FACULTY MEETING MINUTES

Date: 8/25/11
Meeting started: 2:00 PM
Meeting adjourned: 4:00 PM

Attendees: Phil Alderman, Fredy Altpeter, Jerry Bennett, Ken Boote, Barry Brecke (Polycom), Jeff Fedenko, Jason Ferrell, Fred Fishel, Luke Flory, Maria Gallo, Rob Gilbert (Polycom), Bill Haller, Kevin Kenworthy, Greg MacDonald, Ken Langeland, Theresa Martin, Brent Sellers, Lynn Sollenberger, Joao Vendramini (Polycom), Wilfred Vermerris, Jianping Wang

Business Items:

Dean Rieger – Transforming Statewide Programs to an online blended format

- We are half-way through a 3-year implementation. Currently, we are involved in state-wide programs at 5 locations. The goal is to possibly phase out future teaching appointments at RECs and go to an online program.
- Members from the department on the implementation committee: Koenig, Rowland.
- Dr. Rieger needs feedback regarding how we would define success and failure of this program. This feedback is needed by 9/30/11.
- Examples of successful programs: Oregon State, Wildlife Ecology – up to 150 students within 2 years.

Welcome and Congratulations

- Welcome to Luke Flory, who officially began with the department on August 5, 2011.
- Congratulations to Jianping Wang – she was recently awarded, along with Rob Gilbert and Neil Glynn (USDA) $1 million from the Department of Energy. She provided a brief overview of her funded research.

Bioenergy Cultivars Release Advisory Committees

- An E-mail will be sent to those who will be involved in this committee formation.
- Ken Langeland suggested one representative from this committee be at the upcoming Invasive Species Working Group meeting (September 9) as this ties in with their scheduled discussion.

Position Updates

- Aquatic Weeds position – Ft. Lauderdale: Interviews begin 8/26/11. Jay Ferrell has replaced Ken Langeland on the Search and Screen Committee. Candidate seminar attendance by faculty was requested.
- Weed Science position – Jay/Milton: Reopened and it appears that there are good applicants in the pool.
Lingxiao Zhang has requested permission to be a Courtesy Professor in Agronomy.

Background information: took position at Dawson that Diane Rowland vacated, currently working under Peter Teal.

Process: Dr. Gallo will send his CV for review and then a vote will be taken to accept or not.

Benefits for Dr. Zhang: allows access to various University systems (library, etc.) and the ability to serve on Graduate Committees. He is interested in doing this and wants to attend departmental seminars and be involved.

Benefits for Department: Dr. Teal has indicated that they have very good facilities and equipment and these would be available for our use.

Theresa Martin informed everyone that the initial budget releases had finally been made. The carry forward funds (start-up, etc.) was cut 20% when these funds were released. However, Dr. Payne was able to restore most of these funds (cuts to start-up from FY 10-11 only). All other balances in these funds maintain the 20% cut.

Agronomy was informed today (8/25/11) that Dr. Payne has also implemented a “tax” of 11.95% to cover the overhead assessment from UF. This is assessed on Royalty funds (A-FSEED), Research, and Extension Incidentals (FEL charges, and Pesticide Office Publication Sales). This assessment is taken at the time of an expense, so be aware that all expenses (including salary) will be assessed an additional 11.95% fee at the end of each month.

Theresa discussed and displayed an example of the new budget reports. These reports will allow faculty to see real time balances as well as obtain more detail of their expenditures if they want it. She is currently working on these, and will be e-mailing when they are complete.

Dr. Gallo passed flyers around which contained information about the equipment maintenance program that UF offers through Specialty Underwriters.

Dr. Vermerris discussed the program as he has some lab equipment the he currently covers through this program. He was very positive about the benefits of the program and the savings he has experienced because of it. He cautioned that this would only be beneficial for equipment that is known to have issues, rather than equipment that you know rarely needs any maintenance.

Cost will vary by equipment type.

If you wish to have more information, please contact Kim Lottinville (352-392-1811 x 203 or e-mail: agrap@ufl.edu)

Accidents, Workers Comp, etc.
Information on what to do in the event of an accident should be in all vehicle glove compartments. Theresa provided Kim with an updated version and asked her to get that in the vehicles or get it to the faculty to put in their vehicles.

Questions about this, please contact Theresa Martin (352-392-1811 x 204 or e-mail tmoore72@ufl.edu). As an additional note, if you are at the Plant Science REU in Citra after hours, and something happens there, please call the number(s) posted around the facility.

Newell Move

- Agronomy was able to get both classrooms in McCarty B, but likely has lost the space on the ground floor of McCarty D for the business hub (see later discussion).
- Newell faculty are currently moving into the spaces in McCarty (Dr. Flory and Dr. MacDonald). Dr. Gallo thought this was a good idea. If you need a copy of the available space and the plans for that, please contact Greg MacDonald.

Composting Facility Update

- Outside contractor will be a better option, so we no longer need to be concerned.

Business Hub

- IFAS will be implementing these in central areas – currently Fifield and McCarty will be the first.
- These Hubs will merge administrative functions into one area. This will affect Agronomy as we move to McCarty. Administrative functions for Agronomy, Soil and Water Science, Family Youth, and Food and Resource Economics will be combined into this Hub.
- Currently, IFAS is trying to determine what functions stay in the department and what will go to the Hub.

Micah Update

- Hardware/Software issues will need to be serviced by IFAS IT (392-INFO).
- Website may be handled by part of a .25 FTE position currently housed in AEC.
- We are in a holding pattern on a replacement until we know more about what the Hub model will look like.

Plant Science Major

- Specializations have been set. Specialization advisors are: Crop Ecology – John Erickson, Plant Genetics – Jianping Wang, Sustainable Food Production – Diane Rowland. Community Food Systems – Rose Koenig.
- Currently 26 students in Plant Science Major

Program Area Group Meetings
• Goal is to review all courses taught to determine what courses shall remain or be eliminated and any new course offerings. Want to maximize the potential for undergraduate courses to serve the Plant Science major.

Extension Strategic Planning

• Dr. Gallo thanked everyone for their input.
• Feedback from Chairs has been provided and the hope is that upper administration takes the input and uses it to make adjustments.

Research Scientist Position Discussion

• Dr. Vermerris addressed the idea of whether the department should have a set position description for these titles. Most seemed not to be in favor of this since these positions are generally specialized for various needs. These positions can be PI/CoPI on grants (since this is how they are generally funded), but cannot supervise students.

Dr. Bennett reminded faculty to review the graduate applicant spreadsheet and let him know if there is any interest. Dr. Gallo noted that we are now at 44 graduate students with 10 of them being new. She is very pleased.

FYI: Unit Review will be March 7, 2012 in the morning.

Meeting adjourned.