

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE  
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MINUTES OF MEETING #540, 26 SEPTEMBER 2013  
APPROVED 24 OCTOBER 2013

**Present:** *Wai Mok, Fan Tseng, Chris Allport, Charles Hickman, Dan Sherman, Pavica Sheldon, Derrick Smith, Joe Conway, Joe Taylor, Linda Maier, Christine Sears, Carolyn Sanders, Nick Jones, Andree Reeves, Bhavani Sitaraman, Mitch Berbrier, Ramon Cerro, James Swain, Kader Frendi, James, Blackmon, Kristen Herrin, Ellise Adams, Anna Benton, Peggy Hays, Phillip Bitzer, Luciano Matzkin, Carmen Scholz, James Baird, Debra Moriarity, Tim Newman, Craig Cowan, Leonard Choup, Richard Miller, Jakobus le Roux*

**Absent with proxy:** *Deborah Heikes, Marlena Primeau, Nikolai Pogorelov*

**Absent without proxy:** *Keith Jones, Eric Seemann, Ying-Cheng Lin, Junpeng Guo, Jeff Evans*

**Guests:** *Rachel Osby*

- Senate Meeting Number 540 was **called to order** at 12:45 p.m. by Dr. Mitch Berbrier, Faculty Senate President.
  - Mitch Berbrier asks for a **motion to approve minutes** from Faculty Senate Meeting 539. Charles Hickman makes a motion. James Baird seconds motion to approve minutes.
  - Dr. Mitch Berbrier: Guest presenter – Rachel Osby, Senior Director of Alumni Relations.
  - **Rachel Osby:** Announced that **Homecoming is the week of October 14<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup>**. Check out UAH website about Homecoming week. Asks for faculty to get involved in the Homecoming activities. There is a Paint the Town Blue decorations contest (flyer is attached as Appendix A). Alumni has sponsored Homecoming week for many years and invites faculty and staff to participate. There are different categories meant to involve everyone on campus. Help show school spirit by participating. Pick any theme for decorations. Whoever is most creative will be the category winner; there is a winner per category. Register online by October 14<sup>th</sup>. Decorations need to be done by Wednesday morning at 8:00 am. Judging will take place all day Wednesday so need to make decorations accessible from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm on Wednesday. Please leave the decorations up through the week of Homecoming, but take them down by the following week. The winners will be announced at the tailgate party on Friday afternoon. The tailgate party is a campus-wide event. If you have any questions, email her at [rachel.osby@uah.edu](mailto:rachel.osby@uah.edu).
- Mitch Berbrier thanked Rachel Osby for her visit.
- Tim Newman **motions to accept Faculty Senate Executive Committee Report**. Debra Moriarity seconds. Ayes carried the motion and minutes were accepted.

➤ **University Committee Reports:**

Huron: Huron is a consulting group administration has brought in from Chicago to assist with recruitment issues. Mitch Berbrier reports that the group met and Huron made a great presentation. They were very frank in their criticism in UAH's failures in the past to collect and analyze data regarding students in order to help recruitment. Engaging in all kinds of things to work in processes such as marketing and other aspects. Dr. Berbrier will keep the Faculty Senate apprised of progress.

- ❖ Richard Miller: What is the faculty representation involvement with discussion, besides Deans and others? Because faculty often have other insights into issues in recruitment that others in administration may not have.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: There are a number of people on the committee, including a couple of faculty members besides himself.
- ❖ Richard Miller: Can they deliver a presentation to the Faculty Senate?
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: We can ask them to. Their findings are preliminary right now.
- ❖ Tim Newman: Some of his colleagues are under the impression that Huron provided this same service a few years ago. Is this true?
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: No. That was another company out of Chicago. Their strategies were never implemented, though. This is a different company with a track record of high success.
- ❖ Bhavani Sitaraman: Offers a suggestion - like any other committee, maybe we could ask the university to make Huron reports public on the website so it doesn't have to be requested every time there is a meeting.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: Assumes it's on the Office of the President's website.
- ❖ Bhavani Sitaraman: There have been and are some consulting efforts we don't know about because they aren't published on the website.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: Strategic plan would be to have it up, but there is no report yet to post.
- ❖ Ramon Cerro: When this business of hiring a consultation firm was made known to other faculty, some said we have a considerably less amount of scholarships to give away. Is this correct?
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: Huron talked about how important scholarships are. Doesn't think it's considerably lower at this point
- ❖ Ramon Cerro: May not have been cut his year, but 2009 thinks they were.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: Don't think so, sounded like from the meeting that we have good number of scholarships and just need to target them better.
- ❖ Ramon Cerro: Can we find out?
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: Yes.
- ❖ Debra Moriarity: As far as putting the information on the website, we now have a portal set up so it wouldn't be available to the public.
- ❖ Charles Hickman: (In response to Ramon Cerro) The dollar amount went up significantly this year for 2013-2014 budget. If there any questions, he will talk about it after the meeting. The precise dollar amount isn't known to him at this point.
- ❖ Ramon Cerro: What was the percentage that it went up?
- ❖ Charles Hickman thinks it doubled compared to last year's budget.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: Recollection of the discussion at the meeting is that the amount of scholarships available isn't problematic, it would be better for more, but the question is how to tool them and aim them.
- ❖ Luciano Matzkin: What is the timeline for the final report?
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier thinks it is the end of this semester, but is unsure, and so will ask.

