

UF-IFAS Faculty Council Meeting Minutes  
18 September 2007  
Red Larson Dairy Building, Room 102

Individuals present: David Holmes, Jerry Culen, Bill Lindberg, Tom Obreza, Judy Butterfield, Brenda Rogers, Adegbola Adesogan, David Norman, Billy Crow, Mike Kane, Sherry Larkin, and Jimmy Cheek in Gainesville; Monica Elliott in Ft. Lauderdale and Samira Daroub in Belle Glade were to be connected by Polycom, but the bridge did not work at the time the meeting began.

David Holmes called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM. He began by welcoming the members to a new Faculty Council year and discussed the major agenda items to be considered during the next 12 months. These topics include shared governance, the salary supplement plan, and the IFAS budget (due to the budget deficiency IFAS will experience during the next year or two). We will be inviting special guests this year, such as Cindy Littlejohn and the Deans for Research, Extension, and Academic Programs. The FC needs to develop a list of discussion items prior to hosting these guests. We will most likely ask the three program deans to appear separately. Probable discussion items will include publication metrics, diversity, how SHARE funds will be dealt with at the administrative level, and the teaching evaluation system (with Dr. Barrick). On a related note to the last item, Mike Kane is involved with developing a new way to evaluate teachers.

David Holmes introduced Steven Deisher, a student at Georgia Tech, who will help the FC with internal communication. David Holmes reviewed future meeting dates of the FC and asked for volunteers to bring refreshments. He also issued an open invitation for future agenda items, and reminded members to let him know whenever they required a Polycom connection.

David Holmes then shared his thoughts about shared governance with the group. When he first became aware of the subject, his level of interest was not high. However, he said he can understand why others could have a much higher interest level, especially faculty veterans who may have experienced a time when IFAS administration was not as responsive or “non-meddling” like they are now. David Holmes proceeded to describe the process that the FC went through during the past year with respect to the development of a shared governance document. (This process is described in detail in previous FC minutes available on our web site.) A faculty council shared governance subcommittee has recently been working on the next steps to be taken; we will hear from them today followed by a discussion. Subsequently, the current draft document will be modified and presented first to the administration and then to the general faculty.

Tim White joined the meeting at 1:50 PM. At this time the Polycom bridge activated, so we were joined by Monica Elliott and Samira Daroub. Tim White came to the FC to solicit ideas about how IFAS could increase revenue or decrease expenses across campus in response to current and future budget shortfalls. A consulting group (Huron) is now working on campus, attempting to find “big ticket” items that will improve our efficiency. The committee that Tim White chairs is looking for medium and small ticket items as well. Tim White described the job Huron is doing, which is a very diverse and detailed analysis of how the university works. Ideas to generate new revenue include charging for transcripts, adding more “off-book” programs (distance education), implementing salary bonus plans, conducting classes in the evening and on Saturday, training unit leaders to become better fund raisers, and implementing a university calendar with three equal semesters. Ideas for cost reduction include adjustments to Peoplesoft and Unifas, establishing e-mail protocols (e.g. use of IFAS-ALL), promoting wider use of medical

reimbursement accounts, greater use of 403bs and 457s, reduced sick leave payments, more centralization of certain operations, and enhancing UF/IFAS productivity.

Tim White will be compiling a document that contains all the suggestions his committee receives. Tom Obreza suggested that if IFAS could upgrade its Polycom system to a top-of-the-line technology that would run flawlessly, faculty would be more likely to plan remote programs due to improved confidence that the system will work. A discussion ensued about how to reduce energy costs. One suggestion was to turn computers off at night.

Dr. Cheek arrived at 2:04 PM during the discussion led by Tim White.

Samira Daroub asked how centralization of IFAS operations can be controlled. She indicated that the centralization idea is unsettling for faculty located at Research and Education Centers because it could possibly make things worse for them. She suggested that each operation being considered for centralization should be viewed on its own rather than as one size fits all.

