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UFF FAMU

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NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2011

Productivity and Restructuring

Colleagues:

Recent conversations on the restructuring of the University have centered on the issue of productivity. Productivity is the driving force behind an institution's growth and profitability, but how does that translate to an institution of higher education? According to Steve Palin (at Steve Palin.com), **Productivity = Value / Time** (productivity equals value divided by time) and he notes that there are two primary ways of increasing productivity:

- 1) Increase the value created
- 2) Decrease the time required to create that value

What does that mean for us?

The Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education completed its work in September 2006 with the release of its final report, [A Test of Leadership: Charting the Future of U.S. Higher Education](#), otherwise known as the "Spellings Report." According to the Spellings Commission and other similar national study groups, national competitiveness in the global economy has increased the need for United States population to become highly educated. It is generally believed that to increase productivity in U.S. nonprofit higher education is to:



1. [Improve the competitiveness of the workforce](#): Increase the percentage of postsecondary degree holders in the overall U.S. adult population.
2. [Improve degree attainment rates](#). Increase the average rate of graduation within the nation's collective postsecondary degree-seeking "student body."
3. [Reduce degree production costs](#). Decrease the national average of per-degree-granted annual operating costs (per-degree production costs).

(http://institutionalperformance.typepad.com/institutional_performance/2008/07/productivity-in.html)

Therefore, institutions of higher education must be more productive. In fact, the challenge for higher education is to help more people achieve higher levels of education and to use their resources and funding wisely in the process. However, these goals will not be achieved unless the diversity of the student body is reshaped to align itself more closely with the demographics of this nation

in order to achieve the second goal of Spelling Report, increased graduation rates. After all, graduation rates can be improved by selecting the best prepared students inclusive of their culture, gender, and ethnicity.

Therefore, as a Historically Black College and University (HBCU), Florida A&M University's (FAMU) restructuring should focus on creating expedient paths to increasing the proportion of African American postsecondary-degree holders by reducing per-degree operating costs by improving our efficiency. Our focus should not be on the construction of new colleges, the reduction of faculty, or the inclusion of expensive pie-in-the-sky proposals.

All reports concerning university productivity emphasizes the fact that faculty must matter and that universities must invest in the use of technology to enable innovation in higher education. Faculty matters because most students cannot learn without the direction of faculty members and instructors who are content

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Productivity and Restructuring

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experts in their field. Universities must invest in faculty, prior to investing in libraries of other forms of “self-acquire” education. Although students also need the services of librarians, advisors, and others who assist in the learning process, the service of an educated, informed faculty comes first in our pursuit of efficiency and productivity. In addition, the following has been suggested to improve higher education productivity:

- Redesign academic programs for both mission and market(s)
- Use technology to redesign large-enrollment courses for both improved learning outcomes and reduced per-enrollment costs.
- Focus on unique internal academic program strengths and services, while selectively sourcing other programs and services from external partner organizations and businesses to reduce unit costs while simultaneously improving quality, nimbleness, and capacity (http://institutionalperformance.typepad.com/institutional_performance/2008/07/productivity-in.html)

However, according to President James Ammons’ issue of the *Source*, vol, no.2, initially a group formed by Provost Cynthia Hughes Harris developed a proposed methodology for academic program productivity while a group, chaired by Rodner Wright, Dean of Architecture recommended another criteria be considered in determining a program’s productivity,” including faculty productivity, the productivity in relation to similar programs at peer institutions, and the return on investment of research. Other themes also emerged from this group, such as:

- Defining low, medium, and high productivity programs.
- Considering return on investment (ROI) of state dollars”.

This group also suggested that the methodology should differentiate between graduate and undergraduate programs.

According to President Ammons, other themes have surfaced in the focus groups in regards to productivity, such as

- FAMU should focus on high value, signature programs;
- Develop a distinctive brand;
- Ensure its processes are streamlined and efficient; and
- Pursue enrollment growth in its key program areas, particularly in its graduate and professional programs.

