

## **U. of Florida Plans to Reduce Size of Several Departments**

By [ERIC HOOVER](#)

In an effort to reduce growing debts, the University of Florida intends to reduce the size of the faculty in five departments -- including English, philosophy, and religion -- and cut funds for graduate teaching assistants in those areas, according to a new five-year plan.

Florida expects about 80 of 780 faculty members in its College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to retire in the next three years, and the university plans to replace approximately 26 of them. Neil S. Sullivan, dean of the college and a professor of physics at Florida, said the move would help the college overcome a projected \$4.1-million deficit this year. The college has an annual budget of approximately \$98-million.

Mr. Sullivan said state support for the college had not kept pace with an overall growth in its enrollment. "There are many programs here that are strong and vibrant, and they will continue to go forward with strength," Mr. Sullivan said. "But within the college, there are programs where the amount of growth is not as much as it was a few years ago, and we have to realign and readjust."

According to Florida's five-year plan for the college, the university will cut the English department's budget for graduate students and adjunct faculty members by \$120,000, or 16 percent, by the 2010-11 academic year. The plan would reduce the number of full-time faculty members to 51 from 60 and shrink the number of graduate teaching assistants to 54 from 59.

The number of faculty members in the department of Germanic and Slavic studies would drop to 14 from 20, and funds for graduate students and adjuncts would shrink to zero from \$104,500 this year, according to the plan. The mathematics department would lose about six full-time faculty members and 10 graduate teaching assistants.

Under the plan, six departments -- biology, botany, chemistry, criminology, psychology, and zoology -- would receive increased funds for graduate teaching assistants and see a rise in full-time faculty members.

Mr. Sullivan told the college's faculty members about the plan at a meeting on Friday. "The immediate reaction from faculty was one of anger and surprise," said Robert B. Ray, an English professor. "Where the blame lies is difficult to assess at this point."

Mr. Ray said the news had prompted some professors to consider seeking jobs at other institutions. "This is potentially a reprise of Larry Summers and the humanities department," he said, referring to the former president of Harvard University, whose emphasis of so-called hard sciences over liberal-arts disciplines had angered many faculty members at that institution.