposed parental leave policy.

**Academic Affairs** – (*John Vincent & Andre Denham*) Aaron Kuntz of the Graduate Council met with the committee to continue discussions on changes to Appendix J of the Faculty Handbook. The changes are to allow faculty who do not possess regular graduate status to be able to chair professional projects. Academic Affairs had proposed that the qualifications of these faculty had to include an appropriate doctoral degree. The Graduate Council has now agreed to this. The changes can now go forward to the senate for a vote.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee forwarded a proposal statement to be included on all course syllabi. The Academic Affairs Committee could not support the inclusion of the statement. However, the Academic Affairs Committee recommended that the UA policies on religious events and childbirth be placed in the Undergraduate and Graduate catalogues. These suggestions will be forwarded to the Provost at the next meeting of the Faculty Senate Steering Committee and the Provost.

The Faculty Senate President, Vice Presidents and the Academic Affairs Committee co-chairs met with representatives of the Council of Deans to discuss the grandfathering of the requirements for promotion from associate professor to professor. Changes to the wording passed by the senate were suggested which makes the language more specific: "in cases of promotion from associate professor to professor, for the first seven years after promotion from assistant to associate professor, requirements in effect at the time of promotion from assistant to associate professor shall govern unless the faculty member chooses to be reviewed according to updated requirements. After the seven year period, the requirements in place at the time of application for promotion from associate professor to professor shall govern". The senate is waiting for a formal response from the full Council of Deans.

**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion** – (*Ignacio Rodeno & Mirit Eyal-Cohen*) An email address has been established for those interested in forming new affinity groups. The committee attended the task force open forum. The committee is working on the syllabus diversity statement.

**Information Technology & Strategic Communications** – (*Matthew Hudnall & Dan Meissner*) The suggestion has been made for the Faculty Senate to look at the software availability for retired faculty members. Several versions of software can be downloaded with the only software available right now for retired faculty members is McAbee. Some retired faculty members continue to work in areas assisting the University such as research studies, research projects, student project advising and other areas. Continued utilization of software would be of great benefit in those situations. Discussion included additional costs, emeritus or retired faculty, employment status, wait time between availability and usage, retired faculty with grants and other questions. The Steering Committee agrees this should be pursued.

**Research & Service** – (*Ajay Agrawal & Si Blackstock*) Arts and Humanities have expressed concern about assistance coming from the research office. The committee requested feedback from the Steering Committee on this issue. Vice President Mumper has stated the Arts & Humanities are just as important as any other college or school on campus. To secure funding for Arts & Humanities requires effort even though the amount would be on a smaller scale but just as critical as other areas such as Arts & Sciences and Engineering. The Arts & Humanities area may have fewer people trained to solicit funding. Some creative thinking, emphasis on community involvement, and public engagement would be of great benefit. Funding is available for seminars, symposiums and conferences through the Office of Research. The arts have a product where humanities is more abstract. The suggestion was made to do a communication and messaging content analysis.

**Financial Affairs** – (*Christopher Lynn & Rainer Schad*) A faculty member brought up the issue of faculty pay inequality. If this is one person's complaint, the grievance process would be followed. If this is a systemic discrimination complaint, it would be an issue to bring to the Faculty Senate for consideration. The committee agreed to consider issuing a resolution of support for the proposed parental leave policy. The next action would be to meet with administration.

**Student Life** – (*Kobe Moen & Amy Traylor*) This committee will be meeting with Kathleen Cramer and Myron Pope. A report will be given on the impact of the Corona Virus.

It was suggested the committee review the SGA election process.

**Campus Culture Task Force** – (*Barb Dahlbach*) Their meeting was attended by sixty-five people with participants in several different positive aspects including comments and feedback. There will be another meeting in five to six weeks in the evening from 4:00 – 6:00 PM hoping to include graduate school students. The task force has data in hand and will be working on details on how to best present the information.

The election of Faculty Senate officers will be held at the April 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. Senator elections are almost complete.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 PM.