

ANNUAL REPORT

Research Committee

**University of North Alabama
Florence, Alabama**

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Committee Chair

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Date submitted

Submitted to: **Bill Huddleston, Shared Governance Chair**

Title/Committee (if applicable)

Date received

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UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA

ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009

I. Executive Summary

The Research committee met three times during the 2008-2009 academic year. We met to twice to consider a recommendation by the Faculty Senate to remove language capping internal research grants at \$2,000. The committee unanimously endorsed the proposal. We also awarded approximately \$25,000 in research money. Two proposals were also discussed that would encourage research at UNA: course reductions for new faculty during his or her second year and research stipends for summer projects.

II. The Committee's Charge

To serve as an advisory committee on the University's research function and related issues

To serve as a screening board, recommending action for University released time and non-released time research grants (not including those grants given through individual college research committees)

To gather information on the University's research efforts and related issues and assess University performance in these areas in light of the information obtained

To propose changes in University policies, procedures, and practices on research and related issues.

III. The Committee met on the following dates:

- 10/2, 11/21, 2/25

IV. What were the Committee's actions and accomplishments this year relative to each of the items of the charge?

We endorsed a Faculty Senate proposal to remove language capping internal research grants at \$2,000. We also awarded \$25,000 in research monies to faculty. Total requests for assistance was approximately \$60,000.

V. What were the Committee's formal recommendations?

None

VI. What does the Committee plan to accomplish

A. In the coming year?

The committee plans to award available research monies, at the least. Quite possibly, the committee could make formal recommendations for increasing the amount of research on campus by taking up initiatives suggested by Phil Bridgmon, which are release time for new faculty and summer research stipends.

B. In future years?

The committee should develop a five-year plan for improving research resources, not limited to money alone.

VII. What are the Committee's weaknesses?

The committee weaknesses stem largely from lack of available resources, and a narrowing cadre of committed researchers who annually pursue limited research funds.

A. What actions will be taken next year to address the weaknesses?

Very little can be done to remedy the lack of resources, particularly in proration years. The committee likely will take steps to limit the number of faculty who receive research funds annually without producing published scholarship, juried exhibits, or performances.

VIII. Comments:

The Research Committee took up issues outside of its normal awarding of research monies. It attempted to propose policies that could enhance the scholarly productivity of new and existing faculty without adding significant costs to academic affairs. The endorsement of the cap on awards was a non-issue, as latitude has always been given to Deans and the VPAA in awarding sufficient funds to conduct research. Research productivity is largely constrained by teaching and service obligations, not a lack of resources. Once those impediments are removed, faculty will have more time to actively pursue scholarly endeavors.