

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
UNIVERSITY, ALABAMA 35486

OFFICE OF THE
PRESIDENT

July 21, 1975

Dr. Robert B. Sweeney
Vice Chairman
University Council
The University of Alabama
University, Alabama

Dear Bob:

Under the authority given to the President of the University to develop organizational and communicative structures for working with the faculty, I hereby approve the creation of a Faculty Senate as described in the document you submitted to me on June 9, 1975. I also recognize, by their vote, that the faculty wishes to discontinue the University Council and will so advise the other constituencies of the Council.

The Senate document is essentially a statement of the terms which the faculty wishes to have recognized in its general deliberations with the other segments of the University community. For there to be a comprehensive agreement, it seems appropriate also to state the terms that these other constituencies wish to be recognized. Since they are not properly a part of the Senate document, they are alluded to here along with certain statements of interpretation so that this document and the Senate document, together, can constitute a new agreement.

1. The Faculty Senate, as provided for in the attached copy of the constitution, is recognized as an additional resource for expression of interests and concerns of the academic community. However, the distinctions between the Faculty Senate and the faculty as a whole, which has a variety of ways of expressing its views, should be noted. These channels include the organization of the schools, colleges and departments in which the faculty members have their respective appointments, in addition to the wide variety of committee memberships that have always been a vital part of the University governance.

2. The vote on the present structure certainly indicates that there is a great interest in forming a deliberative body consisting entirely of representatives from the faculty. As this new organization works to define its

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role within the University community, it will be most important for the faculty leadership to remain sensitive to some of the limitations that are inherent in such an organization which contains representatives from only one of several University constituencies.

3. Neither the students, deans, department heads, nor the professional staff have yet expressed themselves officially on the question of the modes of involvement and communication that they would prefer. The Executive Vice President and the other Vice Presidents will be working with those groups in the coming year to develop means of recognizing their interest.

A variety of structures that provide for input by the faculty represent an effective means of maintaining an academic community which is responsive to faculty interests. I have heard nothing from the faculty that would lead me to believe that it is anything but desirous of maintaining and strengthening its already established mechanisms for participation in University governance. It is entirely possible for the Faculty Senate to pursue its defined role within the total existing framework of the University.

As President of the University, one of the major responsibilities delegated to me by the Board of Trustees is that of leadership of the faculty. In that capacity, I must continue to work and communicate with a wide variety of University groups and organizations. Certainly included in that is what I hope will be a constructive relationship with this new Faculty Senate.

It is therefore appropriate that you take the necessary action to convene the first meeting of the Faculty Senate early in the fall semester, 1975-76, so that it may proceed with its organization and deliberations.

I am most grateful for the efforts made by you, Bill Darden, the members of his committee and others of the faculty who contributed to the process of developing the constitution and moving it toward effective implementation.

Most cordially,



David Mathews
President

DM/sp

cc: Vice Presidents
Deans of the Colleges and Schools