Minutes of December 10, 2003

Members Attending: Shelia Bradley, Sid Harris, Ron Henry, Hugh Hudson, Fenwick Huss, Fred Jacobs, Susan Kelley, Jerry Rackliffe

Others Attending: Ron Colarusso, Chuck Derby, Bill Fritz, Charlene Hurt, Steve Kaminshine, Robert Moore, Edgar Torbert

Minutes of November 19 were approved as presented.

Mr. Rackliffe reported state revenues were up only 3.3% for November, which was prompting OPB to look for creative ways to balance the state budget without further cuts to state agencies. He cautioned that even so, additional cuts of 0.5% or 1% were a possibility, and urged continuing the 1% holdbacks in budget units as a cushion.

Dr. Henry opened discussion of the document, “Appendix 1: Quality, centrality, viability, and comparative advantage of programs, centers, and activities; December 8, 2003”. He called attention to changes incorporated as a result of discussion by the Strategic Planning Subcommittee on December 8, including clarification of administrative and support unit activities and a process change for appointment of faculty and administrator teams by the Strategic Planning Subcommittee rather than FACP for examination of programs and centers. He also reviewed the revised timeline relative to actions by the Deans’ Group, the Strategic Planning Subcommittee, and FACP.

Dr. Kaminshine commented on potential conflicts between the Strategic Planning Subcommittee and FACP with the faculty and administrative teams reporting to both. Dr. Henry answered that FACP would ultimately make recommendations to the President.

Dr. Henry handed out a revised document, “Appendix 2: RFP--Potential areas of focus; December 8, 2003”. He noted changes following discussion with the Strategic Planning Subcommittee and the Deans’ Group, in particular the addition of a pre-proposal round. He outlined the process with pre-proposals due February 6, invitations for full proposals out by February 20, and full proposals due March 19. He explained that the schedule assumed a third week of April decision by the Board of Regents on the FY2005 budget.

Dr. Jacobs asked if the pre-proposal would have less information (fewer points or less on each point). Dr. Henry replied that the pre-proposals would be 3 pages. He handed out copies of the first page of the document, “Draft 2, Guidelines for area of focus pre-proposals and proposals, December 2003”. Dr. Jacobs asked if the point was to save time. Dr. Henry responded that the intent was to avoid the problem of having 15-20 proposals turned down after a lot of work. He noted the pre-proposal approach worked well for NSF grant programs.

Dr. Kaminshine asked about flexibility in the number of awards in the event more than 5 proposals were outstanding. Dr. Henry indicated such a situation would be addressed. Dr. Kaminshine asked about notation of links between separate proposals. Dr. Henry responded that the comments on the pre-proposals might suggest merging components at the proposal stage.
Dr. Henry asked for the sense of the membership regarding the pre-proposal approach. Dr. Harris responded that the approach seemed good and asked if the first two paragraphs of the “Appendix 2” document would guide selection of pre-proposals for follow-up proposals. Dr. Henry answered affirmatively and added that the intent was to guide proposals toward addition of tenured track faculty positions and increased graduate student support. Dr. Derby suggested adding similar statements to the RFP. Dr. Henry replied that this was covered in the RFP, and would be added to the “Guidelines” document.

Dr. Harris asked about the dollar level for proposals and the status of action plan commitments. Dr. Henry responded that the RFP stated there would be balanced investments in areas of focus, action plans from academic program reviews and administrative/support unit reviews, graduate student support, credit hour production, and infrastructure. He projected $10M plus any new funds for allocation to these purposes with 3-4 areas of focus of $2M-4M each.

Dr. Jacobs asked about external partners in areas of focus proposals. Dr. Henry replied that the intent was to allow such, and that this would be added to the “Guidelines” document. Dr. Huss pointed out that there could be either existing or new partners for such proposals.

Dr. Harris asked whether whole-college proposals were precluded. Dr. Henry responded that whole-college or cross-college proposals could be submitted and emphasized the guidelines and RFP were not prescriptive. Dr. Harris commented that US News & World Report and the Florida Center did not reward cross-college endeavors.

