

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

March 10, 2011

The Faculty Senate of the University of North Alabama met March 10, 2011 in Room 100 of Floyd Science Building at 3:30 p.m.

President Richardson called the meeting to order and recognized the following proxies:

Joan Parris for Senator Nickels from Computer Information Systems,
David McCullough for Senator Loeppky from Music,
Peggy Campbell for Senator Davidson from Secondary Education,
Wendy Darby for Senator Beckwith from Nursing,
John Hodges for Senator Crisler from Social Work, and
Jason Flynn for Senator Sanders from Communication.

Senator Statom moved the adoption of the agenda. Senator Lee seconded. The motion passed. Senator Statom moved the approval of the February 24, 2011 minutes. Senator Lee seconded. The motion passed.

President Richardson welcomed the members of the Staff Senate who were invited to attend the beginning of the meeting to allow President Cale the opportunity to make a presentation to both senates.

President Cale reported that the Athletic Committee of the Board of Trustees met last Monday. He stated that he did not expect that there would be a vote taken this coming Monday at the Board of Trustees meeting related to athletics. He will probably ask for a study to call for an adoption of a strategic plan that would safeguard spending in the budget, provide benchmarks to meet, and minimize the impact to the students. The study would be prepared by May and hopefully adopted in June. He stated that in his personal view under correct circumstances the move to Division I could be a good move. It would allow us to be associated with schools more like ours academically, give us more notoriety, and possibly result in growth. This would of course be possible if the right set of internal circumstances exist. He also stated that he is in agreement with all the concerns which have been expressed. It is critical that we demonstrate consistent external support and find a path that will provide safeguards for our budget and for our students.

President Cale also reported on five construction projects. The Black Box Theatre has had its groundbreaking. The Academic and Student Commons has found its last vendor. The X^{nth}

laboratory design firm has been hired to work along with the architect on the new Science Building. The Board of Trustees Executive Committee met in executive session to approve new furniture for Rice and Rivers Halls. The East Campus Maintenance Facility should be finished in a month and occupied within 2 months.

President Cale reported that there will be a new telephone system implemented for the campus using voice over internet protocol.

Vice-President Thornell reported on the new policy on violence in the workplace. If you make a comment that suggests violence to deal with an issue, you will be escorted off campus. He also discussed that promotions have been announced but the faculty need to realize that only half of those applying received promotion. We need to make the process as transparent as possible.

REPORTS:

- A. President Richardson shared a copy of his report to President Cale concerning the Athletics Issue. (See Attachment A)
- B. President Richardson reported from the Ad hoc Committee on Modification to the Shared Governance Structure. The document the senate approved has been submitted to the Shared Governance Committee, the Staff Senate, and the SGA.
- C. Senator Gaston reported that the Faculty Affairs Committee is reviewing the recommended revisions from President Cale for the Faculty Handbook.
- D. The Academic Affairs Committee did not have a report. The committee is working on the computer utilization policy.
- E. Senator Peterson thanked the faculty for the suggestions for the Faculty Attitude Survey. The Faculty Attitude Survey Committee expects to release the survey next week. She asked that senators encourage their colleagues to respond.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- A. Senator Statom moved that the proposal concerning Thanksgiving Break be amended to say that classes begin on Monday evening and Study Day be removed to allow the entire week of Thanksgiving off. Senator Hulseby seconded. The amendment passed 22-9-2. The vote for taking the entire week of Thanksgiving off passed 24-7-3.
- B. Senator Statom moved to postpone the consideration of the Distance Learning Policies and Procedure Manual. Senator Lee seconded. The motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. President Richardson reminded those senators whose terms were expiring that elections for replacements must be made no later than the fourth week of April with the first meeting of new senators Tuesday, May 3.
- B. Senators Hall, Sanders, and Carrasco were elected to the Nominating Committee.
- C. President Richardson reported the vacancies on shared governance committees and stated that nominations would be taken by email.
- D. Senator Peterson moved that the limit of the vita length be changed from one to five. Senator Lee seconded. The motion passed.
- E. President Richardson presented a remission of course hour fees policy which had been passed by the EC. He asked that the senators share with their constituents. Senator Statom moved to accept the proposal. Senator Carrasco seconded. Senator Gafford moved to postpone. Senator Gaston seconded. The motion to postpone passed.

