

UF-IFAS Faculty Council Meeting Minutes
15 April 2008
Room 1044, Microbiology and Cell Science Building

Individuals present: David Holmes, Billy Crow, Mike Kane, Sherry Larkin, Brenda Rogers, Judy Butterfield, David Norman, Jerry Culen, Steve Johnson, Bill Lindberg. Participating by Polycom were Maisielin Ross, Monica Elliott, and Samira Daroub. Participating on the speakerphone from Tallahassee was Jimmy Cheek. Guests in the room included John Capinera, Charles Guy, and Ed Osborne (IFAS constitution committee).

David Holmes called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM. He welcomed the constitution committee and thanked them for all their work. At that point, discussion of the IFAS constitution was turned over to Bill Lindberg. Bill complimented his committee for working together so well and for the fine job they did. Bill reviewed how the entire process began, going back to the time of President Charles Young. He also remarked about the value of the Faculty Council and the Faculty Senate to the process. The faculty survey conducted by the Faculty Council helped set the context for the committee work. Bill then discussed the draft constitution document, article by article, giving a synopsis of each and providing side commentary and insight about what went into writing each of them. The document before us was influenced by constitutions in place and working at the UF Colleges of Medicine and Engineering and at the Univ. of Arizona. The committee borrowed applicable ideas and language from them. The next goal is to get the IFAS constitution in place by mid-summer (around June 30). The next step will be to request input from the Faculty Council and then take it to the Faculty Senate.

Dr. Cheek said the IFAS administrators were pleased with the document and only had a few areas they wanted to bring to attention. Feedback from IFAS faculty may be slow due to preoccupation with the budget situation (i.e. we may need to lengthen the time frame for putting the constitution in place). The proposed "IFAS Assembly" is a large body that would tentatively meet quarterly (this assembly replaces the current Faculty Council in the current draft). There are 35 people that would comprise the assembly (each department and center has a representative).

Barbara Wingo has looked at the constitution draft and has not found any item that could be considered a legal issue. Bill Lindberg asked for suggestions on the best way to get approval of the IFAS administrators in general. Dr. Cheek suggested that we first get individual faculty feedback before taking that step, and then gather the administrators as a group because group thinking is better than individual thinking. The same process could be used for Faculty Council input and comment. We need to keep the document drafting committee together to consider and merge comments into the next draft. Unfortunately, we cannot approach the Administrative Council at their meeting on Thursday due to a full agenda.

The group will make further decisions regarding the approval time frame during the May 13 Faculty Council meeting. We need to get Faculty Council and Senate feedback before then. Subsequently the draft will be amended according to their suggestions, and then administrators will be approached sometime after May 13. Faculty Council members should send comments to Bill Lindberg.

Dr. Cheek then proceeded to speak about the IFAS budget outlook. The economic outlook for the state is not good. Legislative budget conferencing starts this week. IFAS has fared as well as we could have under the circumstances. President Machen had pondered taking differential cuts across campus, but there is good chance that will not occur. We will not know for sure until it is all said and done in a couple of weeks. All UF units were asked to prepare plans for a 6% budget reduction. Even at this late date, clarity about what is happening with the budget is not

there. President Machen will very likely announce a 6% budget cut, which amounts to \$9.5 million for IFAS. This would be the largest cut we have experienced in 37 years. The administrators do not want to issue too much information until the legislature decides what they are going to do. There could be a volatile situation brewing in that respect.

The Board of Trustees and the President will meet at some point after the legislative session ends to approve the UF budget. Dr. Machen will first announce the spending reduction plan, but then the BoT must approve it before it becomes official.

Dr. Cheek was asked how he felt about the likelihood that Dr. Machen would accept each unit's plan to cut their budget. Is it possible that he could he reject some? Dr. Cheek said he was not sure, but he felt the probably was low that this would occur.

Maisie Ross asked about the possibility that some current IFAS faculty would lose their jobs. Dr. Cheek indicated that the IFAS budget reduction plan would not cut any existing, filled faculty positions. However, some positions will be phased out as people leave on their own. There is no plan to lay off current tenure-accruing or permanent status faculty. Most units will lose some staff members, however.

