

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE
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MINUTES OF MEETING #551, 30 OCTOBER 2014
APPROVED 20 NOVEMBER 2014**

Present: *Wai Mok, Charles Hickman, Jack Schnell, Eric Fong, Xiatong Li, Jill Johnson, Pavica Sheldon, Derrick Smith, Joe Conway, Joe Taylor, Linda Maier, John Kvach, Anne Marie Choup, Kyle Knight, Mitch Berbrier, R. Michael Banish, Richard Fork, Ken Zuo, Ellise Adams, Azita Amiri, Marlena Primeau, Monica Beck, Cheryl Emich, Lenora Smith, Larry Carey, Luciano Matzkin, Debra Moriarity, Jeff Weimer, Peter Slater, Letha Etzkorn, Mark Pekker, Seyed Sadeghi*

Absent with proxy: *Tim Landry, Carolyn Sanders, B. Earl Wells, James Swain, Kader Frendi, Babak Shotorban, Mark Lin, Kristen Herrin, Udaysankar Nair, Carmen Scholz, Lingze Duan, Nikolai Pogorelov*

Absent without proxy: *Nick Jones, Eric Seemann, Ying-Cheng Lin, Junpeng Guo*

Guests: *Regina Hyatt and TJ Brecciaroli*

President Altenkirch and Provost Curtis were not present.

- Faculty Senate President Wai Mok called the meeting to order at 12:45.
- No administration reports because Senator Shelby is in town and both the President and Provost are at his luncheon.
- Marlena Primeau **motions to suspend the rules** to change the order of the agenda—bypass approval of the minutes and acceptance of FSEC report and move to the third item on the agenda. Michael Banish seconds.
Ayes carry the motion
No oppositions
Motion to change the order of the agenda passes
- Student Affairs
- ❖ Regina Hyatt
Student life on campus is unique. Approximately 130 Student Organizations/Groups, which are very active.

There are leadership programs for students. There is a residential program called LEAP for first year students. They live in central campus resident hall. 108 students participated. It's focused on getting students engaged. A first year student is partnered with an upper division student who provides

mentorship to get them involved and connected. So students are getting engaged and taking on leadership roles.

We've had some transitions and challenges regarding the mental health needs of students. Talked with the Dean of Students and found this helpful. We aren't the only institution experiencing this. More students are going into higher education with diagnosed mental health issues.

[Handout: Data from a survey UAH administers every Spring semester from the American College Health Association] Related to mental health concerns. Gives you a picture of what our students are challenged with. This was a robust survey. 670 responses to this survey.

What does this mean for us? The counseling center has seen an increased need for demand. We have crisis hours, but there is a 2-week wait period. We identify a counselor for the student, but the intake will be 2 to 3 weeks post initial conversation. We are hopeful to hire more personnel, but it probably won't help. We are looking into group therapy. Possibly moving to bi-weekly sessions.

Counseling/Disability has moved to Wilson Hall on the third floor. That is their permanent home. We are working to manage the flow of student needs. This is crisis time so we have hit a peak. Don't stop referring people to us—we want referrals. Be aware, though, that if a student isn't in immediate crisis, the therapist won't see them for 2 to 3 weeks.

- Jill Johnson: Are people not coming because of the wait?
- Regina Hyatt: I'm not sure of the answer. People call and think they're in a panic, but we determine they aren't, and within 2 weeks the panic has passed, so...
- Jill Johnson: We encourage people to go, so I'm wondering if it would be appropriate for us to follow up with the student.
- Regina Hyatt: It's absolutely appropriate.

If you think about the triage model, a student might have a 10-15 minute conversation with a therapist.

- Jill Johnson: Is there a co-pay?
- Regina Hyatt: No. They get 12 visits. Some students we do end up referring to mental health professionals in the community.

We are seeing a significant number of students with serious mental health issues. Depression, suicidal thoughts, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, so you are right to be alert.

- Wai Mok: What are the warning signs for a student being a danger to others?
- Regina Hyatt: Everyone wants to know this. The truth is that I don't know unless the student has directly said he/she wants to hurt other people. That's a hard question to answer.
- TJ Brecciaroli: There is a process in place to address when to evaluate a student when there are concerns about that student, and to assess the level of threat or concern.
- Regina: If you are concerned, we want you to refer them. Through processes we have in place, we want you to determine if they are a threat to the community or to him/herself.

