

Reasons to rethink the Five-Year Plan

- **A plan to cut teaching positions and programs in the University of Florida's largest college was instituted without proper consultation of faculty** and presents a direct affront to "shared governance," a concept in higher education that suggests all stakeholders should have a say in the direction of the university. Instead, the implementation of the Five Year Plan has made many faculty and graduate students feel that, to its detriment, **the process has been remarkably undemocratic, and its consequences have not been properly considered.**
- According to Dean Sullivan, while enrollment grew by some 5 percent overall at UF between 2002 and 2005, CLAS' enrollment increased at more than twice that rate, expanding by nearly 12 percent during that time. In turn, teaching loads exceeded what the college could handle, placing it in a hiring mode even as debts accumulated. **CLAS was forced to spend in order to meet the demands of incoming students!** Even UF Provost Janie Fouke, who has admitted no responsibility for the college's deficit or the Five Year Plan, has admitted that CLAS was probably underfunded in the first place.
- Despite these facts, President Machen insists that CLAS budget issues will not compromise the Strategic Work Plan, UF's guiding document, which outlines the university's plans to place UF among the nation's top universities. But the administration cannot hope to meet that goal if it persists in the irresponsible strategy outlined in the Five Year Plan. Nor can they reach that goal without moving forward on the crucial grad student to faculty ratio that the Five Year Plan will undermine in numerous departments. **This poorly considered Plan could negatively affect the value of every degree granted at UF – both graduate and undergraduate!**
- **The administration already knows that the slightest hint of a problem can cause widespread faculty flight and result in a significant loss of quality undergraduate and graduate students.** Who would want to apply to the University of Florida when they see our administrators fail to act quickly in response to the uncertainty and insecurity their Plan has caused? **This is a textbook example of bad management!**
- And what will our Alumni and donors say when they are asked to reinvest in this college? President Machen cannot expect goodwill to come out of this poorly managed and unjustifiable response to a **budget situation that is clearly a University issue -- not simply a CLAS one.**
- Indeed, the deficit has actually provided the opportunity for the CLAS administration to implement a strategic plan that has not been discussed openly and that **does not appear consistent with the Strategic Work Plan for the university,** which suggests that the graduate programs should be growing. Though President Machen and Dean Sullivan have suggested that the current plan represents a "balancing act" between departments that have been underfunded in the past, the language of the Five Year Plan suggests that this is a realignment of mission. The departmental cuts and increases are **a crafty form of ideological warfare that will affect the quality of education at the University of Florida.**

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