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UFF FAMU

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NEWSLETTER

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Restructuring—Let's Not Put Old Wine in New Bottles

Colleagues,

Let me first state that the United Faculty of Florida-Florida A&M University (FAMU) chapter supports any change that will make FAMU more efficient and productive and able to fulfill the needs of our student population as well as faculty and staff with "Excellence with Caring." With that said, I would like to offer two caveats concerning the restructuring:

- 1) there are problems with lack of inclusiveness in the conversation and the quality of the dialogue and
- 2) we object to any change that results in putting old wine in new bottles.

What do we mean, you ask? WE object to focus groups constructed to ask **ONLY** two questions, thus limiting dialogue. Free and open dialogue is the hallmark of accepting and implementing this restructuring. Therefore, when my colleagues tell me that their experience was similar to mine and they were asked two questions with limited dialogue, I have to ask, does the administration want **true** dialogue on this issue or do they want to frame the responses? In other words, do they want unqualified



acceptance of this proposal or critical analysis? True dialogue does not come from the conversations as they are currently constructed. Two questions posed by people who appear not to be trained in the methodology of focus groups, does not solicit true and honest responses. Even with the website and the focus groups, is this dialogue or even a true conversation? Dialogue is an exchange of ideas or opinions on a particular issue. What we appear to be having are responses to statements so that eventually the Administration can report to the Board of Trustees that the faculty responses was included in their consideration. But have they really.....???

Restructuring is change and dictionaries provide us with over thirty definitions of the word *change* including "to transform, to make different in form, and to replace or substitute." The National Academy's January 2000

workshop *Leading Institutional Change: A National Workshop for College and University Teams* listed many barriers to the affective acceptance of the change that should be considered as we evaluate university restructuring.

Some of these barriers are:

- a tendency to mandate change from the top
- organization-wide initiatives that lose sight of individual units
- overwhelming people with too much at once
- operating from wrong cultural assumptions
- the desire for instant success on the part of the leadership
- appropriate resources not available
- change by memo with no discussion, no ownership
- competing cultures: trustees, students, faculty, staff, each thinking they "own" the institution and not agreeing in fundamental areas
- an organizational structure that doesn't facilitate cooperation, that encourages competition
(<http://www.thenationalacademy.org/ready/change.html#morebarriers>)

(con't p. 2)

Restructuring Let's Not Put Old Wine in New Bottles

True, the initial Restructuring Team consisted of representatives from each college who labored for two years (so long that some people left the University and were not replaced). True, we have a website and e-mails announcing the anticipated change. But the Administration must widen its net to include more participation in the implementation process—the secretary, the janitor, faculty members and the administration, must all be part of this process. Including other participants as active decisions makers will improve the quality of the dialogue and the acceptance of the process. The restructuring efforts will affect all members of this community; therefore, all must actively participate. ALL university stakeholders, colleges, and schools must participate in and outside of their venue in this conversation. I am shocked with the number of colleges, schools, and institutes that have not even discussed this issue with their faculty or faculty members who have asked if they can respond to this reform effort anonymously.

Finally, are we getting old wine in new bottles? The college restructuring effort that President James Ammons led at North Carolina Central University (NCCU) appears to be the model for the FAMU effort. For example, in 2006 at NCCU, the College of Arts and Science was divided into, The College of Liberal Arts, the College of Science and Technology, and the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, which is also very similar to what is being proposed here. The goals and mission of that change were very similar. Are we participating in a “one size fit all” reform effort or has this restructuring been tailored to our needs---only quality dialogue on this issue can resolve these questions?

We need to be more efficient. Since 2007, state-mandated budget cuts have reduced FAMU’s budget by more than \$30 million. The Ammons administration chose to deal with the budget squeeze by using President Barack Obama’s Recovery and Reinvestment Act to keep personnel positions. FAMU received \$7.4 million education stimulus dollars for 2009-2010 and \$8.4 million for 2010-2011. Despite the use of this money, positions in FAMU’s School of General Studies, the John A. Mulrennan, Sr. Public Health Entomology Research and Education Center and the Graduate School have also been moved to stimulus dollars set to expire at the end of this fiscal year.

There is a statewide financial problem. Florida’s public universities recently received notice that they might take another 15 percent across-the-board cut in 2011-2012. That would be \$9.2 million at FAMU. However, simultaneously, our enrollment has increased; therefore, there is a need for more, not less faculty. Further, at Florida State University and University of Florida, restructuring began at the administration level, not with the faculty.

Some believe that the restructuring train has already left the station and nothing can stop its momentum. However, we believe that we should slow down the train in order to make decisions that benefit all members of this community. It is not too late for deliberate evaluation.

Yours in the Struggle,

Elizabeth K. Davenport

President
UFF FAMU



FAMU DRS—A FCAT “C” School

Congratulations to DRS students, faculty, and parents who have finally something to cheer about with a “C” combination grade on its 2009-2010 Florida School Accountability Report (FCAT). The change in grade status from a “D” to a “C” is the result of the work of dedicated teachers, parents, and community volunteers who worked hard to prepare students for the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test.

