



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

Faculty Senate 2007-08

University of South Alabama
Faculty Senate
2008-2009
July 16, 2008
University Library, Rm.110

Minutes (Approved September 17, 2008)

Present: Aliabadi, Ambrose, Aucoin, Baggett, Bru, Burnham, Carr, Carter, Connors, Doran, Engin, Estis, Estrada, Hamilton, Haywick, Irion, Keasler, I. Khan, King, Lemley, Loomis, Major, McCormick, Moore, Morris, Omar, Perry, Prendergast, Prescott, Quereshi, Romey, Rowell, Sachs, Summerlin, Tate, Turnipseed, Tony Wright, Tootie Wright.

Excused: Byrne, Campbell, Falkos, Fantoni, Fressne, Johnsten, A. Kahn, Kinniburgh, McCready, Meyer, Nowlin, Perez Pineda, Teplick, Vrettos, Woodford.

Unexcused: Allison, McNair, Pacheco, Patterson, Toelken

1. The chair, John Sachs, called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm with a quorum of Senators present.

2. Approval of the minutes from the June meeting.

Aliabadi moved, Majors seconded, and the minutes were approved by voice vote with no changes.

3. Chair's Report:

Sachs reported on a busy month, including an executive committee meeting with Russ Lea related to the new conflict of interest policy and related matters. Much of today's meeting would be dedicated to these issues. Sachs updated the Senate on the negotiations with the Deans over the non-reappointment resolution. Tate and Sachs met with the Deans who offered what Sachs considers a good compromise. Though they are still working on the precise wording, the administration is planning on beefing-up the evaluation process and requiring annual written evaluations. Faculty will therefore know where they stand, which should eliminate any surprises of non-reappointment. If a person gets good evaluations and not reappointed, that would be considered a procedural matter and could be appealed to the Grievance Committee. Sachs noted that whatever comes out of the committee will have to come back to the Senate for review and a vote. Tate added that the decision on reappointment would now be made after the individual has had a chance to submit papers for their annual evaluation, in April, rather than March. This gives the faculty the chance to demonstrate performance before the decision is made. The Deans did not want to get into the issue of exactly how many published articles per

year. Sachs added that he is not sure whether the revision will include annual peer-review after mid-term review: an idea he recommended and supports. Irions asked that when the matter is resolved that the Senate recognize and credit Loomis and Tate for their work on this initiative.

Sachs noted that the search committee for the position of VPAA held its first meeting and that a professional search firm has been hired to handle the search. Turnipseed indicated that the firm made a presentation to the committee and that he believes that they will take a hands-on approach. Morris asked about the composition of the searchy committee, which includes Sachs, Turnipseed, and Tate from the Senate. The Committee is chaired by VP Ron Francis. Haywick asked about the timetable. It was indicated that they hope to have a decision by December and have the first list by October 13. Doran mentioned that they want to conduct faculty forum in early September to get feedback from the faculty.

Sachs indicated that the Senate web site now includes information on benefits. He also noted that today's meeting would not include the committee or caucus reports and that if the chairs or caucus leaders have a report, that they should submit those to the Secretary. Finally, Sachs thanked Haywick, Engin and Vrettos for volunteering for a committee at the last meeting.

4. Old Business

- FYI -- Resolution on non-reappointment of tenure track faculty (addressed during Chair's report)
- FYI – Resolution on revision to Faculty Handbook on workload expectations for instructors. Sachs indicated that the administration has received the resolution and will get back to us.

5. New Business

- Presentation by Russ Lea, Vice President of Research

Russ Lea described the new policy and procedures on conflict of interest and indicated his intention to engage in a dialogue with the faculty over these and broader issues related to responsible conduct of research. Lea noted two mandates from the federal government: that all universities have a policy (in place since since 1989) and that it has to be centrally administered (in place since 1997). Noting that nothing was broke at USA upon taking the position and that the only thing we did not have in place was an export control policy, the Competitiveness Act of 2007 mandated that we have to communicate responsible conduct of research to the faculty periodically. There are nine aspects of responsible conduct of research, which includes the matter of conflict of interest. He noted that the vice president for research handles this because he has to certify on a grant that there is no conflict of interest, but the issue is much bigger than research alone. There are many potential conflicts of interest and conflicts of commitment beyond research. He also noted that no one at USA has disclosed a conflict of interest in years, though everyone knows there is potential for conflict of interest. Lea offered some historical background, noting that most large, land-grant institutions have had a policy in place for years. USA, however, has a policy of certification, but we have no disclosure of potential conflict of interest, no information, and no training. The culture of USA may be different from other institutions, but this is something that we need to discuss. The new policy is one of annual disclosure. He indicated that he will issue a memo in September informing the faculty of the requirement to file annual statement on conflict of interest. The statement will be presented to the

chair and placed in the personnel file. Beyond that, he indicated his intention to engage in a discussion over the details of the policy. He does not support any uniform police, but to discuss the type of culture we want. He also envisions training regarding conflict of interest.

