

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

September 19, 2023

1008 NURSING

ATTENDING: Paulo Araujo, Sheila Black, Serena Blount, Ibrahim Cemen, Kim Colburn, Jenni Cox, Shibin Dai, Natasha Dimova, Rona Donahoe, Gayle Faught, Renata Fuchs, Marysia Galbraith, John Giggie, Courtney Helfrecht, DiLuo, Lyndell McDonald, Micah McKay, Alessandra Montalbano, Aislinn O'Donohoe Riley, Shanlin Pan, JoAnne Payne, Matt Reynolds, Soledad Sanchez Valdez, Sara-Maria Sorentino, Seth Stewart, Edith Szanto, Theodore Tomeny, Matthew Valasik, Charlotte Wegrzynowski, Tom Baker, Ruth Ann Hall, Matthew Hudnall, Jennie Northan, Shane Stinson, A.J. Bauer, Jihoon (Jay) Kim, Leah LeFebvre, Bharat Mehra, Steven Yates, Nathan Culmer, Dale Dickinson, Mallory Scogin, Nelle Williams, Nirmala Erevelles, John Petrovic, Stephanie Shelton, Xiaoyan Hong, Sushma Kotru, Patrick Kung, Shreyas Rao, Weihua Su, Ruigang Wang, Thomas Herwig, Kim Boyle, Babs Davis, Courtney McGahey, Jeri Zemke, Anil Mujumdar, Brian Clar, Sara Whitver, Kristi Acker, Kim Parker, Rebecca Owings, Conal Franklin, Brenda Smith, Robert Riter, Caryl Cooper (TUARA)

ABSENT: Carl Hancock, Harold Selesky, Rebecca Totten, Craig Armstrong, Hasan Isomitdinov, Clay Voorhees, Bruce Barrett, Tonya Klein, Sundar Krishman, Charles (Ian) Crawford, Heather Elliott, Susan Welch

ABSENT WITH ALTERNATE: Jessica Goethals/Xabier Granja, Greg Starr/Kim Lackey, Kelly McPherson/Maraci Daugherty, Susan Williams/Tom Robinson, Erin Stoneking/Wenfang Sun, Alison Hooper/Lisa Fowler, Stacy Hughley/Colleen Geary, Nicole Swoszowski/Kimberly Tomeny, David Walker/Firat Soyly, Thang Dao/Jun Liu, Gary Sullivan/Russell Gold, Carrie Tuner/Avani Shah

GUESTS: Allen Parrish (Interim VPRED), Lauren Wilson (Asst. VPR), Laura Braddick (Strat Com)

INTRODUCTION OF GUEST SPEAKERS: Dr. Allen Parrish, Interim Vice President of Research and Economic Development, Lauren Wilson, Associate Vice President of Research Agreements and Commercialization

PRESENTATION – (Dr. Allen Parrish) – Discussion began with where we have been as an institution and where we are going and university wide research institutes.

- There are a total of five institutes Transportation, Water, Life, and Cyber and Alabama Analytical Research center focused on singular research topics. While the institutes are focused on research, colleges are focused on a broader mission that is directed at the majors in those colleges. If they can work together, research can grow. Discussed the institutes' role in research metrics for the institution.

