

Faculty Senate

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Date: May 25, 2007

To: Carol Murphy, Chair, Senate Policy Council on Academic Policy

From: Rick Yost, Chair, Faculty Senate

Re: Request to Review and Provide Advice Regarding Faculty-authored Course Materials

Over the course of the past year, your Council has identified a review of the University of Florida's longstanding conflict of interest policy concerning faculty-authored course materials as one of its priorities for the coming year.

I charge your Council to continue to review this policy, and to report at the next Faculty Senate meeting, on August 23. In reviewing this policy, I ask that your Council invite input and assistance from other faculty, either as contributors to the Council, or through the formation of an ad hoc committee or task force, as appropriate. I also request that you solicit input from others around campus, including representatives of the Provost's Office, the General Counsel's Office, student government, the UF Libraries, and the Office of Academic Technology.

In your deliberations, I ask that you review how other institutions across the country address this situation and what the most appropriate practices would be for UF. I also solicit your recommendations on how the current policy should be updated to address electronic course materials and electronic publishing.

While your Council is undertaking this review, I have asked that the Provost, Deans, and Chairs support your efforts by ensuring that the current policy is implemented as carefully as possible. Deans and Chairs have been asked to forward a description of best practices to the Provost's Office to be shared with the Council in its deliberations.

Some issues that your Council should include in your review are procedures to verify that (1) faculty-authored course materials are made available to students in adequate quantities for free in the library, via the internet, or through other convenient means, and (2) that students who choose to use the free materials will be able to participate fully in all course opportunities (including extra credit). You should also address specifically rules for handling royalty income that faculty authors may generate for materials used at UF, while assuring that faculty retain their right under academic freedom to select the instructional materials they will use in their courses.

I appreciate your willingness to address this important issue. Please keep me informed of what support you need to fulfill this charge. The Senate will await your report.