GER: Committee had one meeting last week. Dr. Andrea Word is running it and is very knowledgeable on the subject. The committee will develop what we want rather than fill-in different courses here and there. Development is in the “conceptual stage” (i.e., what is GER, what do we want it to do, how to make it fit in the university, etc.). Go this route rather than starting with the various requirements and constraints. Look at what is best for students and the university as a whole, then deal with the constraints. Still in the first stage.

- ❖ Chris Allport: Next meeting is October 11<sup>th</sup>.
- ❖ Derrick Smith: Do you have any indication on a timeline?
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: President Altenkirch has asked for its implementation by August 2014.

Provost Search: Proceeding according to the schedule. Idea being to hopefully have some initial interviews in November. Trying to get someone in place by beginning of next semester. Committee has been meeting and they have started looking at candidates. Still at point where, according to search firm, it’s possible best candidates have yet to apply because still convincing certain people to apply.

Learning Management System (Angel) replacement: Dr. James Swain reported that the initial meeting was last Thursday. The committee is discussing criteria that would be used and will put out a request for proposals in a week or so. It’s in the stage of discussing what we need from the system. There is another meeting tomorrow at 1:00pm.

- ❖ Derrick Smith: There is a very tight timeline. Trying to have it done by next May.
  - Will send some information on it via email. There is a spreadsheet of everything wanted, so he asks that the Faculty Senate please go through it and pick out what you would like in the system. Will bring leading candidates on campus and do presentations of fake courses to test before buying anything.
- ❖ Dan Sherman: Can we assume that we will be using Angel during spring semester, but that is final semester?
- ❖ Derrick Smith: There would be transition period where next summer will have couple people in transitions to test system and possibly starting fall or spring of 2015. Don’t want to rush into anything. Angel is supported through 2016 and wants to get through that. This won’t be a fast process, but wants to do it correctly.

➤ **Senate Committee Reports:**

Governance and Operations, Phillip Bitzer: Faculty appeals ballots are in and hopes it will be last election done by hand.

- ❖ Richard Miller: Has the Chair of the Physics Department and chair of new department been told about re-electing senators?
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: No
  - Phillip Bitzer will handle this for Dr. Berbrier.

Personnel, Ramon Cerro: First, committee worked last March on Background check policy and made number of comments. Most of the comments made were incorporated into policy, but not all of them. Now in process of looking into them so if anyone has any comments, Personnel Committee would like to hear them.

❖ Mitch Berbrier: We received email last week from President Altenkirch about this. Second, about hiring procedures for new hires. Started with past administration and has continued – hired people not previously tenured, but hired with tenure in university. The real problem is with a statement made by lawyers of UAH that anyone who is a new hire, doesn’t

have to go to PTAC or URB. Some of the new hires a while ago in past administration never went to URB, most or all went to PTAC, but not URB. In this case, new hires dismissed from PTAC but didn't go to URB. This is the interpretation of counsel. Committee looked into rules and have different interpretation. Asked to have President Altenkirch clarify this. Committee sent new interpretation to executive committee. (Read the new interpretation aloud.)

