

ACADEMICS

A Monthly Newsletter for the Faculty of the University of Florida

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Chair's Message:

By: Danaya Wright , Faculty Senate Chair



Danaya Wright

Welcome back from an exciting holiday season. Winning a national championship is just the beginning of what should be a very successful year.

You should have heard by now that the Faculty Senate approved a recommendation to the administration to adopt minus grades for the entire University. The recommendation was to have a symmetric (1/3) split for minus and plus grades (i.e. A=4.0, A-=3.67, B+=3.33, B=3.0) with adoption as soon as possible. The recommendation is awaiting the President's approval and it will take some time to implement since it requires reprogramming the registrar's computer system. It is unlikely to be ready by summer of 2007, and because of different concerns in colleges stemming from different entering classes and course distribution, the ideal implementation time is likely to be in the summer. That means it is most likely not to be implemented before the summer of 2008, but we leave that to the President, the Provost, and the Registrar. Students are understandably leery of the change and would appreciate as much information as possible about how faculty will change their individual course grading policies.

For faculty concerned about the situation in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences we can report that the new interim dean, Joe Glover, has taken over the reins and is actively seeking faculty input on ways

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Hot Topics:

UF is a Leader in Campus Sustainability

American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment

President Machen was one of three inaugural signers of the ACUP Climate Commitment – an initiative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to become climate neutral as soon as possible. The initiative commits UF to developing an institutional plan which sets a target date for climate neutrality, includes interim targets, makes climate neutrality and sustainability a part of the curriculum and other educational experience for all students, and facilitates research or other efforts necessary to achieve climate neutrality. The initiative also includes establishing policies that all new campus construction will be built to at least the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Silver standard or equivalent; that all new appliances will meet Energy Star criteria; that greenhouse gas emissions generated by travel of faculty will be offset by on-campus policies; and that 15 percent of our electricity will be produced from renewable sources.

The UF Sustainability Committee is also working on "Focus the Nation," which is an ambitious educational initiative that will culminate in national symposia held simultaneously at over a thousand colleges, universities, high schools and other institutions on January 31, 2008. The Committee is hoping that each college will create a program to focus on global warming solutions. It should be interesting to attend an event sponsored by the College of Fine Arts about how we can use art to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions,

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to deal with the budget issue. The faculty of the College voted to create a financial advisory committee that has been working diligently to understand the rather unintelligible spreadsheets that have been used to justify the 5-year plan. The faculty assembly also voted last week to approve constitutional changes to create a faculty advisory committee and to ensure greater opportunities for faculty input at numerous decision-making stages. We have high expectations that good recommendations will be coming out of these groups soon.

Rick Yost (Senate Chair-Elect) and I met with Chancellor Mark Rosenberg two weeks ago to learn about the Board of Governor's legislative agenda. The Board is strongly in favor of President Machen's Academic Enhancement Program which should allow for the hiring of 200 additional tenure-track faculty and 100 new advisors. The Board also supports a new student technology fee that will be used to improve IT on campus, primarily as it affects students (electronic registration, better support for web-based courses, etc.) but that should free additional funds for better support of faculty IT as well. The Board independently hired a consultant, The Pappas Group, to report on the state of the University System and make recommendations on how to plan intelligently for population growth and education needs in the next 10-20 years. Ideally, the Board would like to see a coherent State University System, not the current hodge-podge of universities with different missions and different visions. The Report is available on the Senate Web site at www.senate.ufl.edu. I believe you will find it to be very interesting reading.

I would like to commend President Machen for his leadership role in the visionary American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment initiative. President Machen has committed UF to making significant reductions in its emissions of greenhouse gases by developing a comprehensive plan to achieve climate neutrality as soon as possible. The Office of Sustainability, <http://sustainability.ufl.edu/>, is also working on an initiative to "Focus the Nation" on global warming. As part of these initiatives, the Senate received a report by Allan Preston of PPD on

the new flexcar rental car program and the taxi service that is still in its pilot phase. These look to be important steps to reduce traffic (and gas emissions) on campus, ease the parking situation, and move us toward responsible resource use. Please, consider riding your bicycle, carpooling, or riding the bus whenever possible. For more information, go to: <http://www.flexcar.com/>

Inside Academics we have a call for nominations for Senate and Joint committees and Councils. Please take a moment to find something that you care about at UF and volunteer to help move forward our academic and community mission. Also, three important searches are currently underway for Dean of the Graduate School, Dean of the Libraries, and Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education. More information is inside on how you can meet the candidates.

