

FACULTY SENATE MEETING
FEBRUARY 15, 2022 – VIA ZOOM

APPROVED MINUTES

ATTENDING: Paulo Araujo, Julia Bannerman, Sheila Black, Serena Blount, Seth Bordner, Ibrahim Cemen, Spyridoula (Litsa) Cheimariou, Kim Colburn, Matthew Dolliver, Alexis Davis Hazell, Rona Donahoe, Amanda Espy-Brown, Brittany Gilmer, Kim Lackey, Matthew Lockwood, Nathan Loewen, Christopher Lynn, Moises Molina, Luke Niiler, Shanlin Pan, Tyler Sasser, Rainer Schad, Edith Szanto, Alexandre Tokovinine, Bulent Tosun, Laura Erin Watley, Bo Zhang, Yong Zhang, Tom Baker, Doug Bish, Jennifer Dempsey, Todd DeZoort, Chapman Greer, Ruth Ann Hall, Matthew Hudnall, Mary Stone, Brian Britt, Cynthia Peacock, Bharat Mehra, Alyx Vesey, Steven Yates, Cecily Collins, Suzanne Henson, Andrea Wright, Tracy Hinton, Joy Burnham, Nirmala Erevelles, Michael Lawson, Sara McDaniel, John Petrovic, Stephanie Shelton, Nicole Swoszowski, Sriram Aaleti, Jaber Abu-Qahouq, Xiaoyan Hong, Sushma Kotru, Patrick Kung, John Van Zee, Jialai Wang, David Taylor, John Latta, Carla Blakey, Barbara “Babs” Davis, Amy Ellis, Yeon Ho Shin, Jeri Zemke, Paul Horwitz, Dan Joyner, Barbara Dahlbach, Russell Peterson, Michael Callihan, Susan Appel, Rebecca Owings, Kim Parker, Leah Cheatham, Amy Traylor, Robert Riter, Andrea Wright, Brad Porter (PSA), Hank Lazer (TUARA), Laura Braddick (Strat Com).

ABSENT WITHOUT ALTERNATE: Susan Dewey, Lyndell McDonald, Alessandra Montalbano, Regina Range, BC Kim, Nelle Williams, Sundar Krishnan, Weihua Su.

ABSENT WITH ALTERNATE: Courtney Helfrecht/Matt Reynolds; Heather Elliott/Jonathan Arbel.

GUESTS: Myron Pope, VP of Student Life; Sharlene Newman, Ex. Dir. Of Alabama Life Research Institute; Averie King, Crimson White; Harold Selesky, A&S.

Dr. Myron Pope, Vice President for Student Life, started the meeting with an activity and program update from his office. The focus is on the growth, learning and development of students as they progress toward success. Segments of student learning and support include health and well-being, global culture competencies, and learning outcomes. RealTime represents engagement and learning, which will include a transcript for the student’s record of activities. Areas will include global and cultural learning, leadership development, holistic development, experiential learning, community service and engagement. Global and cultural learning will equip students to engage with different cultures and backgrounds at home and abroad. In December students traveled to Memphis TN and worked and interacted with formerly incarcerated men and women from a various backgrounds. Leadership development includes developing skills to be great leaders in their communities and workplace. Community service and engagement encompasses working together and reinforcing each other. Examples include the UA Dance Marathon fundraiser for the Children’s Miracle Network, Beat Auburn-Beat Hunger and AI’s Pals activities in elementary schools, etc. Holistic health gives student support in health, with counseling providing multiple methods for students to succeed. The “Well Track” app provides a resource for mental health guidance. Experiential learning provides ways to apply what has been learned in class.

The Blackburn Institute is also working with our fellows on campus to train students for Civic Engagement and Leadership that will positively impact the State of Alabama. The initiatives of the first- year experience and retention initiatives are providing leadership development for our students. They have many programs, such as the Freshman, which offer students a community on campus based on peer mentorship. The first year in the program provides a peer mentor. The following year the student serves as a mentor for first-year students, revealing ways to assist others through servant leadership and peer mentoring opportunities.

The total development of students, not only in terms of academic support, career support, financial support, but also in psychological, physical, social and spiritual assistance is UA's goal.

Tutwiler will be demolished in July 2022. The new Tutwiler dorm will house about 1,284 students. The Student Life office provides support for any student need.

Dr. Sharlene Newman, Executive Director of the Alabama Life Research Institute, presented their strategic plan. The purpose of the Alabama Life Research Institute is to bring together researchers in all areas to study problems that directly affect the health and well-being of individuals and communities in Alabama. Research is done by faculty and there are five research themes that will be developed over the next few years, which include rural health and health disparities; a neuro-science research program adding magnetic imaging facilities; a bio-science program, which has established a research center on the second floor of the AIME building; Implementation Science developing intervention technology; and Environmental Health and Science and how those issues impact health and wellness. There are other services not included in those five themes, such as data analytics.

