FACULTY MEETING MINUTES

Date: 4/21/11
Meeting started: 2:00 PM
Meeting adjourned: 4:12 PM

Attendees: Fredy Altpeter, Jerry Bennett, Ann Blount, John Erickson, Fred Fishel, Maria Gallo, Rose Koenig, Theresa Martin, Yoana Newman, Dennis Odero, Lynn Sollenberger, Barry Tillman, Jianping Wang

Business Items:

Position Updates

- Ft. Lauderdale Aquatic Weeds Position – Search and Screen Committee (Su, Broschat, Busey and Langeland) met March 31. Review of the applicants will begin May 1. It will be important for Gainesville faculty to participate to ensure that the candidates understand the extension responsibilities associated with the position.
- Jay/Milton Weed Science Position – Two interviews will be conducted. The first, Amit Jhala will be presenting a seminar on Thursday, April 28 at 9:30 a.m. and will meet with faculty afterwards (11:30 a.m.).

Newell Hall Move Update

- July 2012 is still the target date for the move, but the first round of moves from McCarty to Bryan Hall will begin this summer.

Plant Science Curriculum (Undergraduate)

- The major was approved by the curriculum committee.
- Dr. Rieger will recommend a Coordinator for this program, and the hope is that the position will be completely funded by IFAS.
- The Coordinator for this program will be responsible for the initial advising (determining which specialization to pursue, etc.) and the recruitment aspects of the program.
- More specific advising may have to be spread around to multiple faculty in the departments.

Agroecology Distance Education Master’s Track

- Dr. Bennett noted that Drs. Gallo and Reddy met with Dr. Rieger to discuss how to move forward. He, Dr. Rowland and Dr. Hochmuth continue to meet and discuss.
- Target students are in-state extension faculty and possibly others.
- Initially will probably only be distance education and on-book, but may later be able to become an off-book program. Since it will be an on-book initially, there may be an opportunity for some of the funds to come back to the department.
- A fee can be charged for distance education to help with other expenses such as software, etc.
• Target start date is Fall 2012.

Departmental Website

• The “About Us” section has been added, and Dr. Gallo encouraged everyone to provide feedback and/or suggestions for modifications to the information.
• Metrics since January 2011: 750,609 hits; Daily Average = 8,248; To access the stats, go to http://livestats.ifas.ufl.edu (Username: agronomy.ifas.ufl.edu ; Password: ifasstats)
• We are currently linked to the Office of Sustainability and will link our new Plant Science major information once it is finalized.

Budget

• No news yet of actual percentages to be cut.
• SPI’s and Reclasses on state funds have been opened for processing.

Material Transfer Agreements/Memorandum of Understanding

• Dr. Gallo just reminded everyone that they should make sure that policy is being followed. At least one of these needs to be in place before giving any materials to other outside entities.

Spring/Summer Cohort Pilot program

• This is a program that is being proposed by the University so that a certain number of students could attend college Spring and Summer and take Fall off rather than Fall and Spring with Summer off.
• It is an option for Bright Futures recipients.
• Initial Pilot program would be 500 students and the deadline to respond about willingness to participate is May 2.
• Based on these potential changes, we need to start thinking of how we, as a department, can work this to our advantage. Review of currently offered courses to determine viability and whether it is worth continuing. Also need to review AGR3303 (Genetics) to determine how we could offer more sections of this class. Some ideas were whether it would be better to trade off a course that has lower student numbers for this course which has a significant number of students enrolling. Dr. Gallo gave a mandate to the Undergraduate Committee to weigh some options.

Agronomy Soils Club was awarded the Student Organization of the Year by the Office of Sustainability.

Story Ideas for CSA News

• Dr. Gallo has asked for suggestions on this previously but has had limited to no response. All she needs is a topic or people that would be good to interview that she could pass on. Please think about this and give her feedback on this as soon as you can.
**ACTION ITEMS:**

Administrative Items

- Theresa mentioned that there would be a mandatory customer service training being held for Agronomy staff (Administrative, Technical, etc.) and asked for feedback on ideas or areas that faculty feel should be addressed. Examples could be professionalism (verbal and written), interactions with peers both in and out of the department. Please let her know if you have any suggestions.

- New Travel Worksheet Form - Please be sure to use this form for all travel submissions. The policy isn’t changing, just the internal form. Therefore, you can complete the upper portion and the Travel Authorization section for any upcoming travel, save the form, and when your travel is complete, fill out the expense report portion of the travel and submit that with all receipts for reimbursement. Please feel free to provide feedback and/or suggestions to Kim (agrap@ufl.edu) if you feel there are things about the form that could be changed. Modifications noted in the meeting included a more clear separation of the TA and Expense Report sections, and the question of how faculty approve their student travel requests. These will be passed along to Kim for response.

High Oleic Peanut Royalty Funds

- Currently has approx. $280K
- At the last meeting, Dr. Gallo asked whether faculty would be willing to use these funds as leverage to obtain the World Food Crops Breeder (or other top priority position). Based on the feedback, she presented Dr. Payne with the scenario of the department using these funds for two years and then IFAS picking up the position. He was in agreement with this idea.
- Estimated cost of an Assistant Professor level position with fringe would be approximately $180,000 for two years.
- Questions that were raised included how start-up would be handled, and Dr. Gallo said that Dr. Payne had indicated it would work like other new hires have been done.
- Other ideas of the type of breeder and if there should be a specialization. Dr. Gallo agreed to forward the position description again for review and further discussion.
- Majority were in agreement to use these funds for this purpose if IFAS is willing to agree to the proposed terms.

Graduate Education and Curriculum

- New Graduate Committee includes Dr. Ferrell (1 year term), Dr. Kenworthy (2 year term) and Dr. Erickson (3 year term).
- Committee will meet May 9 to discuss the transition and applications for Spring 2012.
- Long term goal of the committee will be to look at the graduate curriculum.
- There needs to be a review, and potential modification, to how often graduate committees meet.
• Discussion of whether the by-laws should contain the requirement for off-campus faculty to have a co-chair that is located on-campus. Dr. Tillman and Dr. Blount both stated that they found this beneficial. Most agreed this was not problematic for the off-campus faculty, and it should remain a requirement.

• Dr. Bennett mentioned that a new trend and questions that seem to be coming up is the idea of accepting Ph.D. students directly from their B.S. There is no policy currently in place for Agronomy, although it has not been a general practice. He asked that everyone give this some thought for future discussion.

Departmental Committees

• Honors and Awards Committee is the last to be filled. The bylaws state that there can be 3-5 members and they can include staff and students. Dr. Gallo asked that thought be given to this to determine if there is interest in this with special attention to whether staff and students should be included. Due to time limitations, full discussion was tabled to a later time.

Meeting adjourned.