

Faculty Senate Steering Committee Meeting. 6-9-20

Attending: Barb Dahlbach, Rona Donahoe, Chapman Greer, John Vincent, Andre Denham, Rainer Schad, Mary Stone, Matthew Hudnall, Patrick Kung, Ajay Agrawal, Kelly Shannon-Henderson, Jennifer Dempsey, Suzanne Henson, Joy Burnham, Steven Yates, Mirit Eyal-Cohen, Ignacio Rodeno, Susan Appel, Christopher Lynn, Ibrahim Cemen, Jeri Zemke, Parliamentarian Robert Riter, Past President Donna Meester.

Absent: None

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

The March meeting minutes were approved with attendance added and the April and May Minutes were approved.

President's Report- (*Rona Donahoe*) President Donahoe electronically attended the meeting of the Board of Trustees last week. The State Education Trust Fund budget was approved by the State Legislature with a 3.1% increase for all three campuses as a whole. A \$16.7 million dollar increase was approved for operation and maintenance, \$16 million dollar allocation for advancement and technology and \$82.3 million dollars overall for capital improvement projects. President Donahoe has requested specific information for UA allocations.

The Board has requested all technology expenditures be submitted by unit and division for approval.

The contract with Aramark has been renegotiated on a sliding scale due to the impact of Covid19.

President Bell submitted two items to the Board's Compensation Committee – the salary for Dr. James Dalton assuming the position on August 1, 2020 of \$525,000 plus benefits and a salary of \$315,000 plus benefits for Scott Raider as director of the Alabama Water Institute.

There were seven items under Physical Properties for UA campus – Delta Gamma renovations \$2 million dollars; Hayden Harris demolition postponed; Reese Phifer satellite relocation will proceed; water tower being paid for by municipal funds with UA paying for painting and being moved to Campus Drive; Building One North will be renovated to house the Transportation Institute at a cost of \$19.5 million dollars from Capital Improvement funds; Moody Music Building repairs from a lightning strike and fire will be a \$9.2 million dollar project with \$8.8 million dollars from State insurance and the remaining expenses will come from gifts and facility funds; athletic broadcast infrastructure improvements replacing all cameras used for all sporting events and upgrading communication software and cables will be funded by the Crimson Tide Foundation.

The Board of Trustees Academic Affairs Committee approved UA's request for MS in Athletics Training. UAH has submitted a request for MS degree in Exercise and Sports Science which was approved. The Alabama Commission for Higher Education will have final approval. UAB's presentation on a Signature Core Curriculum is to distribute the core over all four years of the undergraduate experience increasing problem solving in the junior and senior years. A Core Fellows program has been established with possibly three cohort fellows by the fall of 2023.

Chancellor St. John spoke concerning the challenges faced during the Covid19 pandemic. He stated the reopening of campuses will be the safest in the nation. A Taskforce was formed with membership from all three campuses to formulate a plan for reopening the campuses. The approved plan has not been released at this point. The Board's resolution was read by St. John authorizing a second term summer school pilot program which was submitted by Provost Whitaker limiting the number of classes for the second term to less than 15 students enrolled. A maximum of ten to twelve courses will be face-to-face as a pilot for this fall. The substance of the resolution was misrepresented by the media. UA's plan will require face masks for students and faculty.

Judge England spoke at the end of the meeting referring to the death of George Floyd and police deaths in Alabama asking UA to take the lead in developing solutions to the crisis. President Donahoe sent emails to several departments stating they were in a unique position to take the lead to develop training for law enforcement personnel in the area of race relations. There are a variety of appropriate courses that would apply and are offered online. Six credit hours would be mandatory training both local and State wide with a possibility of going outside the State of Alabama. Law enforcement could have the opportunity to acquire a 15-hour certificate in this area. Course content would have to be combined strategically. A Taskforce could be formed with representatives from each department to develop a proposal by mid-July giving time to be placed on the agenda for their next meeting in September. The last item considered by the Board of Trustees was resolutions commending Kathleen Cramer and Tim Hebson for their service to The University of Alabama. President Donahoe suggested the Faculty Senate write a similar resolution and asked the co-chairs of the Student Life Committee to compose the resolutions.

The September meeting of the Board of Trustees will be an in person meeting in Tuscaloosa at the Bryant Conference Center.

There are two petitions circulating concerning the renaming of buildings and the removal of Confederate memorials. President Bell and UA Systems Office announced in a joint statement that three plaques placed by the Daughters of the Confederacy and the commemorative rock will be removed. The Systems Office has appointed a Taskforce to review UA, UAH and UAB buildings named for individuals with problematic histories. President Donahoe suggested faculty and students have representation in this group. It was suggested that reaching out to other institutions that have been through this process and demonstrated excellent leadership and solutions would be beneficial. The question was asked if this would spur the further development of the UA Commission on Slavery; and is the contextualization in the present mode moving things forward. Moving forward must be done in a thoughtful manner with ongoing conversation and discussion with the goal of developing a model for others to follow.

