

MEMORANDUM

To: Carmen Scholz  
President, Faculty Senate

From: Robert A. Altenkirch   
President

Christine W. Curtis   
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Subject: Faculty Senate Resolution 17-18-13 Importance of Vacant and Vacated  
Faculty Positions to Sustain the Educational Mission of the University of  
Alabama in Huntsville

Date: July 9, 2018

Faculty Senate Resolution 17/18-13 states:

- Actions taken to “capture vacated and vacant faculty lines from academic departments to a central pool of positions” “undermine the ability of the affected department to maintain its educational standards and also damage the morale of the affected department.”
- “Effective Fall 2018, vacated positions that have been administered solely within an academic unit shall no longer be captured to a central pool.”

In the way of some background, in the fall of 2017, shortly before the beginning of fiscal year 2018 (FY18), the Board of Trustees began discussing the historical budget development and Board approval processes. These discussions continued during FY18, among the Board, The University of Alabama System Office, the three campus Presidents, and the three Chief Financial Officers. As a result of these discussion, the budgeting philosophy that emerged is that revenues and expenses should be budgeted as accurately as possible, in essentially audit statement form, and expenditures should be made for what they were budgeted and were approved by the Board, which implies that the budget should track the year-end audit results closely. Although this is sound budgeting philosophy, it was not in place previously.

As a result of the budgeting philosophy in place at this time, funds budgeted for faculty personnel should be spent on faculty salaries. Budgeting funds to vacant faculty positions is inconsistent with this philosophy and so will not occur for FY19 and going forward.

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The process of approving faculty searches and hiring does not change as a result of not budgeting vacant faculty positions in the Colleges. When college deans want to initiate searches to occur throughout a fiscal year for hiring in the following fiscal year, they make a request with a justification and a priority listing. After evaluating the areas that have greatest need for faculty within the University, the Provost then compiles the requests and determines a university-wide priority ranking for the faculty searches. The Provost, in consultation with the President, then approves the initiation of faculty searches. As was the case in the past and as it will be going forward, not all requests are necessarily approved.

Cc: Todd Barré, Vice President of Finance and Administration