

To: Danaya Wright, Chair – Faculty Senate
From: Marc Heft, Chair - AFTPRS Committee
Re: Dispute Resolution Officer
Date: November 20, 2006

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 of the candidate who is ultimately chosen for the DRO. 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.