

IFAS Faculty Council Meeting Minutes
November 16, 2005

Members present: Martin Adjei, Elizabeth Bolton, John Davis, Lochrane Gary, Lisa Guion (chair), Bob Hochmuth, Ed Jennings, Gail Kauwell, Heather McAuslane, Jane Polston, Mike Sweat

Members absent: Jude Grosser, Fritz Roka

Meeting began at 1:38 p.m., chaired by Lisa Guion. Agenda was distributed. Minutes of October meeting were approved with minor changes.

Potential IFAS Faculty Symposium. VP Cheek charged the committee with the task of investigating the need for and content of a statewide IFAS faculty symposium. Fritz Roka will lead this effort but could not attend today's meeting. Advantages and disadvantages to holding such a meeting identified by Roka and other FC members were discussed. Advantages would include providing a forum for IFAS administrators to talk about broad issues affecting IFAS faculty and their vision for IFAS, an opportunity for research and extension faculty to get to know one another and network, and a chance to team build. Many concerns were raised: 1) the FC does not have a clear understanding of the objectives of a statewide faculty meeting, 2) extension faculty already have several state-wide meetings that they must attend each year (Florida Association of Extension Professionals annual meeting [FAEP] and the new extension specialists annual meeting in May) and may not see the benefit of attending a third, 3) the costs for extension faculty of attending these meetings often fall to the counties and faculty may see better use for their funds, 4) the logistics of a statewide meeting may be unmanageable due to the size of our faculty, 5) the faculty must have a clear idea of the benefit to them of attending this meeting, and 6) what added value will a statewide meeting provide to faculty that the Annual Teaching Enhancement symposium, the FAEP and extension specialists meeting don't already provide? One suggestion was that a statewide faculty meeting could be held in conjunction with a research symposium, which faculty might view as a good reason to get together. Dean McLellan may wish to investigate this idea. The FC will pursue further the idea of a statewide faculty meeting after clarification by VP Cheek on objectives and expected outcomes. If no statewide faculty meeting is held, suggestions for modes of communication that VP Cheek may wish to pursue are regular, brief email messages, Polycomm broadcasts, and smaller regional events (perhaps based on extension districts).

Confidentiality and Anonymity of Council Member Comments. Members were divided on whether anonymity of comments provided in response to requests from IFAS administration for input on proposals/plans/strategies and in FC meeting minutes was necessary. The FC decided that we should maintain flexibility. Chair Guion will make it clear before comments are solicited from FC members whether individual faculty comments will be anonymous or not.

Accepting Tasks from Administrators with Close Deadlines. The job of the FC is to provide feedback to IFAS administrators even when turnaround time is short. Chair Guion will inform administrators that if the need for feedback is urgent, comments will be from individual faculty rather than from the FC as a group.

In-depth Analysis of IFAS Report of the 2005 University of Florida Faculty Survey. Gail Kauwell and Elizabeth Bolton studied the survey data intensively and prepared a PowerPoint presentation to guide the FC through an analysis of the data. The FC expressed much appreciation to Gail and Elizabeth for this task. Of the 15 categories of questions on the survey, IFAS faculty responded favorably to questions regarding diversity (74% favorable), engagement (71%), university image (61%), and career development (65%). The percent favorable response for IFAS faculty was significantly higher than for the general UF faculty population. IFAS faculty responded as unfavorably as did the general UF faculty in the areas of recognition and reward

(32% favorable), quality of life (41%), resources and efficiency (42%), strategy and direction (42%), and leadership (45%). The FC looked at the responses to specific questions by demographic group and found that faculty did not respond uniformly favorably in the high ranked categories and uniformly unfavorably in the low ranked categories. As examples, tenure-accruing faculty and Asian faculty were less happy with IFAS' promotion of diversity than were tenured faculty. Permanent status or permanent-status accruing faculty were more engaged and happier with benefits than tenure-accruing and tenured faculty. Tenured faculty were less happy in the area of recognition and rewards than were tenure-accruing faculty or permanent faculty. Discussion followed on the need to study the data more intensively and to parse out different demographic groups to see why they differ so much in their responses. In particular, data for county faculty should be examined and compared with data for IFAS without county faculty. A subcommittee consisting of John Davis, Gail Kauwell, Lisa Guion and Bob Hochmuth was formed to further investigate demographic trends. They planned to ask Kyle Cavanaugh to provide them with these data sets and would meet within the next two weeks. They will report their findings to the FC at the next meeting in December.

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather McAuslane (Secretary)