# FACULTY SENATE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

# JUNE 5, 2018 – 3:00 PM - #213 AIME

# APPROVED MINUTES

**ATTENDING:** Rona Donahoe, Barb Dahlbach, Chapman Greer, John Vincent, Amy Dayton, Jenna Stiffler, Mirit Eyal-Cohen, Angela Benson, Julia Cartwright, Rainer Schad, Matthew Hudnall, Dan Meissner, Amy Traylor, Dominic Yeager.

**ABSENT:** Paige McCormick, Osiris Molina,Andrea Glenn, Ibrahim Cemen, Peter Johnson, Ajay Agrawal, Mike Kreger, Donna Meester.

**GUESTS:** Cresandra Smothers, Strategic Communications.

The minutes for the April 10th and May 8th Faculty Senate Steering Committee meetings were approved with corrections.

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

**President’s Report –** *(Rona Donahoe)* The NTRC faculty FTE and teaching loads report given by Academic Affairs in May revealed some Deans were forcing teaching loads (5.5) in violation of the NTRC document although the document does not specify what the release time should be for research. The document does state release time for service but does not give a specific amount of time. Everything is broken up into .2 FTE. Provost Whitaker has spoken to the Deans and the Steering Committee was urged to follow any developments concerning this matter.

The next item on the agenda is Graduate Student ‘Academic Bankruptcy’. If a graduate student waits until 11:59 P.M. on the last day of classes and pushes the “withdraw” button on the University MyBama dashboard, they will wipe out the entire semester of course work. This apparently is an exception rather than the rule and has rarely been used. However, the student can withdraw from the University without any review or validated reason at any point in the semester. John Vincent made the point there should be a review before the student withdraws which would negate any funding provided for an entire semester. They can be readmitted to the University unless there is some sort of red flag that the student had not fulfilled some of their duties. Banner automatically sends withdrawal sheets but that has not been communicated to the departments. Beginning immediately those withdrawal sheets will be sent to the departments to be communicated to the advisor to make them immediately aware of the withdrawal. It was suggested to add language to the appointment letters reflecting this issue. It would be up to the department and/or advisor to review the student’s application for reinstatement. Adjustments to the student’s ability to change majors are being considered. A change in a major would allow a student to take a restricted class which cannot be taken unless the student is a major in that department. Once the class is taken and recorded, the student can change their major back but still have the elective credit. This matter will be discussed with Provost Whitaker.

The College of Education’s use of the Graduate School’s Tenure, Promotion and Retention spreadsheet was the next item on the agenda. The original spreadsheet originated with the Associate Vice Provost’s office and Dean of the Graduate School, David Francko’s term. Dean Francko reviewed all files that came up to the Provost’s office before the Provost reviewed them. The report that the spreadsheet is being used to compare candidates up for certain levels of promotion is not true. The spreadsheet is currently used by the Dean of the Graduate School, Susan Carvalho, to run down the list and follows up on anything that appears to be an exception. The purpose is to determine the number of candidates for a particular level of promotion or retention and there is an even-ness in the method the candidates were handled by their departments or college before going to the Provost’s office. The purpose of the spreadsheet is not to devalue or degrade types of scholarly activity. Using the spreadsheet to make decisions concerning tenure, promotion and retention would not be acceptable by the Faculty Senate. Digital Measures was a pilot this year and will be going into more widespread use this fall. The suggestion was to change the spreadsheet to reflect the Faculty Handbook. The spreadsheet does not reflect the current governing document. Provost Whitaker assured President Donahoe the spreadsheet was only being used in the situation of a faculty member going through the probationary, promotion or retention process. The Steering Committee was urged to report to President Donahoe if there is any knowledge of misuse of the spreadsheet. Digital Measures was discussed further.

Susan Carvalho sent President Donahoe an email inquiring about procedural matters and policies concerning Graduate Faculty Qualifications. The Doctorate of Nursing Practice Degree offered by the College of Nursing brought this issue forward. The D&P faculty, which are largely clinical track, have routinely been supervising the projects resulting in a clinical paper being used in the place of a dissertation for the students. The rule in Appendix “P” of the University Faculty Handbook where qualifications for full membership is to hold a Ph.D. or a terminal degree and (B) hold the rank of assistant professor and a full-time tenure track or full-time tenure position. Suzanne Prevost, Dean of Nursing School, wants to put an exception to the rule allowing D&P faculty to supervise projects. There is a similar situation in the School of Social Work but it does not apply since almost all of their DSW are tenure track. Making all NTRC faculty eligible to supervise doctoral degree projects would be a potential problem in other departments. The routine in the past has been to appoint a co-advisor. UAH does not have tenure-track as a qualification for full graduate faculty status. A request has been made to change the word “temporary” to “affiliate” (same definition) in Appendix “P”. The Faculty Handbook Task Force will be meeting tomorrow and consider this revision. The process to change that terminology first goes to Graduate Council, then to the Faculty Senate to consider, vote on the terminology, then to the Council of Deans. The Faculty Handbook Task Force can change the terminology with all changes going through the process for final approval. Any specific policy changes must be approved by the Board of Trustees with the goal of having everything consistent across all three campuses.. The Handbook will be reviewed by the legal office in the UA Systems Office.

