

Meeting of the Faculty Senate, Franklin College of Arts & Sciences
December 9, 2003
Pending Approval

1. Call to Order:

Presiding officer Nancy Felson [Classics] called the meeting to order at 3:35 PM in Room 248 of the Student Learning Center.

2. Identification of Proxies and Visitors:

Proxies: Nina Hellerstein for Luis Correa-Diaz [Romance Languages], David J. Puett for John Lee [Biochemistry], Ben Ehlers for Reinaldo Roman [History]

Absences: Michael Marshall [Art], Barry Palevitz [Plant Biology], Wendy Zomlefer [Plant Biology], Liming Cai [Computer Science], K.K. Mon [Physics/Astro], Marly K. Eidsness [Chemistry], Glenn Wallis [Religion]

Visitors: Elliot Gootman and Dan Kannan [Math], Lee Shearer and Ross Markman [Athens Banner-Herald], Peggy Kreschel, Malcolm Adams, Dan DerVartanian, Meg Amstutz [Assistant to the President].

Total: 35 Senators present, 8 visitors, 7 Senators absent.

3. Comments by the Presiding Officer, Nancy Felson:

We set up this special meeting with Provost Arnett Mace, to whom we extend a welcome. We are also pleased to welcome President Michael Adams, who is joining the Provost today and is available to answer our questions as well. Both Provost Mace and President Adams were given our two pages of questions beforehand; they will also entertain questions from the floor.

With this meeting, we are initiating a productive dialogue with the administrators of the University, in the hope that we can learn about problems the University faces and that affect us, as A & S faculty, before the administration has worked out solutions—i.e., in a timely fashion—so that we are not faced with surprises, or mandates, from above. We also want to ask philosophical questions about the direction the university is taking and the place of the College in the long-term plans. We are interested in deepening our understanding of university-wide issues so that our Planning Committee, headed by Elois Ann Berlin and having three members from the general faculty of the College, can make practical and useful recommendations to the Provost. We would like to play a stronger role in governance.

I personally do not doubt that all efforts, on the part of the administration, to recognize the input of our faculty will help improve faculty morale; it is demoralizing to learn, 2nd or 3rd hand, that a number of positions are now being eliminated or not restored or that

the number of new students admitted has again skyrocketed or that certain degree programs will be summarily terminated.

I personally want to reiterate a point I made to you, President Adams, at a breakfast that you sponsored, concerning faculty morale. Faculty morale is not merely a personal issue; rather, it is an institutional concern. For an institution such as ours to function well, it needs to be a community, and this will happen only if faculty are engaged with and included in decision-making, where it is appropriate—i.e., whenever decisions have to do with the academics of the University.

We'll begin by asking Dr. Mace to address our set of questions. There may have been a few developments since we devised these questions, judging from materials I've received from the University Council, the Faculty Conference of the University Council, and from the meeting of Dr. Mace with department heads in the Arts and Humanities Divisions.

4. Responses of the Provost, Arnett Mace, and President, Michael Adams, to the prepared questions of the Senate.

Question 1. Evaluation of Institutional Units –

- The different departments, programs, and institutes within the University are being re-evaluated. Presumably, the purpose of this is to identify areas where the University could potentially save money. Will the faculty have an opportunity to comment on and suggest improvements to the criteria in question? For example, it appears that a number of activities carried out by faculty and departments were not considered. Some examples: the number and quality of publications, undergraduate advising, teaching large classes and lecture sections (many faculty do not have T.A. support or course release units for these endeavors), recruiting undergraduate and graduate students, directing undergraduate and graduate student research (an effort for which faculty generally do not receive instructional, service or research credit).
- If it comes to that, what criteria will determine the elimination of programs, who will handle this process, and what procedures will be followed?

Answer (Mace): The Provost began his response by noting that the Board of Regents mandates the evaluation of units every 7 years. It was decided that this evaluation was best done by Colleges (since the primary mission of the Schools/Colleges differ so widely). The Deans were therefore asked to evaluate programs for the primary purpose of identifying program priorities and majors with low enrollment. This was done by ranking programs according to area (using criteria developed by the individual Deans) and by identifying low-enrolled majors. Low-enrolled majors, once identified, can be retained if arguments are made (typically by departments) that the majors should be retained for academic reasons that justify their cost. The Provost's office invites input from faculty regarding the best way to conduct these evaluations in the future.

Answer (Adams): The President added that this year the Provost had a very short time to determine the nature of this evaluation, which was required as part of dealing with the annual budget cuts.

Questions 2. Layoffs

- How likely is it that layoffs will be necessary considering the following budget decreases: 1.67% this year, 3.4% next year, and a proposed 2% the following year?
- How would such layoffs be carried out?

