FAC Meeting Minutes

January 6, 2012

Steve Sargent requested a meeting with the FAC to discuss recent developments with the Fifield Hall Business Hub. He also invited Kevin Folta, Andrew Hanson and Mark Settles.

In attendance: Steve Sargent, Chris Chase, Rebecca Darnell, Danielle Treadwell, and via invitation Kevin Folta and Andrew Hanson

Business Hub Planning Review

A. Steve Sargent reviewed activities regarding the Hub Initiative with the group.

1. Prior to the holiday break, Steve discussed the implementation of the Fifield Hub at the monthly chairs meeting on December 19. Questions arose as to the implementation process, particularly as to supervision of the hub manager (to be hired on our administrative assistant line). Steve shared the motions passed in the HS faculty meeting on Dec 12th with the chairs:
   
   Motion 1:
   While fully supporting the hub concept, the HS faculty asserts, under the approved shared governance procedures, the supervision of the hub employees will reside with the Fifield Chairs on a rotating basis.
   
   Motion 2:
   The control of departmental soft money is retained by the unit that accrues the funds.

The group decided to request a meeting with Joe Joyce to clarify this process which occurred on December 21. Due to the approaching holidays, only four chairs met with Joe Joyce. The group indicated their general agreement to the terms of the current proposal from Dr. Joyce and did not wish to pursue any additional changes to the plan.

2. Next, the group reviewed ideas the Fifield Hall chairs developed for space allocation. Under one plan, the chairs would remain in their current offices, but staff (excluding IT) would be relocated to new locations in the building. This plan will be shared with faculty and discussed as a group to determine its feasibility.

3. Steve explained that the cost of expendables from each staff member who would be in the hub was estimated by Browne and Morgan to be around $1100/year/staff member. Departments would be responsible for these costs. The actual amount, mechanism for payment and verifying accuracy is still in development.
B. Steve requested input from the faculty on what approach was best moving forward to ensure the needs were met of the faculty and staff. The group discussed the pros and cons of either accepting the current proposal from Dr. Joyce or to continue to attempt to resolve disagreements regarding the last 2 points. There was concern that the loss of rate will decrease HS options and flexibility responding to future budget reductions, and that the fee structure of the new hub will cost the HS Dept. more than our current administrative operating costs.

Steve explained that an outline of a Memorandum of Understanding was drafted by Mary Ann Morgan and Kim Browne and discussed with the Fifield chairs and Joe Joyce on January 3. The MOU is designed to define the communication infrastructure among Hub staff and administration, describe the fiscal responsibilities of departments vs. IFAS administration, space, etc. The group’s comments will be sent out by M. Morgan and Steve will share this with the faculty when he receives it.

Faculty will be updated on the events since holiday break during the faculty meeting January 9, 2012. In addition, the HS proposal for the Hub Initiative will be distributed to faculty as a reference.

C. Because of the complexity of the planning process, the group thought that Jack Payne may not be fully aware of the specific issues regarding the hub implementation and management. The group discussed the possibility of inviting him to a faculty meeting soon so that we can share our concerns with him in a non-confrontational manner as well as to convey our disappointment in the lack of adherence to shared governance throughout the planning process.