The search for Vice President for Research and Economic Development has been given to Ann Hasselmo and her group.

The University’s web site had broken links and other problems. The Faculty Senate Information Technology and Strategic Communications Committee questioned why a dead link analyzer could not be run. The difficulty would be to make changes on all three platforms and there is not hierarchy in place for the changes to trickle down through the platforms without intensive laborious work. The committee feels the analyzer can be run and will consult with IT. The Provost and others are working to get everything on a single platform and hierarchy to make access easier. The Information Technology and Strategic Communications Committee will follow up and monitor this matter.

The next interview will be with Sean David for the position of Executive Director for the Alabama Life Institute on Monday, June 11th at 3:30 P.M. in #1093 Shelby Hall.

**Vice President’s Report –** *(Chapman Greer)* No report.

**Secretary’s Report –** *(Barbara Dahlbach)* No report.

**Academic Affairs –** *(John Vincent & Paige McCormick)* The Faculty Handbook Task Force will meet Wednesday, June 6th from 11:00 until 3:00 or longer if needed. The placement of Item “J” under Scholarly Contributions in the Handbook was questioned. The Task Force will continue to review the handbook.

**Community & Legislative Affairs –** *(Amy Dayton & Jenna Stiffler)* No report.

**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion –** *(Mirit Eyal-Cohen & Osiris Molina)* This committee is joining the Faculty Life Committee in working on the parental leave policy.

**Faculty & Senate Governance –** *(Angela Benson & Ibrahim Cemen)* Strategic Communications has assumed commencement duties including the Marshal position.

**Faculty Life –** *(Julia Cartwright & Andrea Glenn)* The Faculty Life Committee provided a letter of support for the proposed parental leave policy and was attached to the committee year-end report. This is now being reviewed by Vice President for Financial Affairs, Matt Fajack. Robert McLeod is the Chair of the Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee.

“The current maternity leave policy applies only for faculty members who do not earn sick or annual leave. Faculty members who accrue sick and annual leave are expected to use accrued time as paid time off but may be eligible for additional time off under the provision in the Faculty Handbook if they do not have a full eight weeks of leave at the time the leave begins. Leave is granted to cover the time necessary for the medical recovery period as defined by the individual’s health provider and to provide time for initial bonding with the child. Under usual circumstances this time is eight weeks. Unpaid leave under FML Act still applies meaning faculty members can take additional unpaid time up to 12 weeks as needed, as long as the FML is granted. Leave is granted during the actual time period necessary. It is not stored or added if birth occurs during the summer term or winter or spring breaks. For example, if a would-be eligible for approximately six weeks of paid leave, because regular academic year appointments start on August 16. Leave runs concurrently with FML. If eight weeks is insufficient, the faculty member who has been approved for FML can request an additional four weeks as unpaid leave. During the semester in which paid maternity leave is used, the faculty member *may* be relieved of classroom and classroom-related obligations. Department chairs and deans will work with faculty members to determine reasonable administrative, research, and service expectations during the portion of the semester in which the faculty member is not on leave. Except in extraordinary circumstances, and as approved by the provost, no faculty member will be relieved of teaching responsibilities for both the fall and spring semesters. No faculty member will have teaching, administrative, research, or service expectations increased in subsequent terms as a result of choosing to take maternity leave”.

The committee is interested in extending the length of time allowed for maternity leave. The policy seems to be administered differently and inconsistently across departments and colleges on campus. Negotiations can be approached with Deans and Department Chairs with a wide range of outcome. An example was given of a faculty member’s difficulties obtaining the enforcement of this policy. If a settlement cannot be reached, the faculty member can contact Jennifer Greer, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, for further review. The suggestion was to contact primarily SUG institutions to find out their parental policies including adoption, costs, legal liabilities, affected faculty and current policies in force. The committee should compose a proposed parental policy draft.

**Financial Affairs –** *(Peter Johnson &Rainer Schad)* The Financial Affairs Committee is working on SUG faculty salary comparisons.

**Information Technology & Strategic Communications –** *(Matthew Hudnall & Dan Meissner)* No report.

**Research & Service –** *(Ajay Agrawal & Mike Kreger)* No report.

**Student Life –** *(Amy Traylor & Donna Meester)* There was discussion concerning the fraternity that was shut down for two years.

The Steering Committee meeting with the Provost will be June 14th at 3:30 P.M.

The Board of Trustees meeting will be Friday, June 8th for the Steering Committee to attend.

Meeting adjourned 4:45 P.M.