

FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

February 12, 2015

The Faculty Senate of the University of North Alabama met February 12, 2015 in Commons 330 at 3:30 p.m.

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

Keith Jones for Senator Campbell from Accounting,
Ashley Johnson for Senator Greer from Mathematics,
Chiong-Yiao Chen for Senator Kirch from Art, and
Matt Fitzsimmons for Senator Graham from History and Political Science.

Senator Lee moved the adoption of the agenda. Senator Coffman seconded. The motion passed.

Senator Lee moved the approval of the December 4, 2014 minutes with the addition of the word "Senator" at the beginning of A. under Unfinished Business. Senator Renfroe seconded. The motion passed.

Senator Statom moved the approval of the January 15, 2015 minutes. Senator Coffman seconded. The motion passed.

Alec Prince, Chairman of the SGA Legislative Committee, addressed the senate with a request for the faculty to support Higher Education Day, April 9. He asked that students who attend be given special consideration for missed work. He stated the goal was to have ninety students attend and there would be a sign-up sheet to verify those students who actually attend and the list could be then circulated to the faculty by the VPAA's office.

Mark Linder, Athletic Director, thanked the faculty for their tremendous support of the student-athletes. He reported that for the previous year, 166 students athletes were recognized for having a 3.2 or higher GPA. The athletic department's overall GPA was 2.93, making this one of the highest average GPA attained. He reminded the senate of the initiative launched previously to request a grade report for athletes electronically. The pilot use of the electronic program was unsuccessful with a small percentage of responses from the faculty. This resulted in several academic casualties for the student-athletes who did not received some form of intervention such as tutoring or mentoring and required the department return to the use of the hard copy version of the grade report. He wanted to get feedback about how the electronic reporting system could be used effectively. Recommendations from the senators included the need for some way to indicate that the students need to come to personally meet the professor, perhaps to require that the first grade report be in hard copy and the remainder could be electronic, or allow the professors to indicate which method they prefer.

President Thornell reported that President Kitts will be on campus in about six week and that he has been in communication with him almost daily. He has requested the vice-presidents prepare a briefing from their areas and he plans on hitting the ground running. President Thornell reported on the Idea Audition and how young people with ideas communicate how their ideas are

viable. He encouraged everyone to attend the next such event. He suggested that due to the reduced funding for the university, perhaps it would be good to have an idea audition for academics from faculty. He suggested we consider what sets UNA apart from other universities, what makes UNA special, and what distinguishes us from our peer institutions.

Vice-President Calhoun reported that the Council of Academic Deans had a discussion concerning the problem with students failing to read their UNA email from the university. He solicited ideas and encouraged support to get students to read their institutional email. He stated the university is in the process of purchasing a customer relation management system for enrollment management. He noted that the university has advertised for a faculty position in engineering management. The department will be housed in the College of Arts and Sciences but will also be linked to the College of Business. He announced another new position for coordinating the Early College program in partnership with the school districts. The student fees will fund the position.

REPORTS:

- A. The Faculty Attitude Survey Committee is in the final process of revision and anticipates a distribution next week.
- B. Senator Maddox, chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee, reported the committee is working on the issue of summer faculty being able to negotiate salary for low enrollment classes.
- C. The Academic Affairs had no new report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- A. Senator Peterson moved the approval revision to the Faculty Handbook Chapter 5.1 Credit Hour Policy with the amendment of changing the Discipline Specific Exceptions to: Biology: Three-Credit lecture & lab course = 210-270 minutes of instruction (100 minutes lecture & 110-170 minutes of lab) per week and Physics and Earth Science: Four-Credit lecture & lab course = 260-320 minutes of instruction time (100-150 minutes of lecture & 110-220 minutes of lab) per week. Senator Barrett seconded. The motion passed. (See Attachment A)
- B. The Faculty Affairs Committee recommended the senate fail to endorse the proposal to revise the Faculty Handbook 3.2.4 Department Chairpersons – Appointment, Workload, and Supplement, (See Attachments B and C) presented a report outlining their concerns, recommended the issue be sent back for further revision. The motion passed.
- C. Senator Statom moved to postpone the vote on the revision to Faculty Handbook 3.3.1 and invite the Direction of University Advising to discuss the issue with the senate. Senator Coffman seconded. The motion passed. (See Attachment D)

NEW BUSINESS:

Senator Statom moved to conduct the nomination for three Faculty-at-large positions on the Non-traditional and Interdisciplinary Curriculum Committee. Senator Barrett seconded. The motion passed.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

- A. The next Senate meeting will be Thursday, March 12.
- B. The April Faculty Senate meeting will be held on April 16 to accommodate those traveling to the April 9 Higher Education Day.
- C. Departments having senators with terms expiring will be contacted by the Elections Committee.
- D. Elections for Faculty Senate Executive Board positions and faculty positions on the Shared Governance Committees will be held during the May Senate meeting. Senators will be provided a list of vacancies by the March meeting.

