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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
Faculty Senate
Approved Minutes
14 January 1998

1 and 2. Call to order and of Roll

The regular meeting was called to order by Suzanne McGill, Chair, at 3:00 p.m. in Library 5. The Secretary called the roll:

Present:

Allison, Arata, Bell, Broadus, Chrysler, Cronwell,
Davidson Shivers, Dilsaver, Donovan, Engebretson,
Evans, Foster, Frederick, Rain, Haywick,
Honkanen, Isom, Izenberg, Kulkarni, Labbe, Lally,
Langan, LeDoux, Matthews, McAfee, McGill, McIver,
Moak, Moore, Mulekar, Parker, Rodgers, Sauer,
Sweet, Swint, Sylvestre, Thurston, Tucker,
Van Haneghan, Vetroky, Vinson, Weston, c. Wilson,
G. Wilson, Zhang

Absent (excused):

Ardell, Aucoin, Ballard, Brandon, Broadus,
Cronwell, Daughenbaugh, Dorman, Douglass, Fruh,
Hams, Honkanen, Kulkarni, Martin, Simpson, Yeoman

3. Completion of Pending Business

Minutes of the regular meeting of 12 November 1997 will be reviewed for approval at the next meeting on 11 February 1998.

4. Report from the Chair

Suzanne McGill invited Renee Harper, writing lab supervisor, to review the recent history of the EH 010 exam, currently required of transfer students who seek credit for EH 101 taken elsewhere. This task consumes about one half the time and labor of the current staff of the writing center and the utility of the exam is debatable, so Harper would recommend eliminating the exam to allow the writing center staff to devote all its efforts to tutorial and small group assistance of student writers.

Patsy Covey, interim senior vice president for academic affairs, was invited to address the same topic. Covey observed that the goal of the EH 010 exam is to intercept students with poor writing skills and direct them to re-take EH 101; this goal can also be achieved in "W" and other writing courses, students from which can be directed to the writing center where staff time available should be doubled if the EH 010 exam is eliminated. No

other state university in Alabama uses an exam such as EH 010. The articulation agreement may require USA to administer an EH 010 exam to all students, not just to transfers. Covey suggested that students not be allowed to register for "W" courses unless they have credit for EH 101 and 102, that this pre-requisite be stated in the bulletins and that students discovered to be enrolled without EH 101/102 credit would be administratively withdrawn from the "w" course.

Covey was also invited to address other topics she felt would be of interest to the senate and took questions as well.

Page 2

Covey is representing USA at the state-wide meetings of the chief academic officers of state universities, which body is working on the articulation agreement and has expressed concern about faculty salaries in Alabama, which continue to be noncompetitive. Covey discussed Fob James' proposal for a bolus of continuing funding set aside for a salary increment pool. McGill observed that, in order to obtain an 8.5% merit raise pool at USA, state funding would have to be increased 15.2%.

McGill asked for and received consensus approval that she send a memorandum to the president expressing thanks for the recent efforts that brought about a salary raise.

McGill reported that the ad hoc committee to propose endowed professorship guidelines had made its report to the president who in turn would take the proposal to the foundation for approval.

McGill reported that the statewide articulation committee continued to review requirements, but their work was slowed down considerably by the volume of paperwork submitted regarding discipline-related issues.

McGill reported she attended the higher education budget hearings in early December in Montgomery, where legislators were asking if university administrators represented faculty opinion about across the board vs. merit pool raises. McGill said she and other chairs of faculty senates tended to support the latter.

McGill reported discussions with the deans about semester conversion/summer term issues, such as salary and schedule.

McGill reported that the search committee for the senior vice president for academic affairs would ask the president to approve inviting three candidates to campus in the next few weeks. The closing date has yet to arrive for applications for the vice president for medical affairs.

5. Reports of Senate Standing Committees

Planning/Development. Douglas Haywick reported about space in the new coliseum (University Center), where there may be as much as 12,000 square feet of classroom space available, the largest size to accommodate 130 students. Apparently structural supports may limit the configuration of space. Also under consideration is a 100 seat dining facility. Noise levels in the arena may prohibit use of academic space at certain times.

6. Reports of Caucus Leaders

None.

7. Old Business

McGill proposed that the rules be suspended so the senate could consider a resolution offered today, to which the senate consented. The senate passed a motion to eliminate the EH 010 exam, 38 yea, 1 nay, 1 abstain.

8. New Business

McGill proposed that the rules be suspended so the senate could consider two resolutions offered today to which the senate consented; both resolutions passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION

Whereas, both the Teachers Retirement System (TRS) and the Employees Retirement System (ERS) have experienced significant gains earned by the Retirement Systems of Alabama (RSA) investments and the conversion from "book value" to "market place value" of assets, and

Whereas, these gains will result in a significant decrease in required contributions to the RSA for at least the next five years, and

Whereas, the retirement matching dollars for all state four-year institutions of higher education come from the budgets of the individual state institutions, and

Whereas, the State appropriation to the University of South Alabama was cut 7.5% in 1994 and has not been restored, and

Whereas, these cuts in funding have impeded the University's ability to attract and retain outstanding faculty and have forced the University to leave faculty and staff positions unfilled and to decrease funding in such critical areas as the library, technology support, laboratory equipment, etc., and

Whereas the retirement matching dollars could be used to address problems created by the recent cutbacks,

Therefore be it resolved that the Legislature of Alabama be advised of the absolute necessity of leaving in the budgets of individual state institutions all retirement matching dollars currently appropriated to these individual institutions.

RESOLUTION

Whereas, in recent years the state of Alabama has lacked adequate resources to properly fund higher education, and

Whereas, salaries of faculty at the University of South Alabama are below the average salaries of faculty at peer institutions in other states, and

Whereas, K 12 teachers, faculty and employees at two year institutions of higher education, and other state employees will receive salary increases this year via state appropriations, and

Whereas, salary increases at the University of South Alabama and other four year institutions of higher education are merit based,

Therefore be it resolved that the Legislature of Alabama be advised to increase funding to the University of South Alabama to provide for salary increases comparable with the salary increases for teachers at two year institutions and K-12. Specifically, we request an 8.5% salary pool increase for 1998. Moreover, it is essential that the current retirement funds now in our budget be retained by the institution. (*Approximately 10.624 million

Page 4

dollars is needed to provide an 8.5% salary merit pool increase This represents a 15.2% increase in funding from

the State.)

9. Communications from the President

No communications were reported.

9. Adjournment

McGill adjourned the meeting at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
T. Lally, Secretary