

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

It is hard to believe that February is almost over, spring break is nearly upon us, and we are moving into the final crunch time for this academic year. There are quite a number of items working their way through councils and committees to make their way to the Senate floor. Let me begin by listing a number of things I hope you can do or think about in the next couple of weeks.

Please complete the faculty climate survey and encourage your colleagues to do the same. It can be accessed at: <https://www3.isrsurveys.net/UFF07/> and the password is gators.

Encourage colleagues to nominate themselves for Senate and joint committees. Please send your nominations to Amelia Hugus at ahugus@ufl.edu or Carol Kem at carokem@uflib.ufl.edu.

Senate nominations are also being solicited within your colleges, so please consider running for the Senate. Elections for Senators will be held in April.

The Senate will be electing its chair-elect at the April meeting, so please encourage your Senators to run.

Attend at least one of the Provost's Office Conversations or Diversity presentations. They can be viewed at: <http://www.aa.ufl.edu/aa/facdev/conversations/>

Meet with or send ideas about unit-level shared governance to your Shared Governance Task Force.

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Hot Topics:

United Faculty of Florida

By: Danaya Wright , Faculty Senate Chair

Over 40 percent of our UF faculty are located within the collective bargaining unit that is currently represented by the United Faculty of Florida. Faculty in all colleges except the six Health Science Center colleges (Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Public Health & Health Professions), IFAS, and the College of Law are "in unit" and covered by the employment contract negotiated by the UFF bargaining team. Nine of the 11 SUS universities consist of faculties that are entirely located within their bargaining units; only UF and FSU have "split" campuses with part of their faculty within the unit and part outside.

Since devolution in 2002, each campus has had to bargain individually with its administration/BOT regarding the terms and conditions of employment that would be covered in their employment contract. Before 2002, the UFF bargained directly with the Board of Regents, which meant that the employment contract for all in-unit faculty at all 11 institutions was the same. With devolution, the UF bargaining team is able to better tailor its contract to fit the needs of UF faculty. At this time, UF is the only university in the SUS that has not finalized the terms of its faculty contract.

Bargaining at UF began on November 18, 2005 after the UFF won a protracted lawsuit over the question of whether the individual Boards of Trustees were "successor employers" and thus stepped into the shoes of the Board of Regents and had a duty to bargain with the current bargaining agent, or were new employers and entitled to start all over again and demand a new certification vote.

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The Board of Governors will be meeting in Gainesville on March 28 and 29, and the Board of Trustees will be meeting on March 29 and 30. There are a number of items of the BOG legislative agenda that are important to UF: the academic enhancement program, the centers of excellence and distinguished scholars programs, tuition flexibility, proposed rules on academic learning compacts, and others. Please check the BOG Web site for more information. www.flbog.org

Let me also update you on a few items that have been in the newspaper lately. President Machen has requested the input of the University Curriculum Committee and the students on the minus grades issue. He expects to have their input and will be prepared to make his final decision shortly after spring break. I believe the matter will be resolved satisfactorily. President Machen also announced at the Senate meeting last month that the issue of removing Senators from the collective bargaining unit has been settled and that the administration will not move forward on that. And yes, it is still my Senate.

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Bargaining continues to this day. Is collective bargaining beneficial in this day and age? According to the UFF Web site www.uffacultycontract.org, “[c]ollective bargaining is a concerted form of democratic problem solving, in which the solution has to be agreed to by *both* the faculty and the administration. Representatives of both parties keep exchanging proposals until they reach a *mutually* satisfactory solution, cast in the form of a contract. The faculty and the trustees then each vote on whether to accept the contract their representatives have negotiated, which becomes legally binding if approved.” The drawbacks of collective bargaining is that each individual faculty member cannot go to his/her dean or to the president and bargain individually for preferential treatment. The benefit of collective bargaining is that each individual faculty member does not have to go to his/her dean to bargain individually for fair treatment. At the end of the day, both sides have to agree, and the faculty have to vote to accept the contract.

In 2001 the UFF formed nine task forces consisting of over 100 faculty to make recommendations for provisions that should be included in the new contract.

Their recommendations are listed at <http://www.uffacultycontract.org/new/recommendations.shtml>. From the UFF Web site you can also see the provisions of the contract that have been tentatively agreed upon. Regardless of whether you are in unit or not, you should look at those recommendations to see if they reflect what you think the faculty’s priorities should be at UF.

All of us in the Senate are very aware that union sentiments may run very deeply and that we have strongly pro-union and strongly anti-union faculty both within the unit and in the rest of the faculty. As a result, we try to be sensitive that we not interfere with bargaining, and at the same time do not let the existence of bargaining slow down our efforts to make shared governance a reality at UF. The Senate cannot make decisions about terms and conditions of employment (wages, hours, benefits, tenure and promotion, etc.) for those faculty within the unit, but it can make decisions for those faculty outside the unit. We should try to be careful, however, that our Senate actions not impede the efforts of the UFF to bargain a beneficial contract for the over 40 percent of our colleagues who are in the unit.