- There has been a 21% increase in faculty members since 2021.
- There has been a 50% increase in publications for faculty and a doubling of citations over an eight-year period.
- In 2022 we were at \$128 million in research up from \$38 million in external research awards in 2014 with the institutes having a major role.
- Between 2015 and 202 are major core value was focused on growth.
- Efficiency of research administration and the processes in place to support the faculty is important. We have tripled our research awards and expenditures in eight years, but we are still operating as an organization the same way as we operated before 2015. There has been no growth in the Office of Academic Research and Development the same way as the institution has grown in terms of research enterprise. We have not substantially upgraded our research administration systems and we're facing a labor shortage.
- We need to focus on customer service. We are currently working on policy, process systems and workforce and culture. External consultants are looking at staffing size, systems and process, culture, customer service, and response time to make us a best-in-class organization. We are working on a solid organization for the future.
- Sustainability – The focus is on growth. Several projects are in the works. The \$100 million high-performance computing will be one of the best in the country, best in state, an MRI Center, a driving simulator facility, acquired world class spectroscopy microscopy facilities, college centers and laboratories that are connected with faculty hiring. This is an on-going process and engagement is necessary for success.
- Democratization – Faculty are needed as researchers through active outreach institute engagement and more faculty development.
- Desiloisation - 5 Silos – Teaching research employers/industry, communities, and economic development. Siloed groups. The future is more integrated. Research and teaching and getting next to employers gets students jobs and collaboration with employers on what to teach and what research is relevant to them. Place-based research and long-term partnerships are needed. Need to be looking at growth, efficiency, sustainability, democratization and desiloisation. To measure success, we look at all five to determine how we are doing.
- Question - Is there a plan a plan to increase internal and seed grant funding back to pre-COVID levels? Core values, democratization is important. Seed grants are designed to bring more people into the research process. Doing more in this area is needed. A decision was made to limit the large grants in favor of small. Money would be needed to fund early faculty in small incremental steps. Dr. Parrish would be willing to engage if the faculty were willing to have this conversation and look at restructuring.
- The Office of Research is taking steps and assessing the processes, looking at procedures and bringing in consultants.

- Other strategies for managing contracts and grants. - The institutes assisting with large proposals and are providing resources back to colleges that may be of direct assistance along with the Assist Group to help with large proposals.
- Implementation group is a service provided for helping review what area of research you should be looking for and honing writing skills. Reviewing proposals before they are submitted and how they will be graded when sent to federal agencies. Faculty are encouraged to make other faculty aware that this is available to them. This is an invaluable service through the Assist Program.
- The Office of Research Administration is currently understaffed but understands the need for customer service enhancement.

Roll Call and Quorum Check – (Rona Donahue)

- Attendance was taken via QR code. Paper copies of QR code were available.
- Minutes were corrected and distributed. A minor correction from Research and Service will be integrated into the minutes. Minutes were approved as corrected.

President’s Report – (Matthew Hudnall)

- The Childcare Facility was approved at the last Board of Trustees meeting but did not make it to the agenda. It should, however, make it to the November agenda. It will be funded out of central reserve funding. Does not need to be on this year’s budget. Will go in front of the board agenda for November.
- The supercomputing facility was unanimously approved.
- System-wide budget increase went from \$600 million dollars to \$6.6 billion dollars with \$3.2 billion being allocated to UAB hospital.
- Contracts and grants as a system reached over \$1 billion dollars this past year system wide.
- The funding from research expenditures or research grants exceeded tuition dollars.
- Satellite and radio farm is being relocated to a location off campus.
- The geological survey oil and gas board is being relocated to a new facility on the services campus.
- A 245-space parking lot is being built at Kirkbride Lane close to the new transportation building. Searcy Hall will become the new Psychology building and will have access to the new parking lot.

Vice Present’s Report – (Steven Yates) – No report

Secretary’s Report – (Rona Donahue)

- We have at least three new senators. All the vacant alternate positions have been filled with one extra alternate in Arts & Sciences.

