# FACULTY SENATE MEETING

# APRIL 17, 2018 – 3:30 PM - #1010 NORTH LAWN HALL

# APPROVED MINUTES

**ABSENT WITH ALTERNATE:** Adam Hauser/Conor Henderson; Regina Range/Bryan Koronkiewicz; John Vincent/Martin Evans; Mirit Eyal-Cohen/Courtney Cross.

**ABSENT WITHOUT ALTERNATE:** Jenni Cox, Andrew Dewar, Alan Tidwell, Angela Benson, Cory Callahan, Andre Denham, Yuping Bao, Dominic Yeager.

**GUESTS:** Ed Enoch, Tuscaloosa News; Cresandra Smothers, Strategic Communications.

Newly elected Faculty Senate President Rona Donahoe presented former Faculty Senate President Donna Meester the engraved gavel she used presiding at the Faculty Senate meetings and a gift in recognition of the three years she served as president. Former President Meester presented President Donahoe a gavel to use in the meetings over which she will preside.

Following a call for discussion the Faculty Senate Standing Committee list and the Faculty Senate UA Committee Faculty Senate Representative list were approved. Those senators met by committee assignments to elect co-chairs and review primary issues for the coming year.

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

The Faculty Senate meeting minutes of March 20, 2018 were approved.

**President’s Report –** *(Rona Donahoe)* Parliamentarian Dominic Yeager has been appointed and has agreed to continue in this position.

President Donahoe attended the Board of Trustees meeting held in Huntsville, Alabama on April 5th and 6th. Seven construction projects in various stages were on the agenda: Kappa Alpha Theta sorority building; improvement of University Boulevard going east beginning the day after commencement and completed before the fall semester begins; expansion of the College of Nursing building; a sculpture commemorating Tuscaloosa’s bicentennial celebration donated by UA; Northeast Medical Center near the Bryce Campus will undergo interior renovations; Russell Hall will have a nutrition and bio-lab addition; resolution of the Board of Trustees proposed Peter Bryce Park Preserve (27 ½ acres) green space preservation; sub-funding for instruments needed beyond NSF grant funds; Lakeside Dining is undergoing renovations.

UA sent workers and equipment to assist in repairing the damage caused at Jacksonville State University, Jacksonville, Alabama by a tornado. Some student groups also assisted.

Tuition increases for the Medical, Dental and Optometry Schools were approved.

The combined UA, UAH and UAB Faculty Senate Steering Committees sent a letter to Chancellor Hayes proposing a “Chancellor’s Choice Award” to be awarded in Fall of 2019. This would be an all-day meeting at UAB with possibly a dinner the night before. Poster presentation, touring and stimulating discussion would be a part of the meeting. The recipient would receive some funding to bring faculty members from all three campuses together for collaboration, creative activity and exchange of information.

The ModernThink survey distributed by President Bell and his office closed last Friday, April 13th. There was an overall 47% participation rate. Faculty participation was 39%. The collected data will be forwarded to the consulting firm which will then return the information to UA. The Faculty Senate Steering Committee will look at the information and make recommendations to improve work-life issues on this campus. Hopefully the Faculty Senate will be involved in implementing those recommendations such as child care. Efforts are underway to have funding a child care facility building included in the Capital Campaign.

A Research Funding Endowment proposal has been put forward to be included in this fund-raising campaign. Funding for faculty start-ups has drained the budgets of some departments. Aging infrastructure, instruments and equipment is an additional expense. Stability through an endowment would ease this financial strain.

President Donahoe proposed the Financial Affairs Committee conduct a study on salaries across the SUG. Small increases have been given but a determination needs to be made that UA is not losing ground to other institutions in the SUG.

TIAA has selected certain universities to participate in projects connected to community or university service with a $5,000 donation. A luncheon for students funded by Bama Dining will be held next week (Dead Week) and cram bags filled with snacks will be distributed. Some personal items for the students have been donated by a local church. A Teacher Appreciation Day will be held for the fifteen teachers at the Brewer Porch children’s center. A small garden plot will be constructed at the center to engage the students in raising vegetables. Notices will be sent out requesting volunteers for these projects. The goal is to continue to address those students in need throughout the year in collaboration with the Professional Staff Association (PSA) and the Office/Clerical/Technical Staff Assembly (OCTSA).

The scheduled external speaker invited by the America First student organization will not speak due to the group losing their official organizational status at UA.

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee will be meeting with the Provost on Thursday. Vice President for Advancement, Bob Pierce, will be the speaker.

Donna Meester gave a report on the Faculty Handbook revision process. The committee has been in long-hour meetings for several years to bring these revisions to a conclusion. The Appendix B update is complete and requires a faculty-wide vote. The Faculty Senate will provide proposed revisions to the handbook this fall with a call for faculty input on those changes. Those revisions will require approval by the Faculty Senate, Council of Deans, UA Provost and President and the UA Board of Trustees.

Bill Poole, member of the Alabama House of Representatives, was introduced to begin his presentation concerning legislative issues. Poole chairs the House Ways and Means Education Committee. The Y2019 budget is the largest budget since the recession in 2010-11-12. A climb back to pre-recession numbers has been a slow one. The $47 million dollars borrowed has been paid back to the Rainy Day Fund. Allocations of $216 million more dollars for spending on education for next year brings the total to $6.63 billion which is the largest education budget since 2008. There will be a 2½% pay raise for K-12 teachers in the 2019 educational budget. Pre-K has been built up to a $100 million dollar budget and is recognized nationally as a quality system. $113 million dollars has been added to K-12 outside the teacher’s raise. K-12 will get an increase of $146 billion which is 69% of the Education Trust Fund. Two and four year college allocations are $1.7 billion or 25% of the Education Trust Fund. Bonuses are being offered to those teachers becoming certified in core subjects. It is difficult for rural areas to secure qualified teachers in sciences and mathematics and retention of those qualified teachers is a problem. There is a $42 million dollar new funding increase for Alabama’s colleges and universities and last year the amount was zero due to bailing out the scholarship program. Dollars can be put into education budgets but leadership has to have the ability to implement those dollars in the best possible way. The State of Alabama is in an election cycle with most of the policy making positions open excluding the court system. Representative Poole discussed the Governor’s, Lt. Governor’s, and Secretary of Treasury election race. The State of Alabama has record unemployment, however, there are less people working now than before the recession. The unemployed number is 76,000. There is $3.6 million dollars earmarked for general fund agencies that does not pass through the Legislature. Online sales have had a negative effect on tax revenue. The tax revenue stream is not a stable source of revenue and depends on the ups and downs of the economy. The Legislature established the Rolling Reserve Fund which would assist in avoiding proration. Medicaid and prisons take 60% of the General Fund. Poole further discussed the Teacher’s Retirement Fund and investments (91,000 retirees), higher medical and medication costs and Peehip. A question was asked concerning having a lottery in Alabama. In Poole’s opinion there are several competing interests making the establishment of a lottery in Alabama difficult. There does not seem to be any tax reform movement in the Legislature.

Meeting adjourned 5:30 P.M.