I firmly believe that a strong Senate can co-exist with a strong faculty union, and that at heart all faculty want to continue UF’s trajectory toward excellence. Probably the most important thing we can do is educate ourselves about the advantages and disadvantages of collective bargaining and about the stand that the union is taking on critical faculty issues. As educators, we certainly know the value of knowledge. If you want to know more, please go to the UFF Web site or speak to your colleagues, deans, and administrators.

February Announcements:

Climate Survey

The climate survey became available on February 12th- please take the time to complete the survey. For more information about the survey please contact the Faculty Senate office at facultySenatechair@ufl.edu

2007 Internationalizing the Curriculum Grant Competition

Faculty members are invited to submit proposals for the fifth annual competition for internationalizing the curriculum. Up to 16 grants of \$3000 will be awarded to faculty for proposals to develop new courses with substantial international content or for modifying existing courses to increase their international component. Proposals are due by Monday, March 19. Winners will be notified in early April. Links to this year's guidelines and proposal format and the lists of winners in previous years can be found on the International Center's Web site at:

<http://www.ufic.ufl.edu/ica.htm>

For additional information, please contact Sandra L. Russo at 392-5834 or via e-mail at <mailto:srusso@ufic.ufl.edu>.

Alligator Ombudsman

The ombudsman position was created at the start of the fall semester in part to help repair strained relationships between the paper and several campus groups, and to make the Alligator more accountable to the public. The ombudsperson serves as the public spokesperson of the paper and as the readers' representative, answers questions, investigates complaints and works as an intermediary to resolve disputes between the paper and public. Contact: Mike Jayne mjayne@alligator.org (352) 376-4458

Regulations

Proposed regulations changes will be posted on the Faculty Senate Web site on February 27th. Please review these recommendations and provide necessary feedback during the public comment period.

Mini-grants for the Enhancement of Sustainability in Instruction Proposals

The university is asking for proposals for Mini-grants for the Enhancement of Sustainability in Instruction. The Request for Proposals (RFP) can be found at http://www.aa.ufl.edu/documents/Sustainability_Minigrant_2007.pdf

Deadline: March 19, 2007

Nominations for Senate and Joint Committees

The Nominating Committee is beginning to prepare nomination slates for Senate and Joint committees and we need additional nominations

Please distribute this call throughout your colleges and recruit your colleagues to participate.

Curriculum Committee: 3 nominations

General Education Committee: 3 nominations

Steering committee: 1 nomination

Lakes, Vegetation and Landscaping Committee: 2 nominations

Honorary Degrees: 5 nominations

Constitution Committee: 4 nominations

Land Use and Facilities Planning Committee: 4 nominations

Preservation of Historic Buildings and Sites Committee: 4 nominations

Research Policy Committee: 2 nominations

Nominating Committee: 3 nominations

University Libraries Committee: 3 nominations

Student Petitions Committee: 2 nominations

Sustainability Committee: 2 nominations

Transportation and Parking Committee: 2 nominations

Academic Freedom, Tenure, Professional Relations and Standards

Committee: 5 nominations

Committee on Committees: 2 nominations

Compensation Committee: 7 nominations

Please submit nominations by March 8th at 5 PM.

Nominations may be sent to the Senate office at ahugus@ufl.edu or to me at carokem@ufl.edu.

Council in Review: Academic Infrastructure

Are you tired of outdated technological support in your classroom? Do you worry that the journals you depend upon for your research and the education of your students may no longer be subscribed to by the University of Florida? How can our campus become more energy efficient, possibly even carbon neutral? These are among the issues the Academic Infrastructure and Policy Council has been wrestling with this year.

The official mission statement for our Council reads, “To establish policies and procedures for academic infrastructure and support in cooperation with the President of the University and the Faculty Senate. This includes coordinating the work of operating committees that contribute to the physical framework of the campus community. Our goal is to achieve standards of excellence for the interdependent network of facilities and services essential to a top-tier public research university.”

Specific activities for the year have included:

- Participation in interviews for Dean of the Libraries
- Discussions with Fedro Zazueta and Mark McAllister about Academic Technologies
- Discussions with Marc Hoit about IT Centralization
- A Joint Meeting with the Cultural Plaza Committee about their Master Plan and potential improvements
- A Joint Meeting with the Sustainability Committee about their agenda for a more sustainable campus

We recognize there is never enough funding to create the perfect physical infrastructure in an institution like ours, but we want to make the most of the money we have and ensure that the great ideas and preferences of the faculty are considered as policies and priorities are established. If there are any infrastructure issues or concerns of particular interest to you, we encourage you to contact us through the Faculty Senate Secretary, Amelia Hugus at ahugus@ufl.edu.

Contributing Committees:

The chair of each of these committees (or an elected faculty member) is a member of the Infrastructure Council

Sustainability Committee

This committee promotes sustainability within the University and in the University’s relations with the larger community and seeks to enhance the University’s standing as a global leader in sustainability. It assesses the progress of the University of Florida’s sustainability efforts as compared to national and international best practices and pursues their implementation when appropriate. It aids in the development of policy with the Office of Sustainability and participates in the annual evaluations of that Office, its director and academic officer.