Regina was asked if the increase in student problems is new compared to the past, and if that is a trend nationally compared to other universities. Regina Hyatt answered yes to both. She said nationally it's the trend due to a lot of reasons. For example, people with bipolar disorder 5 years might could not have gotten to college, but they can now.

When to refer a student? If you have a classroom issue and you've tried to resolve it, but it isn't working, call me. If you're concerned about a student's welfare (it will be the student whose

behavior has changed, who is suddenly disheveled), call me. If a student comes to you with a significant crisis or an emotional problem, refer them. If you've referred them in the past and there has been no improvement, refer them. Call the counseling center, then talk to the student and tell them you believe they should go to the counseling center. If you aren't sure why they're struggling, call me and I will work with you to figure out the referral. If it's a first year student, TJ and his team will assist you.

- Letha Etzkorn: Do you take anonymous recommendations?
- Regina Hyatt: Yes. You can either call or there's a form on our website (Student Affairs).
- Mitch Berbrier: There are more ambiguous cases than not. I've contacted Regina and she's been extremely helpful.

A senator commented that she and her staff would like more training on how to deal with students.

We do have a number of safety initiatives, such as sexual violence prevention. First year students had to complete it; it was part of a graded requirement. The Student Government has signed on to the "It's on Us" Campaign. We also offer a service for students starting on Thursday night through Sunday morning, transportation to get students off campus back on campus. It's called SafeRide. The student doesn't have to pay. It's used fairly regularly.

Regina explained that they launched a food bank this fall. There has not been a tremendous usage yet, although she suspects it will go up after Thanksgiving. They don't need any food right now thanks to a generous gift from a local church. It's in their office and open daily. Students don't need to provide any documentation that they need food.

- Jill Johnson: Available for non-resident students and students with families?
- Regina Hyatt: It's available to all students. They just need their Charger ID card.

❖ **TJ Brecciaroli**

Over the summer, through the VA, we applied for a Veterans Work Study Program, which we were granted. We are able to hire up to 15 students on campus. The program is veterans working with veterans. So we will be staffing our veterans' center in Charger Union. A lot of students will be working with OITS and undergraduate research. Some positions are still available.

Over the last few weeks, we've been working on centralizing our veterans' services on campus. In the past, financial aid has taken care of veterans' benefits, the veterans' service department was in Student Affairs, and then we had Vetnet, our student organization. A resignation allowed us to combine all of these into a one-stop shop. We are posting a position for this in the next few weeks based out of the Charger Union to help connect veterans to the campus and take care of their educational needs. Along with the change in staffing, that allows us to bring some other programs to the campus that will coordinate through that office. We will start some incentives and work with the task force on the Ace Veteran Friendly Toolkit. One of institution's goals is to get be considered veteran-friendly. But we want to do evaluations to make sure we have the procedures and policies in place before we go through the accreditation process.

The student will lead a "Got Your 6" campaign through the work-study program. It's put together by students and involves a series of workshops about how to work with veterans on campus, ways to help veterans succeed. It's an internationally recognized program. It will be professionally staff supported but veteran led. We have a large number of veterans new to the institution, so we want to have these resources for them.

Freshmen Intervention Team (FIT)

Colleagues from Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Housing, Financial Aid, and a few others around campus met weekly. A team was put together to create an intervention for students who were referred to the Dean of Students office or came to us through other means and were first year students. Students who weren't acting appropriately, etc. We've intervened with approximately 50 students and we have been highly successful with them. We get them the resources they need, whether it's connecting them with the Student Success Center, providing them with a "maturity talk," or connecting them with counseling resources, etc. to get them back in the classroom.

We are moving forward with our Freshmen, Sophomore, and Transfer series activities, which connects our students to resources, people, and places needed as they transition.

Mitch Berbrier: Can you tell us a little bit more about those veteran jobs? You said there were about 15? And then there's another more professional position. How do they find out about them?

