

UF-IFAS Faculty Council Meeting Minutes  
16 July 2008  
Red Larson Dairy Building, Room 102

Individuals present: Mike Kane, Judy Butterfield, Samira Daroub, Jerry Culen, and Tom Obreza. Joining by Polycom were Monica Elliott, Brenda Rogers, and Maisielin Ross.

Mike Kane, substituting for council chair David Holmes, called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM. The first order of business was to approve the June 2008 Faculty Council meeting minutes. After review by the group (no comments were put forth), the minutes were approved unanimously.

Judy Butterfield provided a shared governance update (due to Bill Lindberg's absence). After discussion at the June 2008 meeting, the Faculty Council was prepared to bring the constitution to the general faculty. Barbara Wingo had approved it and said it was an excellent document. She had only one suggestion to change some wording in Article 1, Section 1. Her recommendation was accepted by the Drafting Committee and the change was made. The constitution is now in Dr. Cheek's office, waiting to be sent out for a ratification vote. The Faculty Council will exist until the new Faculty Assembly can be formed based on the new constitution (assuming it is ratified). Faculty Assembly members will be selected by their own units, rather than by faculty-wide vote. Paul Willis will be handling distribution of the constitution to the faculty prior to the vote.

Jerry Culen asked if the Faculty Senate must approve the constitution after a positive vote by IFAS faculty. Judy Butterfield said this action most likely will have to take place.

There was no Faculty Senate meeting in June 2008, so no update was provided.

Mike Kane discussed the status of the teaching peer-review guidance document under development. He said that Dr. Barrick has his recommended guidelines in-house. The recommended guidelines are appended with procedures describing the evaluation procedures. A question was asked about how distance education classes will be reviewed. Mike Kane stated that DE class evaluation is not specifically addressed in the guide. The guidelines are meant to supersede department teaching evaluation guidelines to provide for more uniform teaching assessment outputs.

Dr. Cheek arrived at 1:27 PM. He spoke about his recent visit to 4-H Camp Ocala, telling the group how well-run it was and how well-behaved the campers were. He described the 4-H camp experience as very positive and valuable for 4-H participants.

Dr. Cheek was asked to bring us up to date on the IFAS constitution from his perspective. He indicated that it is ready to go forward to the faculty for inspection. He asked if a ratification ballot should be attached when the document is e-mailed. The council agreed that simultaneous mailing was a good idea. The next question was what time period should be allotted to the faculty for voting? The council suggested that a 3-week period should suffice, with a reminder e-mail sent 1 week before the deadline.

On a related note, the election for new Faculty Council members ends Friday July 18<sup>th</sup>.

The next subject for discussion was the reorganization of IFAS Information Technology, Communication Services, and External/ Media Relations. These units experienced the same budget cuts as other units, so we are in the process of streamlining them. The

goals are to create a leaner group under the direction of one individual, and to have the new unit to be more responsive to faculty. IFAS cannot afford the investment currently allocated to the three existing units. During the transition, we must create a new unit that is user friendly. IFAS administration is going forward with this plan, but will keep the Faculty Council informed of what happens as the new organization takes shape. The impetus for this change is the global effort to improve IFAS' world wide web presence.

Other information: IFAS had 53 faculty members apply for the UF Supplementary Pay Plan, and 55% (29) were successful. The overall UF average was 51% successful. An ongoing discussion about the SPP plan is taking place. Questions being asked are: is it the right thing to do, and is it structured the right way. Since the program began, some talented faculty have not received SPP, which is a problem and a concern. Some faculty have expressed unhappiness about how the plan is working. The Faculty Senate may discuss this next year to determine if the plan should be altered. President Machen makes the final decisions on who receives and does not receive the SPP.

No 2008-09 salary increases can be announced at this point in the year, but this is a high priority for President Machen and the Board of Trustees. They are currently evaluating what could possibly be done to provide raises. IFAS has lost 50 people via layoffs due to budget cuts. Samira Daroub asked if we can consider bonuses for staff to help keep them in the fold. Dr. Cheek said that we would have a hard time going back to the days of bonuses. However, special pay increases can be given if an employee's responsibility increases. There are various ways provide money to employees. Susan Hudson and Mary Ann Morgan are the individuals to speak with about this.

Jerry Culen asked if the Polk county extension office possibly was closing. Dr. Cheek feels that this will not happen.

IFAS departmental mergers were briefly discussed. The merging of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences with Forest Resources and Conservation has already been accomplished. A second merger, which involves seven departments turning into six, has been studied by a committee of department chairs. This committee has given their preliminary report. Following questions by IFAS administration, the committee is back at work revising their report into a final version that will be issue shortly. Merge possibilities will then be shared with the greater IFAS faculty.

Dr. Cheek left the meeting at 2:05 PM.

Samira Daroub asked about an alternative plan for supplementing salaries from grants. The group decided to present this idea to the new Faculty Assembly after it gets formed, prompting them to devise a workable plan. One agenda item for our August 2008 Faculty Council meeting is to ask Dr. Cheek to discuss the results of the implemented salary supplement plan after its first year.

The next Faculty Council meeting will be held on 26 August 2008. This meeting will be transitional, as it will be attended by both new council members and those who are finishing their 2-year terms.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:12 PM.

Submitted by  
Thomas Obreza, Recording Secretary