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A shameful act that will hurt UF

It's shameful that UF has decided to resolve the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences's outstanding debt by cutting professor and graduate student funding and jobs.

The college's 5-year plan, introduced by Dean Sullivan, negatively affects the students, the university's reputation, and the quality of a UF education.

As educational research has shown, students learn math, critical thinking, and writing skills better in smaller class sizes and with a more personalized teaching environment. Up to this point, the college offered these smaller classes with exceptional faculty/graduate student resources. With the proposed cuts, these "luxuries," as Dean Sullivan called them, are no longer tenable. Many classes will increase in size, significantly diminishing the amount of individual attention students receive throughout their education.

Moreover, the 5-year plan also sends a larger, contradictory message to the nation by impeding President Machen's desire to make UF a "top ten research school" and UF's support for faculty and graduate student research and teaching.

Any good administrator knows that the slightest hint of a problem can cause widespread faculty flight and result in a significant loss of quality graduate students.

Yet it's not the faculty or the graduate students who bear the greater brunt of these cuts; it's UF undergraduate students. Since the plan will chase away valuable faculty, increase class sizes and teaching loads, students will not experience the same outstanding education their parents, teachers, and leaders did.

Instead, UF's national ranking will drop, student admission criteria will be less rigorous, and the UF degree will lose its prestige, quality, and value, thus becoming "just another state school."
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