Samira Daroub asked if the bad situation we are now in will continue for years, and if so, what will we do about it? Dr. Cheek suggested that we cannot realistically do anything about it. The entire nation's economy has tanked, and we are just on the front end of it. Nobody knows what the future holds or how long it will take to get out of the slump. We hope the current cut will get us through academic year 2008-09. Right now, IFAS expenditures are about twice as much as income from state revenue. Regardless, IFAS faculty and staff must keep doing the jobs we are supposed to be doing. The constituency of IFAS has been extremely strong in supporting what we do. The support has never been stronger and has helped us keep our position regarding cuts. There are a tremendous number of people who support us and believe in what we do. This constituency will help IFAS in the future.

The discussion moved to the Federal Farm Bill that is making its way through Congress. This bill has significant provisions in it that will help Florida. For example, there is \$200 million proposed for "specialty crop" research and extension. TSTAR has returned, and there is an earmark for citrus greening research.

The next subject discussed was the demise of UNIFAS. Dr. Cheek said that production deadlines were not being met, so the administration pulled the plug. Deans McLellan and Arrington will determine the type of information we need for federal reporting and how individual faculty will report it. They have said they will share their proposed mechanism with a few faculty for comment and feedback before releasing it to the masses. The question was asked: What will happen to data that is already entered into UNIFAS? No one was sure at this point. The current UNIFAS database will be kept active as a repository. A few Faculty Council members commented that crushing UNIFAS created a boost in morale. Another question: What about the plan to create web pages from UNIFAS data by Ashley Wood's group? Dr. Cheek suspects this plan will go by the wayside if the old system is gone, but a follow-up with Ashley is needed.

As a final remark before signing off from Tallahassee, Dr. Cheek reminded the Faculty Council about the invitation to dine at his home following our May 13th meeting. He signed off at 2:34 PM.

Susan Hudson and Mary Anne Morgan from IFAS Personnel arrived, and David welcomed them to the meeting. They were here to discuss the IFAS Tenure & Promotion process. The following Q & A ensued:

Q: When T & P packets are returned to faculty, what are the reasons?

A.: Susan and Mary Anne discussed the process of submitting and reviewing packets in detail, and outlined several reasons why a packet may be returned. Judy Butterfield said that the T & P workshops are great, but new faculty could really use personal guidance beyond the workshops. It was suggested that faculty attend more than one workshop to get used to the packet format. A discussion ensued about various aspects of the packets and their preparation, particularly in light of the UNIFAS demise.

Q.: The quality of evaluations that go into the packet are quite diverse. Some have numbers only, some have lots of narrative. How can we address the problem of inconsistency?

A.: Susan and Mary Anne agreed that something needs to be done about that, but did not offer specific solutions other than evaluators must interject more faculty "coaching" when conducting and writing the evaluation. There should be both summative and formative assignments.

Q.: The 3-year initial review bar is getting higher; is this still the best time frame?

A.: We need a better mentoring situation to address this issue.

Q.: How detrimental is a not-so-good evaluation in the overall T & P process?

A.: The T & P committee will definitely notice a not-so-good evaluation, but will consider it in the context of all other material in the packet. The chair's letter should explain these things. Item 32 in the T & P format is the place where further information and explanations can be supplied.

Q.: What about going up early? Is this a good idea?

A.: Neither Susan nor Mary Anne were high on the idea of going up early. They suggest that the lead dean be asked to look at packet; if the dean supports an early entry, then perhaps it is OK to go ahead.

Q.: How should contracts and grants on joint projects be reported?

A.: Susan showed an example of how to do this. Need to first identify the full amount of the grant or contract, and then identify the applicant's share.

Bill Lindberg pointed out that criteria for T & P at the IFAS level is no more specific than it is at the UF level.

Susan and Mary Anne left the meeting at 3:29 PM.

The next item to discuss was nominations for the IFAS P & T committee. David Holmes distributed three documents...the current committee, the past committees, and the list of eligible faculty. The group looked through the names and nominated Larry Duncan, Ed Philips, Dave Schuster, Richard Kilmer, Elaine Courtney, Monica Brinkley, Dennis Gray, Lawrence Datnoff, and Ed Jennings.

The final task of the day was to nominate new Faculty Council members. David Holmes distributed two documents...the current Faculty Council and a list of eligible faculty. The group looked through the names and nominated Charley Guy, Craig Stanley, Chris Kilbride, Kevin Kenworthy, Eboni Baugh, William Giuliano, Debbie Miller, Gene McAvoy, and David Dinkins.

A motion to approve the March 2008 Faculty Council meeting minutes was made, seconded and approved unanimously.

During the May 2008 meeting, we will discuss the situation regarding community council transfer students with Dean Kirby Barrick and Rick Yost.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 PM.

Submitted by
Thomas Obreza
Recorder