Finance Committee Report, Part I:
Recommendations With Respect to Making a $3 Million Cut in the CLAS Budget
(February 21, 2008)
(as corrected February 25, 2008)

Note: As this report was being finalized we were advised that it was likely that budget cuts to the college would have to be deeper. Since the precise amount of the deeper cuts are not yet clear, we have decided to issue this report as is. We will issue a second report on those second, deeper cuts, if need be.

Summary

In January 2008 Interim Dean Glover asked this committee to recommend ways that CLAS could implement a $3,007,000 cut to the college’s budget. We were advised that those cuts would be permanent.

Our recommendations follow. Briefly, we propose that the cuts occur at two levels:

- $2 million dollars should be cut from the budget at the college level.
- $1 million dollars in cuts should be made by asking each department or budget unit in the college to cut 1%.

Both these sets of cuts will be implemented in the 2008-2009 budget, so that the CLAS budget will be $3,007,000 less than it was in 2007-2008.

We explain our reasoning and our sense of the impact the cuts will have on CLAS in the following sections. The preliminary section provides a background of the budget situation in CLAS in order to provide a context for our assessment of the impact these cuts will have on the college. The second section details where we propose the cuts for the $2 million worth at the college level should be made, and assesses our sense of the impact of these cuts on the college. A third section explains the 1% budget cuts at the department or budget unit, and provides a process and some guidelines for making those cuts. Finally a concluding section notes the long-term impact. The appendix to this report lists the units that we believe should be asked to make 1% cuts.
Background

In January 2008 this committee was contacted by Interim Dean Glover and asked to recommend ways in which CLAS could implement the $3,007,000 cut that the college was being asked to make. That cut was in response to cuts the state legislature had made in the public university budget.1 We were told that the $3 million cut had to be made from recurring funds.

Traditionally a report of this sort opens with the claim that a budget cut will not merely cut fat, but will hit flesh and bone. But we are beyond the point of making that objection in CLAS. As this committee reported last year, we believe that CLAS has been under funded relative to other colleges at UF for several years now.2 While there may have been instances of misdistribution of funds within the college, that sustained pattern of under funding meant that CLAS as a whole had no fat to cut.

The efforts over the past three years to pay off the CLAS debt have made a bad financial situation worse. In our final report last year we argued that the efforts to pay off the debt had already deeply cut into the college’s core mission of teaching and research.3

Given our previous findings, we cannot understate the harm to the college if these cuts go through. To put the point in terms of the usual metaphor, we are no longer merely cutting flesh and bone in CLAS. We are now removing organs and hoping that we can get along without them.

Recommendations Part I: $2 Million College Wide Cuts

When we were first approached by the Interim Dean to make recommendations for cuts, he advised us that he believed he had found a way to make roughly $2 million dollars in cuts at the college level. After reviewing his proposals carefully, and examining as many other options as we could think of, we have come, reluctantly, to agree with him that these $2 million in cuts should be made. But we do so knowing that the impact of these cuts will be significant. Below, we identify the amount of the cuts and then set out the impact these cuts will have on the college in the years to come.

- $884,000 in savings from cancelled searches for 2007-2008.
- $275,000 in savings from “unused” OPS funds.
- $300,000 in savings from OE funds.
- $500,000 cut from the Enrollment Management fund.

None of these cuts are painless.

1. Hires: The savings from cancelled searches appears invisible. But last year we found that over 50% of the courses in CLAS taught in Fall 2006 were taught by non-tenure/tenure

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track faculty.\footnote{We determined that 57.5% of students in CLAS were taught by non-tenured/tenure track personnel in Fall 2006. Subcommittee 3 Report, p. 2. \url{http://www.clas.ufl.edu/gov/comm/finance/subcommittee3-report.pdf}} Given the significant losses to retirement CLAS experienced this year, failure to make replacement hires will surely make those numbers worse, not better in 2008-2009. In addition, many departments have been waiting for several years to get permission to make hires in core areas. Failing to make hires in 2007-2008 will make this problem more acute. Worse, to stay below budget CLAS will be unable to make any hires in 2008-2009 and will only be able to make new hires in 2009-2010 if further attrition frees up money and that money does not have to be transferred somewhere else in the college budget. We are not, therefore, simply looking at a one-year hiring freeze. We are looking at a multi-year hiring freeze in a college that is already woefully understaffed.

