

FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES

April 21, 2020

3:30 - 5:00 PM (via Zoom)

ABSENT WITH ALTERNATE: Jennifer Duckworth/Amy Taylor, Courtney Cross/Paul Horwitz, Michael Callihan/Sara Kaylor

ABSENT WITHOUT ALTERNATE: Sheila Black, Heather Gunn, Ruth Ann Hall, Lexi Lowe Edwards, Shuhui Li

The meeting opened with UA's Provost Kevin Whitaker's remarks expressing his sincere thanks to faculty members for the tremendous accomplishment of converting over 6,500 courses to an online format in unprecedented efforts.

Chancellor Finis St. John expressed thanks from the Systems Office for an outstanding job done by faculty during these unusual circumstances. The Systems Office is working hard to assure financial and organizational stability through these difficult times. Coordination and cooperation from all three campuses with additional medical input will be determining factors in the timing of reopening campus. Financial compensation has been secured through the CARES act securing \$20 million dollars with \$10 million dollars earmarked for student emergency aid and \$10 million dollars for institutional support.

Dr. Tonjanita Johnson, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, commented on the speed of institutional response to the impact of COVID-19. Dr. Johnson pointed out inconsistencies in technology training and computer hardware availability. Conversations will continue exploring methods to support and serve UA students.

According to Faculty Senate bylaws the first order of business is to discuss and approve committee assignments. The Faculty Senate Standing Committee and the University of Alabama Standing Committee assignments were approved as distributed.

The March meeting of the Faculty Senate was cancelled due to the Corona virus. An expanded Agenda will be substituted for the minutes. The February minutes will be presented at the August meeting for approval.

President's Report – (*Rona Donahue*) Robert Riter, Faculty Senate Parliamentarian, and Sarah Miesse, Faculty Senate web master, were unanimously approved to continue in those positions.

President Donahoe attended the Board of Trustees University of Alabama-Huntsville institutional meeting via Zoom due to campus closings caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The University of Alabama receives only 12% State funding and is dependent on tuition revenue. A decrease in out-of-state students will have a significant impact on revenue. Enrollment numbers are not substantially below normal at this time. Final figures will not be available until the middle of September. The Board of Trustees Financial Committee reported some assets were moved into more liquid accounts so the holdings were not tied down for more than thirty days.

REMINDERS -- Paid parental leave remains a top priority - Ethics Commission statements are due at the end of April – Provost candidate interviews are ongoing – COVID-19 virus caused a limited business operation model which will continue until a decision from the Systems Office – a safety commission has been appointed by Chancellor St. John to oversee a return to normal operations.

The revised Faculty Handbook went live with the pdf format available after some changes concerning search capabilities and table of contents links. One handbook change is waiting on a response from the Council of Deans.

Faculty Senate committee end-of-year reports are due by Friday, May 8, 2020. These will be posted on the Faculty Senate web page.

The Faculty Senate has been closely involved in several issues this past year including the grading policy which was adopted by administration and forwarded to the students; extending the drop date for courses; involved with the tenure clock extension policy for probationary faculty who have been adversely impacted by the limited business operations and damaged in their progress toward tenure and promotion. This was released last week by the Provost and allows probationary faculty to choose or not to choose to extend their tenure clock by a year in addition to the normal life situations that would be extensions such as childbirth, etc.

Vice President's Report – (Chapman Greer) The General Education Taskforce has been reviewing general education for the past two years. The core curriculum has had no substantial revision since 1982. The review is being done from a faculty, student, employee and employer perspective looking for qualities and characteristics a student should have upon graduation from this institution. The Faculty Senate has approved the General Education mission statement, guiding principles and learning objectives. The taskforce is in the process of building models to give to the Provost for the stamp of approval. The next step will be to bring the models to the Faculty Senate and all faculty members. Once the final model is approved implementation will follow. Comments and input may be directed to Chapman Greer.

Research & Service – (Ajay Agrawal & Si Blackstock) A research reporting form has been developed by Vice President of Research and Development Dr. Russell Mumper, Faculty Senate President Rona Donahoe, and the Faculty Senate Research and Service Committee to establish disclosure of external research, proposals and grants. The establishment of this policy will synchronize and centralize reviews to determine if there is conflict of interest and/or conflict of commitment. This policy will apply to all faculty members. The form should be submitted to the dean of their college for approval before beginning the project. The Faculty Senate approved the policy as submitted with one abstention. If this policy is approved by administration, a wording change will be needed in the Faculty Handbook by adding specific language concerning the form. The same protections remain in place for faculty giving recourse in the event of a rejection by a chair or dean. The Faculty Senate will vote on the proposed wording change in the Faculty Handbook at the August meeting.

Community & Legislative Affairs – (Steven Yates & Joy Burnham) The Community and Legislative Affairs Committee will host a teacher appreciation luncheon at Brewer Porch on May 5, 2020. There are approximately 80 faculty members and staff. This is to acknowledge their hard work and dedication in serving special needs children.

Faculty & Senate Governance – (Ibrahim Cemen) There was to be a confirmation vote for Alan Tidwell's replacement on the Mediation Committee in the March Faculty Senate meeting. The March meeting was cancelled due to the Corona virus. The Faculty and Senate Governance Committee requested a vote in today's meeting to confirm Ramada Reddy as the replacement. The vote for approval was unanimous. The vote for Faculty Senate officers elected Rona Donahoe President, Chapman Greer Vice President and Secretary Barb Dahlbach.

The vote for the General Education Taskforce proposal was 66 yes and 2 nos. Good comments were received. The vote for the tenure clock extension with 75 voting – 70 yes, 5 nos.

Academic Affairs – (*John Vincent & Andre Denham*) The Academic Affairs Committee had three items to consider – pass/fail resolution, tenure extension and waiting on the Council of Deans response to a change in the Faculty Handbook.

Information Technology & Strategic Communications – (*Matthew Hudnall & Dan Meissner*) This committee urges everyone to use DUO – a dual authentication tool to protect against phishing attacks and personal and vital information. They also encouraged migration away from a legacy site on Banner. A phishing attack was sent out to multiple faculty and staff members across campus. Fifteen people responded to the email giving hackers access to four email accounts. One of the accounts had vital personal information which would have been protected if DUO were in place.

Campus Culture Taskforce – The town hall conducted by the taskforce was a success. Several surveys have been conducted by the taskforce. Methods to increase student response is being reviewed. The taskforce has met with Dr. Christine Taylor with plans to resume regular meetings. One of the surveys was distributed on April 15, 2020 and everyone was encouraged to distribute the survey to their colleagues. The survey was sent to 5,000 students and the taskforce individually is attempting to distribute to other students. The survey is still open and President Donahoe will send out a reminder next week.

The Faculty Senate broke into committee groups to discuss future issues and priority items and elect co-chairs.

Academic Affairs – John Vincent and Andre Denham

Community and Legislative Affairs – Steven Yates and Joy Burnham

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – Mirit Eyal-Cohen and Ignacio Rodeno

Faculty Life – Christopher Lynn and Susan Appel

Faculty and Senate Governance – Ibrahim Cemen and Jeri Zemki

Financial Affairs – Rainer Schad and Mary Stone

Information Technology and Strategic Communications – Matthew Hudnall and Patrick Kung

Research and Service – Ajay Agrawal and Kelly Shannon-Henderson

Student Life – Susan Henson and Jennifer Dempsey

Transforming Campus Culture Taskforce will be led by committee.

August 18 will be the next Faculty Senate meeting and a Steering Committee meeting with the Provost will be held on April 30th.

Meeting adjourned 5:10 PM.