- ❖ Mitch Berbrier will talk to President Altenkirch first about lawyer's interpretation of handbook and try to correct this. A meeting is set up for next week. Also will bring up System Board Rule 301 which supports agreement that normal procedure are to be followed. New hires shouldn't bypass the committees. President Altenkirch doesn't always realize Faculty Senate's experience in past few years and how it colors anxieties about things.
- ❖ Charles Hickman: Talked to College of Business faculty and they're all in agreement that it would be perversion to allow someone to come in as faculty with tenure and rank and not have to go through PTAC or URB. There is some ambiguity in old faculty handbook, but not the new one. One approach to take is that the change was not intended to change policy, but intended as clarification of existing policy. Requires all faculty to go through PTAC and URB.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: We have clear, simple, and strong argument to make. Won't be much disagreement among faculty on this.
- ❖ Bhavani Sitaraman: Just focusing on the president and legal counsel is insufficient. Many times chairs and departments are involved with tenure and promotion. When this is clarified, and all parties at top have agreed, something official should go out to all faculty, or at least chairs, and let them know this is the case.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: Referring to ambiguity in current handbook, talks about process of department, college, and university level.
- ❖ Charles Hickman: It doesn't specify that PTAC and URB must approve of tenure and rank to new hire. There is a paragraph that refers to existing policy for other faculty. Is ambiguous but doesn't say clearly it isn't required. It's been done, that's how it was historically done – everyone who's getting rank or tenure goes through PTAC and URB.
- ❖ Ramon Cerro: Don't think the whole handbook is bad because can't just look at paragraph 7.3.1 of faculty handbook and say this is allowed. Specification everywhere else says something else. Paragraph 7.3.1 talks about people being hired as assistant faculty, and they don't have tenure. So why would they go through PTAC or URB?
- ❖ Charles Hickman is in complete agreement. The intent in enacting the current handbook was everyone getting hired goes through PTAC and URB. It doesn't state explicitly, which new handbook does. Our position needs to be the new handbook isn't a change, but a clarification. Interpretation is rule has always been that anyone getting rank or tenure, whether getting promoted or newly hired, has to go through the college to PTAC and University Review Board.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: Be sure to look at this when we get the handbook back.
- ❖ Ramon Cerro: Dr. Berbrier should bring Board Rule 301 up to the president. Rule 301, as interpreted, says if hire someone who doesn't have tenure somewhere else, doesn't get tenure.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier will bring up the faculty handbook and Board Rule 301 to the president at their meeting.

Undergraduate Curriculum, Debra Moriarity: Committee didn't meet in person, but instead via email. Approved a set of course changes and new courses. Rather than reporting every time we

get a set of these, committee will put together a complete report and send to Faculty Senate at end of each semester. Plan is to provide summary of everything that's been approved for each semester.

- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: Discussion in the Executive Committee that each committee can provide a semester report.

Finance and Resources, Charles Hickman: Budget has been approved by BOT, available on UAH website. Invited Ray Piner to come to committee meeting scheduled on October 31<sup>st</sup> to talk about the budget. Questions regarding the budget from some faculty and this is a chance for us to ask those questions to Piner. Told him we would supply him with a list of questions two weeks prior to the meeting which will be discussed. If you have questions, please email to Dr. Hickman in order to provide to Piner in advance. Will report on discussion post-meeting. Research and creative experience for undergraduates – emailed Ray Vaughn. Will have a meeting on October 8<sup>th</sup> to talk about funding for that program. Has already agreed to fund at last year's level, so if anyone has input please let Dr. Hickman know.

- ❖ Carmen Scholz: Running into same problem again about who is eligible. Open up for people who would use students as cheap labor... Do we want to open ourselves up to the program for that possibility?
- ❖ Richard Miller provided some background. The last few years, RCEU call for full-time university faculty which applied to tenure, tenure-track, research and clinical faculty. There has been an effort of certain staff members who want anyone with PhD to be allowed to be a mentor. Have been concerns about this over last few years. One about wanting to tie research endeavors tighter to academic departments and also that full time faculty have long term stake in success and quality of RCEU program where post-doc or adjunct, the more transient faculty, doesn't have stake. Simple solution for agreement last year was that anyone who wasn't full time faculty would have to have a primary mentor who was a full time faculty member, as a co-mentor, so some linkage there. Don't understand why this is coming up again because it as a workable solution last year.
- ❖ James Baird: Regarding the Finance meeting, time and place for that?
- ❖ Charles Hickman: October 31<sup>st</sup> is the budget meeting. No place yet, 12:45 time- if you want to attend let Dr. Hickman know. October 8th is meeting regarding the Research and Creative Experience, can't remember the exact time for the meeting.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: Anyone want to build on Dr. Miller's point? Or have a different view?
- ❖ Charles Hickman: Dr. Vaughn's response to request for meeting said he thought it was important that research faculty be able to participate. Dr. Hickman assumes research faculty meant research, not simply anyone with PhD.
- ❖ Richard Miller: There are other staff people in office who want it to be anyone with PhD.
- ❖ Carmen Scholz: Dr. Vaughn and his staff are talking about every center member have PhD. Those are usually staff scientists. We are fearful that education falls by the wayside if open itself up.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: Will keep posted on this. That's what the meeting is about this. Dr. Vogler shares Dr. Scholz's views on this.