TJ: The VA Work Study Program is any job that we create that is veterans working specifically with other veterans. It can be anything from using veteran students working front line at the center to academic-type position (we have conversations in place with the Student Success Center for this), and Undergraduate Research has asked for a person. We were given the funding for up to 15 students at 20 to 25 hour per week. Send them right to me. They have to fall under certain criteria of their VA benefits.

- Approval of Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes 549 (August 28, 2014), 550 (September 11, 2014), and 551 (September 25, 2014)

Jill Johnson **motions** to accept Minutes 549, 550, and 551. Charles Hickman seconds.

Ayes carry motion

No oppositions

Motion to accept Faculty Senate Minutes 549, 550, and 551 passes

- Acceptance of the September 18, 2014 Faculty Senate Executive Committee Report
 - President Wai Mok presented Past-President Mitch Berbrier with a plaque for his service as Faculty Senate President during 2013-2014.
 - Reports
- Senate Officer Reports**
- ❖ President Wai Mok
Administration is proposing 3 tiers to the lecturer ladder. Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, and Master Lecturer. Details are coming soon. After that, we give our feedback to them.

Parental Leave. The Provost has been working on it. She mentioned that she is very bothered by the fact that UAH does not provide sick leave to the faculty members.

- ❖ No other Officer Reports

Committee Reports

- ❖ Finance and Resources Committee Chair Charles Hickman

RCEU program proposals are due by tomorrow. We have 10 so far. We have funding for 30. Try to get them in as soon as possible.

Provost gave funding for 8 Distinguished Speakers for the Distinguished Speakers Series; that's the same as last year, but increased one from the prior year.

- Deb Moriarity: I talked with some faculty members about the timing of the proposal. It's probably the same for other departments. The research could change so much between now and then. It's hard to write specifics now for what they would do next summer. It would need to be broad and vague now. Will you consider that in judging proposals?
 - Charles Hickman: We went through a multi-tiered analysis last year. In my evaluations, I tried to spread among colleges and look for diversity. There's a preference for females and minorities, and honors theses. Just make it sound cool.
- ❖ Personnel Committee Chair Michael Banish
The Personnel Committee met. We got the initial indication that there was some hesitancy regarding the Parental Leave Bill. We've done some surveys at other universities if we need it to back up this bill.
- ❖ Faculty and Student Development Chair Linda Maier
We met and discussed a 2 tiered versus a 3 tiered Lecturer ladder. We will work on shaping it into a Bill.
 - Wai Mok: My understanding is it's coming soon.
 - Linda Maier: We have a meeting scheduled next week.
- ❖ Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Co-Chair Deb Moriarity
With the new catalogue coming out, the deadline for getting new course approvals, course changes, etc. is January 15. So we can get them in before the catalogue goes out. The committee is trying to do them electronically so they are done quickly.
 - Mitch Berbrier: There's a problem with the electronic forms. The form isn't working. Amanda said they're working on it.
 - Deb Moriarity: It's supposed to be all online submission now.
- Bill 380: Climate Survey
Wai Mok: I had a discussion with the Provost on Tuesday. She wants this to be done in a way that will improve the climate of the university. If the Bill is passed today, most likely I will form an Ad-Hoc committee to look at it. She wants it to bring some change to the policy to improve the climate. She mentioned there are many openings right now at the university, and she wants to create a climate that will attract the best and brightest faculty members to UAH. The other thing, this is not supposed to be a "witch hunt." At the end of the meeting, she said that in case something bad happens, she is supposed to know. At the same time, in the Faculty Handbook, there is a Reassignment of the Dean and Reassignment of the Chair. So if this is necessary, there are procedures in place. So, this is not supposed to be a "witch hunt," but in the rare situation that that might be necessary, there are certain procedures in place that we have to follow. We are bound by the Handbook as to what cause of action we take.
 - Anne Marie Choup: The Bill is very straightforward. I'm surprised we even need a Bill.
 - Deb Moriarity: At the Executive Committee, the idea was that if we passed this to do another survey, the issues related to the responding would all be addressed prior to doing