2. OPS: The savings from unused OPS funds also appears invisible, since the money will be captured from departments that did not spend their full OPS budget. But the reality is that this unused money could have been redistributed to other departments that needed more OPS money to hire graduate student teaching assistants or adjuncts to teach courses. Taking this money out of the college rather than redistributing it within the college harms those departments and units that would have found a good use for the money.

3. OE: The cuts from OE will be achieved by making permanent the reductions to the OE Budget that were made on a temporary basis at the start of 2007-2008. Making these cuts permanent will hurt, sometimes quite seriously. For many departments in this college, OE funds were already too low before the temporary cuts at the start of 2007-2008. In some of those departments faculty and graduate students no longer have access to travel money to go to present their research at professional conferences. In other departments cuts to OE funds mean faculty are replacing old or broken computers and monitors with equipment from home. In other departments the cuts to OE budgets will mean that paper supplies will run out before the end of spring semester. It was one thing to limp through this year with the reduced OE budgets, knowing that in future years the cut funds would return. Cutting $300,000 from OE permanently will be very difficult for everyone.

4. Enrollment Management: The $500,000 cut represents more than 50% of the college’s Enrollment Management fund. (CLAS spent $869,630 on Enrollment Management this year). Enrollment Management money is used to pay to open classes where demand out steps the supply of courses. Cutting Enrollment Management by more than half will directly impact the college’s ability to teach core courses and will exacerbate the problems caused by canceling searches and cutting OPS funds. Cutting Enrollment Management funds also means that the critical tracking program will have to be abandoned, because with less Enrollment Management money CLAS will be less able to open additional sections of high demand courses.

As this summary suggests, these cuts will not be easy for CLAS to absorb. Instead, they will make problems CLAS already faced worse. However, after reviewing a variety of other options we reluctantly concluded that there was no other place to find money to cut. Therefore we concur with the Dean’s plan to implement these four cuts as outlined above.
Recommendations Part II: $1 Million Worth of Cuts at the Department and Unit Level

Cutting roughly $2 million at the college level is not enough. We need to cut another $1 million dollars from the CLAS budget. We propose that the final million dollars be made up by reducing the budget of every department or budget unit by 1%, including the Dean’s office (see the attached list of budget units).

This will also be a permanent cut.

Below we outline both some principles that should guide the determination of these cuts and a process that we believed should be followed in making them. Our guiding assumption in recommending that units determine these cuts was that units themselves are best able to determine how to preserve their core functions and strengths. At the same time, we realize that as difficult as this cut will be for all units, for some units it will be impossible. Thus, in the process section we propose some steps that should be used with respect to departments and units that cannot make the full 1% cut.

A. Principles:
   1. The core function of the university is the creation and distribution of knowledge. The budget problems in CLAS have already strained that function, additional cuts must be made in the manner a department or unit judges will do the least additional harm to that core function.
   2. No tenured/tenure-track faculty lines should be cut.
   3. No permanent staff positions should be cut.
   4. No current students (either graduate or undergraduate) should be prevented from graduating in a reasonable time as a result of the cuts.

B. Process:
   1. Each unit identified on the last page of this report shall be notified by the Dean’s office that it must cut 1% from its 2007-2008 basebudget to be implemented when the 2008-2009 fiscal year begins.
      a. We assume that all departments, centers and other units will be asked to make a 1% cut. However, the Dean may conclude it is necessary to reduce the cut for some units or even exempt a few units from this cut entirely. If he determines that some departments or units should be exempt from the 1% cut the Dean should advise the Finance Committee of this determination and explain why he feels those units should be exempt. The Finance Committee will then review these determinations and either approve the Dean’s decisions or recommend alternatives.
      b. If some units are exempt from the cut, then cuts to some other units will have to be greater than 1%. Before notifying units that they will be asked to cut more than 1% of their budget, the Dean should consult with the Finance Committee, explaining which units he feels are able to bear a greater cut. The Finance Committee will review those decisions and either approve them or recommend alternatives.
   2. Consistent with the principles of shared governance, the Dean shall ask each unit to decide for itself how the 1% should be cut from its budget.
   3. Each unit should make this decision following their own internal governance procedures and taking into account the principles set forth above.
4. After determining where it will make cuts, each unit will produce a statement that sets out:
   a. Where the cut(s) will come from in its budget,
   b. What the estimated savings will be from the cut(s),
   c. What the impact of the cut(s) will be. By way of example, such a statement of impact might include an estimate of SCHs and sections lost as a result of cuts, instances of increased class size resulting from cancelled sections, and/or instances of current or newly admitted graduate students denied funding.