Secretary's Report – (Barb Dahlbach) Roll call and quorum check done by Faculty Senate Secretary Barb Dahlbach. The minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting on January 18, 2022 were approved.

President's Report – (Chapman Greer) The Faculty Senate elections are ongoing, with letter-of-intent letters due. Chapman Greer, Faculty Senate President; Matthew Hudnall, Faculty Senate Vice President; and Barb Dahlbach, Faculty Senate Secretary; have submitted letters-of-intent as candidates for Faculty Senate offices. Nominations may be made from the floor at the meeting.

Masks worn for protection from Covid will become optional as of February 21, 2022. There were only two people in quarantine last week, with 177 beds available.

The SGA has proposed a day off for students to vote on National Election Day, with a request for faculty input/support on this issue. Points made included: students voting absentee due to travel home to vote; lab work disruptions; wait time to vote and distance of voting sites; labor intensiveness of establishing absentee ballot voting; ways to get people out to vote; and that this is a small nod to civic duty for out-of-state students. The informal poll was 71 responses – 67% Support Day Off - 33% Do Not.

The Tuscaloosa City Council voted unanimously to move municipal elections from March to May. Comments – against due to attempt to disenfranchise part of community – not a faculty matter – request for input from faculty members – ensure student opinion is heard – and reasoning to move date. The expressed opinion is not strong enough to take an informal poll.

Vice President's Report – (Matthew Hudnall) The Land Management Office controls the licenses for geographic information and GIS software. A single individual controls licensing for all faculty and students on campus and is under the Financial Affairs Office in the Land Management division. There is an issue of license management and response time when problems occur. The Faculty Senate Information and Technology Committee should work with OIT and Strat Com to shift this management responsibility to a central entity. Anyone with issues (good or bad) should send the information to Matthew Hudnall.

Secretary's Report – (Barb Dahlbach) A nomination reminder will be sent to all colleges concerning Senator elections.

In October 2019, the Faculty Senate created a Campus Culture Taskforce which has been meeting consistently. Two surveys have been conducted with the data combined (1,300 responses) into a report containing recommendations. A summary report will be presented today for a Faculty Senate vote.

An interactive forum seeking information was hosted in February 2020 (30-40 in attendance) along with discussion. Heat mapping activity indicated safety uneasiness. There were also story booths; brief anonymous statements were displayed; and there were focus group discussions. Further slide presentations and information are available on the Faculty Senate web site.

Campus Culture Taskforce recommendations –

One-Year Recommendations:

1. Implement University-wide DEI training for administrators and search committees
2. Implement University-wide HR training for chairs, deans, and administrative faculty
3. Fix physical accessibility issues in University buildings and campus grounds
4. Promote renamed University buildings to incoming freshmen and new employees
5. Enlist an independent organization to annually conduct campus climate surveys to respond to campus culture's needs **or**
6. Formalize Taskforce as a permanent committee

Five-Year Recommendations:

1. Launch University-wide first-year course about UA's efforts to change racist history **OR** mandate all incoming freshmen take Hallowed Grounds tour
2. Hire impartial professional HR representatives for each academic unit **AND** create climate of support for faculty and staff who fear retaliation:
 - a. against reporting workplace infractions
 - b. against practicing free speech online.
3. Increase administrative staff to address lack of response or transparency around reporting Title IX and EEOC violations
4. Reframe DEI's benefits for entire University community and not just for the underrepresented
5. Compensate staff at rates which are competitive regionally and across institutions

Points made: physical, lighting, and speech/hearing accessibility; right to work safety; campus presence responsibility and equity; free speech/hate speech clarity; building renaming; and academic freedom.

Appreciation was expressed for the hard work and many hours put in by the Campus Culture Taskforce. The recommendations will be voted on at the Faculty Senate meeting in March.

Faculty & Senate Governance – (Ibrahim Cemen & Jeri Zemke) Letters-of-intent have been received from Chapman Greer for President, Matthew Hudnall for Vice President, and Barb Dahlbach for Secretary. There were no additional nominations at today's meeting. Election will be held at the March meeting and nominations may be made from the floor.

The proposed bylaw change:

Current language: The Secretary will call the roll of senators at each meeting of the Senate. Any absences in excess of two by a senator will be reported by the Secretary to the Faculty Senate Governance Committee. The Secretary shall also record the attendance, by name, of each visitor having floor privileges pursuant to Article III. Section 3, paragraph 4, of every attending member of the press, and other special visitors to the Senate.

