

UF/IFAS Faculty Advisory Committee Minutes
21 April 2004

Members present: Jim Selph (Chair and Presiding), Doug Archer, Lynn Bailey, Alison Fox, Tim Hewitt, Celia Hill, Carol Lehtola, Marjorie Moore, Gregg Nuessly, Jim Preston, and Ken Quesenberry.

Members absent: Viv Harris and Larry Parsons.

Meeting called to order at 1:16pm by Chair Jim Selph. The agenda was distributed.

The Minutes from the March meeting were reviewed. The motion to accept, made by Ken Quesenberry and seconded by Lynn Bailey, was approved unanimously

Jim Selph noted that based on the FAC guidelines, the general call for nominations to FAC needed to be sent out soon (this will be handled by Donna Stall) and that replacements should be selected by the committee not by the Vice-President. It was agreed to move the July meeting from July 21st to July 28th.

Vice-President Martin arrived at 1:45pm and made the following comments:

Transition of Vice-President: Dr. Martin will assume the presidency at New Mexico State University on July 1st at which time Dr. Richard Jones will become interim VP for IFAS. Winn Philips is the Chair of the Search and Screen Committee for the next VP. Dr. Martin has proposed 26 names for members of the committee including representatives of the important constituent groups (e.g., Farm Bureau), extension agents from around the state, and several faculty members including someone from FAC. There are anticipated to be two or three internal candidates and while there will be national attention to this position, Dr. Martin does not expect to see a large pool of sufficiently qualified applicants. It is expected that the next VP of IFAS will be given authority over certain matters that currently have to go to the Provost for approval, such as Tenure and Promotion. It is anticipated that President Machen will attend a FAC meeting in the near future, but should there be a scheduling conflict, the FAC could utilize the 11am Wednesday appointment with the President that is reserved for Dr. Martin.

IFAS budget: Currently the budget for IFAS proposed in the Legislature looks promising, the best in three years if unchanged, with matching funds for 29 county positions (which will release funds for other uses). Funds will be provided to match federal citrus funds, some new programs and lines could be filled, the Plant City campus could be extended, Balm could receive \$850K for equipment and a funding for a GIS position but there would be no increase for PO&M. Funds are included for planning the Life Sciences building which would include the Departments of Agronomy, Soil and Water Science, Botany and Zoology. It is intended that this building would be located in the open area north of Fifield but Botany and Zoology are pushing to have it on Museum Road near Rogers Hall. Dr. Martin is adamant that this is not a viable location due to congestion and future programming needs for IFAS and he will continue to express that opinion or suggest that the CALS and CLAS departments not be housed together. Of the \$38m assigned to the Lake Okeechobee Project, \$4.7m is to go to IFAS (none to CLAS) so IFAS should expect a strong leadership role in the UF Water Institute. The budget includes a projected 2 - 2.5% cost of living adjustment to faculty salaries but President Machen hopes to increase this to 4 - 4.5% using enrollment growth, tuition increases, and making savings elsewhere.

Faculty option for 9 or 12 month appointments: Dr. Martin asked FAC if they had received any reaction from faculty members to the plan for making 9 month appointments available in IFAS. Hearing no negative responses, he intends to implement the plan.

Reconsideration of the UF strategic plan: Dr. Martin asked the members of FAC to be prepared to reconsider the IFAS-related aspects of the UF Strategic Plan. President Machen may ask IFAS, E&G and the Health Science Center to revisit and revise (at least modestly) the Strategic Plan because there were too many “ought to” statements without enough tactics for implementation or direction as to what would have to be given up to accommodate such changes.

Travel authorizations (TAR) policy: Dr. Martin will verify what is required by IFAS for in-state travel.

FAS2: The implementation of FAS2 for the 2004 Plan of Work has been shelved for a year during which time more thorough beta-testing of the completed product will be provided. Concern was expressed about the required coordination between faculty members, for example, where the listing of publications or funding requires the reliance on colleagues for entering data on time. The training for FAS2 also highlighted the confusion among faculty with extension appointments about how decisions were made to delete the State Major Programs (was there any Shared Governance here?) and the current status of the new programs within the seven focus groups. FAC would like to hear from the Acting Extension Dean on this topic soon.

Bonuses and Special Pay Increases (SPI): Celia and Marjorie provided a report of their survey of unit leaders about their procedures for allocating recent bonuses but concluded that the information was not particularly helpful except in illustrating the diversity and opaque nature of these decision making processes within IFAS. As with the SPIs, a draft set of guidelines will be proposed to try to provide more consistency, fairness, and transparency to the allocation process for both faculty and staff awards. Susan Hudson (Assistant Director, Administrative Services) is scheduled to attend the June FAC meeting to provide information from the IFAS Personnel Office.

