

Minutes
Faculty Council Meeting
Wallace Hall

Date: March 26, 2008

Time: 3:04 pm

Members Present: Dr. Scout Blum (T)
Dr. Cindy McCoy (T)
Dr. Sam Shelton (T)
Dr. Steven Taylor (T)
Dr. Dianne Eppler (UC)
Ms. Alyssa Martin (M)
Dr. Timothy Buckner (T)
Mr. Jim Davis (T)
Dr. Al Glover (T)
Dr. Nimol Podder (T)
Dr. James DeLoach (M)
Dr. Larry Fogelberg (T)
Dr. Jim Ryan (PC)
Dr. Catherine Allard (T)
Dr. Mark Walker (T)
Dr. Andrew Creamer (T)
Dr. Chan Roark (T)
Dr. Jeanne Wright (T)
Dr. Dick Williams (D)

Members Absent: Dr. Sandra Harris (M) – with notice, Dr. John Harrell attended
Dr. David Hollingsworth – with notice
Dr. Allen Dennis – with notice
Dr. Bud Borders – with notice
Dr. Tish Metuszek
Dr. Frank Hammonds – with notice
Dr. Sue Hayden

1. Roll was called by Dr. Sam Shelton

2. The minutes of the February meeting were reviewed. Item 3(c) was amended with the correct spelling for Dr. Vardaman (Senior Director for Human Resources), change of “dean’s” to “deans,” and the correction for the College of Fine Arts to College of Communication and Fine Arts. Item 4(b) concerning Dean Cochran’s explanation of the facilities reservation process was clarified. Dr. Chan Roark moved approval as amended; seconded by Dr. Steven Taylor; approved.

3. Old Business

a. Dr. Eppler presented the Faculty Welfare Committee report. The Committee examined the draft Faculty Salary report, but it will be discussed later in the agenda.

b. Dr. Allard had nothing to report from the Academic Affairs Committee.

c. Dr. Shelton presented the Elections Committee report. He is still working on the full-time faculty list, trying to identify the rank, College and Campus, user ids, and Datatel id. The user id will be used as the login name and the Datatel id as the password for access to the online election process. A call for candidates was sent to all faculty (although between 50-60 emails were returned). He asked Council members to make sure that their faculty received the email and knew about the opportunity to run for the Faculty Council. Also, Keith Sessions is going to post the notice on the Faculty Council website. A deadline has been set for Friday, April 4th, to declare candidacy. Candidates are requested to provide a short paragraph that includes their campus, what they teach, and why they would like to become a member of the Council, as well as a picture. A specific date for the election has not been set because of the need to make the database as accurate as possible; once provided to the election software vendor, it is very difficult to make changes. Dr. Shelton hopes it can be scheduled during the third week of April. Voters will only have access to the ballot(s) for which they are eligible to vote.

Recap of vacancies:

- 1-Troy at-large
- 1-Montgomery at-large
- 2- College of Arts and Sciences
- 2-College of Education
- 1-College of Communication and Fine Arts
- 1-College of Health and Human Services

There is also a third vacancy in the College of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Dennis is retiring as of June 1st, so his position has to be filled.

d. Dr. McCoy presented the Committee on Committees report. She received one report back from Mr. Jim Davis. Dr. McCoy asked Mr. Davis to discuss what he had told her.

The Undergraduate Academic Council has approved a change in how the American English Group (AEG) evaluates students to determine when they are ready to bridge into campus at-large and start taking regular courses. It had been based on TOEFL exclusively which has been an unreliable test because there are many ways to cheat on it. The AEG program asked it be allowed to test based on the ACT test, which students will take when they enroll in AEG; to graduate from AEG, the student will have to pass a final exam where all of the AEG teachers

evaluate every student individually to see if the teachers believe the student can bridge into regular courses. The TOEFL will still be accepted if the student passes it in their home country, but once the student gets to Troy the TOEFL will not be administered.

e. Dr. Blum had previously sent everyone a draft copy of the Ad Hoc Committee report on the Vision 2010 recommendations on faculty salaries. However, after distribution she was notified of a few changes. Dr. Blum will resend the draft document with all the corrected information.

There were quite a few faculty members for whom she was not able to get salary information because the information was not in the public salary report at the Troy Library.

Dr. Fogelberg suggested that the salary information should be presented by discipline, not just by rank. Dr. Blum explained the committee decided to break down the report by rank rather than discipline because the comparative data by discipline is not readily located. In addition, in 2000 when the administration bumped up salaries, it was by rank not by discipline. The committee does have the average salaries for each rank, by each college.

Dr. Eppler asked whether it could still be recommended that a good faith effort be made for parity by discipline. Dr. Allard noted that she understood the point of view, but the point of the current effort is to look at a proposal to assist the University to achieve the 2010 goal. We are not acting like a union in negotiations but as a cooperating participant in the salary discussions for faculty.

Dr. Blum acknowledged that the current effort is examining a base salary structure but recognized that certain disciplines are also affected by market forces.

Dr. Allard noted that in order to find a comparison such as a departmental comparison you have to rely on the good faith of other universities to supply that information to you, which they may not be willing to supply. The current approach gives a way to find a basis of comparison at a much wider range.

Dr. Eppler agreed that the committee should dig and see some discipline specific numbers if those numbers are available. In any public university, she assumed that salaries are public knowledge. She thinks that the Council should compare more specific information.