Senator Roden moved the meeting be adjourned. Senator Statom seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m.

ATTACHMENT A

5.1 CREDIT HOUR POLICY

Academic credit provides the basis for measuring the amount of work a typical student is expected to complete during a specified amount of academically engaged time whether the instructional interaction is in a traditional classroom setting, a laboratory, studio, internship or other experiential learning, or through technology-based (online) or other distance education instruction. A “credit hour” is a unit of measure reflecting the value the University assigns to the level of instruction, academic rigor, and minimum time requirements for courses taken at the University of North Alabama (UNA).

UNA employs sound, commonly accepted practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for courses, regardless of format, location, or mode of delivery. The University of North Alabama endorses the basic definition of a credit hour as determined by the federal government and supported by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

According to 34 CFR 600.2, the federal definition of a credit hour is as follows:

An amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:

1. One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Determination of Course Credit

At the University of North Alabama the academic department determines the number of credit hours and level of credit to be awarded for the course and assigns a course number. Graduate level courses require additional research and application beyond the undergraduate level.

The department completes a formal proposal for a new course. The proposal is reviewed and approved by: departmental faculty, the Department Chair, Dean of the College, and the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee or Graduate Council depending on the level of instruction. The curriculum development and review process is detailed in section 3.3.3 of UNA’s *Faculty Handbook*.

Instructional Schedule*

The University of North Alabama operates on the semester system, with two semesters (fall and spring) during the regular academic year. Fall and spring semester courses are scheduled for approximately 15 weeks, excluding holidays and spring/fall break, but including a week of final exams, resulting in approximately 14 weeks of class meetings.

Semester hours of credit are awarded based on the average number of minutes of instruction or the equivalent during the semester or term. Courses follow the guideline of 700 minutes of instruction per credit hour. This translates into 2100 minutes of instruction for three-credit-hour courses.

For classes that meet on campus, the University of North Alabama follows these guidelines:

- Three-credit-hour daytime courses that meet three days per week meet for 50 minutes per class session. These courses meet for approximately 42 sessions per term.
- Three-credit-hour daytime courses that meet two days per week meet for 75 minutes per class session. They meet for approximately 28 sessions per term.

Fall or spring evening courses may meet one or two nights per week. The total number of meeting minutes per semester is used in the calculation of the total length of each class meeting for evening courses (2100 minutes for a three-credit-hour course).

Additionally, UNA offers courses in compressed schedule formats:

- For example, the Summer I and Summer II sessions are each approximately four weeks in duration. The combined Summer session is approximately eight weeks in duration. Intersessions are approximately three weeks in duration.
- Courses offered in a compressed schedule session follow the guideline of 700 minutes of instruction per credit hour. This translates into 2100 minutes of instruction for three-credit-hour courses. Therefore, the total number of instructional hours in courses offered in a compressed schedule session is approximately the same as the instructional hours in courses or labs offered during a regular semester session with the exception of some laboratory courses or sections, which may require more instructional time than typical courses.

*Note: Credit hour requirements of discipline-specific accrediting bodies or licensing units will be taken into consideration when credit hour determination is made related to the impacted academic programs.

Studio/Labs/Applied Music/Clinical Instruction

Studio art courses follow the standards of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design and meet 100 minutes per credit hour.

Labs associated with natural science courses meet for a length of time determined by the department, as follows: typically 2 hours per week in physics, earth science, geology,

geography, and most biology courses; 3 hours per week in chemistry, industrial hygiene, and some upper level biology courses; and 4 hours per week in a small number of upper level biology courses. One credit-hour labs associated with the Department of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation involve approximately 120 minutes of lab instruction per week. One credit-hour labs associated with the Department of Chemistry and Industrial Hygiene involve approximately 165 minutes of lab instruction per week.