Last Wednesday was the deadline for the Presidential Advisory Committee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to submit their report. President Donahoe's Committee was the "Welcoming Campus Committee" charged with creating a social media policy and a free speech policy. After reviewing policies at other institutions the committee drafted an outline. The infinity groups will continue to be supported by the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office and the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate proposal crafted by the Faculty Senate Legislative and Community Affairs Committee in 2016-17 to establish a commission on race, slavery and civil rights will finally happen. There will be a campus symposium in the spring of 2021 announcing the official launch of the commission. A recommendation from the Black Faculty and Staff Association is to establish a commission on truth, racial healing and reconciliation. The renaming of buildings and other recommendations will be an important part of that process.

Dr. Christine Taylor, Vice President of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion requests the institutionalization of the Martin Luther King Committee. President Donahoe wrote a committee description of duties and membership requirements. This will be sent to the CUC for review and possible approval to establish the MLK, Jr. committee as a University Standing Committee.

UAPD training in racial relations, filling vacant positions and boosting salaries by extensive overtime was discussed. Send input and suggestions to President Donahoe.

The Faculty Senate Standing Committees and the Campus Culture Taskforce year end reports have been posted to the Faculty Senate web page.

The re-entry plan regarding Covid19 and teaching requirements from the Systems Office has not been released as of this date. What is known at this point is that face masks will be required and teaching will be divided between face-to-face and remote instruction.

President Donahoe encouraged all Faculty Senate Standing Committees to schedule monthly meetings with their counterpart Vice President or administrator.

Jeri Zemke has been elected to the Steering Committee of the SLIA Coalition for Intercollegiate Athletics formed by Faculty Senates across the country.

Vice President's Report-*(Chapman Greer)* The subject of decreased revenues, UAB hospital assessments, Covid19 impact and testing, infection gatherings, classroom capacities, tracking apps and projected enrollment will be discussed in Thursday's meeting with the Provost. All must comply with CDC and Systems Office recommendations.

The General Education Taskforce worked during the spring. Subcommittees were formed into three groups following the approval of the guiding principles and learning objectives as a working document by the Faculty Senate. Two were hybrid with high distribution bringing it in line with high impact practices on student learning. The Student Life and Academic Affairs Committees have continued to meet each week through the semester and are working on a meeting schedule for the fall. Following feedback from the Deans the Taskforce will be working to develop a model to present in the fall and to implement the model in the fall of 2023.

Academic Affairs- *(John Vincent & Andre Denham)* The Committee expressed frustration with the once reviewed classroom capacity at six foot distancing feeling this would not be operational. The suggested multiple distances has not been included in faculty recommendations in the final report. The committee questions what authority could require students to wear face masks or to get the vaccine once developed. Microphones are being installed since lecturing wearing a face mask would be difficult. Several committees are addressing these issues but are not communicating with each other. Libraries are working toward opening with the mandated six foot distancing regulation. Gorgas Library is under construction and has only one operating elevator. The restriction of one person per elevator is possible and could be mandated campus wide. Systems Office clarification is needed to move forward. Some faculty members are in a high risk category with no CDC guidelines concerning classroom instruction and requirements.

Financial Affairs- *(Rainer Shad & Mary Stone)* The Committee is concerned about the 403b plan in connection with nine month employees and matching summer salaries from grant funds. The decision was made to match the deferred salaries. The committee will meet with Vice President Fajack this coming week.

Information Technology & Strategic Communications – *(Matthew Hudnall & Patrick Kung)* The Committee met with OIT to discuss the virus tracking app and OIT was not involved at all. The committee urged OIT to get involved due to privacy and security issues and received no positive response. A new link was received from Strategic Communications for the new UA home page which has no major changes.

Research & Service – *(Ajay Agrawal & Kelly Shannon-Henderson)* The Committee met with Dr. Mumper on May 26 to discuss the Covid19 impact on research, startup package hiring, essential designated research, August 1 return date, personal protection equipment provisions, decisions referred to units, encouraged faculty consultation, Covid19 impact on undergraduate students, conditions to return to campus and approval process delays.

Student Life – *(Ruth Ann Hall & Jennifer Dempsey)* The Student Life Committee met to discuss resources for student mental anguish and distress caused by Covid19, and adjustments for incoming freshmen in the areas of social issues and diversity within the student body. The committee will be meeting with the new Vice President for Student Life, Dr. Myron Pope, for the second time. The committee will follow up on the infection gatherings. It seems the social distancing and face mask regulations are not being enforced.

President Donahoe will follow up on the response from the Council of Deans concerning tenure and promotion guidelines.

Meeting adjourned 5:00 PM.