Undergraduate Scholastic Affairs, James Blackmon: No report.

Faculty and Student Development, Fan Tseng: Working on Lecturer Ladder. Looked at several policies from other universities and we are reviewing them. Handout is in the meeting packet

that summarized what has been found so far. Very general description of them. Committee will meet again on October 10<sup>th</sup>. Hope to get it worked out then.

- ❖ Ramon Cerro: What committee of the Senate does department realignments fall under?
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: Will need to go back to appendix of faculty handbook and look. Dr. Newman?
- ❖ Tim Newman: Will look at committee descriptions to see. Don't think it's laid out clearly. Doesn't remember finding anything pointing to specific committee.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: Governance and Operations is also beginning to look at restructuring of the committees. Dr. Bitzer already has information from other UA schools. If you have thoughts like that, forward to Dr. Bitzer and ask for specific committee which has responsibilities for certain things.
- ❖ Ramon Cerro: In main policies of AAUP, one states that in every realignment, the faculty must participate. Have already seen one realignment recently that was not brought to senate except for announcement. Rumors of another realignment going on and ask for Faculty Senate's participation.
- ❖ Tim Newman: Looked up answer to Dr. Cerro's first question. The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee is tasked with initiating and reviewing any proposed changes affecting programs, basic degree requirements, and creation or elimination of academic programs. Personnel Committee is tasked with any faculty issues related to termination or discontinuation of.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: Therefore, go to one of those two committees.
- ❖ Ramon Cerro thinks the president should know about any realignment rumors going on regarding these issues.
- ❖ Debra Moriarity: Need to be careful that programs and departments are not synonymous. If talking about a department realignment there are multiple factors to that meaning several committees would be involved. For program changes, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee is clearly defined. If department realignment is also going to affect existing programs or bring in new programs, it goes through Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. For changes in those programs, would have to look at impact on Personnel, Scholastic Affairs would have to look at its impact on academic environment relative to undergraduate students.
- ❖ Tim Newman: One more piece to Undergraduate Curriculum Committee's portfolio – they're to collect information and report about academic programs being planned including new degree programs, departments, majors, minors, and degree program options. Don't have to be part of approval process, but do have a reporting and investigation rule regarding any changes to departments.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier asked Richard Miller if he spoke to the president about concerns regarding this last year.
- ❖ Richard Miller: Yes I did
- ❖ Ramon Cerro: Personnel Committee definitely involved if any terminations or dismissals of tenure. When it comes to realignment of programs or departments, he was unsure.
- ❖ Richard Miller: The president asked him last year if he thought split should be brought before senate (referring to the physics/space science split). Dr. Miller said absolutely. Didn't describe specifically going to committees because it didn't go to that point. It was at end of academic year, and asked for summer meeting to present that. Dr. Cerro is correct, it was just an announcement though. In principle that was a problem. Number of reviews that Dr. Moriarity mentioned should have been done

- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: So his goal in speaking to the president is to prevent this from being done again.
- ❖ Andree Reeves: When we consider widespread realignment of units, that would be a special ad hoc committee selected by the Faculty Senate. It didn't go to any other committees specifically.
- ❖ Tim Newman: When that committee met, we proposed that the university have a policy on realignment. Committee brought forward two bills that passed the Faculty Senate overwhelmingly. If it had been accepted by administration, it would have brought UAH in line with sister institutions. AAUP says every institution is supposed to have a policy that is crafted with faculty. UAH board has such a rule as well. Other institutions in system have done that, and on faculty side, we attempted to do that three years ago but it was rejected. This needs to get back on the radar – ought to have a policy. There are gaps in bylaws, tried in past to change. Let's try it again.

➤ **Officer Reports:**

Ombuds Deborah Heikes: No report.