5. These statements will be reviewed by the Dean’s office before the cuts they outline are implemented to make sure that the proposed cuts do not violate any collective bargaining agreement or University Rule.

6. Once the statements have been approved they will be forwarded to the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will prepare a report documenting the impact of the cuts by department and this report will be placed on the Finance Committee’s website.

Long Term Impact

As we indicated at the start of this report, we believe that every one of the cuts we recommend here will harm CLAS. The proposed college-wide cuts will affect every student and faculty member in the college, and we know that the department level cuts will make it even harder for the college to carry out its essential mission. We cannot begin to estimate the impact of these cuts on the quality of our instruction or research or on our efforts to improve our national ranking.

But while the financial impact of the cuts will be severe, the harm from these cuts goes beyond that. These cuts are doubly hard to bear in a year that has been punctuated by the repeated hiring of outside search firms and consultants, the addition of another, well-paid, layer of upper administration, and countless other financial decisions that have seemed to reward administrators while asking faculty and students to sacrifice. That sense that budget problems do not fall equally on everyone is a serious problem and that sort of sentiment should not be allowed to fester.

To that end, we have recommended that there be cuts to the Dean’s Office budgets. In addition to helping CLAS make up the final $1 million in cuts, those cuts are necessary because they demonstrate that faculty and students are not the only people being asked to make sacrifices. At the same time, we recognize the limits of this symbolic act. Asking administrators and staff in CLAS to sacrifice will not alter the perception that Tigert Hall is held harmless while the rest of the university suffers cuts. We also recognize that cuts to the Dean’s Office could put pressure on the current Dean search and probably will mean the end of the small things that create a sense of community such as the college newsletter, and of big things that create a sense of a college, like graduation.

We have two final thoughts.

First, because there is no clear mission statement for either the college or the university, these cuts must be uniform and their impact on programs ad hoc. If we have to make greater cuts, the haphazard nature of the cuts will be more pronounced. While this causes us concern, we are equally troubled by the idea that the college should come up with a mission statement in the shadow of budget cuts.

Second, while we applaud the extent to which faculty has been involved in this process, painful as the experience has been and may continue to be, we are concerned that our involvement has gone one way. Shared governance should not just mean that faculty are brought in to help make budget
cuts. It should also mean that faculty are consulted when there are new allocations or new initiatives in the college.

For all these reasons we urge the higher administration to reconsider the request that CLAS permanently cut its budget by $3 million. But if those cuts must be made, we recommended they be made as described in this report.

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Ronald Akers
H. Jane Brockman
W. Samuel Brown
Alan Dorsey
Mary Ann Eaverly
Susan Hegeman
Alyssa Lunin, Student Representative
Paul Robinson, Vice Chair
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List of Units

Each of the following units should be subject to the 1% budget cut, subject to the caveats noted in our report.

Dean’s Office
Dean’s Office-Reserve
Dean’s Office-CLASNet
Dean’s Office-Publications
AALL
Anthropology
Astronomy
 Biological Sciences
Botany
Chemistry
Classics
Communications Science
Criminology
English
Geography
Geology
Germanic/Slavic Languages
History
Linguistics
Mathematics
Philosophy
Physics
Political Science
Psychology
Religion
Romance Languages
Statistics
Sociology
Zoology
Academic Advising
Language Lab
OASIS
CWOC
African Studies
African-American Studies
Asian Studies
European Studies
Florida France Research Institute
Gerontology
Humanities in the Public Sphere
Jewish Studies
LUECI
PRC
QTP
Women’s Studies
Graham Center
Oral History
CA Pound Lab
Seahorse Key
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