Dr. Hudson requested further clarification of where the areas of focus would fit with the action plans, etc. in the balance of investments. Dr. Henry noted some action plans may address pieces of areas of focus. He added that the more things that can be done, the better.

Dr. Derby advised that the RFP should include the names of faculty, not just numbers. Dr. Kaminshine suggested this be held until the proposal stage given the limitation of only three pages. Dr. Derby termed the information critical. Dr. Henry acknowledged listing of key players would be useful, and indicated there could be an appendix with this information.

Dr. Henry shifted discussion to the composition of the evaluation committee to review the pre-proposals. He proposed a committee of one representative each from the mathematics and natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities and fine arts sectors of Arts and Sciences and one representative from each of the other colleges. He noted the need for these representatives to recuse themselves in the event they have pre-proposals and the need for them to be available for the relatively narrow time slot of the reviews.

Dr. Harris objected to the committee as proposed, and recommended that FACP serve as the evaluation committee. Dr. Henry pointed out that FACP did not have representatives from all the colleges in its elected membership. He added that the proposed committee would hopefully be experts who would have campus-wide credibility.

Dr. Moore commented that the pre-proposals for areas of focus would differ from those from NSF in that they would not require highly specialized knowledge for review. Dr. Hudson spoke for the inclusion of the three representatives from Arts and Sciences in light of the percentage of university...
programs located in Arts and Sciences. He called for trust as colleagues and noted sequential FACP participation in the process.

Dr. Huss asked if the evaluation committee would recommend to FACP which pre-proposals would be selected for full proposals. Dr. Henry replied that the evaluation committee would make these decisions. Dr. Derby observed that FACP was not designed for making programmatic decisions of this type. Dr. Harris responded that nevertheless FACP would eventually decide on the funding. He suggested FACP should sit in on the discussions by the evaluation committee in order to hear their rationale. Dr. Derby noted that NSF and NIH separated academic reviews from administrative, and urged the same in this case.

Dr. Harris stated that the evaluation committee would not be an independent panel as in the case of NSF or NIH, with members more likely to represent the interests of their own units. Dr. Henry expressed confidence the committee members would have a university perspective and stand above their own colleges to look at the best interest of the university. Dr. Derby pointed out that a significant number of the proposals would be inter-college, and Dr. Hudson added this was in fact a major consideration.

Dr. Harris advocated limiting the number of proposals from each college. Dr. Moore cautioned that a limit would discourage inter-college proposals. Dr. Harris responded that the tenure-track faculty emphasis discouraged inter-college proposals. He reiterated his objection to a separate evaluation committee. Dr. Hudson observed FACP was not empowered to look at programs rather than budgets. Dr. Kaminshine commented that the Student Technology Fee Committee faced similar concerns early on but evolved to a university perspective in making its funding recommendations to FACP, but voiced understanding of the instincts behind the objections. He suggested that the chair of the evaluation committee present the rationale of their recommendations to FACP and then have FACP make the final decisions.

Dr. Huss noted that third-party review processes typically have weights assigned to the guidelines with score sheets available for understanding their determinations. He urged incorporation of such in the “RFP” document. Dr. Harris concurred with this suggestion and added that anxiety would also be lowered if the members of the evaluation committee had the best records at the university, not just the most active in the Senate.

Dr. Huss suggested adding a member to the evaluation committee from External Affairs who could provide insights on taking advantage of the Atlanta location. Dr. Harris repeated his preference that FACP members attend the meetings of the evaluation committee. Dr. Henry commented that opening the meetings would be the most effective way of politicizing the process.

Dr. Derby suggested 2-3 pages of explanation from the evaluation committee on its recommendations. Dr. Kelley asked if the consensus was now to have the recommendations of the evaluation committee at both the pre-proposal and proposal stages sent to FACP. Dr. Henry indicated this was the case.

