The meeting started at 2:03pm.

1. Visit with Dean Teri Balser – Dr. Sargent welcomed Dr. Balser and gave her the floor. Dr. Balser wants to get around to all areas and meet the faculty and find out more about the departments and centers to learn about the teaching programs. She has a busy calendar, but always happy to take appointments. Faculty went around the room and introduced themselves and talked about their teaching and research programs. Dr. Balser wants a strategy to tell our story better, louder, and stronger. She has been working with the new communications director on who we are, what we do, and why we are here. She mentioned the budget decreases and the challenges to protect our excellence. There is always more and more to do, but we have to do it with less. One goal is to make academia and industry more aligned in order to maintain program relevance. She asked the faculty a question for discussion - How do we protect our capacity to teach at the level we have always done in the past, or more? Faculty then discussed a number of items with Dr. Balser.

   a. A previous study of the teaching faculty chaired by Eric Triplett. Dr. Balser was thankful for the survey reference, and made a note to contact Dr. Triplett.

   b. RCM funds are not well-understood by faculty, including some administration. Funds generated from student credit hours are more difficult to track in IFAS than other Colleges at UF. In IFAS, student credit hour funds can be estimated, but funds are deposited from various sources into one large account and traceability is difficult from that point on.

   c. Distance education is a popular subject with administration. Faculty are discussing who our teaching clientele really are – off-book vs. on-book – internet-delivered courses, etc. The faculty asked Dr. Balser her thoughts on DE, and what should and should not be online – to maximally contribute to education? Dr. Balser admitted she was trying to make sense of all the information and statistics from experts in that area to help guide future direction. She was looking for a balance of what needs to be taught online and what made sense delivered over the web. Faculty expressed some concern that DE courses may not be a high priority for courses that traditionally have relied on hands-on learning and group discussion, and other face-to-face teaching formats. We have been operating on a premise of program expansion and this has changed.

   d. The group then discussed the advantages and disadvantages of hiring postdocs versus graduate students. Students need to be educated for a broader job market. The deans are trying to figure out how to do the academic side of NSF, post docs, grad students, and development. Graduate students need intensive training, and to graduate in 2-5 years, depending on degree. For some programs it is difficult to argue in favor of graduate students when postdocs are much more productive. What makes sense to be supported departmentally and what does not? Students are begging for experience in teaching and need experience to get
jobs in the future. We all need to be finding ways to train them to teach well. The faculty discussed efficiencies in curriculum, and there was a short discussion about CALS and CLAS teaching biology together.

e. Dr. Balser asked if faculty would be interested in partnering with outside companies to prepare the students for jobs. Faculty believed this was a good idea because some students lack skills typically earned through external experiences. Many academically gifted students enroll in a program as undergrads and continue on through graduate school and therefore don’t have many opportunities for outside engagement. Faculty expressed concerns that the cost of graduate education may be outside of the comfort level of many of our industry partners. One faculty member commented that perhaps the cost of tuition is too great.

2. Fifield Hall Business Hub Update - Laurie Bell, the new HUB administrator, was introduced. She said it was nice to meet everyone and discussed her background. Most recently, Laurie came from physics. She does like working with people and she feels that she has the opportunity to work with a fine group of employees. They had their first official HUB meeting today. They plan to be organized and ready to roll by the middle of May or first of June. She announced the location of the fiscal office, the HR group and where everyone will be housed. She has now met one-on-one with all the HUB staff. They talked in generalities about who will do the work and how, etc. She said her door is open, to please come see her and talk about programs, etc. Right now there are three groups, which means three different methods and approaches to get the work done. She plans to use their skills and strengths to get this done the one best way possible. The question was asked - How much money is this going to save us? Laurie answered by saying, we want to work smarter, and we will see what happens. Better processes, some attrition. She is not sure how much money will be saved. Dr. Sargent offered that we did have input through the HS FAC, but communication from administration was limited. Much to the surprise of some of the faculty, it was announced that Wes is going to the HUB and another person named Adrian was also hired from the Department of Neurosurgery and she is one position level above Wes. Laurie is in Terrell Nell's office now – 1545 Fifield. The faculty thanked Laurie for coming and she left the meeting. The faculty continued with a short discussion on Lydia’s position and whether or not she will be retained. Another short discussion was held with regard to the renovation.

