

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

Individuals present: Fritz Roka, Michael Kane, Gail Kauwell, Mike Sweat, Jude Grosser, Lockie Gary, Steve Johnson, Judy Butterfield, Bill Lindberg, Elizabeth Bolton, David Holmes and Tom Obreza in Gainesville; No attendees via Polycom

Committee chair Fritz Roka called the meeting to order at 1:37 PM. He informed the group that Dr. Cheek will not be attending the meeting due to a commitment in Okeechobee. He also welcomed our two new council members, Judy Butterfield and Bill Lindberg.

The April 2007 meeting minutes were reviewed and were unanimously accepted into the record.

Fritz Roka asked the council members if the e-mail about the elections was received. Some members indicated they did not, although they had heard an email had been sent. There were no biographical sketches accompanying candidate names, but it was pointed out that a bio may not do much good to help a voter select a candidate. It would be better if each candidate supplied a campaign statement, but obtaining that might be difficult considering how hard it was to fill out the slate of candidates. Next year the council should think about how to improve the election process. There could be links to faculty web pages, or the candidates could be asked to provide a written answer to the question of why they want to be elected. It was pointed out that the ballot does not allow abstentions; a button should be added to the electronic ballot that allows a voter to continue even if not all races are voted on (or some other measure to allow abstentions). We need more ideas to coax a larger group of faculty to participate in elections. Gail Kauwell suggested that an e-mail be sent describing voter turnout so all of IFAS can see the percentage that votes. This action might improve voter turn-out in the future. In addition, a report should be compiled showing the departments from which senators and T & P committee members have come during the previous 5 years.

Lockie Gary and David Holmes observed that the Shared Governance survey was transformed from "short" to "long." According to Ryan Mills, the first 11 people who took the survey completed it in an average of 16 minutes. In order to increase survey participation, "reminder" e-mails will be sent, and the deadline will be extended to the end of June to try to capture survey reminders mentioned at unit faculty meetings. At the July faculty council meeting, Fritz will invite reports from members about comments received on the PowerPoint presentation and shared governance in general.

A discussion ensued about how the survey data will be analyzed. This task needs to be completed by August if possible. Survey results can potentially be viewed from many different angles. Gail Kauwell suggested that each faculty council member review the raw results on their own first because different people may see different things. Elizabeth Bolton said that we need to be able to sort the answers by type of person, e.g. state, county, administrator, FTE assignment, employment level. We need to think about the number of responses received...will it be a large enough sample size to represent all faculty without bias? We should ask Dr. Cheek to prompt unit heads to encourage their faculty to take the survey.

Gail Kauwell asked if a "standard" exists regarding the sequence or order for authors of journal articles. A discussion ensued about this situation. There has been a lot of talk among IFAS faculty about it. This committee may be in position to steer Dr. Cheek in a particular direction.

The issue of charging faculty salaries to grants and contracts was raised. Fritz Roka asked if we need to invite Dr. Mark McLellan to one of our meetings to discuss it. Mike Kane said that Faculty Council feedback should also be provided regarding the development of the publication and science metrics to the Vice President. The faculty council exists in part to help improve the quality of faculty life through better communication. Everything we do is noted by the faculty and they react in certain ways. Faculty uncertainty has been the rule of late. Faculty often incorrectly interpret administrative decisions based on what they hear from their colleagues. In some ways the university is transitioning into a business model with a structure that is perceived as being in conflict with the mission of a land grant university. Consequently, this generates an environment of uncertainty among faculty regarding what is expected of them. The challenge is how the faculty council can help to improve communication. For example, state for the record that we agree with the idea of raising tuition.

Fritz Roka asked if we need to invite any outside individuals to our next three meetings. Gail Kauwell suggested that we wait until we have recommendations or a message to pass on before we invite specific people. Elizabeth Bolton said that we should first analyze the survey data, and then invite the three deans to the August meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 PM.

Submitted by Thomas Obreza, Recording Secretary