- another survey to make sure that all of the appropriate controls were in place so that we could get data that we could use.
- Jeff Weimer: This has nothing to do with how it will be established nor does it have anything to do with the results once it's taken. All this says is: we approve that a survey will be done.
 - Wai Mok: That's right.
 - Charles Hickman: How are we going to control for the "witch hunt"? If the survey provides open ended responses, people will take shots. I don't see the purpose of this.
 - Deb Moriarity: I think the purpose is to allow the people to express their opinions in a way to show valid data.
 - Anne Marie Choup: There are ways to preface the survey. There are ways to phrase and present the questions. This isn't the first time this has been done. There should be templates out there.
 - Jeff Weimer: Who makes the survey? Who gets the results? This bill doesn't discuss any of this. However, they impact this bill.
 - Wai Mok: We will use funds from the Faculty Senate budget to hire an outside firm to guarantee the integrity of it and make sure everything is done right.
 - Jeff Weimer: Are we handing off all responsibility. Or do we provide the questions?
 - Wai Mok: We design the questions. We will be in consultation with a firm for the template.
 - Peter Slater: The principle point is, who gets results? Will it be made public?
 - Wai Mok: If it's done right, we will disclose the results.
 - Charles Hickman: If defamation occurs again, are we willing to publish it? How does it help the university? We can't do open-ended questions.
 - Wai Mok: Metric questions, maybe. There are other alternatives. This bill just allows us to go forward on the survey.
 - Mitch Berbrier: Charlie's point about a witch hunt is a good one. If you want good data, people will need to express themselves at some point. We won't know by close-ended questions what the problems are, although we will get some information. It's an inherent problem with surveys in close communities that everyone knows who is getting the surveys and everyone knows each other, so people can collude with each other to change the results. There's only so much you can do about that. I never got a clear answer about the previous data corruption myself, but it doesn't really matter at this point. You won't overcome the fact that everyone who gets the survey knows everyone else and knows someone else who is getting the survey. So if there is a group of people who want to gang up on somebody or another group, or make a certain point together, that is what you'll get. That has to be understood as part of this climate survey. Otherwise, you can't do it. Climate surveys are done around the country all the time. It just has to be interpreted in the right framework and understanding what the limitations of it are.
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- Wai Mok: Improving the climate is the purpose in order to recruit faculty.
 - Derrick Smith: I have no problem with the Bill, but it is abrupt.
 - Anne Marie Choup: I think if we get really specific, then it gets complicated. This is just to give a charge to do this.

- Charles Hickman: This is a public institution. Everything that's written down can be put in the paper tomorrow. I think it's a bad idea.

Jack Schnell **motions** to change the wording from "unreliable" to "unusable." Mitch Berbrier seconds.

In favor: 6

Opposed: 16

Motion to change the wording from "unreliable" to "unusable" fails to pass.

- Jill Johnson: If we don't want people to know the results of the survey, it means that the climate is something we don't want people to know about. And if that is the case, then it sounds like we should do something to help the climate. If there are problems here that we feel are important in terms of recruiting faculty, creating an environment that is productive, etc. don't we want to know that, or do we just pretend that everything is perfect because we don't want anyone to know that there might possibly be something wrong.
- Michael Banish: The reason this was put forward was to say that we want to do it. The details were to be worked out later. This Bill is only to answer the question, "Do we want to spend the money to do it?"
- Jeff Weimer: It also seems like a blank check, to just go to town, do things, and then never hear from them again. So I want to amend the wording.

Jeff Weimer **motions** to amend the bill to change the wording in the last line: *That the process be initiated to create another Campus Climate Survey to be administered during the 2014-15 academic year.*

This gives that we are initiating the process and so it will be brought back here with a statement of what we will learn, this is what the campus climate survey will look like, and do we now approve to give this survey. We initiate the process, we approve once, we have that on hand to review, and then it can be given. Rhonda Gadee seconded.

Ayes across the room

Motion to amend the bill to change the wording passes.

Michael Banish **calls the question** on the Bill.

In favor: 31

Opposed: 4

Two-thirds majority pushes Bill 380 to third reading. President Mok decides to move it immediately to third reading.

Michael Banish **calls the question** on the Bill.

In favor: 31

Opposed: 4

Bill 380 passes by majority vote.

Marlena Primeau **motions** to adjourn. Deb Moriarity seconds.

Faculty Senate Meeting #552 adjourned
October 30, 2014, 2:00 P.M.