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Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes - February 2006

Faculty Senators

University of South Alabama

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**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
FACULTY SENATE
2005-2006
February 15, 2006
University Library, Rm. 110**

Approved MINUTES

The meeting began at 3:07 p.m. with Chair Doug Haywick presiding.

With no quorum, Doug began the meeting by introducing the guest speaker, Gordon Stone, Executive Director of the Higher Education Partnership (HEP). Gordon defined the Higher Education Partnership's mission as the "advocating the important of higher education in Alabama." The primary purpose is to organize a grass roots voice to promote positive action in Alabama universities. The focus is typically on budgets.

Currently, Alabama has the largest revenue pool in its history, an increase of \$1 million from last year. Current peak funding, however, follows a shortfall. For this reason, the HEP opposes Governor Riley's proposed state tax cut. Universities will work hard to advocate for equal appropriations improvements for all levels of education.

Gordon commended President Moulton and Happy Fulford for their work in helping to obtain increased funding for the University. Gordon also noted that the HEP has increased presence in the political arena.

Gordon encouraged all senators to attend Higher Education Day March 2nd to provide legislators with a visible reminder of the importance of higher education. All were encouraged to vote to send this message.

HEP is working with the Alabama Council of University Presidents. There is an upcoming annual event with the association that will include an open forum discussion with political leaders. Gordon invited the Faculty Senators to be a part of the event.

Gordon brought a Talking Points handout for senators to provide to students or friends. He also mentioned the ongoing development of a web site for HEP. Among other information, the site will provide statistical analyses of comparative faculty salaries.

Gordon ended by encouraging senators to be involved in HEP to help make a difference for Universities in the state. He provided his telephone number if senators seek more information.

Following Gordon Stone's presentation, Doug declared a quorum.

Present: Robert Moore, Bill Pruitt, Steve Brick, Kristy Britt, Genevieve Dardeau, April Dupree, Nicole Flynn, Doug Haywick, Zoya Khan, Susan McCready, Barry Nowlin, Federico Perez-Pineda, Stephen Bru, John Kovalski, Irene McIntosh, Vaughn Millner, Susan Santoli, Martin Parker, Dennis Guion, Jan Sauer, Barbara Burckhartt, Melissa Costello, Curtis Harris, Richard Whitehurst, Kevin Olden, Frank Pettyjohn, Kathy Porter, Craig Sherman, Deborah Spake, Jim Swofford, Irene Rattie

Excused: Brenda Beverly, Nicole Amare, Robert Coleman, Vasiliy Prokhorov, Abdullah Ficici, Daphne Hubbard, Nicholas Sylvester, Jie Li, Judy King, Arnold Luterman, Ehab Molokhia, Randall Powell, Thomas Williams, Natasha Delcoure, Alice Godfrey, Donna Wooster

Unexcused: James Davis, Tom Hain, Harold Pardue, Elliot Lauderdale, Scott Douglass, Martin Parker, Elizabeth Mancini, Gary Carnahan, Ed Harrison, Cindy Morgan, Rebecca Ryan

Guests: Gordon Stone, Higher Education Partnership and Dr. Timothy Beard, Dean of Students

The Minutes of the January 18th meeting were approved with no corrections.

Chair's Report

Doug began by noting that the March 15th faculty senate meeting is scheduled during Spring Break. A motion was made, seconded and approved that the next faculty senate meeting will take place on the following Wednesday, March 22, 2006.

Doug brought forth information gained during discussion with President Moulton and other administrative officials.

Update on the Cancer Center: Negotiation is proceeding well. Construction has started and sub-contractors are being utilized. Building costs are expected to increase. The administration is proceeding with the teaching mission of University people working with Infirmary people.

Update on the Knollwood transition. The transition is progressing. Currently, University employees do not pay a deductible whereas the Infirmary employees pay a deductible of \$500. Negotiations are underway to determine an equitable solution with special attention being given to long-term employees.

Dental plan. Doug asked senators if they were pleased thus far with the dental plan. Doug reported that the plan to date is staying within the costs of the deductible.