Ms. Hurt commented that having a separate evaluation committee would spread the workload. Dr. Harris injected that the issue was how the evaluation committee would conduct itself. Dr. Henry projected that the committee would divide up the proposals for detailed review, and then look at all
of them as a committee. Dr. Harris asked about the anticipated number of proposals. Dr. Henry responded there would likely be 8-9.

Dr. Harris offered a counter-proposal to add one additional representative on the evaluation committee from the Robinson College of Business. Dr. Kaminshine spoke favorably of adding someone from External Affairs. Dr. Henry replied that the legislative session would make participation by Mr. Lewis impossible. Dr. Kaminshine then suggested representation from the Library instead. Dr. Harris advocated an odd number for the size of the committee. Dr. Henry expressed doubt there would be 5-5 votes to resolve.

Dr. Harris again spoke for opening the evaluation committee meetings to members of FACP. Dr. Derby commented that the FACP would be involved in receiving the recommendations. Dr. Huss characterized FACP members as observers rather than participants in the evaluation committee discussions. Dr. Kelley supported allowing FACP members to observe and added that half of the people attending FACP meetings were non-members who participated in FACP discussions. Dr. Hudson commented that no member of FACP should be on the evaluation committee.

Dr. Harris urged that “top guns” be appointed to the evaluation committee. Dr. Kelley injected that “big picture” people were needed as well as top scholars. Dr. Hudson commented that the deans should be trusted to appoint the right kind of representatives. Dr. Harris emphasized that top scholars would resonate to the principles of the guidelines.

Dr. Jacobs pointed out that FACP was the permanent committee and that it was important that the process suit the members of FACP, no matter how bizarre. Dr. Kaminshine noted the perceived discrimination between big colleges and little colleges, which the multiple-representative format would engender. Dr. Henry responded that 45% of the university faculty are in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Dr. Huss suggested that the deans of the four smaller colleges elect an additional member for the evaluation committee with a membership of 3 from Arts and Sciences, 2 from Business, 1 each from the other colleges, the University Librarian, and the one elected. Dr. Kaminshine commented that the representation for Arts and Sciences reflected the college as an amalgam rather than proportionality. Dr. Moore commented that Policy Studies was also an amalgam. Dr. Harris commented that Business was also an amalgam. Dr. Kaminshine responded that Arts and Sciences was often split at other institutions.

Dr. Kelley spoke in favor of the original proposal for 3 members from Arts and Sciences and one each from the other colleges. Dr. Harris countered with the addition of the one elected member as proposed by Dr. Huss. He stressed the need to have the representation right so people feel good on the front end of the process.

Dr. Kelley made a motion to have the membership of the evaluation committee consist of 3 from Arts and Sciences, 1 each from the other colleges, and the University Librarian. Dr. Hudson seconded the motion.

Dr. Harris requested acceptance of amendment to motion to include 2 members elected by the deans of the 4 smaller colleges. Dr. Kelley stated she would accept 1 elected member. Dr. Harris
spoke of the potential for bringing greater balance. Ms. Bradley spoke for having 1 member from each college. Dr. Colarusso spoke for the committee as originally proposed. Dr. Harris agreed to accept one additional elected member. Dr. Moore spoke for the original proposal. Dr. Harris withdrew his amendment. The motion passed 5-3.

Dr. Henry clarified the evaluation committee would send its pre-proposal recommendations to FACP for final decision. He reported the annual meeting with Board of Regents staff regarding the budget for the following year would be held January 15. He also reported guidelines to vice presidential units and the colleges concerning the 90%/10% cuts/funding requests would be sent shortly. Ms. Hurt asked if the Library would be included. Dr. Henry replied it would. He reiterated that administrative and support units would be included, not academic programs. Ms. Bradley asked if Senate Budget Committee recommendations had been incorporated. Dr. Henry indicated this was the case.

Prepared by Edgar Torbert
Approved January 14, 2004