I. Call to Order
President Dan Krejci called the meeting to order. Paul Beezley moved that the minutes of the October meeting be approved as amended. The motion was seconded by Benjie Blair. The motion carried.

Members Absent: Misty Cobb, Mike Davis, Mark Hearn, Bill Lowe, Keith Lowe

II. Special Guests
Lori Owens introduced Whitney Wood, who spearheads membership for ACHE. She addressed the funding problems that exist in the Education Trust Fund, stating that the sources of money for this fund—sales taxes, utility taxes, and other small taxes—are shrinking. The results for higher education include no salary increases, vacant positions, increases in costs of benefits, etc. The ETF has seen a 31.7% decrease in funding in the last 2 years. She went on to say that colleges and K-12 schools are fighting for a larger share of the funds and that colleges and universities have not received the 1/3 split of the funds that they have been getting in the past in several years. Because K-12 schools are getting a larger and larger percentage of these funds, Ms. Wood said that postsecondary schools need to get more involved. She suggested that faculty need to let their legislators know how they feel about cuts in funding being inequitable, saying that faculty will make more of an impression on legislators than lobbyists and university presidents will, who are always asking for money. K-12 educational programs such as AMSTI and ARA, which don’t have full funding, are asking the legislature to increase their funding levels through taking funding away from colleges and universities.

Ms. Wood talked about some of the membership benefits of ACHE membership including, vision and dental insurance, good hotel rates, and a good liability policy. She pointed out that The Alabama Education Association liability policy “reserves the right not to represent you” and is often not going to represent higher education employees. She also announced that March 4, 2010, will be Higher Education Day in Montgomery and that we should encourage our students to go so that we can make sure we have a large representation there. She suggested that this would be a good educational field trip for us to take with our students, with free transportation and free lunch provided.

Dan Krejci commented that he has the liability insurance offer by ACHE and that it is good to know that he is covered. He also asked why no group was looking to other resources (such as lotteries, casinos, etc.) that other states use to help fund education in Alabama.

Ms. Wood replied that constitutional reform and an increase in our property taxes would help fund education better but that people in Alabama look at an increase in property tax as a “dirty word.” Opponents have instilled fear of property taxes into their constituents. She commented that one of the candidates for governor, Ron Sparks, is pro-lottery; however, according to her, the lottery won’t generate enough funds unless the structure of the state is changed. She ended her remarks with a quotation, “Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.”
Lori Owens announced that copies of the ACHE cookbook could be purchased from her and encouraged faculty to attend the luncheon and info session when Gordon Stone would be on campus in November.

III. Committee Reports

Admissions and Scholarship Committee  No Report
Elections  No Report
Honors  No report
Policies  No Report
Welfare  Miriam Hill

Miriam presented a Faculty Senate Recommendation concerning Attraction and Retention of Faculty: Promotion to Distinguished Instruction for discussion by the group. Referring to the phrase “minimum of 12 years” in the recommendation, Heidi Dempsey questioned why that number had been changed from the Welfare’s Committee’s verbiage of “15 to 20 years.”

President Krejci responded that the executive committee had requested the change.

Paul Beezley commented that he thought the level of promotion set forth in this recommendation was not to be analogous with that of Distinguished Professor. To him, it seems that the rank is exalted without a very strenuous method of achievement.

Edwin Bellman suggested that there should be more steps to achieving this rank—maybe an intermediate step.

Heidi’s issue was that the committee wrote the recommendation analogous to Distinguished Professor that very few would be able to achieve.

Curt Gladen commented that “If you [a professor] can go up for tenure at 6 years, why should an instructor wait 12 years?

Jimmy Griffin asked if we approved the recommendation today, would it go back to committee, and Heidi inquired what the pay increase would be.

President Krejci answered that if this is approved with us recommending the ranks but not be specific about salary, it will be more likely to pass.

Paul Beezley moved that we amend the time from 12 to 20 years and add an intermediate step at 10 years; Edwin Bellman seconded. The motion passed.

Paul asked that we ask the committee to write a proposal for senior instructor (the intermediate step) that would include the years at which one might apply.
IV. President’s Report

The president asked for a motion for the Faculty Senate not to meet in December. Benjie Blair made the motion; Jimmy Griffin seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

V. Old Business

Tenure and Promotion Policy Changes: The recommendations are with the Dean’s Council and are under discussion by that body at this time. The chair of the Academic Council has told them to act on this recommendation.

Distinguished Professor: This rank has been approved and should appear in the new revision to the Faculty Handbook.

Full-tuition waiver for Full-Time Faculty Resolution: Administrative Council will be given the Faculty Senate’s responses to questions the council had posed so that the council can consider action on this resolution.

Increase in Academic Promotion Pay—Because we are in proration and will continue to be there in the immediate future, this recommendation may not be acted upon until later; however, it does have the support of the VPASA, so we should not let the issue die.

Board of Trustees Academic Affairs Committee—The committee has requested a return visit to the Faculty Senate in spring 2010 so that more members of the committee may attend.

Book Vouchers—This is an issue that needs to be resolved as students with book vouchers often have to wait so long for the vouchers that when they receive them, there are no books to be purchased. The SGA and the senate should work together for a solution to this problem.

Short term/Summer Pay and Course Loads: Heidi Dempsey asked when the deans would make a decision about summer pay, saying that no one in her department wants to sign up to teach until they know whether they will be paid for teaching a second course in May. She also asked for guidance about how to do scheduling for the short terms.

Dan Krejci said that he knew Dean Hammett was all for teaching more than one course in a term, even in a four-week term.

VI. New Business

Doug Gordon had comments on the parking situation on campus, saying that visitors are being given tickets if they come on campus and do not get a visitor’s parking pass. He also complained that because they are not allowed to park close to the music building, some music students are having problems getting their instruments to class.

Allison McElroy, from Art, said that when artists are unloading their works, the University Police often want to give them tickets.
Randy Blades’ comment was that the new parking changes have not been made smoothly.

Benjie Blair asked if there was a parking committee.

President Krejci reminded senators that we don’t want to let minor issues (like parking) detract from our larger initiatives.

Jeff Hedrick said that the justification for all the changes seemed to be the shuttle and that its routes were always changing.

Bryant Whaley, SGA president, said that there will be changes in the red route.

Dan announced that he had invited a representative of AAUP to meet with the senate but that a scheduling conflict prohibited that.

Teresa Gardner asked that if faculty did join this organization, they be willing to serve.

Marsha Zenanko said that they were told they only needed tenured people for officers, and no one wanted to serve. If anyone is interested in joining, they should contact John Jones.

Randy Owen and Thomas Dedrick, from the Board of Trustees, want to visit the Faculty Senate in March.

The University Travel Grants committee will be sending out a call for proposals for travel grants. They will have less money than last year, so they may only have one selection meeting. Jordan Barkley chairs this committee.

There being no further business, Heidi Dempsey moved that we adjourn the meeting. Greg Pass seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gloria Horton, Secretary