2009-02-02 Finance Committee Minutes

Present: Monika ARDELT
Jane BROCKMANN
Sam BROWN
Mike MAYNE
Kenny MERZ
David PHARIES
Paul ROBINSON
Andrea STERK
Ken WALD
Caroline WILTSHIRE

Paul D'Anieri, Dean

The meeting opened at 3:00pm.

Meetings from the previous meeting were approved.

The Dean arrived at around 3:07pm.

Most of the meeting concerned the proposal that Dean D'Anieri was to present to CLAS on 18 February. Dean D'Anieri made the following comments:

1. Evaluating research is generally harder than evaluating teaching.
2. In this regard, there is perhaps greatest agreement on metrics in the experimental sciences and least in the social sciences, the humanities coming somewhere in the middle.
3. In assessing the relative merits of departments, external reviews are perhaps less helpful than might be hoped.
4. On the whole, the quality of programs at UF is good: while there are several excellent programs, none can be classified as poor.
5. The current round of ("differential tuition") hirings is taking place in departments with recognized teaching needs.
6. CLAS has a substantially greater fraction of its funding from the state than do other colleges.
7. Some departments are considering moving positions from state support to grant support.
8. The Dean said that it is his understanding that the Athletic Association may help bridge a one-time gap in the budget, but knows of no firm decisions in this regard.
9. While undergraduate students are clearly a part of the teaching mission and doctoral students a part of the research mission, there is a perception that MS and MA students are harder to classify.

Some of these points were in response to questions from the Finance Committee, while others prompted responses from the committee. In particular, it was noted that the accuracy of data is vitally important when deciding layoffs, as such a step has momentous repercussions; in addition, the notion of "mission" for CLAS is crucial, as statistics are subject to manipulation.

The Dean left at 4:28pm for a conference call.

Discussion continued. It was decided that our next meeting would be on Monday, 23 February, at a time to be arranged.
The meeting adjourned at 4:50pm.

Respectfully submitted

Paul Robinson