Tim White's bottom line message was that anyone who has an idea about how to improve efficiency to send it to him so he can incorporate it into his report. He left the meeting at 2:25 PM.

Dr. Cheek began his discussion by indicating that he had received some comments about the salary supplement plan that will be considered for incorporation into it. President Machen had just approved the salary supplement concept the previous day. Dr. Cheek indicated that IFAS will consider the plan as experimental with a 3-year trial to see how well it works. He does not yet have specific criteria that will be used to define the meaning of success after 3 years; we will have to wait and see about that. Administration will be monitoring both positive and negative consequences of the plan on a yearly basis. The 15% supplement figure may yet be increased to 25% before the plan is officially put into place. The 10% difference would come from programmatic funds that are returned to the faculty member plus the funds given to the unit leader.

The IFAS IMM that describes the Faculty Council was discussed. The IMM needs to be updated to indicate the addition of two senators to the FC roster. The IMM also needs a specification describing how new members will be added if a member departs during their term. One method for replacement would be to grant membership to the person from the elected candidate pool who received the next most votes compared with the newly-elected members. The question of why the FC chair cannot come from appointed members was asked. This option should be considered when the IMM is re-written. The question of an attendance requirement for FC members is needed, similar to the faculty senate's requirement. The group agreed that we probably do not need an attendance requirement at the FC level. The group also agreed that e-mail voting should be included as a way to elect members in addition to paper ballots.

Dr. Cheek then opened a discussion of shared governance. He said that the FC should examine the survey results and try to "read between the lines" to determine what the faculty as a whole is saying. The group should soon appoint the previously-discussed shared governance document committee that will include FC members, other faculty, senators, and administrators. This committee should be assembled jointly by Dr. Cheek and David Holmes. Our goal is to finish this job (have a document in place) by the end of the 2007-08 academic year. The document produced should serve the faculty well. David Holmes said that he would like to see input from Dr. Cheek describing items he did not particularly care for in the first draft. However, Dr. Cheek

said he would rather not do that because he does not want to influence the next part of the process in that way.

A discussion of the IFAS budget cut ensued. The projected amount of \$7.3 million will be close to the final figure. IFAS had 40 open positions exposed that are now gone. Unit heads have recently received letters describing their portion of the budget cut. "Rate" suffered a major blow due to the cut. A discussion and Q&A with Dr. Cheek about the budget ensued.

Sherry Larkin joined the meeting at 3:05 PM. Dr. Cheek's portion of the meeting concluded at 3:10 PM, followed by a 5-minute break during which Mike Kane left to teach class.

Upon returning from the break, the minutes from the August 2007 FC meeting were reviewed, corrected, and accepted into the permanent record.

Bill Lindberg distributed a draft of a document showing a faculty survey data summary in tabular form. It described the demographic description of respondents to the 2007 shared governance survey compared with IFAS statistics, and faculty perceptions and expectations of shared governance at the IFAS level. The data suggested a greater sense of shared governance at the unit level than at the IFAS level. Extension faculty seemed more content than research faculty. Bill Lindberg gave a detailed description of how the tables were assembled and made several additional inferences about the results. He would like the FC to review data in the tables independently to determine if the FC as a group arrives at the same inferences. The survey was not completed by enough administrators to enable the break-out of an administration category. Before the next FC meeting in October, the four-person survey working group will produce a summary document describing their thoughts about what the survey says. This group has come up with ten inferences that will be discussed the next meeting.

David Holmes reviewed the names that the FC suggested for the shared governance document committee that will be charged with finishing the process. There was only one administrator on the list, so David requested more administrator names. The group suggested associate deans as a possibility. It was also pointed out that off-campus centers need more representation. Another discussion ensued that resulted in additional names added to the potential list of document committee members. David Holmes said he would e-mail this list to the FC members for our information.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 PM.

Submitted by  
Thomas Obreza, Recording Secretary