Dr. Blum thought that the discipline salaries would be very hard to get. She is open to suggestions on where to go from this point.

Dr. Taylor stated that the main action is simply a recommendation to administration, which is all that the Council is trying to do to start a discussion on the topic as it was raised by the Chancellor. If the issue is that we feel as if we

need more specific data, then we can better specify and then discuss what recommendations we wish to make based on the document at the next meeting if that is the case.

Dr. Blum suggested that once she redistributes the correct draft everyone needs to look it over. She will include the Southeast Region Education Data (SRED) webpage so that the Council can see what is out there, and certainly anyone else who wants to do some looking on there for that type of information would be welcome to do so. The draft will be discussed at the next meeting.

f. Dr. Blum attended the Academic Steering Committee and presented the Committee with the Council's report and recommendation for a +/- grading system approved by the Council in January 2007. Dr. Roach formed a subcommittee to look at the issue. The subcommittee should be meeting soon.

g. Dr. Buckner provided an update on the Faculty Council Excellence Award. The award is for a non-tenured track faculty. He distributed the forms for nomination to the faculty; two submissions have been received at this point. He encouraged the Council to submit the names of any non-tenured faculty who are excellent teachers, researchers and University citizens. Barbara Patterson had suggested to him that this award be given out at Honors Convocation. The deadline for submitting nomination forms for the award is March 31st.

Dr. Blum asked Dr. Buckner to serve on the committee that would choose the award recipient. Drs. Podder and Roark volunteered to also serve on the review committee.

4. New Business

a. Dr. Walker and Dr. Blum discussed the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee on Constitutional Amendments. Dr. Blum described briefly the process that is mentioned in the Constitution. Any amendment that is drafted and proposed has to be debated at one of the Council's scheduled meetings, the Council debates it, but the voting must be deferred until the next meeting. To be presented to the faculty, an amendment must get a two-thirds vote of the Council. Once this happens, then there is a 30-day period between that point and whenever there is a vote by the faculty on this. In order to pass, an amendment has to receive a favorable vote of a majority of eligible voting faculty; those that pass are then sent on to the Chancellor. There is also a process if the Chancellor objects to an amendment.

Dr. Walker sent out an email last week soliciting suggestions for possible amendments or revisions. He identified the suggestions that he has gotten so far. He received a suggestion for a name change to Faculty Senate and another suggestion that the Council look at its definition of vacancy and what to do about that. Dr. Walker checked nine other universities through their websites to try to

see what name was used for their faculty organization. Auburn University is designated as University Senate. He also looked at their constitutions and all but the University of Florida and Louisiana State University had a very definite policy about vacancies. The Faculty Council Constitution has specifics about the officer vacancies but not regular members.

Dr. Taylor agreed that the Council has had several shortened terms that required action, but there are no set rules for the process. The Council could use some set rules not only for vacancies but also for attendance. As representatives of a specific part of the University, absent Council members are not adequately representing their constituents.

What the Council is going to do today is just to decide if we want to form a committee to draft possible amendments. The Council is not voting on any specific amendments. If a committee is approved, it will report its recommendations at the April meeting for Council to discuss.

Dr. Allard moved that the Council form a committee to explore amending the Constitution. Although not limited to them, some items for discussion should include a definition of a vacancy, expectations of member attendance, the idea of a name change, and whatever else the committee may decide; Dr Taylor seconded; approved.

Drs. Walker, Taylor, and Blum will serve as the committee.

b. Dr. Blum received some comments from some Troy Campus faculty members that they had been told that the 2009 summer schedule had been changed to only include one long summer session. This contrasts with the previous years' two short sessions (with one long session coinciding) or the 2008 schedule with one short session and one long session (also coinciding).

Dr. Fulmer explained that he and Dr. Barron work on this for the Troy Campus. He explained the he and Dr. Barron have not had any kind of definitive discussions about Summer of 2009 because the current priority is to get the 2008 summer and fall calendars into the package form so that students can register in April. If there is a sense out there that somehow a decision for 2009 has already been made, it has not. He and Dr. Barron do have certain constraints, such as the master calendar scheme approved by the Chancellor's Cabinet. That calendar has a start date and an end date and a certain number of weeks to work with, but what will be done within those weeks has not been decided. If Dr. Blum, or anyone else, has a suggestion or a comment, they should contact their departmental chairs.

Dr. Shelton asked if Dr. Fulmer thought there would be the possibility of a return to a split session as used previously at the Troy Campus. Dr. Fulmer responded that in the past, since there was not a University-wide standard calendar, there

was a longer period of time in the summer in which to fold in smaller terms. With the standardized calendars, there is less and less time in the summer which makes it increasingly difficult to fold in multiple terms, but a decision has not been made.

5. Other Business

a. Dr. Podder informed the Council that it was reported to him that a student had a gun in class. The instructor that reported the student asked what the gun policy was for the University.

The gun policy is in the Oracle. Students are not allowed to carry weapons on campus. If a student has a weapon, the student should be reported to the University Police and to Dean Reeves.

Dr. Shelton noted that the doors in GAB do not lock, so if we do have an emergency and all the cell phones go off, the instructor can not lock their class to prevent anyone coming in. Dr. Barron responded that the issue with the door locks or lack of them will be examined.

Dr. Roach instructed all faculty that if at any point they do not feel safe to please call the University Police.

5. The meeting adjourned at 3:54 pm.