Report to the College Assembly from the College Faculty Council

3 December 2008

(1) Introduction of committee members

College Faculty Council Webpage:

http://www.clas.ufl.edu/gov/comm/faculty.html

College Faculty Council Members


Behavioral & Social Sciences:
Susan deFrance, Anthropology (2007-2009)
Sam Stafford, Political Science (2007-2009)
Donald Stehouwer, Psychology (2007-2009)
Barbara Zsembik, Sociology (2007-2009)

Humanities:
Nora Alter, Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (2007-2009)
Carol Murphy, Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (2007-2009)
Ann Wehmeyer, Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (2007-2009)

Natural & Mathematical Sciences:
John Yelton, Physics (2007-2009)

Ex Officio:
Chair of the College Assembly: Chris Snodgrass, English (2008-2009)
Chair of the Finance Committee: David Pharies, Spanish (2008-2009)

Student Representatives:
Amber Muehlman (2008-2009)
Kristin Tennyson (2008-2009)
(2) Proposed Alternatives to the Budget Cuts: The Faculty Council and the Finance Committee jointly issued a set of revenue-neutral alternatives to the faculty layoffs and the restructurings of several departments. The “Recommendations of the Faculty Council and the Finance Committee Regarding Alternatives in the $6M Budget Reduction” was published on the Faculty Council’s and the Finance Committee’s websites

(http://www.clas.ufl.edu/gov/comm/finance/20080618-recommendations.pdf)

and presented to Interim Dean Joe Glover. On 21 June 2008, Interim Dean Glover replied:

I have reviewed the four recommendations contained in [the document] and have consulted with the President.

Recommendation 1 states, “The retirements from DROP in 2009-2010 should be used to remove the remaining four tenure-track faculty from the layoff list.” I do not plan to implement this recommendation for several reasons, including (i) this would further mortgage the future of the college and stretch an unreasonably strained budget, (ii) this strategy would shift faculty deficits randomly to other units, and (iii) the college relies on some of the retirements for the pool of funds needed to pay sick and annual leave payouts.

Recommendation 2 states, “The academic re-structurings ... resulting from the already occurring administrative reductions need to be worked out over the next academic year...”

By action of the BOT, there were several program mergers/reorganizations. The only academic consequences of that action are the creation of one tenured faculty in each new unit. All other academic issues in each unit may be considered by the faculty over the course of the next year. These include deciding whether or not to maintain a divisional structure, the selection of a name for the unit, policies and criteria for tenure and promotion, future hires, graduate student admissions, and degree programs. The newly merged/reorganized faculty will vote on tenure cases, but internal divisions may still register their opinions separately, and the chair can report them in the tenure letter.

Recommendation 3 states, “The doctoral programs in French, German, and Philosophy should be neither suspended nor eliminated.” The decision to adopt a moratorium on new doctoral admissions to these programs for a period of three years was motivated by academic and fiscal considerations. I have sent letters to the department chairs in French and Philosophy discussing some of these. The reasons in German are similar. During this period, the OPS funds will be redirected to other doctoral programs and more faculty effort will be directed toward undergraduate instruction. I do not plan to modify the moratorium approved by the BOT.

Recommendation 4 states, “Discussion with the Faculty Council should take place as additional funds from resignations become available over the coming year. Reinvestment of such funds to reinstate laid-off faculty and staff should be a high
priority.” Such a policy would affect the current budget and the future direction of the College and should be discussed with Dean D’Anieri.

The recommendations were also discussed with Dean D’Anieri on 16 July 2008. Additional discussions have occurred, and the Council passed a resolution in November 2008 opposing faculty layoffs, “particularly at a time when new faculty are being hired”


To date, none of the recommendations of the Council on these matters have been taken up by the University or College.

(3) Resource Allocation

(A) The Council issued its 21 November 2008 report on the structure of the Dean’s Office:

Report and Recommendations Regarding the Structure and Organization of the CLAS Dean’s Office


As part of its information collection, the Council held three open discussions with the chairs and directors. The sessions were divided according to the electoral divisions in the College Constitution; chairs and directors were asked to come or send a representative to one of the meetings, even if the meeting they could attend was not their divisional one.

(B) The Council met with Dean D’Anieri in July, August, September, October, and November (the December meeting is upcoming) to discuss such questions as the state of the college and of the college budget (history and present and future), layoffs, hiring, and the structure of the Dean’s office.

(4) Shared Governance and Organization

(A) As stipulated by our constitution, the Council met with the Dean once a month to discuss College business. The Chair of the Council met with the Dean each month as well.

(B) As previously reported, the website on governance will become separate from the Dean’s office on the College’s website.

(C) In the coming semester the Council hopes to gather information on the status of shared governance at the department and unit level.

(D) The election for the representative for the open position from the Natural and Mathematical Sciences will be held in the coming semester.