Productivity comes from reducing administrative costs, streamlining processes, and putting faculty and student first. Our value as institution increases with each and every student that we graduate. Therefore, we must always keep in mind that the goal of any educational change is to create the best teaching and learning environment for our students. We must also remember that change for change sake is meaningless and hollow. Therefore, if our efforts are directed by a “Students and Faculty first” philosophy, then we really will be exercising “Excellence with caring”

Yours in the Struggle,

Elizabeth K. Davenport

President



Senate Bill (SB) 1130 Public Employee Pension Reform

On Tuesday, February 15, 2011, Sen. Ring introduced the much-anticipated FRS pension reform bill, SB 1130 (154 pages). Florida Education Association Public Policy and Advocacy Department (FEA PPA) has done a quick review of the 154-page bill and found the bill makes the following changes listed below. This is a preliminary listing of what SB 1130 does, but this preliminary report may not be completely accurate and/or comprehensive. FEA PPA is continuing to read and analyze the bill and will provide you with additional information as we develop it.

Sen. Ring held a hearing on February 18th, 2011 to receive public input and comment on SB 1130 . FEA arranged for one or two FEA members who have a Legislator from their local area sitting on the committee to come point out to the committee that, as their own bill analysis states, the total impact now and in the out years, may be hard to gauge, and are indeterminate — but everyone understands that the cost to implement the bill will be large. (Continued, p. 3)



Questions from the Field



If you have any "Questions from the Field," comments, or concerns, don't hesitate to contact your UFF representatives through face-to-face, telephone, and/or e-mail conversation. We strive to have a transparent and effective Union. We are, after all, representing you. Please remember, there is strength in numbers; therefore, if you are not a member, JOIN TODAY and if you are a member, please encourage your colleagues to JOIN TODAY!



**SB 1130
Public Employee Pension Reform**

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SB 1130 reforms the Florida Retirement System (FRS) --

- Closes defined benefit plan to new members, effective 7/1/11.
- Changes vesting for new members of the defined contribution plan on or after 7/1/11. They will vest in graded increments over a five-year period.
- Requires employee contributions for all members, effective 7/1/11, but the employee contribution amount is not specified. The rates probably will be decided in Senator Alexander's Budget Committee and will probably be included in the budget conforming bill (near the end of the 2011 legislative session)
- The employer rates are listed for 2011 and 2012, so it is possible that the employee rates will be phased in, but the employer rates might get changed in the conforming bill also
- Changes the definitions of "compensation" and "average final compensation" to exclude overtime and lump sum annual leave for all members, effective 7/1/11.
- Allows defined contribution participants (current and future) to re-enroll in the defined contribution plan (if they choose to leave FRS employment, and return to FRS employment later).
- Sets the employer contribution rates (which will be subject to change depending on other economic and policy issues).
- DROP appears to be continued with no apparent changes except for those hired after 7/1/11.
- HIS (health insurance subsidy) is not impacted by this bill.

The bill includes an actuarial study that will look at how DROP is funded

"Teacher Quality" Bill Passes Second Committee



IT'S B-A-C-K!!!! As predicted, a version of Senate Bill 6 is again being considered in the legislature. The Florida House released the Teacher Quality Proposed Committee Bill which is the companion legislation of Senate Bill 736 on February 16th.

This proposed legislation would eliminate teacher tenure and tie teacher pay and evaluations to student test scores. Teacher union officials are encouraging teachers and their supporters to write their legislators asking them to vote against this legislation. Many people opposed to this legislation are communicating on Facebook and other online social media.

Last year, Senate Bill 6 was approved by the Florida Legislature but vetoed by former Governor Charlie Crist after massive protests.





**Comments from
A Retired UFF
Member**

I have held part-time positions and now teach as a part-time adjunct at less than 50% of the salary I earned as a full-time professor. I was fortunate to have a tenured position for most of my academic life and retired as Professor Emeritus.

In the State of Florida, Teacher's Unions have consistently made a dramatic improvement in working conditions and enabled teachers to be more effective in performing their roles as educators.

Our NEA based faculty union strives for equity in faculty professional assignments and in opportunities for promotion, merit salary increases, and so on. When a salient concern is maintaining their "high" salaries and perks, will administrators (managers) of Universities be looking out for Faculty?



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WHY THIS FACULTY SENATE ELECTION IS IMPORTANT

The role of the Administration is obvious. The administration manages the affairs of the University and the President is the Chief Executive Officer. The Faculty Senate acts as the cabinet and advises the President; that is why the president of the Senate is a member of the Board of Trustees. The Union, however, is the exclusive representative of the faculty for salaries, wages and terms of conditions of employment. Therefore, UFF FAMU's responsibility is to police the actions of both the Administration, and sometimes, the Faculty Senate, for the benefit of faculty because the collective bargaining agreement details the contractual relationship between the administration and faculty. None of us can act in the exclusion of the other, but each of must keep in mind our main objectives and our responsibly to this faculty.