Biology degree: Dr. Martin reviewed the history of the proposed biology degree at UF, which was recommended as a university-wide program in the UF Strategic Plan. Initially CLAS developed a degree program based on their interdisciplinary Integrative Biology Major but after CALS complained that this was not campus-wide, the Provost directed the two colleges to work together on a proposal. Members of FAC were concerned that there has been limited involvement of faculty in the synthesis of the CALS and CLAS combined program. Members of the CALS Curriculum Committee were concerned that they had been given a poor quality proposal which they were being pressured to approve hastily lest CLAS decides to submit their original proposal to the UF Curriculum Committee without CALS. Such a situation is further complicated by the fact the IFAS representative on the UF Undergraduate Curriculum Committee is Dr. Jane Luzar, the person leading the CALS participation and looking for approval from the CALS Curriculum Committee. With Dr. David Colburn stepping down as Provost, and potential changes in the UF Strategic Plan, it may be an appropriate time to pause the rush to develop this degree and even if CLAS decided to continue without CALS, the CALS Deans need to appeal directly to President Machen. While there may be acceptance within CALS to the principle of a joint CLAS/CALS biology degree, if the quality of the proposal is not yet acceptable and the lack of grassroots faculty input is of concern, then the CALS Curriculum Committee should report this. Dr. Martin agreed that the academic programs, as well as the economic, professional, and social welfare of faculty members, are the most appropriate areas for strong Shared Governance, and he believes that this must permeate not just the Faculty Senate but also at the department and college levels.

Dr. Martin departed the FAC meeting at 3:22pm

Shared governance at UF: Dr. Eric Triplett the Chair of Microbiology and Cell Science spoke to the FAC about his experiences of Shared Governance at the Universities of Wisconsin and California – Riverside. One general difference was the impression that at UC faculty were hired and treated as professionals whereas at UF it is as if faculty are assumed to be less trustworthy

and hence have greater limitations on their freedom and decision-making. The resulting attitude of faculty at UF seems to be defeatist with reluctance to vote against administrative proposals. As at UF, the administration at UW has complete control of the budget, but there is an illusion of Shared Governance because faculty members comprise the majority of committees and deans tend to respond to the vociferous faculty on these committees. Neither UW nor UC have faculty unions and at UW faculty only receive merit pay raises and not cost of living increases. Before decisions are made about the Faculty Union at UF, Dr. Triplett was concerned that someone (perhaps the Faculty Senate could request someone in the Law School) should review the language in the Florida Statutes to understand better what restrictions there might be upon faculty members and/or union members to be a part of governance or to strike. Dr. Triplett noted that Departmental Chairs may have too much authority at UF and that the FAC might consider helping to devise a plan for increasing Shared Governance in IFAS in the units, counties, etc.

IFAS involvement in the Genetics Institute (GI): Richard Jones joined the FAC meeting and provided an undated copy of the strategic plan developed by Dr. Ken Berns for the GI that identified the four key areas in which future hires will be focused: bioinformatics, comparative genomics, population and statistical genetics, and epigenetics. Dr. Jones reiterated the overall development of the GI which includes the allocation of 17,000 sq ft of space to IFAS in which 10-12 faculty members will be housed. The Provost provided \$250K per year salary and a \$200K-300K start-up package for hiring a prominent new IFAS faculty member but searches to fill such a position have been unsuccessful (perhaps because there is no building yet) so this money has been reassigned to hire two new Assistant Professors. In addition, two more Assistant Professors are being hired using IFAS funds and three of these four positions have already been filled (each getting approximately \$80K in start-up funds). Dr. Jones has appointed an advisory committee to oversee decisions made on the participation of IFAS in the GI. There is a concern that if Assistant Professors are assigned to the GI building, progress towards tenure and promotion may be more difficult because of separation from their departments.

Shared governance in IFAS: Dr. Jones was asked his opinions about the role of Shared Governance in IFAS. He noted that there is no history of advisory committees for the IFAS offices of Teaching, Research, and Extension because Department Chairs now have more leadership in setting priorities in these areas when new hires are made, and faculty committees are used to review individual research projects (e.g., CRIS). Thus, faculty members within a department make tactical decisions about program priorities while strategic planning follows from efforts like Florida First, which also receive faculty input. Using inter-unit advisory committees to make hiring decision can be difficult and does not optimize use of within-unit expertise. Dr. Jones expressed concerns that the Faculty Senate document on Shared Governance was too expansive indicating the intention to govern, or be able to veto, everything including the organization / dissolution of colleges, departments and centers. He suggested that instead an important focus for strengthened Shared Governance would be in matters such as grievance procedures where a hearing jury could be randomly selected from all faculty rather than being composed of the volunteers on the grievance committee (who he considers are like to have or have had their own grievances).

Dr. Jones concluded his comments with a declaration that outstanding faculty have been hired in the last five years, and that a current focus is to provide more help to faculty members at the RECs in an effort to reduce their rate of attrition or moves to Gainesville.

Meeting adjourned at 4:25pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Alison Fox, FAC Secretary.