

UF-IFAS Faculty Council Meeting Minutes  
15 January 2008  
Red Larson Dairy Building, Room 102

Individuals present: David Holmes, Judy Butterfield, Brenda Rogers, Bill Lindberg, Adegbola Adesogan, Billy Crow, David Norman, Mike Kane, Sherry Larkin, Tom Obreza, and Jimmy Cheek attended in Gainesville; Monica Elliott and Samira Daroub participated via Polycom.

Guests (IFAS Constitution Committee): Judy Butterfield, John Capinera, Millie Ferrer, Bill Lindberg, Charles Guy.

David Holmes called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM. He welcomed the Constitution Committee and made some preliminary remarks emphasizing the importance of their job. Dr. Cheek provided the committee's charge: They are to examine the current constitution document and determine if it makes sense, i.e., is it something IFAS can work with. The committee should compare the IFAS document with other constitutions on campus, e.g. Law School, College of Education, College of Engineering, Veterinary Medicine. They must involve the General Counsel's office from the beginning by consulting directly with Barbara Wingo. The IFAS document can refer to information in existing governance documents, but it should not repeat what is in them. Bill Lindberg (Chair of the Constitution Committee) indicated IFAS is facing critical decisions that shared governance can make more rational for all. We have an opportunity to define how dialogue occurs between administration and faculty, and we need to solve problems before they occur. The Constitution Committee will attempt to complete their assigned task in a 2-day meeting scheduled for Feb 12-13. The meeting site is yet to be determined.

The Constitution Committee guests (other than Bill Lindberg) left the meeting at 1:45 PM.

Dr. Cheek proceeded to discuss the IFAS budget situation. IFAS was very successful at the federal level this year. The TSTAR program was reinstated at \$7.5 million. This budget is divided between Florida and Hawaii, and some of Florida's allocation goes to the Caribbean. IFAS received \$1.3 million for citrus research, garnered \$4.5 million from the Dept. of Defense funding for a perishable supply chain project, and was awarded \$150,000 for biofuel projects. Thus, the top four federal-level priorities were funded, plus several smaller allocations were received. IFAS traditionally has not fared well in the Farm Bill, but this year several potential inclusions were targeted, including \$200 million worth of competitive funds for specialty crop projects. Also, biofuel research, particularly dollars for cellulosic ethanol, was emphasized. For example, what crops are the best to grow to make biofuels? IFAS feels that new plants need to be developed in addition to the crops currently being considered. The big question is will a Farm Bill be passed before or after the November 2008 election.

Bola Adesogan asked if TSTAR projects that were halted when the program was cut will be funded automatically now that the dollars have been restored. No specific answer to his question was available. A major priority of TSTAR is invasive species research, which is a very broad subject.

Dr. Cheek continued by commenting on the state budget situation. More cuts are coming this fiscal year, but the magnitude of those cuts will not be known until around March 1<sup>st</sup>. We also do not know if all or a portion of the cut will be recurring. Whatever their magnitude, these cuts will have a huge effect on UF because it is difficult to determine how they will be absorbed without certain devastating effects. No guidance has been provided at this time, so we can only imagine

what might happen. Dr. Cheek would like to hold a statewide faculty meeting to describe the picture, both good and bad, to all. The most recent year was the best IFAS has ever had in terms of grant support, and the capital campaign is going well. One of our goals is to see that an endowment is established for every county in the state. Thus, some good things are happening within IFAS even with a very poor state budget.

The previously-mentioned cuts must come from the current operating budget. Dr. Cheek asked the group how this information should be conveyed to the faculty. Everyone who reads the newspaper wonders how it will affect them, but no answers are forthcoming. It appears that the cut will be between 4 and 8%. Most retrievable money in IFAS is in salaries. We have numerous "holes" in IFAS due to deaths and retirements. Everyone wonders who will be the first to lose their position when the axe finally falls. Tenured faculty would be the hardest to remove unless an entire unit was eliminated. Different scenarios exist depending on the circumstances. Brenda Rogers suggested that IFAS administration tell faculty that information is on the way, because by doing so a line of future communication will be opened. The message should indicate that faculty will know the facts as soon as the administration finds out the specifics. Even if the scenarios presented are bad, it is still better to be in the light than kept in the dark. Samira Daroub furthered this idea by suggesting that, if possible, administrators show the light at the end of a dark tunnel by describing what is being done to prevent more of this in the future. Bill Lindberg's interpretation of the discussion was that regardless of the situation, it appears there will be layoffs. Dr. Cheek confirmed this, but he cannot predict the magnitude of it yet. Bill Lindberg indicated that this is not the first time IFAS has faced draconian cuts that we never fully recovered from, and asked if buffers can be put in place for the next time it happens. Bola Adesogan commented that it would be useful to debunk myths that appear in the newspaper, such as publishing exact dollar values of cuts prior to the time of their true determination.

