

**Fall Faculty Meeting
September 15, 2006
Terrace Room**

Welcome and Overview by Buffy Bondy

Buffy called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m., and she went over the written agenda for the meeting and introduced the speakers and presentation topics. She emphasized the collaborative and interdisciplinary nature of the presentations today.

Dr. Danaya Wright, Chair of the UF Faculty Senate

Danaya Wright talked about shared governance at UF. She met with all UF deans and college governing bodies over the summer to get a sense of the issues they felt were important. She has a PPT on the UF Senate website for basic information about shared governance at UF and reminded COE faculty that there are five policy councils at UF: academics, faculty welfare, budget, research and scholarship, and infrastructure. She said that this year the councils have really started to take the lead on setting goals. There are also numerous committees that report to the appropriate councils. She pointed out that the Faculty Senate last year initiated a joint task force to look at the implementation of shared governance at the local level; the report said that each unit needs to figure out the appropriate balance of faculty input in the mission of the college. It was also recommended that each unit have a task force charged with evaluating shared governance at the college level. However, the specifics of this implementation and evaluation are to remain flexible and open ended, depending on the context of particular departments, regarding elections, constitutions, policies, etc. Danaya has met with senators from each college to have conversations about this process. She also complimented the COE faculty governance system.

However, the recent problem with CLAS at UF has altered her plans for addressing shared governance issues. The Senate is concerned specifically about lack of faculty participation in the CLAS five-year plan.

Buffy mentioned that the FPC has just started the process of talking about the evaluation/oversight piece (feedback) of how COE shared governance is working. A task force will report to the Senate by April 30, 2007.

Danaya said the evaluation of faculty governance is a major focus of the Senate this year, and that there is particular concern about faculty input/participation on college/department budget issues.

Presentations: Research Across Borders – Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Inquiry in the COE

Buffy mentioned some different ways to think about “border crossing” and mentioned the emphasis that many funding agencies now place on interdisciplinary and collaborative research. She chose a few to feature today as examples, but by no means as an exhaustive list of COE projects that involve “crossing borders.”

1. Catherine Tucker, "Working with Children and Parents in Remote Rural Schools in South Africa"

Catherine talked about a South Africa Study Abroad program in Capetown and Plettenberg Bay for six weeks in the summer of 2006. Her elementary PROTEACH students who went on the trip shared their experiences, via narrative and a slide show, with regard to the variety of school structures and issues they encountered in poor, rural areas of South Africa. The students did service projects to improve some of the facilities they visited, and they worked with children on basic academic skills and specific units of study (e.g., geography). One student said she recommended that all students do a study abroad program as a graduation requirement. Several described the changes to their perspectives on teaching because of this trip. Catherine talked about the family literacy piece of the project that involved collaboration between the UF group and local families. Buffy mentioned that the students collected data on the family literacy project as part of their PROTEACH coursework.

2. Mary Ann Clark, "Male Underachievement in Public Education: A Collaborative, Cross Cultural Study" (Paul Thompson and Wilma Vialle, co-researchers)

Mary Ann talked about her work with colleagues in the UK and Australia, supported by her B. O. Smith Professorship in the COE. This work arose from her experiences as a guidance counselor with seeing boys referred to her more often than girls and exploring the possibility that this had more to do with school success skills than ability. She briefly presented some national data on the extent of the issue:

- a. Gap between males and females going to college has widened and is expected to keep widening for the next 10 years
- b. K-12 males are disproportionately placed in special ed (2 to 1)
- c. More male dropouts, discipline referrals, behavior issues, lower grades

Internationally, a PIRLS study showed 4th grade girls outperforming boys in every G8 country that participated in the survey.

The purpose of Mary Ann's study was to encourage preservice counselors and teachers to collaborate in examining this issue and its contributing factors, to work collaboratively with their own university class/groups as well as groups from other countries, and to do action research projects on possible interventions. Fifteen students from three universities (UF, Nottingham, Wollongong) participated; projects were done by students in small groups across countries via WEBCT. Themes that have emerged so far illustrate gender differences in children's views on school success skills and on educators' lack of awareness of these issues. Next steps include developing and testing the interventions.

3. Catherine Emihovich, "Science for Life: Enhancing Undergraduate Education and Research in the Life Sciences"

Catherine discussed a project involving a number of COE departments, UF colleges, and US and international institutions, funded by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI). HHMI is the largest funder of research in the life sciences in the US; these grants are highly competitive, and UF received \$1.5 million this year for a four-year period (with substantial UF, donor, and state matching funds). Initially it was unclear what role the COE would play, but it has

become highly involved. The project is now probably the largest interdisciplinary initiative at the undergraduate level in the US. Components include:

- a. Build undergraduate research capacity by identifying promising students early on as HHMI scholars and faculty as HHMI mentors
- b. Develop a new research course for freshmen
- c. Restructure the curriculum component of the UG life sciences program, including the core lab in the health sciences center (Tom Dana will be involved in this, and a curriculum coordinator will be hired)
- d. Create an UG science education minor, which HHMI scholars will be encouraged to complete (Troy Sadler will be creating a new course called Explorations in Science Teaching)
- e. Create an outreach program (e.g., summer seminars) for science teachers (Bernie Oliver, Mary Jo Karoly, and Alliance schools)
- f. Develop a postdoc mentoring program to help with effective science teaching
- g. Develop an assessment instrument (Luis Ponjuan, Linda Behar-Horenstein)

Catherine mentioned that the COE's profile has been raised considerably through involvement in this project in terms of contributing expert knowledge on teaching and learning. Also, HHMI grants often become long-term and can result in various spin-off projects, including the possibility of new state-of-the-art addition to Norman.

4. Hazel Jones and Lynda Hayes, "Professional Development to Improve Early Literacy Outcomes for Preschoolers"

This started as a service project and evolved into a research study with NEFEC's "Early Reading First" initiative in five rural school districts. The purpose is to create preschool centers of educational excellence to serve as model/demonstration sites for Florida pre-K programs (14 pre-K classrooms, 14 teachers, 6 mentor teachers). Goals include development of language- and literacy-rich preschool environments; age-appropriate, explicit instruction in key emergent literacy skills (e.g., oral language, alphabet); increased time for daily instruction and teacher-supported practice in key emergent literacy skills; incorporation of science and math to help build children's skills; active involvement from parents in literacy skills; use of age-appropriate assessments of early literacy skills; and development of a model for transitioning students into Reading First kindergartens. The project also focuses on successful teacher professional development/school reform via content knowledge, coherence between standards and teachers' experiences, time span and contact hours, collective participation, and active learning. Project evaluation will address improved child outcomes and improved teacher knowledge and skills.

Conclusion of Meeting

Eileen Oliver reminded about the COE Centennial Conference, "Closing the Achievement Gap Through Partnerships," November 2-4 in St. Pete.

Catherine reiterated three themes for this year: public scholarship (aligned with T&P issues), interdisciplinary program initiatives, and learning community (both within

the COE and around UF). Dr. Barbara Hill of the American Council on Education will serve as a consultant to the COE on institutional change, and will work with the FPC Long Range Planning committee.

Buffy said the FPC will promote the collaborative climate in the COE and reminded people to bring issues to the FPC as necessary.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 pm.