Therefore, we need a strong administration, Senate, and Chapter of the United Faculty of Florida and the person who hold these leadership positions must be equally strong. For the faculty Senate one area in which the Senate performs an important function is the development of academic policy. Through their senates, college and university faculties hold legitimate and exclusive authority to formulate and adopt educational policies governing the curriculum, academic programs, instructional methods, and standards of student performance. The Senate and their senators perform important functions at this University—elect them wisely—especially in this era of restructuring.



Faculty Collective Bargaining



The Faculty Collective Bargaining Team consist of :

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In November, UFF-FAMU reached a tentative agreement regarding negotiations over a successor collective bargaining agreement, including a \$1,000 salary increase for all faculty. In addition to the salary increase, the parties agreed to support in principle the faculty's right of first refusal regarding the teaching of overload courses. The administration and UFF-FAMU agreed that faculty should have the option of teaching courses now being taught by adjuncts. At the February 10, 2011, at the DRS negotiations, the administration was asked when will a joint administration-UFF committee be developed to formulate specific policies to implement the agreement regarding right to first refusal and the date and time of the final negotiation session to sign the final articles. We will keep you posted as dates are finalized.

DRS Negotiations

The DRS Collective Bargaining Team consist of :

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On February 11, 2011 a collective bargaining session was held at DRS. The DRS faculty Negotiating team led by Liz Davenport proposed that the DRS faculty would accept the Administration's offer of \$1,000 per faculty member if the University would also provide a performance bonus for all DRS faculty from the funds received by Florida A&M University from the Obama Jobs' Bill. At that same session, the DRS Negotiation Team also offered to complete negotiations on all remaining articles that stood in the way of FAMU DRS obtaining their first collective bargaining contract.

The Administration asked to adjourn the meeting until February 14, 2011 but cancelled that session that day.



We will keep you posted as dates are finalized.





What We Face Now...

Governor Rick Scott and a supermajority of the legislators in Tallahassee have set the goal of privatizing—phasing out or eliminating—most public programs and operations in order to reduce government to a minimum and build a “new Florida” in the image of a corporation. What does this mean? How will changes affect faculty in Florida?

The threats to faculty:

- A severe funding crisis through the elimination of corporate taxes
- The downsizing, privatizing or elimination of university programs
- Elimination or severe reduction in retirement benefits and health and life insurance benefits
- Elimination of payroll dues deduction for unions, weakening the ability of unions to function
- A possible new law requiring 50% membership to maintain union bargaining rights
- Elimination or weakening of tenure
- The imposition of a corporate model in higher education to the detriment of academic quality in research and teaching

Only a legally binding collective bargaining agreement protects:

- Academic freedom, due process, tenure, fair evaluations, the right to grievance and arbitration, assignment dispute resolution
- Faculty patents and copyrights
- Paid parental leave, sabbaticals, and other benefits

What can faculty do?

Join UFF. We must have a majority of members this spring to withstand the attacks on collective bargaining. Get involved in the UFF campaign to build a strong union and a coalition of higher education allies to speak out for higher education in Florida.

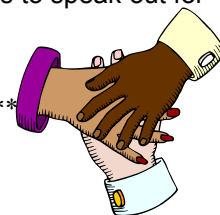
Stand together—Join the UFF



UFF Membership Form

UFF dues are 1% of bi-weekly salary.

Please Print Complete Information



United Faculty of Florida FAMU Chapter

Last Name First Name MI Department or Unit

Home Street Address Campus Address & Mail Code

City State Zip Code Office Phone Home/Cell Phone

E-mail address: Personal/Home E-mail address -- Office

Please enroll me immediately as a member of the United Faculty of Florida (FEA, NEA-AFT, AFL-CIO). I hereby authorize my employer to begin bi-weekly payroll deduction of United Faculty of Florida dues (1% of bi-weekly salary). This deduction authorization shall continue until revoked by me at any time upon 30 days written notice to FAMU’s payroll office and to the United Faculty of Florida.