Building on campus. The Student Services building is proceeding. The Allied Health-Nursing building is costing 35% to 40% more than budgeted due to price rises as a result of Hurricane Katrina. The University asked for \$10 million in special monies to match federal money for the Shelby Engineering Science building. The University's Shelby building is modest (\$50 million) as compared to others in the state (e.g., UAB's Shelby). The University did not receive the \$10 million perhaps resulting, in part, because some people viewed the southern part of the state getting a windfall of money in other areas such as the state docks.

Regarding other matters, Doug inquired as to how many senators were receiving the information from Happy Fulford's e-mail updates about governmental relations. In summarizing the latest update (February 10, 2006), Doug noted that the University received \$5,550,000 in additional funding from the House Education Finance and Appropriations Committee, bringing the total to \$119,888,263 from the state to the University. This represents an increase of 18.9% over the current funding, slightly surpassing the average increase for 4 year colleges (18.5%).

Doug discussed the demise of the purchase cards effective today's date. There were problems involving protocol not being followed. As a separate option, credit cards may be available for some uses.

Old Business

One senator brought forward a point of inquiry. At the August meeting, the senate discussed asking senators to resign if they do not regularly come to meetings. Doug asked senators if they want him to enforce the attendance policy. There was general concurrence.

In a separate point, it was mentioned that in the November meeting, senators discussed changing the name of "Chair" to "President." Some commented that many universities use the title "President." This requires a faculty vote and amendment change. Doug will check with other universities to determine how they address the leader of the senate.

It was added that when senators consider amending the bylaws to address the Chair's title, they also change the March meeting date. The March meeting typically must be moved each year as the pre-determined date falls during Spring Break.

New Business

A senator brought forth the concern that students currently follow different procedures at night and on the Baldwin campus in filling out evaluation forms on faculty. Should there be a policy to address that? A few

potential solutions were discussed. In Arts and Sciences, there is a policy that students would bring the evaluation forms to the office. Another alternative would involve online evaluations. In extending this concern, it was mentioned that evaluation questions should be re-assessed as well. Doug asked Jan to explore the issue since the solution may involve technology.

A separate issue involved duplicate health and dental coverage with a spouse. In one case, Blue Cross/Blue Shield in one spouse's policy covered ½ of the costs whereas the other spouse's BC/BS policy did not pick up the difference. In a separate case, two spousal policies of BC/BS did cover the entire amount. Those with two policies in the family were urged to check on their coverage to determine if two premiums are a good investment.

Reports from standing committees

Academic Development & Mentoring: John Kovalski reported the committee was working on two initiatives. The first is the composition of a draft of a mission statement for the committee.

The second is consideration of a committee name change.

Academic Policy and Faculty Handbook: Donna Wooster. No report.

Environmental Quality: Barry Nowlin. No report.

Evaluation: Deborah Spake reported that Dr. Covey agreed to pay the fee for Survey Monkey. Tom Hain and Deborah tested the questionnaire. It is ready to go.

Planning & Development: Nicole Flynn reported that the committee has planned an International Wines Tasting fund raiser for the University Club for Thursday, March 30th at House of Blends located at 4406 Old Shell Road from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. The cost is \$40 couples; \$25 individuals. World class wines will be available and some food. The committee will work with Public Relations to determine the guest list and work on invitations. Dr. Busta agreed to serve on the University committee for the University club.

Salary & Fringe Benefits: Susan McCready. No report.

Technology Utilization: Jan Sauer. The committee met and are discussing a Technology Fair, an opportunity to show faculty what each other is doing. Secondly, they are exploring a student response system (student uses remote) to see if a demo is available. This might help faculty retention. Jie Li has agreed to be web master.

Caucus Leaders Reports

Allied Health: Bob Moore. No report.

Arts & Sciences: Federico Perez-Pineda reported that Dean Johnson met with the educational assessment committee to evaluate general education outcomes. He met with other Deans about available campus positions. The college is publishing a brochure which will soon be in press.

Computer & Information Sciences: Harold Pardue. No report.

Continuing Education: Elliot Lauderdale. No report.

Education: Daphne Hubbard. No report.

Engineering: Martin Parker. No report.

Library: Dennis Guion. No report.

Medicine: Gary Carnahan. No report.

Mitchell College of Business: Jim Swofford. No report.

Nursing: Irene Rattie. No report.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

Next meeting: Wednesday, March 22, 2006

Final note: Doug reminded senators that in a few months, terms expire for officers and committee chairs. He urged senators to look for nominations.