

**RE: Library Faculty Assembly Response to the University of Florida Faculty Senate Budget Council Survey Regarding Budget Activities as Part of a Resolution Passed by the Faculty Senate in April of 2007.**

September 27, 2007

TO: Allen Wysocki, Chair, Budget Council, University of Florida Faculty Senate  
FROM: Joe Aufmuth, Chair, Library Faculty Assembly

Dear Allen and Council members,

On behalf of the Library Faculty Assembly (LFA) the survey comments that follow are respectfully submitted.

As you may know UF libraries really consist of 3 Libraries with 3 separate budgets and funding sources. The main campus libraries, or George A. Smather's Libraries (Smathers) are covered under the Provost, the Health Science Center Libraries (HSCL) are under the Senior Vice President for Health Affairs, and the Lawton Chiles Legal Information Center (LAW) is covered by the College of Law. While LFA is composed of librarians from all libraries and we try to address issues common to all librarians and libraries, the budgetary divide makes it difficult to have a common process for budget input and review. As shared faculty governance is new, we are working together with the administrations on the process. To remain fair to our common goals with administration, we did our best to answer the survey in a manner that reflects our new shared governance beginning and a cooperative spirit in achieving budget transparency.

When I received a copy of the survey, I crafted an initial response. The response was sent to Dean of Libraries Judith Russell, Interim HSCL Director Beth Layton and Law Director Kathleen Price. Responses from Dean Russell and Director Layton were received and are included in our report. Additionally, the initial response and Dean Russell's comments were discussed at a September 17<sup>th</sup> meeting of the LFA. Some comments were received from faculty at the LFA meeting. Lastly, an email message was sent to all library faculty asking for their comments. I have incorporated the comments I have received in this response.

Specifically in regards to the survey our LFA response is as follows:

1) Describe how faculty and staff are involved in budgeting processes in your college, focusing on procedures assuring timely review and input, and the entities involved in fulfilling the review function.

Traditionally no one in any of the libraries, outside of senior administration and financially related personnel, are involved in the entire budgeting process. Additionally there are no written procedures in either, Smathers, Health, or Law for timely faculty or staff review and input to the budgeting process. However, Faculty are aware that there are historic library committees in various areas of the library involved in the distribution of monies in Smathers, namely mini-grants, travel, and collections management. We also understand that there is a written travel distribution policy for HSCL. According to faculty responses received at the September LFA meeting, traditionally there is a disconnect between recommendations made by library committees in various budgetary related areas and the final decisions made by library

administration. More importantly, faculty felt that while they might not have objected to the administrative decision, there was no communication about the reasons why the recommendations were not adopted. Since new library administrations are forming the faculty is looking forward to developing new traditions.

2) Describe plans in place to further this process especially its implementation at all unit levels.

While the Libraries have no written plans to further the process, I can whole heartedly say from our LFA discussions with all administrators that the new library administrators have expressed their commitment to work with LFA to develop a budgeting process that is transparent to all faculty and staff and which will have library faculty review and input in the future.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joe

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### **Response to Library Faculty Assembly Comments on the Faculty Senate Budget Survey from Dean of Libraries, Judith Russell**

As you know, this is my first year working through the budget process, and it is a rather unusual year with the budget cuts and hiring freeze. Past practice, while interesting, is not controlling on how we proceed with the budget this year and in the future.

I met with the provost yesterday and, as a result, I have asked Barbara Oliver to prepare a preliminary budget based on last year's budget less \$967,266 (our assigned reduction). The projected savings from the hiring freeze will be reflected in the appropriate salary and benefit categories. This budget reduction target is not in addition to the hiring freeze; it includes those savings, which were initially estimated at approximately \$500,000.

Our intention is to start with the actual expenditures in each budget category, reducing salaries and benefits by the savings from the hiring freeze and adding in identifiable costs for the staff reclassification and market equity adjustments, new hires, subscription and databases price increases, and other known changes, but without reducing the acquisitions budget. We need to see how close we can come to the established target with that methodology. Then we will know how much more we need to cut and/or how much we have available to reallocate.

We would certainly welcome recommendations from the Library Faculty Assembly for unnecessary expenditures that could be removed from the budget or cost savings measures that

could be implemented quickly to free up funds for other purposes. If you wish to develop recommendations on priorities for new spending, especially one time expenses, I would welcome those as well, but I do not know how much, if any, money will be available for new initiatives unless we can identify offsetting savings.

Meanwhile, as soon as we have a preliminary budget that meets, or at least come close to meeting, the target, I would be happy to meet with the LFA to share the data and discuss options and alternatives.

One complication in this entire process is that the university does not yet know the amount of appropriated funds that it will receive and whether or not there will be a tuition increase in the spring semester. Since we may find ourselves recalculating this budget several times before we actually have a final budget, it would be good to develop some contingency plans that will let us respond rapidly to requests for further reductions or opportunities to restore funding.

An additional concern, and a good reason for us to act quickly, is that we cannot resume hiring until we have an approved budget that meets this initial target and we can demonstrate that the funds for the positions are included in the budget as approved.

I suggest that even as we work through the rather awkward process for this year's budget, we also try to develop a plan for a more orderly and proactive process for consulting on the budget for next year. Clearly we will want to begin that process early in 2008, so we should be designing it now.

I would be happy to talk with you about this and welcome your thoughts about both the process and the substance of the library budget.

### **Response to Library Faculty Assembly Comments on the Faculty Senate Budget Survey from Interim Health Science Center Library Director Beth Layton**

1) Describe how faculty and staff are involved in budgeting processes in your college, focusing on procedures assuring timely review and input, and the entities involved in fulfilling the review function.

Most of the HSC Library money is spent in personnel and collections. Additionally money is spent on equipment, travel and supplies. At this time much of the input and monitoring of the budget is done by the Division Heads Group.

The Division Heads Group is made up of directors of each functional area. They represent reference and instruction, technical services, administration, access services, systems/information systems and the Borland Library (at Shands Jacksonville). The directors of reference and instruction, technical services, and the Borland Library (at Shands Jacksonville) are faculty. The Division Heads Group meets weekly for an hour.

The personnel budget is somewhat fixed. When there is a need for new staff or replacement of positions when staff leave, the Division Head for that functional area prepares a job description and brings it to the Division Head Group meeting for review. The Division Heads Group discusses the job description and the justification for the position with their respective groups. After approval by the Division Heads Group, the final decision regarding recruiting for new and replacement staff rests with the Library Director.

Decisions regarding spending for equipment including computers are usually made at the end of the fiscal year and are reviewed by the Division Head Group. Again, the Division Heads Group may get input from their respective groups before a final decision is made.

Each month the Division Heads Group receives and reviews budget reports. These reports outline each budget category, state the beginning balance, and display month-to-date expenditures. During a Division Heads Group meeting in early 2007, the accountant explained the budget summary.

2) Describe plans in place to further this process especially its implementation at all unit levels.

The HSC Libraries Faculty Assembly began meeting in April 2007. One of the goals for the current fiscal year is to clarify the role of the faculty assembly regarding the budget.