

## **CALSFA Meeting Minutes for October 18, 2011**

Attendees: Dean Alan Grant (guest), Joe Guthrie, Holly Scoggins, Renee Boyer, Erik Ervin, Theo Dillaha (guest) and Achla Marathe

The meeting started at 8:35am.

### **Update from the Dean:**

Dean Grant said that the college will contribute \$500 and the departments will contribute a total of \$1500 (collected based on the number of faculty members) towards the CALS-FA funds. The college contribution would be designated for one of the two annual Teaching Excellence Awards.

Regarding strategic planning, four working groups, one each for teaching, learning, research and extension have been formed. The dean will meet with each of the working groups. In January 2012 listening sessions will be arranged to get input from all stakeholders, internal and external. Websites will be set up to facilitate input from the external stakeholders.

The Extension document from the Secretary is expected today/this week.

### **South Sudan Books Project**

Dr. Theo Dillaha came to the meeting to provide more information about the South Sudan Books project. Margaret Marrill is leading the project. The books and journals are being collected to benefit two universities: *University of Juba*, which is the public university in the South Sudan; and *Catholic University of South Sudan*, which is a new university. Due to the space limitations, the journals are only being collected for year 2000 and later.

The project needs volunteers to help with boxing the books, moving them and cataloging them. Currently students from *Engineers without Borders* are the main volunteers. Theo is trying to arrange students from the Agronomy Club to help also. CALSFA offered to spread the word around regarding volunteers and arrange more help.

Theo talked about some interesting cultural issues regarding the people and cattle in Sudan. He offered to have the donated books be sent to his office. Other than books and recent journals, the project is also expected to benefit from textbooks, computers and other educational equipment. Faculty may encourage their students to donate the textbooks rather than sell them back to the bookstore at a nominal price.

There is funding available to increase involvement of VT faculty in this work. Theo wants to spread the word among faculty members, encourage them to visit Sudan, accompany him on trips to Sudan, and offer courses in the above universities. Collaborative research is possible in fields of agricultural science, animal science, fisheries, forestry, geology, crop science, soil science etc.

Joe suggested that Holly make a draft of the mail briefing this project that can be circulated among the CALS faculty members. The mail will have action items for the faculty members, a time line, place to send the books etc. Theo will help gather this information.

Holly gave Achla a folder containing past bank statements, a chequebook, and extra cheques.

The meeting ended at 9:40am. The next meeting is scheduled for Dec. 7 at 8:30am.

*Prepared by Achla Marathe*