Answer (Mace): The Provost began by noting that no layoffs were planned for the year 2004. This was largely due to a reduction in the proposed budget cuts from 5% down to 2.5%. If, however, the budget must be reduced by a full 5% in 2004/2005, there may have to be some layoffs. If layoffs are necessary, the Deans will advise the Provost regarding the most expendable positions, which may occur at any level with the exception of tenured or tenure-track faculty. Until Governor Perdue presents the next fiscal year budget and the General Assembly approves a budget, it is difficult to predict the magnitude of the cuts that will be required in 2004/2005.

Answer (Adams): The President added that when considering layoffs, three elements must be taken into account: the magnitude of the cuts in the Governor's budget (e.g., there is no way to cut an additional 18-19 million from the already strapped budget without layoffs); increased revenue due to tuition increases; and changes in full-formula funding. All of these factors must be considered together in order to determine whether there is a need to lay off employees.

President Adams expressed his belief that it will take time to recover from the effects of the recession. Nonetheless, he believes that we are at the beginning stages of improvement and that, although 2004/2005 is likely to be similar to 2003, he has high hopes for a fuller recovery in 2006.

Question 3. Course Instruction

- Last year faculty were asked to teach an extra half course/year. Was this step taken to increase the number of courses taken by students or in response to increased student enrollment and diminishing numbers of faculty and instructors? Does this approach appear to have achieved its intended goal(s)? How has this increase affected the quality of instruction, and what measures have been used to determine this? How has this increase affected the student-teacher ratios in the College of Arts and Sciences? Will the faculty be asked to teach this increased course load again?
- How will courses lost due to eliminated faculty lines be replaced? If these courses are not replaced, how will students who had planned to take these courses be accommodated considering that many courses on campus already fill to capacity?
- Will the University continue to create large numbers of temporary positions that are often filled by graduate students or others without Ph.D.s? Many faculty think that this lowers the quality of the education the students receive and damages the

University's reputation. This creates a climate where our best professors leave and outstanding prospective students seek their degrees elsewhere. (The percentage of courses taught by Ph.D.s is frequently published in college guides.)

- How does the University plan to support new and untenured faculty for whom presenting their research at national meetings, having access to reduced teaching loads, and obtaining release time, travel grants, research assistants, and other internal support are critical for establishing a national reputation and developing the strong research and teaching records crucial for tenure?

Answer (Mace): The Provost noted that we did receive revenue last year from a 15% increase in tuition (totaling 15 million dollars). The magnitude of that increase was reduced, however, when a portion of these funds was redirected to areas ancillary to instruction (e.g., employee health benefits were increased by 2.3 million dollars, annualization of salaries [July-Sept.] 2 million, and non-annualization of resident instruction budget \$5 million). Some of these funds were also used for the purpose of faculty retention: a number of colleges needed to make strong counter-offers in order to retain valuable faculty. Nonetheless, a large portion of these tuition-generated funds was applied directly to instructional needs. For example, Dean Anderson received an additional \$985,000 that was used primarily to hire post-doctoral teaching fellows and contractual instructors. (Nonetheless, regular faculty were asked to teach an additional half course/year.) Deans reported on compliance with this request; no formal analysis has been done regarding its impact on the quality of instruction.

The Provost and President both emphasized their deep concern about and commitment to maintaining a high quality of instruction at UGA. Although many of the new instructors are excellent (e.g., post-doctoral teaching fellows are selected based on having excellent teaching skills), in general, contract instructors do tend to correlate with a reduction in the overall quality of instruction. Typically, the College employs about 10 Franklin Fellows per year and this increased last year to about 18. Although not optimal, hiring short-term instructors was deemed necessary in order to deal with the immediate crisis with the annual budget.

The current ratio of Instructors to students in the College of Arts and Sciences is 23.3 to 1. This is about average when considering ratios from other colleges, which vary from a high of about 40:1 in the Business school to about 15:1 in Forestry.

The Provost also noted that the increased teaching load may be required for the next academic year, despite his promise to the contrary. Marjanne Gooze [Germanic/Slavic] reminded the Provost of the faculty's original fear that an increase in teaching load would be institutionalized and not actually "temporary," as he had originally promised. The Provost and President emphasized their wish for an increased teaching load not to be institutionalized and said that next year really would be the last year it may be required.

Answer (Adams): The President noted that it was impossible to cut 52 million dollars from the working budget of 440 million (37% of which comes from the State) without feeling some impact throughout the University. This impact is increased for Georgia

since so many of our students are in-state (86%) as opposed to Georgia Tech where many students (25%) are from out-of-state and therefore pay higher tuition. Nonetheless, many steps are being taken to maintain high standards of instruction at UGA. For example, the next freshman class will be restricted to 4500 (as opposed to 5200 entering freshman last year). Funds have also been made available to departments to be used for travel and for promoting professional development.

