

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

FEBRUARY 21, 2023 – 3:30 PM – 1008 NURSING BUILDING

APPROVED MINUTES

ATTENDANCE: Paulo Araujo, Nikhil Bilwakesh, Sheila Black, Serena Blount, Spyridoula (Litsa) Cheimariou, Kim Colburn, Shibin Dai, Susan Dewey, Rona Donahoe, Amanda Espy-Brown, John Giggie, Jessica Goethals, Courtney Helfrecht, Kim Lackey, Nathan Loewen, Di Luo, Christopher Lynn, Lyndell McDonald, Micah McKay, Moises Molina, Alessandra Montalbano, Luke Niiler, Shanlin Pan, Matt Reynolds, Erin Stoneking, Edith Szanto, Alexandre Tokovinine, Soledad Sanchez Valdez, Tyler Walker, Laura Erin Watley, Charlotte Wegrzynowski, Craig Armstrong, Tom Baker, Todd DeZoort, Chapman Greer, Ruth Ann Hall, Matthew Hudnall, Hasan Isomitdinov, A. J. Bauer, Bharat Mehra, Cynthia Peacock, Steven Yates, Nathan Culmer, Dale Dickinson, Stephanie Buckner, Joy Burnham, Nirmala Erevelles, Sara McDaniel, John Petrovic, Stephanie Shelton, Nicole Swoszowski, Tonya Klein, Sushma Kotru, Sundar Krishnan, Patrick Kung, Weihua Su, Jialai Wang, Ruigang Wang, Kelly McPherson, Thomas Herwig, Charles (Ian) Crawford, Barbara "Babs" Davis, Amy Ellis, Yeon Ho Shin, Jeri Zemke, Paul Horwitz, Barbara Dahlbach, Sara Whitver, Kristi Acker, Kim Parker, Amy Traylor, Carrie Turner,

ABSENT: Seth Bordner, Sara-Maria Sorentino, Brittany VandeBerg, Doug Bish, Clay Voorhees, Andrea Wright, David Walker, Heather Elliott, Dan Joyner, Robert Riter-Parliamentarian

ABSENT WITH ALTERNATE: Leah LeFebvre/Dimitrios Latsis, Nelle Williams/Meenakshi Arora, Sriram Aaleti/Kaylan Srinivasan, Xiaoyan Hong/ Paul Puzinauskas, Michael Callihan/Brandi Lester, Rebecca Owings/Sandi Estes

GUEST: Laura Braddick - Strategic Communications, Caryl Cooper – TUARA, Dr. Greg Vander Wal – Executive Director, Counseling Center, Clay Ryan and Charlie Taylor – UA System Office

SPEAKERS:

Dr. Greg Vander Wal with Student Counseling Center began the meeting with a presentation of counseling services offered at the Center. The overall goal of the Center is to help students successfully achieve their academic goals. Counseling services include individual therapy, which begins with a phone screening. A \$15/session fee is charged, whether online or in-person. The average wait time is one week, with a limit of 15 sessions per academic year. The Center will assist if ongoing treatment is needed beyond the 15 sessions. Counseling is also offered through a telehealth source. Assistance is offered if referrals, medication, or other specific counseling is needed. Support groups are available, along with same-day consult appointments. A student in crisis can receive counseling in a 30-minute telephone counseling session. Crisis intervention is offered where the need is urgent, and students can be seen immediately. Help can be reached even during holidays through on-call counselors and mental health assistance at the University Police Department. Self-help is available through a website that include literature, audio, and video sources. WellTrack is a Student Care and Well-Being self-help app. There is a website for suicide prevention – Tide Against Suicide - which is a student-led initiative to spread suicide awareness. There are other campus services including the University Medical Center, SHC Psychiatry, training clinics, and specialized support sources. The Center offers workshops and awareness events. The Center is below the

standard for counselors per student for an institution this size. There should be a designated mental health liaison in every department/school. The Counseling Center has partnered with Together-All, which is an anonymous support platform.

Faculty can help in these areas: advocate for accurate information, engage in QPR training, and advocate for institutional support.

Urgency levels and access channels for non-urgent cases are same-day appointments and regular appointments, with supplemental services available. Urgent cases are same-day appointments. Crisis cases can call or walk-in.

Student response has grown every year, peaking at around 8% of the student population. Counseling services are available for anyone enrolled in at least a one-credit hour course. The Counseling Center is looking at alternative access and same-day appointments to mitigate anxiety-producing situations. Funds have been set aside to hire 8-9 additional counselors.

Clay Ryan and Charlie Taylor, UA System Office, gave an overview of pending legislation. The Critical Race Theory bill was presented last year. The original bill, which placed academic freedom in jeopardy, has been revised. The original bill included disciplinary action for violations, along with concerning language regarding contract and grant writing. This wording has been eliminated from the current pre-filed bill, HB7. Faculty input has been considered and influenced revisions. One of the main concerns was the impact on accreditation status. The revised version, HB7, does not address all concerns, but is an improvement. Some form of this bill will pass this session.

