

UF-IFAS Faculty Council Meeting Minutes  
21 February 2007  
Red Larson Dairy Bldg., Room 102

Individuals present: Fritz Roka, Steve Johnson, Lockie Gary, Heather McAuslane, Elizabeth Bolton, Gail Kauwell, David Holmes, Jude Grosser, Tom Obreza in Gainesville; Samira Daroub attending via Polycom; Jimmy Cheek attending via telephone. Glenn Israel attended as a guest.

Fritz Roka called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM. Our first task was to review the minutes from the January meeting. After several changes were suggested and made, the minutes were accepted unanimously by the council.

Glenn Israel provided an overview of the Unifas system to the group. He reviewed what has happened with Unifas during the past year. IFAS now has 3 years worth of faculty input to the system. They have upgraded how publications are entered and recorded. Some faculty reported missing courses on their Unifas reports. Glenn indicated that these problems were found and corrected. Last year Glenn organized a Unifas advisory committee with nine members. In December and January, their group worked to update the personnel database. More data continue to be entered into the system as availability permits. Sometimes data from other databases takes awhile to be updated at the respective sources. The Unifas staff troubleshoot cases on an individual basis as people call to let them know. On the program side, they have revised the annual report. For example, if a faculty member teaches and does research, only the headings pertaining to those will appear on the RTF report, and extension will not appear. A wide scope of changes will come in Version 2 of Unifas. Users will be provided more editing capability, and the screen layout will change. A different screen geography will be used to minimize long lists and a lot of scrolling.

After Glenn's overview, several council members had questions and comments about Unifas. These were specific issues that members had with their own Unifas reports. According to this discussion, the following things need attention:

Teaching – Samira Daroub said that some columns in the teaching evaluation data tables are blank. Glenn said the raw data they get from academic programs comes in that way, i.e. it is not a full dataset. Glenn is working on this problem, as it has been an ongoing issue for some time. Steve Johnson said he needs to put two teaching evaluations for a course into his T&P packet, but there is only room for one. Glenn realizes this and they are working on that problem.

Extension – Samira Daroub asked where someone should put extension activities if they do not have an extension appointment. Glenn said in this situation the faculty member should create an umbrella extension program for all they do and enter it regardless. Fritz Roka said that the distinction between an extension team member and contributor is not clear. It is obvious that different faculty classify events differently, e.g. a field day vs. a group learning event. Several council members agreed that it is laborious to go through the series of extension screens.

Elizabeth Bolton stated that she liked the Unifas training sessions provided by Glenn. She would like to see this done once a year as a refresher.

Glenn said he is getting fewer calls for assistance this year compared with last year. Faculty reactions to Unifas have been all across the spectrum. Glenn opined that those who enter information on a regular (e.g. monthly) basis have an easier time in the long run.

David Holmes asked how administrators (unit heads) have taken to the system as evaluators. Glenn admitted that some department chairs have given him a hard time about it. Their main complaint is that the unit level report generated by Unifas is not complete. There are two reasons for this: the external database problem, and the fact that some faculty are not entering their material into the database.

The faculty council recommended that IFAS use Unifas-based reports to compare the performance of UF-IFAS vs. other land-grant universities at the federal level.

Samira Daroub left the meeting at 2:38 PM for another engagement.

Final comments about Unifas: Lockie Gary said he is involved with numerous activities that have no place for reporting in Unifas. Lockie mentioned that his international activities could not be entered through current Unifas system. Glenn indicated that entering book chapters into the publications section has been a big problem this year, as well as entering lectures and speeches. Glenn asserted that Unifas should not be viewed as providing a “ready-to-use” T&P package. Faculty should take the Unifas document and edit to produce the T&P document.

Dr. Cheek was in Ft. Pierce that afternoon, and joined us by telephone at 2:49 PM. He told us about the Farm Bill needs meeting he was attending there. As these things often go, the meeting wrap-up took extra time, which is why he was late calling us.