Applied music courses follow the standards of the National Association of Schools of Music: "a semester hour of credit represents at least three hours of work each week, on average, for a period of fifteen to sixteen weeks" incorporating both lessons and practicing. Weekly lessons are one-half clock hour for one credit hour and one clock hour for two credit hours. Music technique courses offering group instruction in woodwind, brass, percussion, string, piano, and guitar are assigned one credit hour for two 50-minute class meetings per week. Music ensembles in the areas of band, orchestra, choral, opera/musical theatre, and chamber music are assigned one credit hour and vary in rehearsal hours per week ranging from 1.5 to 8 hours per week depending on the nature and mission of the ensemble.

Nursing follows the Federal Credit Hour definition, making allowances, as permitted by law, for the amount of work, measurements of student work, academically engaged time and academic disciplines in its allowance of flexibility of the definition of credit hour as determined by the institution. Through this definition, lab (clinical) hours are considered "direct faculty instruction" and, therefore, credit hours.

Internships/Practica /Independent Study

For courses designed to include significant out-of-class experiences (e.g., student teaching, internships, etc.) and Independent Studies guidelines are set by the academic department for how the instructional time frame will meet credit guidelines outlined above. These courses require individual enrollment accompanied by a detailed contract specifying the nature of the student work product, learning outcomes, the frequency of meetings between the faculty member and student, and the method of final evaluation (grading).

Online/Technology-Based Instruction/Distance Education

The University requires that all non-traditional courses delivered online, through other technology-based instruction, or via distance education be equivalent to traditional, campus-based courses in terms of course descriptions, expectations, assessments, and learning outcomes.

Courses delivered with technology, in whole (online 50% or more) or in part (hybrid), emphasize academic engagement and student preparation in determining time of instruction, but otherwise follow the same guidelines as face-to-face courses. Academic engagement may include, but is not limited to, submitting an academic assignment, listening to class lectures or webinars (synchronous or asynchronous), taking an exam, completing an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction, attending a study group that is assigned by the institution, contributing to an academic online discussion, initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a

question about the academic subject studied in the course, conducting laboratory work, or completing an externship or internship.

The University of North Alabama courses delivered abroad or at other off-campus settings are developed by faculty to take full advantage of the unique location and be consistent with the expectations for academic engagement and instructional time articulated in the policy.

In summary, within the relevant semester time frame, the policy is:

General University Guidelines:

One semester credit of scheduled/lecture course instruction = 50 minutes of instruction time per week

One credit of lab = 180 minutes of lab instruction time per week

Four-credit lecture/lab class = 330 minutes of instruction time per week (150 min. lecture/180 min. lab)

Discipline Specific Exceptions:

Art: One credit of studio = 100 minutes of instruction time per week

Biology: Three-credit lecture & lab course = 220-270 minutes of instruction time (110-170 minutes lecture & 220-270 minutes of lab) per week

Biology: Four-credit lecture & lab course = 260-320 minutes of instruction time (100-150 minutes of lecture & 110-220 minutes of lab) per week

Chemistry and Industrial Hygiene: One credit of lab = 165 minutes of lab instruction time per week

Health, Physical Education and Recreation: One credit of lab = 120 minutes of lab instruction time per week

Music: One credit of group music instruction = Two 50 minute meetings per week

Music: One credit hour of music ensemble = 1.5 to 8 hours of rehearsal per week

Nursing: Six-credit lecture/lab class = 510 minutes of instruction time per week (150 min. lecture plus 360 min. clinical/lab experiences instruction time)

This policy will be reviewed by the UNA Council of Academic Deans on a regular basis and revised as necessary to maintain currency with updated guidelines and instructional changes.

ATTACHMENT B

3.2.4. Department Chairperson—Appointment, Workload, and Supplement

Department chairpersons are appointed to four-year term appointments that are renewable at the option of the University. Renewals shall be on a four-year term. All department chairpersons hold "at will" appointments which are not replaced by indicating the term of appointment.

While department chairpersons are appointed by the President, they report to the respective college dean who supervises their work. Thus, the college dean has the major responsibilities in the selection and supervision of the department chairperson. This responsibility includes utilization of a standardized plan for selection of department chairpersons, revision of the generic job description for department chairpersons specific to each department, and development of a standardized plan of evaluation that will be used for all department chairpersons during the review of a completed term and before recommendations are made for the renewal of a term. Recommendations for appointment and renewal or non-renewal of a term are made by the college dean to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost who recommends action to the President.

