

Auburn at Montgomery Faculty Senate
Minutes
July 8, 2011
East Room, Library Tower, 9:00 AM

1. Senate Business

A. Roll Call

Senate Officers and Senators: Ioimo, Deravi, Hamilton, McKenzie, Morton, Young-White, Willis, Severance, Winemiller, Gantt, Terry, Ragland, Klevay (for Kaufman)

Ex-officio: Pettway, Tyler Peterson (Dean of Admissions and Recruiting)

B. Approval of Minutes for June 24, 2011

* Motion for by McKenzie, seconded by Willis

* Young-White pointed out that the substitution of “elevation” for “evaluation” on page 4 of the minutes should be fixed. Veres on the same page wanted it noted he had mentioned that the faculty member brought forward for Post Tenure Review for “one negative evaluation” was also brought forward because of concerns about his/her research productivity.

* The minutes as modified were approved unanimously.

C. Next Meeting will be September 16, 2011 in the East Room of the Library Tower at 9:00 AM

2. Administrative Reports

A. Chancellor—John Veres

* The current construction projects on campus are going according to schedule. The parking lots and modifications to Goodwyn Hall should be finished by August 1st. The longer term Wellness Center Project and modifications to the Taylor Center are also on schedule. Our students will be especially pleased with the new study spaces in Taylor, as they will create extra room not just for study groups but also for Student Organizations to hold meetings.

* Veres hosted visitation teams from three Chinese Universities this summer and expects to host two more before the end of the month. We will have over 100 students from China enrolled in the coming year. The addition of these students will expose our domestic students to new perspectives. The incoming Chinese students are also generally more academically prepared than our domestic students.

Discussion

Guest: Asked if a site had been chosen for the new student dorm.

Veres: I have looked at five potential sites on campus for the dorm with the architect from the West to the North Commons. Will meet again with the architect to discuss the project in two weeks. The architects will make a presentation to the Faculty Senate about their plans.

Veres: Just as a side note, Keren Deal has been given an award by a major accounting association. There will be upcoming coverage of this and it is a good example of the positive recognition AUM's faculty typically receive.

Ragland: Will the computer lab in Goodwyn 126 remain after the modifications to the Taylor Center, or is it only temporary?

Veres: The lab is only temporary, but it will remain in its current spot until the Bookstore inside Taylor moves upstairs. The move will happen after Labor Day. Once the bookstore is upstairs, a new, larger computer lab for the students will open nearby. Construction of the computer lab on the first floor must be completed before the bookstore can move. The construction is being carried out in careful phases so that no service will have to be shut down for more than a day or two at a time.

B. Provost—Jeffery Elwell

- Dr. Elwell is cautiously optimistic about our admissions, enrollment, and orientations for the coming year. Comparing admission numbers by June 20th of this year with Sept 7th of last year, this year 1538 students have been accepted (along with 4 provisional students), while last year 1497 had been accepted. This year we were more selective. Last year 87% were accepted as opposed to 81.1% this year.
- Last year's average ACT scores were 20.4 and this year's are 21.5. Last year's grade point average was 3.0 and this year's is 3.23. Last year we had 207 withdrawals by this point, and this year we only have 130. We are pulling from a better ACT pool than last year, which means some students may have had better offers elsewhere. Because fewer provisional students were accepted (266 were accepted last summer), our overall ACT numbers have grown by 15-20%.
- Students have been accepting every cent of scholarship money that has been offered to them.
- In terms of student enrollment in various colleges and majors, Business is up by 32 students, Education down by 29 students, Liberal Arts up by 6 students, Nursing down by 4 students, and undeclared up by 13 students.
- Seamless Admissions will double from last year. We're expected 155 students, as opposed to 77 enrolled in the program last year.

- The number of completed graduate applications is down this summer. We are down by 100 enrolled graduate students from last summer. The rate of completed graduate applications (meaning we've received all the necessary application materials to make a decision) is down to 25%. This may be typical, as there are no numbers from this time last year. This may be a result of AUM not marketing or recruiting graduate students. Lots of loss in Education, probably because teachers are being laid off and there is no incentive to go back to school for a higher credential. It's easier at this point to keep track of Freshman enrollment, as keeping track of Graduate student enrollment has only just started.
- Housing says we are ahead of where we were in accepting housing deposits last year.
- Adjunct usage is down, as AUM has filled 29 new positions and no longer requires as many. We are still looking for a new Dean of Business.
- Elwell introduced Tyler Peterson, the new Dean of Recruiting and Admissions.

Discussion

Veres: In the past, the numbers always have seemed to be “optimistic” right up until a few days before classes begin. Things will hopefully be better this year because AUM is now counting registration rates better than it did before. Before there was more focus on the acceptance rate rather than the registration rate. 982 students enrolled after their acceptance last year.

C. Past President—Nelya McKenzie

- *McKenize* had nothing new to report for this meeting.

D. President—Ralph Ioimo

- *Ioimo* had nothing new to report other than he is still trying to fill seats on committees. He will send out another reminder about the empty seats this coming week. Afterwards, if there are no more volunteers, the committees will go forward with their work.

3. Old Business

Discussion

Veres: Would like a response from the Senate on the previously proposed Smoking Policy.

Ioimo: The Senate is working on this response. The Faculty had some concerns about the “policing” element of the policy, the requirement that they are obligated to report smokers violating the policy. What is Auburn’s Policy like?

Veres: They do not yet have a policy, but they are further along in formulating one than we are.

Ioimo: It would be good to see what Auburn is doing as a model and to gather further information. It would be good to talk to someone at Baptist East to get some idea of how their implementation of the policy went forward and to discuss the reactions to it. And to see if any changes have been made to it.

Guest: Responded that Baptist East has not made any changes to their policy and that she could put Ioimo in touch with those who implemented it there.

4. New Business

Ioimo: Although Donnie Nobles is not here, I have heard from him that not much new has happened regarding the changes to the Faculty handbook. We can wait to address this.

*The faculty should discuss ideas that they can bring up to the administration, so that ideas come from the bottom up as well as from the top down. The relationship should be a true partnership.

*One thing that the Faculty Welfare Committee should look at is the Sabbatical Policy of the university. The Committee should look into how sabbaticals are currently approved and report on this to the Senate.

Discussion

Elwell: How are Sabbaticals different from Professional Improvement Leave? To apply for Professional Improvement Leave the current requirements seem to be that you are tenured, have been with the university 5 years, and have not previously had this type of leave. The provost's office typically handles this. There are typically more applications than funding for Professional Improvement Leave. There were 6 candidates this year, with the top 3 being singled out from the bottom 3. There's a problem with departments coming up with the money to replace the faculty member on leave, as faculty typically choose to use the leave for a full term with full salary. What is the history of not calling this a sabbatical? Is it like in North Carolina, where the universities were not allowed to have "sabbaticals" so the universities simply call it "Professional Improvement Leave?"

Veres: I'm willing to look for funding for departments that need to replace faculty who are on leave. This shouldn't prove too expensive. What needs to be done is that a budget needs to be set for that.

There was general agreement that the application process for a sabbatical or Professional Improvement was murky. Deravi pointed out that the current form only asks for a C.V., Elwell mentioned that for the current applications some applicants sent in huge amounts of material and others no more than a C.V. Veres said he thought this was definitely an area where the faculty could weigh in with

their ideas. Deravi expressed an interest in getting a committee together and to discuss this further next time.

5. Announcements

- There were no new announcements for this meeting.

6. Adjournment

- Ioimo made the motion to adjourn, Willis seconded
- Meeting was adjourned at 9:44 AM