There were two things Dr. Cheek wanted to talk about – the shared governance process and a potential salary proposal. Shared Governance: Dr. Cheek thinks the faculty council has done a good job in our shared governance effort; he particularly singled out the PowerPoint presentation as a product he liked. At this point, Fritz Roka suggested to Dr. Cheek that it would be very helpful to the effort if he could provide 60 to 90 seconds worth of opening comments encouraging IFAS faculty to show enthusiasm and get involved. Dr. Cheek said he would provide an opening statement in that regard. Salary Proposal: The proposal he e-mailed us the previous day detailed a plan that could be used to allow faculty to pay a portion of their own salary from grants and contracts. At present, 53% of the IFAS budget comes from the state; the second highest income stream is grants and contracts. IFAS administration wants to increase the grants and contracts portion, and are mulling over methods to get this accomplished. The incentive in this proposal is a salary increase for the faculty if they can pay part of their salary from outside sources. Dr. Cheek asked that we study the document and provide feedback at the March faculty council meeting. There are potential downfalls and risk in the concept. The extra income would be used for merit salary increases that are necessary within IFAS. The upside of the concept is that a market equity pool would allow investment in new faculty. Dr. Cheek wants us to take a good hard look at the proposal, not just a cursory evaluation. Fritz Roka indicated that we will do this at our next meeting, which is scheduled for Monday, March 19<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Cheek ended the phone call at 3:07 PM. Lockie Gary left at the same time for another engagement.

The group returned to the discussion with Glenn Israel. Glenn wants input on how to make the process better and suggestions on how the process could be streamlined. He said he is always happy to help people and give workshops so faculty can better learn and understand the system. At this point, Glenn left the meeting.

The last task for the meeting was to discuss the next steps in shared governance. We need to add the opening message from Dr. Cheek to the PowerPoint, and then put it on the faculty council website for viewing. We will send it to senators before it is made available to the faculty. Dr. Cheek had made comments about the PowerPoint that we should take into consideration.

One of his suggestions was to remove the diagram (he said it was confusing). This issue was discussed by the group, and we felt that the diagram should remain. Gail Kauwell pointed out that the diagram is not prescriptive. It was felt that it would help some faculty understand shared governance better than plain text. We should explain to Jimmy Cheek why we want to leave it in so he will understand our position. Fritz Roka indicated that the diagram provides some concrete areas for discussion. David Holmes agreed, suggesting that the diagram will help stimulate discussion.

Some of Dr. Cheek's other comments were discussed, and the group tried to interpret them with regard to where his concerns might lie. The group listened to the PowerPoint narration on Heather McAuslane's computer and re-wrote some of the statements for the next version. We tried to use language that will likely be acceptable to Dr. Cheek.

Fritz Roka suggested the following timeline: Release the PowerPoint in early March for faculty review. Develop the survey in March for delivery in April. Our purpose is to identify hot button issues, and perhaps how we should address these issues. We need to address IFAS-wide concerns in the constitution, not those things that occur strictly at the unit level. Elizabeth Bolton believes we will receive a huge laundry list that will take a long time to sort out.

There was considerable discussion about the survey, how it will look, how it will be analyzed, and how the results will be used. Jude Grosser asked if we could find another land grant university that used a survey in a shared governance process, and obtain it for our use. David Holmes suggested that our survey should be much shorter than the recent university-level survey. Fritz Roka indicated that we will need to gather demographic data in the survey. Also, ask the faculty if they are willing to serve to help with the process, and how much time would they be willing to commit. Fritz said he would send an e-mail to each unit, to whoever is in charge of faculty meetings, to make sure the PowerPoint gets shown.

Gail Kauwell said she called eight people regarding their willingness to be nominated for a university-wide committee and only two people allowed their names to be submitted.

By March 23, the faculty council needs to identify 22 names of willing nominees to put forward for the University Senate election. Paul Willis will send a list of eligible faculty. We can send out a preliminary e-mail first to gauge the level of response. This e-mail should also be sent to unit heads. Another election the council will need to supply names for is the IFAS T & P committee. A third election will be positions on the faculty council.

Our assignment for the next faculty council meeting is to review salary enhancement draft proposal and provide commentary.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:28 PM.

Submitted by  
Thomas Obreza, Recording Secretary