Department chairpersons have responsibilities according to their job descriptions which may, in turn, vary somewhat according to the size and type of department. However, department chairpersons have some general responsibilities that apply to all. These general responsibilities include: teaching classes in the department, developing departmental curriculum, requesting and administering an adequate departmental budget, and recruiting outstanding faculty for the department. The department chairperson has major responsibilities for leadership in the university's institutional effectiveness program. The department chairpersons also have the responsibility of representing the Administration to the faculty as well as the faculty to the Administration. Due to the special nature of the department chairpersons' position that involves both faculty and administration and due to the duties they have that go beyond the normal teaching responsibilities and workload policies as described in this Faculty Handbook, relief is given to the chairpersons through a teaching load reduction and a salary supplement. The supplement is strictly for the administrative duties, and it ceases when administrative responsibilities are no longer held by the department chairperson; however, department chairs retain any increases that were realized throughout the term appointment. "Across the board" raises will be applied to base department chair supplements in the same manner that they are applied to base salaries.

~~Since departments at the University vary greatly in both size and responsibilities which, in turn, contribute to the time that must be spent in the administration of a department, there is not a common reduction or supplement paid that applies to all departments. There is a formula which is used to determine department groupings for class reductions and administrative supplements. The university formula is used to evaluate each department and gives points as follows:~~

- ~~1. Each equivalent full-time faculty member counts as one.~~
- ~~2. A score of one is given for each \$15,000 in the supplies and equipment budgets of the~~

department (including lab fees generated).

3. A score of one is given for each 20 graduates of department programs. In the calculation of this value, the graduates in each program for the last five years are averaged to determine the departmental score.
4. A score of one is given for each 3,750 instructional hours (credit and non-credit) produced by a department totaled from the fall, spring, and summer terms. Both graduate and undergraduate hours are included in this calculation.

Formula Implementation:

Final rankings should be divided into quartiles. Academic departments should be assigned such that the departments with the most points should be assigned to Quartile 1, the next to Quartile 2, the next to Quartile 3, and the final grouping to Quartile 4 as determined by statistical methods.

Department chairs in Quartiles 1 and 2 will receive a \$6,000 annual supplement and a six-hour teaching load reduction in the fall and spring semesters and the summer term. Department chairs in Quartiles 3 and 4 will receive a three-hour teaching load reduction in the fall and spring semesters. All department chairs will receive a three-hour teaching load reduction during the summer term.

Department chair supplements should be based on Quartile Rankings as follows: all Quartile 1 departments will receive a \$6,073 supplement each year; Quartile 2 departments will receive a \$5,473 supplement each year; Quartile 3 departments will receive a \$4,873 supplement each year; and Quartile 4 departments will receive a \$4,273 supplement each year. As noted above, department chair supplements will increase with "across the board raises" granted to faculty.

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The Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment will generate rankings each year by June 1. A department chairperson's supplement for the duration of the term will be based on the data at the time of the appointment. Changes in the department chair rankings will not affect the individual's released time or supplement during the appointed term. Should the chair be reappointed or a new chair assigned to an area, the rankings generated that year will be used in determining the appropriate supplement and released time, which will remain for the duration of the new appointment period.

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Recognizing that departments, even within the same quartile, may differ substantially in the nature and volume of administrative needs and that special needs may arise temporarily, the University supports flexibility in meeting the administrative needs of departments. Requests for Released time beyond the amount specified above may be approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost upon the recommendation of the college dean. The recommendation is based on additional duties anticipated for the coming year and must be approved on an annual basis, paid for from the dean's budget at the established rate for adjunct and overload pay. The amount and duration of additional salary supplements or released time is

~~determined by the dean within his or her applicable budget, after discussion with the affected department chair and/or faculty member, and requires the approval of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.~~ “Across the board” salary increases are not applied to these supplements.

ATTACHMENT C

FAC Report on Proposed Revisions to Faculty Handbook Section 3.2.4

The Faculty Affairs Committee has reviewed the proposed changes to Faculty Handbook section 3.2.4 as well as policies that are in place at similar institutions regarding the appointment, workload, and salary of department heads. We have also heard from several faculty members regarding their thoughts and concerns on this issue. Although the committee has decided not to endorse the policy revisions in their current form, we are encouraged by the desire of the COAD to revise this section of the handbook to make practices more equitable and consistent across campus.