The lack of a consistent definition of Critical Race Theory was an issue. The title "Divisive Concepts" was interchangeably used with "Critical Race Theory". Divisive Concepts is a legal term with 8-9 subparts. Work continues to define each of these titles. There will be more tweaks to this bill, which makes faculty input very important. The main goal is to protect UA's integrity and control of the System's administrative decisions. The bill does not reference clarification between hate and free speech. The First Amendment will not be restricted. The bill allows teaching historically accurate information, with no restrictions. Any questions and feedback should be sent to President Chapman Greer.

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

The Faculty Senate meeting minutes of January 17, 2023 were approved with corrections.

President's Report – (Chapman Greer) There will be an event on February 28th for support of Turkey and Syria in the aftermath of massive earthquakes, with over 150,000 deaths. Eleven UA faculty members and seventeen students are from that area. Slides of the destruction will be posted on the Faculty Senate web site. All support is appreciated.

The Master Plan survey has been distributed. Master Plan representatives will speak at the March Faculty Senate meeting to share the survey results. Everyone is encouraged to fill out the survey.

President Chapman Greer has been appointed Associate Provost for General Education. She will provide strategic leadership and management of the resources required for designing, implementing, and evaluating the UA's GE requirements.

The Faculty Senate elections will be held in March, with the following nominations: Matthew Hudnall for president, Steven Yates for vice president and Rona Donahoe for secretary. Nominations can be made from the floor.

Vice President's Report – (Matthew Hudnall) SACSCOC is the main accreditation body for The University of Alabama. There is a diversity statement on their web site. Their proposal is to change the statement to a policy, which may be important to UA and other higher education institutions because of the increasing number of state laws pertaining to CRT and “divisive concepts.” Institution presidents will be voting on this issue in December.

Secretary's Report – (Barb Dahlbach) The Faculty Senate elections are under way. Nomination calls should have been received by every school/college. Emails have been sent to senators with expiring terms. Those wishing to continue to serve as a senator should make sure their names are on the ballot. Re-election is not automatic.

Community & Legislative Affairs – (Steven Yates & Joy Burnham) Charlie Taylor and Clay Ryan are open to discussion and questions concerning Critical Race Theory legislation.

Senators are asked to report any other pre-filed bill negatively affecting individual academic disciplines.

The Brewer Porch Teacher Appreciation Luncheon will be held May 11, 2023.

A date for a Legislative Reception is to be determined.

Academic Affairs – (Babs Davis & Rona Donahoe) The *Faculty Handbook* continues to be reviewed. Three documents pertaining to proposed changes were sent out for review. One question brought up in February's meeting was “how do you quantify contribution” in the Statement on Contribution to Publication” section of the *Faculty Handbook*. This issue will be addressed after the *Handbook* has been approved by the UA System Office.

The Council of Deans agreed to put back in Category C regarding conversion from administration to faculty for those who complete less than a full term. This will be at the discretion of the respective dean.

In the documents distributed, bolded text items have been addressed in Summary and shared with the Senate. Senators should review the proposed changes before the final vote at the March 2023 meeting. The provost is open to discussion regarding changes.

The Academic Affairs Committee is working with the SGA in their efforts to find alternatives for lower-cost and/or open-source textbooks. There was a meeting with UA Libraries and support was received from this area. The SGA is looking for Faculty Senate support and a statement. Academic Affairs will draft a statement of support for the Faculty Senate to review. The SGA would like three or four faculty members to support this pilot program. A time will be scheduled for the SGA to address the Senate.

Student Life – (Amanda Espy-Brown & Kim Parker) The REACH luncheon was very successful. Donations can be taken directly to Russell Hall or REACH will pick up the items. Donations can also be made through the REACH wish-list through Amazon.

Research & Service – The Research and Service Committee will send the IRB Survey to the Steering Committee and the Faculty Senate.

Faculty Life – *(Heather Elliott & Alex Tokovinine)* No report.

IT & Strat Com – *(Patrick Kung & Xiaoyan Hong)* This committee will engage OIT regarding concerns about ChatGPT and its impact on academic integrity.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion – *(Thomas Herwig & Alessandra Montalbano)* The committee has two possible dates for the DEI symposium. Details will be sent out when finalized.

At this time, faculty will not be allowed to change their last names on their email and broader UA image for professional reasons, as the Banner system overrides any changes made.

There will be a Deaf Event on February 23, 2023. Details are attached to the agenda.

Financial Affairs – *(Todd DeZoort & Tom Baker)* This committee is working on faculty salary data and a meeting with Matt Fajack.

Faculty & Senate Governance – *(Jeri Zemke & Ruth Ann Hall)* Dr. McWilliam is nominated to be Ombudsperson. This vote is taken in the colleges.

Calls have been sent out for commencement Marshal nominations.

Faculty & Staff Benefits Committee – *(Rona Donahoe)* No report.

Compliance Committee – *(Babs Davis)* There will be a meeting on February 22, 2023.

Meeting adjourned 5:00 PM