Doug Crowe [Geology] asked whether increasing teaching loads was really cost-effective since this reduced the time available both to do research and to obtain external funding. Dr. Adams agreed that increasing teaching loads was a short-term solution that, while helping solve an immediate budget crisis, would probably ultimately reduce research funding and result in a loss of revenue.

Question 4. Faculty and Staff Morale

- How is the University working to maintain faculty and staff morale? This question derives from hardships incurred by recent budget cuts but also from an increasing number of apparent inequities on campus that have been publicized. For example, reportedly the number of administrative hires has increased and administrators have received raises even as faculty hires have declined and faculty wages have remained static. In contrast to perceived increases in the number and salaries of administrators, many faculty have experienced additional cutbacks that interfere with research and instruction such as limited use of office telephones for long-distance calls, elimination of travel support, declines in secretarial support, and elimination of research assistants. Though some of these inequities may be exaggerated or have logical explanations, even a presumed inequity can have a strong negative impact on employee morale and should be addressed.
- Some faculty have been demoralized by perceptions that other state colleges and universities are not experiencing cuts – particularly freezes in hiring and travel funding – as deep and as long term as those instituted at UGA. How does the University stand in this regard in relation to other state Research One institutions in our region – UNC Chapel Hill, University of Virginia, for example - and in the nation?

Answer (Mace): The Provost noted that in January the University will begin its “shared-leave” program that will allow employees to give their leave to other employees who may need it for reasons such as illness. This new benefit will, hopefully, improve morale.

The Provost also noted that administrative hires have actually decreased and will continue to decrease. There have been no administrative raises except for two cases for purposes of retention. This includes bonuses from the UGA Foundation as well as salary raises from the Board of Regents, Dr. Adams said in response to a question. Dr. Adams noted that, when compared to comparable universities, UGA ranked 13 out of 14 in administrative costs. Although there will be increases in administrative costs, these costs are largely focused on infrastructure. For example, increases are needed in security and public safety, physical plant workers, and academic support (e.g., computers). These

categories are considered administration, but must grow with the physical size and needs of the University.

The Provost also mentioned that efforts are being made not to cut the budget for graduate students both in order to stay competitive with peer institutions and because graduate students serve instructional needs.

The impression that UGA has suffered more cuts than other institutions is not accurate. University of Michigan suffered a 10% reduction last year and another 10% reduction in 2003. University of Virginia had a 22% reduction in budget over the last two years. Virginia Polytechnic Institute had a budget reduction of 13% last year. As has been widely publicized, universities across California have suffered very large budget reductions. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill lost 900 employee positions; it eliminated numerous programs, particularly those involved in instruction. Most exceptions to this general rule (i.e., of significant budget cuts) are due to privatization of funding (e.g., UVA only receives about 10% of its budget from the state).

Ultimately, the College of Arts & Sciences only suffered a 1.5% budget reduction last year, which was better than most other academic units at UGA.

Finally, both the President and the Provost plan to increase the frequency of their meetings with faculty and they invite faculty input into all aspects of University governance.

Question 5. University-wide Initiatives

- What is the current status of the Engineering Initiative? The Bioscience Initiative?
- Where will these programs be housed? What is the status of the Coverdell building?
- What impact will these initiatives have on degree programs and future faculty hiring in the College of Arts and Sciences?
- How will internal University budgeting for these initiatives affect funding of the College of Arts and Sciences?
- How will Arts and Sciences faculty be involved in these initiatives in the future?
- Are there any plans to split additional Colleges or Schools out of the College of Arts and Sciences?

Answer (Mace): Funding for the Engineering Initiative will not be affected by the current budget reductions. The Provost and President strongly support both the Engineering and Bioscience initiatives and will continue to lobby the Board of Regent to approve appropriate programs in these areas. The Coverdell construction and infrastructure for the Bioscience programs is in the initial stages. Faculty input is welcome and needed regarding both initiatives

There appear to be no plans for splitting any additional units out of the College of Arts & Sciences or for creating new colleges or schools.

- Best Model for International Instruction

Answer (Adams): The President noted that the best approach is a multiplicity of models. Currently, the University has 70 cross-institutional arrangements, 40 program efforts, and three residential programs. The President would like to expand all of these programs.

The Provost and President thanked the faculty Senate for the opportunity to speak and for the commitment and extra effort of faculty and staff.

5. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Submitted by B. Randy Hammond, Psychology.