After the resignation of Dr. Ronald Holmes last summer, DRS is currently being helmed by W.E. “Bill” Johnson, an experienced, retired Leon county administrator on an interim basis. A committee for a permanent superintendent has been formed and a new superintendent should be selected soon.

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!



BEFORE RESTRUCTURING- WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS

The pending loss of stimulus dollars means that Florida A&M University (FAMU) must now join the other State University System of Florida (SUS) institutions that are streamlining their bottom line and becoming more efficient. According to President James Ammons, President Barack Obama's Recovery and Reinvestment Act monies permitted FAMU to save 347 full- and part-time jobs, including adjunct faculty and overloads for our regular full-time faculty.

With 78 percent of FAMU's budget going to salaries, cutting salaries may be the first option for FAMU to alleviate our money woes. Therefore, prior to acceptance of the impending restructuring process, each and every faculty member must READ the current collective bargaining agreement and understand their rights under this agreement.

According to the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the selection of employees in the layoff unit to be laid off will be determined as follows:

- (a) No tenured/ permanent status employee shall be laid off if there are non-tenured/ non-permanent status employees in the layoff unit.
- (b) No employee in a non-tenured/non-permanent status position in the layoff unit with more than five (5) years of continuous university service shall be laid off if there are any such employees with five (5) years or less service.

Finally, when employees are equally qualified under (a) or (b) above, those employees will be retained who, in the judgment of the University, best will contribute to the mission and purpose of the institution.

Remember that on November 5, 2010, in a decision on an arbitration between Florida State University and the United Faculty of Florida, the arbitrator decided in a 83-page decision "that the only reason the university had declared certain departments "suspended" was "to allow the effective layoff of all faculty and the selective recall of certain faculty," apparently for the sake of creating a subterfuge to avoid having to comply with a contractual requirement that it lay off tenured faculty members last. The arbitrator characterized the reasoning used by a dean in eliminating one faculty member's job as "arbitrary, capricious, and unreasonable."



Benefits of Union



Employer and employees both benefit by becoming unionized. Consider some of the reasons:

Union workers get higher pay and better benefits

Unions create safer workplace

Unions have great pension plans

All these benefits are important, but the one that stands out is the benefit of belonging. Being a union member, and belonging to an organization that is focused on making life better, inspires pride that is well earned.



WE STILL NEED YOU !!!!!!!

We are always looking for representatives from colleges and schools to represent and serve as liaisons. If you are interested in becoming a member of this dynamic team, please contact Patricia Youmans at patmilton@msn.com.

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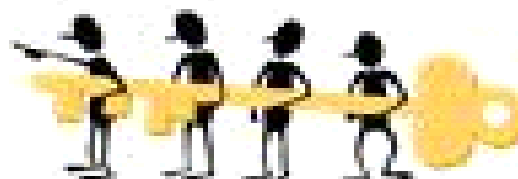
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Collective Bargaining?



Faculty Negotiations

The Faculty Collective Bargaining Team consisted 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. A joint administration-UFF committee is being developed to formulate specific policy to implement the agreement regarding right to first refusal. UFF-FAMU and FAMU administration will re-convene to negotiate re-openers in the spring of 2011.

Ratification by faculty is expected to occur in mid-February. We will keep you posted as dates are finalized. We are awaiting the final negotiation session to sign the final articles.



DRS Negotiations

The DRS Collective Bargaining Team consisted of :

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Elizabeth Davenport
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Sylvester Peck
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The faculty members from the Developmental Research School (DRS) have decided to go to impasse after the administration failed to accept a salary schedule. One of the top DRS goals of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) was the elimination of salary inequities at the school, a predominantly African American School, with a predominantly African American faculty on the campus of an Historically Black College and University (HBCU). It is the only school district in the State of Florida that does not have a way to reward faculty for their commitment to education. The faculty believed that it is always easy to dismiss and minimize the importance of the school through the "That will do" philosophy (whatever we do for it, that will do).

It was the faculty's belief that due to the administration's offer of \$1,000 per faculty member (\$41K), the non-filling of the secondary principal's position (~\$75K,) and other disclosures, the University and FAMU DRS are in a great position today to eliminate the current inequities. The faculty also believes that we should not accept the \$1,000 added across the board to the base because they believed that accepting the raise in that way would simply magnify and multiply the inequity problems at the school..

We are currently waiting for Administration responses to the final articles and a proposal regarding earmarked monies to be paid to the Staff according to its specifications. We will keep you posted as dates are finalized and as developments occur.



Think you're protected against layoffs? Think again.



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, and Send Application to patricia.youmans@fam.u.edu



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 and 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.

Signature (for payroll deduction authorization)

Today's Date

Membership is in your best interest