During a brief Q&A period, Loomis raised the issue of the role of the Senate. Lea indicated that he was not aware of the role of the Senate in approving changes to the Faculty Handbook until very recently, but would make the proposed changes available. He noted that the changes center on the broad policy and would refer to the details and the forms located elsewhere. Haywick suggested that the Handbook committee could act quickly to handle this and that the Senate could perhaps suspend the rules to consider the proposal at the September meeting. Haywick also asked if during the training sessions, examples of conflict of interest would be provided. Lea indicated that the case approach would be used. Lea emphasized that we have the discussion during the course of the training: for example, do we want codes of research, or honor codes for students? Iriion suggested that the meetings also be held at the Shack and Baldwin County.

6. Sachs advised that the September meeting will not be in the Library auditorium, but the venue is still to be determined.

7. The meeting adjourned at 4:03 pm.

Supplemental Materials. The following committee and caucus reports were submitted in writing to the Secretary.

Committee Reports

- Academic Development and Mentoring (Susan McCready): no report
- Environmental Quality (Smoot Major): no report
- Evaluation (Vicki Tate): Evaluation Committee will be working on two main issues this coming year: 1.) streamlining the faculty survey so it will have fewer questions and 2.) looking into the procedures for conducting and tallying student evaluations with the goal of developing practical suggestions for improving their usefulness.
- Planning and Development (Zari Aliabadi): no report
- Policies and Faculty Handbook (Elizabeth Romey): The Handbook and Policy Committee will attempt to meet the week of August 11, when faculty (but not yet students) have returned; date, time, and location still TBA. In the meantime, if anyone with a concern they'd like the committee to address will please submit it in writing to me, earomey@usouthal.edu, (preferably with a subject line containing either or both of the words "handbook" and "policy") before the end of the semester I will distribute it to the committee for consideration.
- Salary and Benefits (Jean Iriion): The committee discussed the University policy regarding the inclusion of Directed Studies, Independent Studies, Thesis and Dissertation in faculty load. Five different colleges were represented at this meeting. From the discussion among committee members and the Faculty Senate Chair present at the meeting, it appears as though there is no

uniform method of treatment of Directed Studies etc in a faculty member's load across the university. For some it was reported that it was included in their load. For others, it was an overload with no extra pay with the perception that directed studies serve as a means for generating grant proposals and publications, in conjunction with the student, further down the road. It was noted by one committee member that Auburn faculty are paid for supervising a directed study course. The Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee will request the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate to present this issue to President Moulton and to assist in gathering further data from the Deans and Department Chairs about how this is dealt with on a departmental and college level across the university. Once the data is gathered and reviewed, the Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee will present any proposal that may be appropriate to address the apparent non-uniformity of this course load issue.

A second topic of discussion was the date of paycheck distributions when the 1st of the month occurs on a Saturday. In this instance, paychecks are not distributed until Monday, the 3rd day of the month. Looking at the 2008 calendar, this occurred twice (March and November). In the instance where the 1st occurs on a Saturday and the following Monday is a legal holiday, you are not paid until the 4th of the month. Concerns have been expressed by some faculty to their Faculty Senate representatives that this is a financial hardship to them when there is such a delay in getting paid. A request will be made to President Moulton via the Executive Committee to consider changing the paycheck date for those months in which the 1st is on a Saturday to the last day of the previous month which would be that Friday.

The next University Fringe Benefits Committee meeting will be on 7/29. A representative from the Faculty Senate Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee will be in attendance at this university committee meeting.

- Technology Utilization (Tom Johnsten): no report

Caucus Leader Reports

- Allied Health (Julie Estis): no report
- Arts and Sciences (Phil Carr): no report
- Continuing Education (Stephen Bru): no report
- Computer and Information Sciences (Michael Doran): no report
- Education (Leah Kinniburgh): no report
- Engineering (Peter Byrne): no report
- Library (Amy Prendergast): no report
- Mitchell College of Business (Greg Prescott): MCOB will have four new faculty members who will start this fall.
- Medicine (Sheryl Falkos): no report
- Nursing (Tootie Wright):
 1. The College of Nursing received \$286,000.00 continuation funding for the Public Health Administration grant, PI Dr. Karen Hamilton.
 2. \$260,000.00 was awarded by the DHHS/HRSA division to the College of Nursing in the form of a Nurse Traineeship grant. These funds are distributed competitively to graduate and doctoral students at the College to offset the cost of tuition and books.
 3. The College of Nursing's satellite campus at Baldwin County has moved to their new building which is the former Fairhope Library. The CON operates a full program including an accelerated track at Baldwin campus. There are several fully equipped state-of-the-art

classrooms as well as faculty offices. There are 4 labs with human simulators that can run all types of medical scenarios for teaching. The College purchased an I-Stan simulator and is the only non-military institution in the state of Alabama to have a mannequin of this caliber for teaching purposes. Dr. Barbara Broome is the Associate Dean of the USACON Baldwin Campus.

Minutes by Stephen Morris, Secretary