Dr. Cheek left the meeting at 2:40 PM.

David Holmes introduced today's special guest, Dr. Mark McLellan. After each Faculty Council member introduced themselves, Dr. McLellan described his background and where he has been before coming to IFAS 3 years ago. He distributed several items, including the document that new professors are given describing expectations, two web pages, and Goals for IFAS Research.

Dr. McLellan shared his perceptions and expectations of shared governance with the group. He has been on the faculty at several institutions with shared governance in place, e.g. Cornell University and Texas A & M University. One major difference between these two places is that they had different shared governance styles. Dr. McLellan is glad that UF is stepping up in this area. He feels it is beneficial to have a venue in which faculty, including himself, can put in their "2 cents worth." Shared governance starts at the unit level. There is a need for a "regularity of process" where faculty can feel involved in what goes on. Everything feeds forward from the units. IFAS has a diverse management structure. What is missing is the fundamental engagement process between administrators and faculty.

Dr. McLellan then discussed the process of evaluating publications and the IFAS Publications Task Force. This evaluation took place because Dr. McLellan saw that IFAS faculty wanted to draw attention to the quality of their work and were seeking new ways to do this. Some choices were not the best to identify publication impact, e.g. "journal impact factor." Newly-hired faculty in particular wanted to do this, but there was no mechanism in place. At about the same time, a letter was issued from the Provost indicating that quality of publications would be a criterion to be considered as a faculty member navigated the tenure and promotion process. Dr. McLellan

wanted to set this criterion before it was set for us, which led to formation of the Publications Task Force. The group quickly determined that publication metrics is not a “one size fits all” approach. After their report was issued in mid-2007, it was reviewed by departments, and task force has now reconvened after receiving their comments. Once they produce an amended version, Dr. McLellan would like to have a couple of units try it out to see how it fits. The new metrics will remain as is until we observe the success of a new model. Shared governance is the smart way to approach this. There are no plans at this time to turn the definitive guidance from the task force into “rules.”

Dr. McLellan proceeded to discuss SHARE funds vs. funds from contracts and grants. SHARE money received by faculty via the UF Foundation is a **gift**. Not a gift for some work in return, but a **gift**...period. There are no faculty obligations or requirements for a gift. There can be no dictation by the gift giver to the receiver regarding what the receiver does with the money. Dr. McLellan described a situation where a company was providing a considerable amount of SHARE funds to a number of faculty members, all the while thinking they had a contract for work. It is not appropriate for a faculty member to do anything specific in response to receiving a gift, and it is also not appropriate for a company to accept data from a faculty member in return for a SHARE donation.

Dr. McLellan commented on expectations for faculty members by directing the group to the publication he distributed called “High Quality Research Programs.” Dr. McLellan said that when he evaluates a faculty member’s productivity, he never focuses on the amount of indirect costs they have generated. A suggestion was made that perhaps IFAS should look at research expenditures instead of the value of research grants to more accurately gauge faculty productivity.

Dr. McLellan left the meeting at 4:00 PM.

The group proceeded to discuss the IFAS vehicle use policy. Elizabeth Bolton had prepared a statement that the group reviewed. A few minor suggestions for changes were offered. After these changes are considered, the statement will be presented to the faculty senate. The IFAS Faculty Council is in support of the resolution regarding IFAS vehicle use. A motion was made, seconded, and it passed unanimously.

The minutes from the December, 2007 Faculty Council were approved by unanimous vote.

Two new meeting dates were offered for later on this year: July 16<sup>th</sup> and August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

Suggested guests for the February, 2008 Faculty Council meeting were Ashley Wood and Cindy Littlejohn; for the March meeting, Larry Arrington; for the April meeting, Susan Hudson.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Feb 20<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.

Submitted by  
Thomas Obreza  
Recording Secretary