Parliamentarian Tim Newman: No report

Past-President Richard Miller: No report

President-Elect Wai Mok

Attended BOT meeting in Tuscaloosa on behalf of Dr. Berbrier. Report is in Executive Committee report. One thing that caught his attention was enrollment in Tuscaloosa increased which puts pressure on UAH. Thinks the 120 hours is where this is coming from.

President Mitch Berbrier

Faculty Senate webpages are being updated, but there is limited capacity. Faculty handbook is now on welcome page. We can't change menu items, must go through IT to do that. Calendar is up to date. Membership is up to date. Suggestions – email Kala at facsen@uah.edu.

Shepherd Bend mine – there is land owned by Tuscaloosa UA near Birmingham. An individual named Drummond wants to mine coal on land. He has received some permits through department of environmental management but not all permits. Began five years ago. Environmental impact studies done. Certain individuals became concerned about impact of mining on quality of water. Warrior river – water source for low income African American community. There is a concern on quality of water and the effect of mining. Trying to get UA system and University of Alabama to input. Dr. Hickman knows permit specifics. UA faculty senate and UAB faculty senate, along with SGAs from all, have signed on to documents requiring and requesting the system (and chancellor) to clarify stance on this. And to not allow mining. Or to make process transparent on permits. UAH last ones to get involved. Asked to provide support for other groups. This is a bigger concern on Tuscaloosa campus and on Birmingham campus since the land is in Birmingham. We have now gotten involved. We didn't have much time but both faculty senates at UA Tuscaloosa and UAB got full presentations on environmental impact. Want transparency and for the process to be followed properly ; want to know details. Much discussion in background between the chancellor and President Bonner. Chancellor Witt is working hard to craft satisfying language for concerned people. Publicity should come forth in



future. Goal is that people concerned with water quality – a strong card – to get it into press. Trying to play card carefully.

- ❖ Wai Mok sat down to lunch with Chancellor Witt, other faculty senate presidents, and students from UA Tuscaloosa and UAB– Chancellor Witt made commitment to put in writing to do full investigation if UA Tuscaloosa decides to sell property. At that point in time, that’s all we can do.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: We will see if that comes forth.
- ❖ Wai Mok: Although water supply won’t affect us, we should support sister institution.
- ❖ Carmen Scholz: Is UA considering selling land to mining company?
- ❖ Wai Mok: No decisions have been made.
- ❖ Charles Hickman – Shepherd Bend has permits to conduct mining and for the runoff. Pollution is just water runoff. Pollution control measures are in place. All available on environmental agency’s website. Have appropriate permits, but don’t have mining rights. So UA would have to either sell property or give rights to extract. That hasn’t taken place yet. That is a BOT decision. All property of all university system ultimately belongs in a sense to BOT. They would have to approve mining rights.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: That is issue people have – it goes back and forth between UA and BOT.
- ❖ Charles Hickman: No mining has begun. Environmental permit expired.
- ❖ Mitch Berbrier: Will let go for now, but if issue isn’t resolved, need to have someone from Birmingham come and talk to us.

Chancellor of UA would come visit with Faculty Senate on an annual basis. Sometime in the past this stopped. Want to begin invitations again. Want chancellor to come give address to faculty across campus. Will invite to one of the meetings. All Faculty Senate meetings are open to all faculty, only members can vote. Need to be sure all faculty knows they can come. Suggestions on presenting his visit? Objections, concerns? No.

BETA policy is still with president. Supposed to get back several months ago, in recent email he said he’s been busy, apologizes and promises to get to us in October. Behavioral Evaluation and Threat Assessment. Lack of clarity about policy and how committee works. Working on for 18 months now.

- ❖ Ramon Cerro: Policy was started two to three years ago, but never went to senate. But policy affects every employee and student on university. Revision began, chaired by Dr. Wren. Revision went to the president in spring semester. Waiting on it now.
- **Peggy Hays:** Fitness helps you learn. Tried to get something on university website (unsuccessful) so brought to Faculty Senate to announce. Tennessee Senior Stars Women’s Softball Team earned their way to the Senior Olympics and won a Gold Medal in their division. Age is at least 55 years to be in the Senior Olympics. Olympics in Cleveland, OH. Next one will be in Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- Chris Allport **motions to adjourn**. Andree Reeves seconds the motion. Ayes carried the motion.

Faculty Senate Meeting # 540 adjourned  
September 26, 2013, 1:55 P.M.