



Academic Affairs Committee
January 21, 2022
McCandless Hall Conference Room 300

Meeting called to order 1:15

Roll Call

Present: Mr. Ronnie Chronister, Chairing meeting, Dr. Timothy Thornton, Dr. Cynthia Lovelace, Professor Pamela Keller, Ms. Laken Smith, Ms. Felicia Mucci, Dr. Catherine Wehlburg, Dr. Donna Estill, Mrs. Robin Moore.

Absent: Mr. Jim America, Mr. Macke Mauldin, Mrs. Missy Ming Smith, Mr. Jimmy Baker, Ms. Rita Wallace, Mr. Ira Lacy, Dr. Phillip Way

Review of previous minutes – no discussion

Motion to approve – Dr. Lovelace
Second – Ms. Mucci

Jeff Guenther introduction and welcome

New Business

New Programs in Academic Affairs

Bachelor of Science in Public Health – to be voted on by the Board today. We will replace the Public Safety and Health Administration degree. Need no new faculty. Dr. Michael Behring introduced himself and talked about the program.

Undergraduate Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language (TESOL) with a Specialization in Teaching English to Adults
Undergraduate Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language (TESOL) with a Specialization in Teaching English to Young Learners

These will help teachers need for understanding of the growing immigrant population. It will be offered jointly through the College of Education and the College of Arts and Sciences. It will provide an entry level teaching credential to teach ESOL here and abroad. Also allows people to work at church-based programs, businesses, community programs. English majors who want to teach English abroad. We have several students interested now.



We plan to work with community colleges as well as there is interest in collaborating with us. We this as something in which all three colleges could participate.

It will be a mix of online and face to face synchronous components along with asynchronous elements. These certificate programs do include a practicum to have hands on experiential learning. It will be widely accepted and recognized that they are qualified to teach even in different countries.

Undergraduate Certificate in Professional and Technical Writing - a 12-hour certificate made up of existing courses no new resources needed. The certificate will be beneficial to the large technical community in north Alabama.

Programs Discussed at last ACHE Meeting - The Master of Science in Computer Science, Master of Science in Cybersecurity and the Bachelor of Science in Aerospace and Systems Management were approved. The programs will begin in Fall, 2022.

Grants – The College of Education has received two grants. The National Education Association CREATE Grant for \$2,000 and the Society for Public Health Education with the CDC Health Schools Branch for \$5,000.

NEA Create Grant – Dr. Johnnie Lundin received the grant for the University Chapter of SAEA. It will help students participate in conferences to present their work. The grant will pay registration fees and travel costs for students who attend the conferences.

CDC Health Schools Grant – This was a collaboration of Health and Physical Education faculty with the CLL to get the word out to the community encouraging healthy practices.

College of Education Spotlight

Dr. Johnnie Lundin – our Elementary Education program is one of largest programs on campus. We have 70 interns this semester alone and are excited. We have some wonderful professors doing great things.

Dr. Jameha Gardner highlighted three specific areas the college is focusing on – the Reading Initiative, the Literacy Law, and the Listerhill Credit Union grant for the Literacy Lab.

Alabama Reading Initiative – educators have realized we are not reaching enough kids for reading and literacy. We have offered training for our students, but as time progressed, it had to be tweaked. An initial two-week training was whittled down to a 3-day training. We have since revamped it to 5 days. We want to make our students competitive, so we made sure the students receive the training BEFORE their internship. Dr. Gardner and Dr. Darlene Turner-White are the facilitators so that our students can continue receiving the training. Our students understand the science of reading.

Literacy Law – in 2019, the State of Alabama passed a law focusing on literacy K-3. If by the end of grade 3, a student does not meet reading level then that student has to repeat 3rd grade and some students



can be held back twice. The College of Education wants to be sure we are providing great instruction and that our teachers fix this problem. State looked at the NAEP report and for Alabama, only 28% were on grade level at the 4th grade. Nationwide it was only 34%. They determined that grade 3 is the critical year.

Listerhill Credit Union Grant for the Literacy Lab – here, the college created a space for teacher candidates to come in and participate in experiential learning. The lab looks like a classroom and students learn how to teach reading there. We are going to use this grant to upgrade our technology for classroom to better be able to teach our students to teach reading. They have found that most children not reading on grade level are low socioeconomic and black and the State of Alabama is placing an emphasis on early intervention.

Dr. Marla Williams reported on the College of Education Elementary Science program. We will have a new STEM lab thanks to a \$25,000 gift from Northrop Grumman. The lab will be set up in the basement of McCain hall. We are updating the technology and want to introduce hyflex to our students. Much of the gift goes to supplies. They will be involved in coding, robotics and anything they have not experienced through AMSTI. Students will go through 2 days of training in the AMSTI method of inquiry learning. And will learn how to deal with making this type of learning work anywhere. And what if their materials are limited – how to deal with this. We want to show teachers that you can do very good inquiry-based lessons and that students can sometimes fail and to keep trying. To provide true activities that challenge students. Dr. Williams is currently working with Cowart Elementary where it is a true STEM school. Everything they teach is using science. Dr. Williams takes her students over to experience a real STEM environment. She hopes to have the lab open by fall.

Ethics Conference – the college had their first one last semester. We served 124 senior students. Dr. Williams experiences from her law classes led to the conference. There is an Alabama Educator Code of Ethics and we want our students well versed in this. It's a one-day training session where guest speakers (principles, superintendents, etc.) come in. The next conference will be March 1.

Mr. Chronister recognized that the College of Educations adapting to things quickly changing within the state to be able to foster better classroom teachers.

Old Business

There was none.

Meeting adjourned at 1:57.