Senate Committee Reports

- **Community & Legislative Affairs** – (*Serena Blount & John Giggie*) – No Report

- **Academic Affairs** – (*Rona Donahue & Babs Davis*) –
 - Looking at +/- grading for Graduate Students. Andre' Denham from the Graduate School has sent a Benchmarking survey of other universities and their use of +/- for graduates as well as a survey of graduate faculty and their chairs. The committee is reviewing the survey and will continue the discussion at the next steering committee meeting.
 - There is concern on how the university communicates after a student death. Currently, there are no guidelines in place when it comes to student deaths. UAB has guidelines in place. Guidelines need to be in place along with a more compassionate response and a way to help students when faced with this situation. A meeting is scheduled with Leslie Reed on this topic next week.
 - A proposal was received from some faculty who have joint appointments in different departments. This was brought to the committee but still needs more investigation. Several things need to be identified such as defining what a joint appointment is, are they tenured in those departments, and will they be on a TPR committee where they are not qualified to make decisions. This will also be taken to the meeting with Leslie. This would be a possible handbook change.
 - Faculty recognition for service – we need to have something to recognize faculty services.
 - President Hudnall indicated that policies are being pulled from other sub institutions regarding compassionate response to student deaths. UA has a policy, but we still need to understand what that policy is and benchmark it against peers and find out where gaps and opportunities exist to improve the process.
 - Recognition – It is time for Premier awards for Faculty, staff and students. There are new awards this year. It will be emailed to everyone. Encourage yourself, fellow faculty, or students to apply.

- **Student Life** – (*Carrie Turner & Dale Dickinson*) – No report.

- **Research & Service** – (*Shanlin Pan & Clay Voorhees*)
 - The committee met on August 29th and discussed priorities on the research side. Discussed graduate recruiting, graduate students and the mental health issue and how we can prevent tragic happenings.
 - The subvention program is on-line and will be launched on October 1st.

- **Faculty Life-** (*Kim Colburn & heather Elliot*)
 - A few things need focusing on. Working on the compassionate response to death procedure, looking into Flex leave policy for 12-faculty depending on department.
 - The interactive map for UA bathrooms does not include a lactation station and changing rooms because the changing tables are broken. Looking into who to speak with for a faster response.
 - Several complaints have been made regarding the recreational pool closing early. We are looking into this.

- **IT & Strategic Communications** – (*Patric Kung & Xiaoyan Hong*)
 - Requests have been received regarding platform technology. Will meet with OIT. Any other concerns can be addressed as well.
 - President Hudnall provided an update on two topics that are still on the lists of priorities. The first being able to specify your last name for your email signature. It is a limitation for OIT indicating that HR's input is needed. This current system cannot accommodate the first name change. This is presenting problems. We still need an update on where we are for retiree email addresses.

- **Financial Affairs** – (*Tom Baker & Shane Stinson*) – No report

- **Faculty & Senate Governance** – (*Jeri Zemke & Ruth Ann Hall*)
 - We have two nominations for December commencement marshals that went out last week. It will close this coming Friday.

- **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion** – (*Thoms Herwig & Sheila Black*)
 - Had the opportunity to pass on the meetings of the faculty senate to the International welcome event.
 - The committee will meet next week to discuss the mining memorial and becoming familiar with the victims of mining on campus.
 - There will be two DEI breakfasts and a DEI summit.

Reports from Other Committees

- **Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee** – (*Rona Donohue*) – Not yet met.

- **Compliance Committee** – (*Babs Davis*)
 - October 31st is the deadline for compliance training. An email reminder has been sent out.

Old Business – None

New Business

- Several instances where decisions are not being made through the legislative session and being unilaterally made in the Governor's office. An objection was made regarding the new edition of a book on early childhood education which resulted in the book being banned. They are now using an outdated book if they want to use State funds.
- There is discussion from the Governor's office regarding disassociating Alabama public libraries with the American Library Association. This is concerning.
- Clay Ryan will speak with us as a senate in November or December to talk about this. Hopefully, we can connect with him prior to that.
- This situation directly affects institutions at UA and the College of Education along with grants and programs. It is an important issue, and everyone is encouraged, no matter how you feel about it personally, to at least be aware of it. We are highly concerned that the spotlight could hit us if it has not yet, maybe it's because our lobbyists are working on it.

Reminders

- The next Faculty Senate meeting is October 17, 2023 – Venue 1008 Nursing

Adjourned - The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.