Faculty Senate Bill No. 420

**Importance of Vacant and Vacated Faculty Positions to Sustain**

**the Educational Mission of the University of Alabama in Huntsville**

**WHEREAS** a core mission of UAH is to educate individuals in leadership, innovation, critical thinking, and civic responsibility; and

**WHEREAS** this educational mission is provided primarily if not exclusively by faculty and staff in academic departments; and

**WHEREAS** the ability of an academic department to fulfill its role in the educational mission of UAH depends directly on its ability to assign teaching duties to qualified individuals; and

**WHEREAS** academic departments as a whole are the best judges of the qualifications that individuals must have to teach to the needs of the respective department; and

**WHEREAS** the process that an academic department must undergo to fill vacated or vacant faculty lines with qualified personnel often if not always takes at least a year to complete; and

**WHEREAS** when a faculty position is vacated, the absence of immediate, reliable, coherent, and consistent statements to assure the position will be filled undercuts the ability of the affected department to plan how to met its educational requirements in the short term; and

**WHEREAS** as long as a faculty position remains vacant, the sustained absence of reliable, coherent, and consistent statements to assure the position is to be filled undermines the ability of the affected department to maintain its educational mission and negatively impacts the morale of the affected department over the long term; and

**WHEREAS** academic departments at UAH have had positions vacated and have positions remain vacant even as the duties and responsibilities required of the affected department to meet their educational missions have remained constant if not increased over that period; and

**WHEREAS** the administration has taken upon themselves to capture vacated and vacant faulty lines from academic departments to a central pool of positions; and

**WHEREAS** the administration has also indicated that it plans to disburse vacant and vacated positions later according schedules that they set; and

**WHEREAS** the administration has given reasons for taking this approach that appear non-committal toward or ignorant of the needs of the affected departments to meet and sustain their own constant or growing educational needs;

**BE IT RESOLVED THEREFORE** that actions taken wherein vacated or vacant faculty positions are captured back to and held within a central pool of positions above department level, especially without giving due diligence to provide immediate, reliable, coherent, and consistent information back to the departments to plan to fill the positions, are deemed to be counter to sustaining the educational mission of UAH. In the short term, such actions immediately undercut the ability of the affected department to plan, assign, and implement its teaching responsibilities with an account to meet its educational standards. In the long term, such actions undermine the ability of the affected department to maintain its educational standards and also damage the morale within the affected department.