The committee during its deliberations had the following concerns:

1. **The policy reduces a guarantee to faculty.** Department chairs classified as Q1 or Q2 will be asked to teach more with either a reduction in pay (Q1) or a small increase in their stipend (Q2 - \$527 more). This change in policy will impact half of the department chairs across campus. This will eventually reduce a guarantee to faculty (after the current contract period) by cutting the course reduction from 6 hours to 3 hours. Although department chairs will be able to ask to have their course reductions reinstated on an individual basis, this changes the 6 hour course reduction from a policy qualified faculty can count on to a practice entirely decided by administration and, as a result, this change conflicts with the principal of shared governance.
2. **The department chair policies at other institutions do not provide strong evidence to support the proposed revisions.** The committee believes we lack a complete data set for making an informed decision. We don't know which institutions have shared governance policies in place or what is considered a full teaching load making it difficult to compare UNA's situation with the other universities.
3. **Department Chairs will have less time to dedicate to administrative functions.** Increasing the teaching loads of Q1 and Q2 department chairs will potentially have a negative impact on our ability to recruit and retain quality department chairs particularly in the case of larger departments. It will also force department chairs to dedicate less time to their administrative responsibilities if they are to teach at a high level. We feel it is extremely important to maintain and even improve the administrative capacity and leadership within each of the departments on campus. Some departments on campus have limited administrative support and the department chairs play a vital role in making sure departments function properly and meet established goals.
4. **The process for requesting additional release time may be more difficult for all involved.** The practice of considering exceptions to policy on an individual, case by case basis at the VPAA level each year seems cumbersome since we might anticipate an increase in requests if the proposed revisions were to go into effect. The new language does not specify whether the money still comes from the dean's budget (is the Dean's role in the decision diminished?). It is difficult to determine whether exceptions to policy will in some way be more difficult to

obtain under the new proposal, especially when administrators or budgets change in the future.

The committee would like to recommend examining the quartile system to determine if it can be changed in a way that would encourage positive change over time. Perhaps instead of dividing department chairs into four evenly distributed quartiles, we could use a category system in which categories are determined by objectively measured criteria. The system could allow for flexible upward mobility from one category to the next based on incentives (i.e. the department adds new faculty due to successful new courses) resulting in a positive impact for the university in the long run.

ATTACHMENT D

(Proposed addition to 3.3.1 underlined)

3.3.1 Academic Advisement

Faculty responsibility for student academic advisement includes both informal contacts with students and formal advisory assignments made by the chair of the department or the dean of the college. Academic advisory assignments of students with fewer than 24 semester hours of credit will be made by the Director of University Advising Services. Freshmen students will be paired with trained University Advisors in their intended major. Students with greater than 24 hours of credit will be assigned advisors by the department of their intended major. Any student who is undecided in the College of Arts and Sciences will be advised by staff in University Advising Services. Any freshman student who decides to change his/her major will do so in consultation with his/her University Advisor. The official change of major will occur in the spring semester during the pre-registration period.

All faculty who wish to provide advising for freshmen students must receive professional development as a University Advisor through the University Advisor Program. Faculty initially trained as University Advisors must continue to receive professional development through sessions offered by University Advising Services.

Faculty are also expected to accept responsibility for advisement in minor fields upon request by a graduate student.

The purpose of academic advisement at UNA is to provide students a supportive relationship with an academic advisor. This relationship offers information and guidance to assist students in making decisions leading to the fulfillment of their educational, career, and life goals. Given this purpose, the goals of academic advising are:

1. To promote a clear understanding of the courses required to fulfill degree requirements;
2. To monitor student progress toward completion of degree requirements;
3. To assist students in the selection of courses with regard to the level of difficulty and class load, especially as that pertains to employment, campus involvement, and personal lives; and
4. To promote student awareness of opportunities and experiences that will enhance their educational experiences such as practicum, internships, honors, and study abroad programs.
5. To assist students in interpreting academic policies and procedures.
6. To serve as an institutional gateway to campus resources and services that will enrich students' university experience and facilitate student retention.
7. To encourage the development of short-term and long-term educational goals and an action plan for goal attainment.
8. To model professional behaviors as encouragement for students to develop similar behaviors in readiness for the world of work.