3. Update on Undergraduate and Graduate Curriculum Committees - The undergraduate committee is making their reports and recommendations now and hope that the report would be completed in May for faculty review. The adhoc EH-HS Graduate Committee has not met yet.

4. IFAS Faculty Council Update - Mercy Olmstead sent out the minutes from the faculty senate meeting. She discussed the recommendations for T&P that IFAS is suggesting and hopefully going forward with. She stated that without support from faculty senate nothing will happen. Much of this is slowly but surely moving forward. She discussed the changes in T&P and unions and what is happening. Dr. Cline said that he helped set up the task force in the Faculty Council and nothing has happened. We have been told that anything that has to go through the faculty senate will take a long time and maybe never even get done. She reviewed the discussions made by Joe Joyce. The faculty talked about the 3% contribution for retirement and the fact that the faculty are going to also lose their leave.
5. Discussion and vote of FAC by-laws change to Operations Committee -Danielle Treadwell presented proposed revisions to the HS By-laws. Due to the establishment of the HUB, the historical tradition of involving staff in HS committees needed revision since in the past the Operations committee has included HR and fiscal staff representatives. It appears that the only staff left in HS are Lisa Tomlinson and Curtis Smyder. (Note: HS IT staff also remain in HS.) The proposed language reflects that change. Additional changes included a notation that the Department Website Committee was recommended as a standing committee. The Safety Committee and Space Committee are new committees suggested for inclusion as ad hoc committees under the Operations Committee. Ad hoc committees are dynamic and do not need to be in the bylaws, but were included as examples. After discussion, Karen Koch moved to accept the change as written, it was questioned by Dr. Brecht, and then after more discussion, was seconded by Saba Rathinasabapathi, there was no further discussion and a vote was held. All were in favor – No opposing votes. A second vote was held to take out items A-D. Dr. Darnell moved to accept, Karen Koch seconded the motion and a vote was held. All were in favor – no opposing votes.

6. Dr. Brecht discussed the new wording for the courtesy faculty appointments section in the HS By-laws. Wording was changed to reflect the request to provide a faculty seminar as well as provide evidence of an HS faculty sponsor. They discussed the recent vote for Osman Gutierrez and wanted to know if they should follow the old rules or the new rules. Dr. Chaparro, as his faculty sponsor, discussed the reasoning behind this request and informed the faculty that Gutierrez will provide a seminar, so either old or new he would qualify for a courtesy appointment. Dr. Brecht moved to insert the wording as is, Dr. Treadwell seconded the motion. A vote was held and all were in favor – no opposing votes. Faculty were reminded to vote for Dr. Gutierrez’s nomination.

7. Other Items - Sargent said that each unit leader was asked to come up with plans for a 3%, 5%, and 7% percent decreases in the teaching area. He suggested that Fred Davies position would be our contribution. Salary and teaching FTE’s were discussed briefly and it was mentioned that Dean Balser no longer wants faculty to report 5% teaching commitments for graduate student mentoring alone. – The faculty thought more discussion and explanation was needed.

8. HS Chair Search Update – Dr. Sargent, being a candidate for this position, left the room during this discussion. An update was then given on the current HOS Chair Search. Dr. Jerry Bennett replaces Maria Gallo as Chair. Dr. Gallo has been hired as a Dean at the University of Hawaii. So far, seven people have applied for the position and the group is going to meet to discuss the applications soon. It was asked if anyone can see the materials online for ALL applicants, or just the committee. Dr. Hanson volunteered to get the answer to that question. The position is still open and additional applicants are encouraged to apply.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:07PM