And finally, don't hit that delete button too quickly. The President's Faculty Climate Survey will be coming out soon and he needs to hear from all of us about how we can make UF a better place to spend so much of our time and energy.

I hope you all have a good semester.

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or by the College of Business on business solutions to make the United States a more responsible energy user. If you are interested in how your unit can help, please contact Eva Czarnecka-Verner, the chair of the sustainability committee, go to: <http://www.focusthenation.org/>, or the UF Sustainability website at: <http://www.sustainability.ufl.edu/>, where you can find more details about what you can do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help make UF a sustainable workplace.

Now what is it going to take to get recycling bins inside campus buildings?

January Announcements

Nominations for Committees and Councils

MEMORANDUM

TO: University of Florida Faculty, Administrators and Staff

FROM: Carol Ritzen Kem, Chair Senate Nominating Committee

RE: University Committee Nominations 2007-2008

Each year the University of Florida offers employees the opportunity to participate in its governance through various university committees, boards, and councils. Faculty, Administrators and Staff are all encouraged to serve as a member of one or more of these entities. All nominations will receive due consideration.

The Senate Nominating Committee invites recommendations for nominations to fill these vacancies. We encourage self-nominations. If you choose to nominate a colleague, please be sure to verify their willingness to serve before completing the nomination form.

The nomination form is posted to the Senate Web site at <http://www.senate.ufl.edu/>. We ask you to fill out the form completely before submitting it. **Please check to see that you meet the requirements, if any, to serve for the committees you are interested in and rank up to four preferences on the nomination form with "1" as your first preference, etc. If you are willing to serve on any committee that has a need, please mark the form in the box provided.** Submit the completed form by January 26, 2007.

If you have any questions concerning these committees, you may call or send an email to any of the following members of the Senate Nominating Committee:

Cenzer, Douglas 392-0281 x262 cenzer@ufl.edu

Eaverly, Mary Ann 392-2075 eaverly@classics.ufl.edu

Katovich, Michael 392-3292 katovich@cop.ufl.edu

Kem, Carol Ritzen 392-4919 x 1731 carokem@ufl.edu

Sasnett-Stauffer, Gail 392-0421 sasnett@law.ufl.edu

Swaminathan, Sankar 846-1151 sswamina@ufl.edu

Turner, R. Elaine 392-1991 x224 returmer@ufl.edu

We hope that you will use this opportunity to become more active in our university. Thank you for your participation.

Ongoing Searches

More information about each candidate can be found at:

http://www.aa.ufl.edu/search_committees/

Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education

Public Seminars will be held on the following days:

Dr. Smith, January 29, 9:30-10:30 AM, S201A Criser

Dr. Wubah, February 1, 9:30-10:30 AM, S201A Criser

Dean of the Libraries

Public Talks will be held on the following days:

Dr. Smith, January 25, 1:30-2:30 PM, 284 JWRU

Dr. Pitschmann, January 29, 1:30-2:30, 100 Library East

Dr. Russell, February 1, 1:30-2:30, 100 Library East

Dr. Carlson, February 5, 1:15-2:15, 100 Library East

Council in Review:

Senate Council on Research and Scholarship Policy

By: Mary Ann Burg, Council Chair

SCORS congratulates the 2006 UF Gator National Champion Football team! Excellence in sports contributes to a culture of enthusiasm and striving for excellence in all other missions of the university, including research and scholarship.

The responsibility of SCORS is threefold: to establish policies and procedures for research and scholarship in cooperation with UF Faculty Senate and the President of the University; to coordinate the work of Senate, Joint and Presidential committees that contribute to the research and scholarship activities of the campus community; and to evaluate new University-wide research or scholarship initiatives and strategies.