Parking and Transportation Advisory Committee

This committee reviews and recommends rules and regulations of a nonfinancial nature governing traffic, parking and registration of vehicles, bicycles, scooters and motorcycles and public transportation to and on the campus; programs to meet and enhance the parking and transportation on the campus; site locations for new parking facilities and parking lot enhancements on the campus; special parking requests from University departments, students, staff and faculty; any significant findings regarding all parking and transportation matters.

University Libraries Committee

The Committee shall assist the Director of University Libraries in maintaining and promoting the welfare of the University Libraries; advise the Faculty Senate about the state of the Libraries and the Committee’s position on policy matters affecting the Libraries; forward an annual report to the Faculty Senate and the University Administration, and provide other reports whenever advisable.

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Land Use and Facilities Planning Committee

In conjunction with the Lakes Vegetation and Landscaping, Preservation of Historic Buildings and Sites, and Parking and Transportation committees, this committee will be responsible for providing recommendations on the overall appearance and development of the campus to the VP, Finance & Administration. The committee shall also provide recommendations regarding the enforcement of the University of Florida Master Plan (UFMP) policies and guidelines. Its responsibilities are to participate in the development and updating of the UFMP, to recommend policies for land use and facilities development, and to review and recommend approval/denial of all requests for land use changes. The committee will monitor the execution of the UFMP by reviewing and recommending approval/denial of all project sites during the Programming and Schematic Design phases; review and recommend approval/denial of architectural design of buildings and landscaping, building additions/renovations, and utility projects during the design development phase; provide input on minor projects (\$1 M and less) that impact the footprint building exterior of potential historic building's interior; and assist in upholding the policies, procedures and standards set by the UFMP.

Preservation of Historic Buildings and Sites Committee

This committee assists the University in implementing its Policy on Historic Preservation, filed with the Florida Secretary of State, as a Programmatic Memorandum of Agreement for Protection of Historical Resources. In support of this Memorandum, it assists the University in fulfilling federal and state obligations with respect to its historic and archeological resources.

Lakes, Vegetation and Landscaping Committee

responsible for items that affect the use of University lakes, including guidelines for use of such lakes in order to preserve their ecological integrity and research capabilities, and the management and well being of natural areas containing non-domesticated plants and animals. It provides recommendations concerning enforcement of policies regarding the removal of trees and other vegetation; input to the

Land Use and Facilities Planning Committee regarding planning of major landscape elements such as green space, open space, and significant architectural features to ensure their compatibility with existing and planned landscaping and master planning; recommendations to the VP for Finance and Administration about construction on campus, specifically concerning: programming, including general site suitability having an impact on trees, landscape, natural areas and lakes; schematic design, including tree removal, plans for transplants, replacements and/or mitigation based on building footprint, utility corridors and other construction activities; and design development including new landscaping, appropriateness and inclusion of any mitigation for tree removal.

Faculty Senate News: Meeting Outcomes

2.15.07

Chair's Report:

Dr. Wright announced that the Senate Nominating committee is still accepting nominations for Senate and Joint committees and Policy Councils. Senate Chair Elect nominations are open and will close on March 1. Statements are due March 31 and the Senate will vote on the next chair-elect at the April Senate meeting. Only current Senators are eligible to run for Chair Elect.

Colleges received information about Senate elections. Please help to ensure that your college submits candidates to the Senate office by March 26.

A Graduate Student Forum will be held on April 4 from 12:30 -2:00 P.M. The forum will discuss balancing teaching, research and service. The Senate office is seeking three faculty members to participate in this round table discussion. Please contact the Senate office at facultysenatechair@ufl.edu if you are interested.

Search Committees for the following positions will begin soon:

Dispute Resolutions Officer, CFO and a Vice President for Human Resources

The administration would like Faculty members to serve on these committees. Please send nominations to facultysenatechair@ufl.edu.

President's Report

The BOG commissioned Pathus Report is available on the Senate Web site. The governor proposed no new increases in undergraduate instate tuition. The BOG and the BOT can still set out of state, graduate, and professional tuition. The Climate Survey is now available on-line. Dr. Machen reviewed admissions figures for African American students (increased 19 percent over last year) and Hispanic students (increased 27 percent over last year). Dr. Machen is seeking input from the UCC and students on the minus grades plan.

The administration is looking into ways to increase minority faculty numbers at UF.

Information Items:

County Extension Agents

Rebecca Pauly presented an information item regarding a proposed pilot program to change the process for review of tenure and promotion packets for County Extension Agents.

Sustainability Committee Report

Eva Czarnecka-Verner presented several sustainability initiatives. There will be a lunch discussion on March 2 from 12-2 P.M. in room 404 of the Reitz Union. Several Mini-Grants in sustainability will be offered and the committee is participating in Focus the Nation initiatives on global warming.

Proposed Regulations Changes

Tim Taylor presented the constitution committee's recommendations regarding proposed regulation changes. The regulations will be posted on February 27. Please make any necessary comments during the public comment period.

Action Items:

Academic Enhancement Program Resolution

The Senate unanimously approved a resolution supporting the Academic Enhancement Program.

Graduate Council Item

Migration of Nutritional Sciences concentration to PhD in Nutritional Sciences

The Senate approved the degree proposal



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