Senator Roden moved that the meeting be adjourned. Senator Statom seconded. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

ATTACHMENT A



MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. William G. Cale
President

FROM: Dr. Terry D. Richardson, President
Faculty Senate

DATE: February 28, 2011

SUBJECT: Towards the Future of UNA Athletics—Faculty Concerns

INTRODUCTION

On February 6, 2011, all members of the Faculty Senate were asked to discuss the future of UNA Athletics with the departments or units they represent. Specifically, senators from each department or unit were asked to come up with a list of the top five concerns expressed by their respective departments regarding UNA making the move to the NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision (D-I FCS). They were asked to interact considerably with their constituents to form this list and that the list be prioritized from the greatest (1) to the least (5) concern. Concomitantly, they were also requested to provide a list of the top five concerns, again prioritized from greatest (1) concern to least (5), regarding staying in Division II. Finally, the senators were asked to gather responses to the following statements with simple “Agree” or Disagree” responses:

- “I am philosophically opposed to a move to Division I FCS Athletics.”
- “I would be in favor of a move to D-I FCS athletics if my concerns were satisfactorily addressed.”
- “I would be in favor of staying in D-II athletics if my concerns were satisfactorily addressed.”

The following link was provided to the senators to share with their constituents for background on the issues facing UNA's athletic program: [Toward the Future in UNA Athletics](#) (.pdf). The senators were informed that this link was also available on UNA's Home Page.

RESULTS

Of UNA's approximately 34 departments or educational support units (libraries, Educational Technology Services, *etc.*), 18 responded to the request for information. Some reported singular responses for the entire department while others chose to provide the individual responses of each faculty member of the department.

Responses to Specific Statements

I am philosophically opposed to a move to Division I FCS Athletics.

Disagree— 27% (15)

Agree— 73% (40)

It is clear the UNA faculty are philosophically opposed to a move to NCAA D-I FCS Athletics nearly 3:1. However, responses to this statement were variously reported. Some senators reported one response for their entire department while others reported the individual responses for each faculty member within their department. Reported here is the sum total of all responses, *i.e.*, departmental *vs.* individual responses were not separated and each response was counted. For clarity, 6/18 respondents reported a single answer for the entire department, 6/18 reported responses for each individual in their department, and 6/18 did not provide a direct response to this statement.

I would be in favor of a move to D-I FCS Athletics if my concerns were satisfactorily addressed.

Disagree—46% (19)

Agree—54% (22)

Responses to this statement were nearly equal. Interestingly, 19 disagree with a move to D-I even if their concerns were satisfactorily met (see below). This seems to support the overall philosophical opposition to the move. Again, responses to this statement were variously reported with individual and departmental responses combined. For this statement; 8/18 provided a single response for the entire department, 6/18 gave individual responses, and 4/18 did not provide a direct response to this statement.

I would be in favor of staying in D-II athletics if my concerns were satisfactorily addressed.

Disagree—6% (2)

Agree—94% (33)

UNA faculty clearly favor staying in NCAA D-II Athletics. It is important to note, however, that numerous responses failed to report any concerns for staying in D-II. This may reflect that no real concerns exist or a positive attitude that UNA will be able to satisfactorily address the concerns that will arise while staying in D-II. Conversely, it could also reflect a lack of familiarity with what problems may confront UNA while remaining in D-II. Here, 7/18 reported a single response for the entire department, 5/18 gave individual responses, and 6/18 did not directly respond to this statement.

List of Faculty's Top Concerns Regarding Moving to NCAA Division I FCS

All 18 respondents provided at least one concern for UNA moving to D-I FCS Athletics.

1. Cost to University—72% As Number 1 94% In Top 5

This concern was placed throughout the top 5 concerns of many respondents with 17/18 listing it among their top 5 concerns. 13/18 had this concern as at least a part of their number one concern. 2/18 listed this concern second, 2/18 as fourth, and in 1/18 this was not readily discernable. Frequently mentioned was the need of money for academic programs, faculty/staff cost of living raises, additional faculty, infrastructure repairs/improvements, research, development, “so many other items require funding”, *etc.* Typically, across the board faculty were concerned there would be an undue financial burden ultimately placed on the University regardless of the good intentions of the Athletic Department and Administration.