Our council has worked intently on several projects over the last two years, including: (1) working with campus administration to bring more transparency to how indirect costs from research grants are accumulated and distributed across campus departments, centers and colleges; (2) formulating policy to conform with 1-UF to standardize IDC distribution practices across campus and to reinforce the inviolability of the principal investigators' share of IDCs; (3) reviewing policies for the creation and sun-setting of UF centers and institutes; (4) working with the university comptroller's office in producing effort-reporting forms and processes that are relevant and user-friendly for faculty. Council objectives for 2007 include exploring regulatory processes in research (e.g., human and animal studies review processes) and ways to make them less intrusive on faculty productivity, and exploring avenues for bringing more attention and opportunity to faculty scholarship on campus. We are currently participating in reviewing the candidates for the position of Dean of the Graduate School.

SCORS welcomes input from all UF faculty on ways we can support your efforts to be more productive in research and scholarship in 2007.

Contributing Committees:

The chair of each of these committees (or an elected faculty member) is a member of the Research and Scholarship Policy Council:

Graduate Council

The Graduate Council shall assist the dean in executing the policies of the Graduate Faculty in matters related to graduate study and associated research.

Research Policy Committee

The Research Policy Committee shall advise the Vice President for Research on matters of University-wide policies related to the promotion and development of the University's research program.

Grants for Philosophers, Linguists, Classicists, and more!

You may not realize it, but many of our colleagues here at UF have to fund research materials out of their own pockets; they have to buy their own computers because those provided by their colleges cannot do the work they need to do; they hire outside transcribers or assistants because they have inadequate administrative support; and they pay for their own travel to conferences or to collect data. Although the Senate Policy Council on Research and Scholarship aims to support scholarship, broadly defined, faculty in Fine Arts, the arts and humanities, Journalism, Law, and others often do not have even the few hundred dollars they need to fund their basic research. Well, at least one University has seen the importance of supporting their humanities faculty. Stanford is now offering \$5,000 to every humanities professor. See <http://www.insidehighered.com/index.php/news/2006/12/29/stanford>

Faculty Senate News: Meeting Outcomes

12.14.06 Meeting Outcomes

Chair's Report:

Danaya Wright reported that nominations for committees will open in January and elections will be held in April. Dr. Wright also noted that she is beginning to look into ways to increase student involvement on committees and councils. The Alligator has created an ombudsman position.

Action Items:

Graduate Council Items

Ken Gerhardt, Interim Dean Graduate School

Proposal to move the concentration Entrepreneurship under the Master of Science with a major in Business Administration to a Master of Science with a major in Entrepreneurship

Proposal to sunset the International Relations PhD program in the Political Science Department

Both items were approved.

Constitution Items

Tim Taylor, Constitution Committee Chair

Compensation Committee Language

Eric Wachsman moved to amend the presented language of the compensation committee. The motion to amend the language was approved. The Senate will vote on the amended language in January.

Nominating Committee Language

The nominating committee language was approved.

Minus Grades Recommendations

Anita Spring, Academic Policy Council Chair

Anita Spring presented a minus grades resolution from the Academic Policy Council.

The resolution passed with only 15 opposing votes.

1.18.07 Meeting Outcomes

Dispute Resolutions Officer Approved Recommended Language:

The Academic Freedom, Tenure, Professional Relations and Standards Committee unanimously requests that the Faculty Senate approve the following recommendation to hire a Dispute Resolution Officer (DRO):

The University of Florida shall hire a Dispute Resolution Officer whose primary duties will be to assist in the resolution of faculty disputes, grievances, and concerns by providing information to faculty about grievance and dispute resolution processes available at the University and to assist the faculty and administration in resolving disputes before formal grievance procedures are initiated. The DRO shall have faculty status (either as a current tenured faculty member or a newly-hired employee with faculty credentials) and shall report to the Vice President for Human Resources. The AFTPRS Committee shall participate in the search for the DRO through membership on the search committee and must approve the slate of candidates from whom the final choice will be made. The Vice President for Human Resources and the AFTPRS Committee shall jointly evaluate the DRO's performance on an annual basis, or bi-annually if the parties so agree. If more than one DRO is hired, the conditions of appointment and evaluation shall be as stated above for each DRO hired.

It is understood by the AFTPRS Committee and the Faculty Senate that the DRO shall be as neutral as possible in the administration of his or her duties, shall assist in the resolution of disputes before formal action becomes necessary, and that no oral and written communications made in the DRO process – prior to the grievance actually going forward – could be used in the grievance process. It is also understood that when a faculty member contacts the DRO with regard to a potential dispute, the time limit for filing grievances under any University policy shall be followed.