Suggested Revision: *The Secretary will record the attendance of senators at each meeting of the Senate. Any absences in excess of two by a senator will be reported by the Secretary to the Faculty and Senate Governance Committee. The Secretary shall also record the attendance, by name, of each visitor having floor privileges pursuant to Article III. Section 3, paragraph 4, of every attending member of the press, and of other special visitors to the Senate.*

Professor Kevin Shaughnessy was confirmed as the replacement for Dr. Cathy Pagani as Ombudsperson. Dr. Pagani retired on December 31, 2021.

There was a call for nominations from C&BA or Engineering for Ombudsperson to replace Dr. Linda Parsons (term ends December 31, 2022) regular term to begin January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2026. The bylaws state there should be one male and one female, which will be revisited next year.

There are two open seats on the Mediation Committee – Janie Hubbard is retiring and Stacy Alley's term is ending. Nominations from the following colleges are needed – A&S, CCHS, Ed, CHES, Libraries. The mediation link is open until February 25, 2022.

Academic Affairs – (Rona Donahoe & Babs Davis) The revised copy of the Faculty Handbook, along with comments, has been distributed. Appendix B on mediation and grievance will be addressed next year. Any comments or suggested changes should be forwarded to Rona Donahoe or Babs Davis. Voting will take place at the March 15th meeting of the Faculty Senate.

IT & STRAT COM – (Patrick Kung & Nathan Loewen) These are the issues listed by the IT Strat Comm for consideration:

- CIT now has someone available for outreach to colleges to inform/demonstrate to faculty (Melissa Green, Assistant Director for Education and Outreach)
- OIT platforms are at the mercy of AWS outages (e.g., Blackboard at the end of the fall semester). Faculty should be prepared with contingency plans, like downloading grade books. Would drills be a good idea?
- Google 0365: Content shared by students will be lost. Faculty should review, copy/migrate asap. Tools are available on the OIT website
- Still rebuilding courses after move to Blackboard SAAS. Same will happen for move to Blackboard Ultra (Summer 2022)

- OIT developing new, 3 yr. Strategic Plan. Will seek input from community through survey (example from previous survey: Adobe Creative Cloud, new MyBama)
- IT-related support (ITSD< CIT< AVS) now all under same ticketing system (Jira). Moving colleges to Jira too. Working on a portal for people to see status
- OIT working with HR to be flexible to retain/attract IT staff. It is a very competitive market, esp. after Covid
- UAHPC< CHPC< Ultra storage just moved to DC Blox (1st week Feb.)
- New MyBama look rolled out
- Check and train your Outlook Junk Folder

Research & Service – (Shanlin Pan & Douglas Bish) The Research and Service Committee requested and encouraged the completion of a short survey from Dr. John Higginbotham and the link was given to access the survey.

Revised IP and copyright policies from ORED will be voted on at the March meeting of the Faculty Senate. The IPPC members shall be selected based on recommendations from the Associate Dean's for Research, college/school Deans, and the director of OIC. The IPPC shall be composed of nine (9) members including five (5) employees, three (3) ad hoc technical experts, and one (1) representative from the Faculty Senate. The IPPC members shall serve a three-(3)-year term that may be reviewed. IPPC Committee Members for 2022-25 are Jason Bara, Julie Olson, John Baker, Jaber Abu Qahouq – (Faculty Senate Representative), Rob Morgan, Dan Gibson, Nghia Chiem – Chair, Steven McCall – Ad hoc, Jared Miller – Legal Advisor, University of Alabama Systems.

Discussed lab safety highlights from EHS and its response to FS's recommendations in Spring, 2021, including new concerns regarding EHS safety training and SOP and audits. (See attachments sent out 2/14/22 to the Faculty Senate ListServ).

Student Life – (Jennifer Dempsey & Amy Traylor) No report. (Update by Dr. Myron Pope)

Community & Legislative Affairs – (Steven Yates & Joy Burnham) Appreciation was expressed to those attending the Legislative Reception. The attendance was well below the number of positive responses. Methods to increase attendance will be researched. Senator Gerald Allen, Representative Cynthia Almond, and Representative Chris England were on the legislative panel.

Plans are underway for the Brewer Porch Teacher and Staff Appreciation Luncheon to be held May 5, 2022.

Faculty Life – (Heather Elliott & Ruth Ann Hall) Work and meetings continue in discussions and planning for a childcare proposal.

Financial Affairs – (Mary Stone & Byung-Cheol Kim) This committee continues to advocate for some flexibility in using Concur. The committee requested any special situations and problems with Concur be communicated to this committee.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion – (Lyndell McDonald & Luke Niller) The DEI Committee will be discussing the CRT Bill HB 312 and will move it forward to the Steering Committee, then to the full Senate.

Compliance Training update is the fiscal responsibility module training session due at the end of this month.

Faculty Senate meeting March 23 venue TBA.

Meeting adjourned 5:30 PM