2. Cost to Students—61% As Number 1 83% In Top 5

15 of 18 respondents listed this in their top 5 concerns of moving to Division I FCS and it was frequently mentioned as a primary concern along with “Cost to University.” 11/18 respondents listed this as their primary concern. 2 of 18 listed this as their second concern, 2 of 18 listed as their 4th concern and 3/18 did not include cost to students specifically in their top 5 concerns. In general, faculty did not approve of the idea of a move to D-I being financed by increased student fees. It was cited that the cost effectiveness of attending UNA would be further reduced thus affecting competitiveness with other state institutions. Also mentioned was simply the increased financial burden placed on students and that this financial burden on students may be increasing with further proration.

3. Academic Impact—22% As Number 1 83% In Top 5

Many respondents were genuinely concerned about what affect this would have on academics. It is more difficult to obtain a direct count as this response was a theme often woven throughout the concerns given or included as part of “Cost to University” above. For 15/18 respondents, the concern of an “impact on academics” was clear. This could be gleaned from the top concern in 4/18, second concern in 2/18, 4/18 suggested this as their third concern, 2/18 as fourth and 3/18 as fifth. Only in 3/18 was a concern over impacts to academics not clearly discernable.

4. Other Concerns—

Beyond the “third level” concerns became difficult to categorize. Here are listed some of the concerns.

- a. impact on enrollment (unknown impact or, if positive, how will we accommodate it under current fiscal constraints)
- b. concern over losing sight of UNA's mission and goals as a regional institution
- c. favoring one University department over all others in terms of raises and finances
- d. campus morale (students and faculty)/counter to goal of promoting a unified campus community

List of Faculty's Top Concerns Regarding Staying in NCAA Division II

For this request, 6/18 provided no concerns for staying in D-II with 12/18 listing at least one concern.

1. Conference Opponents/Scheduling—42% As Number 1 83% In Top 5

In listing concerns, 5/12 respondents providing concerns gave scheduling football opponents as their number 1 concern. 5/12 referred to scheduling in their top 5 concerns, while 2/12 provided no reference to scheduling.

2. Declining GSC/NCAA Division II—67% In Top 5

Eight of 12 respondents referred to the declining GSC, peer institutions, or uncertainty of NCAA D-II viability in some manner as a concern. Specifically mentioned was the decline and uncertain future of the GSC, as well as the potential peer institutions with which UNA would be associated. Also mentioned was the overall NCAA commitment to Division II athletics.

3. Negative Impact on UNA Athletics—58% In Top 5

A perceived negative impact to UNA athletics was listed in the top 5 concerns of 7/12 respondents. Respondents referred to the potential decline of the football program and quality competition in this sport, and neglect of other sports including the loss of the potential to add more women's sports.

4. Travel Issues—42% In Top 5

Travel, in some manner, was listed in the top 5 concerns of 5/12 respondents. Concerns included added costs associated with extended travel due to playing outside the GSC. Also of concern was the additional time away from class/campus/study time that would be required of student athletes for these extended trips (8-12 hours road time).

5. Missed Opportunity—42% In Top 5

Other themes in the top 5 concerns were more difficult to define; however, 5/12 senators provided concerns suggesting a missed opportunity for UNA and the community. Specifically mentioned was the negative impact by limiting UNA recognition and marketability. Suggested were limitations on growth; growth in the athletic program, in enrollment, and jobs for the community. Limitations on faculty recruitment and retention was also noted. It was pointed out that many Alabama schools have already made the move to D-I.

CONCLUSIONS

It is clear that the UNA faculty are generally opposed to a move to NCAA D-I FCS. This appears to be the case even if their concerns about moving to D-I were met. The opposition to this move seems to be philosophical, driven by concerns associated with costs; costs to the University in general and costs to the students specifically. Under the current economic conditions and uncertainty of state funding, it was felt that UNA simply could not afford to make this move and should not make this move if the only way to pay for it is through student fees. While concerns about staying in D-II were admitted, especially concerns surrounding scheduling and the future of the GSC, fully a third of respondents felt there was absolutely no need for concern if we remain in D-II.

