Meeting of the Horticultural Sciences Faculty and HOS Faculty Advisory Committee

January 4, 2011

In attendance: Zhao, Koch, Chase (Ch), Darnell, Treadwell, Olmstead (J), Zotarelli, Sargent, Brecht, Rathinasabapathi, Vallejos, Cline, Settles, Williamson, Hanson, Paul, Dittmar, Huber, Davies, McCarty, Chase (Ca) – attended by conference phone

The meeting of the FAC and faculty began at 1:00PM with the primary discussion focusing on the future need to recruit and hire a Department chair. The original agreement for a new Chair was that a national search was to begin April 2011, with the plan of having a new Chair in place July 2012.

Prior to this meeting (on December 7, 2010), the FAC met with Dan Cantliffe to discuss the timeline regarding the search for a new chair.

The FAC also scheduled a meeting with Dr. Jack Payne, IFAS SVP, for January 10, 2011, to discuss options available at this time regarding the search for a new department Chair.

The three options that the group thought were possible at this point were: 1) a national search beginning in April (as per the original letter of intent between Jimmy Cheek and Dan Cantliffe), 2) appointment of an interim Chair until the state budget is better, or 3) asking Dr. Cantliffe to remain in the position until the budget climate is better. It is unclear as to whether that role would be as chair or mentor to chair.

Discussion followed:

The faculty unanimously agreed that an interim chair was unacceptable, as it would put the department in a weak position going into an unknown, but likely gloomy, budget situation.

There was discussion as to whether it would be wise to wait on a national search because the unknown budget situation might dissuade potential candidates from applying. There was limited discussion on whether it was possible or desirable to conduct an internal search or elect a new chair internally. However, budgets are always unknown and therefore waiting on a budget resolution before conducting a national search was felt to be non-productive and delaying the inevitable. There was further discussion on what the department has to offer candidates in order to encourage excellent applicants. There was discussion on whether we wanted someone to come and be in administration only or to also run their own research program. Dr. Andrew Hanson moved that, if Jack Payne agrees, we start a national search on time – the motion was seconded by Dr. Mark Settles – there was no further discussion. A vote was held and all were in favor.

The FAC stated that after they meet with Dr. Payne they will inform the faculty of the outcome of the meeting.

Other Business

The members of the HOS departmental committees are finalized:

Academic Programs Committee: Kevin Folta, Mark Settles, Xin Zhao, Steve Sargent, and Rebecca Darnell.
Operations Committee: Dennis Brown, John Thomas, Donna Dyer, Bob Morris, Steve Sargent, Libby Rens, and Mike McCaffery.

Tenure and Promotion Committee: Rob Ferl, Jeff Brecht, Ken Cline, Bruce Schafer, and Karen Koch.

The FAC is meeting with the Academic Programs and Operations Committees on Friday, Jan 12 to give them their charge. The meeting with the T&P committee will be arranged.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:26pm.