

Honors Discussion Panel: Public Meeting
Thursday, October 30, X-period
Mashburn Hall

Transcription of Taped Proceedings

Tammy Benson

We are here to discuss the Honors College position paper that was submitted to the Faculty Senate. We appreciate the presence of each and every one of you and your concerns for this issue. We are taping the proceedings today, and they will be transcribed and posted on our URSA website.

Let me introduce the panel members: I'm Tammy Benson from the College of Education; we also have Phillip Anderson from the College of Liberal Arts; Brian Bolter, College of Health and Behavioral Sciences; Steve Butcher, College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics; Margaret Morgan, College of Fine Arts and Communication; Michael Rubach, College of Business; and Rick Scott, Director of the Honors College; Dr. Kurt Boniecki is also with us today, he is president of the Faculty Senate as you all know, he is also chair of the Faculty Handbook Committee, and he is available to address any concerns concerning the Faculty Handbook. I would also like to recognize Dr. Stephanie Huffman, who served diligently on this committee until about three weeks ago when she had to resign due to family illness. I was happy to replace her but I also wanted to make you aware that she has worked very hard as has every committee member who is seated at the table today.

These committee members have spent much time and energy working through this proposal, sorting through the various pros and cons of the issues, and seeking for compromise and solutions that would guide this university forward.

Brian Bolter is now going to take a few minutes to explain how this committee came to be and what our roles have been.

Brian Bolter

Thank you. First I'm going to talk a little bit about the charge of the committee. The committee was charged to discuss the future status of the Honors College at UCA with an emphasis on whether or not Honors should be allowed to hire and tenure faculty members who are otherwise unaffiliated with academic departments at UCA – that was the general charge of the committee and that's what we set out to do. To meet that end I will give you a little bit of background of the situation and how it came into being and try to emphasize a few of the issues that were important to the Honors College and the faculty as a whole.

First, the people on this committee were elected through college elections, they were hard fought elections. I was able to win my election with a 30 minute infomercial last night – uh I don't know if you saw that, I tried to get that through so faculty could get votes – in a very heated election we were all able to squeak out victories. Actually if you look at the make up of this faculty, you can see it is – uh I don't know if I want to use "experienced," or "older" faculty members – but it's faculty members who have a deep concern about the issues of tenure at the university. Most of the people up here have been through the tenure battles and the censurship of the university by AAUP people in the audience, Mike Scoles, Mike Schaefer, Rusty Rogers, were all also involved in those wars. And I use the term "war" with reason because they were battles that the faculty had to take in order to preserve tenure. So this situation with the Honors College is really a long story that took place earlier about 15 years ago in

which the university consciously made an assault on tenure. It was the stated intention of the administration to move toward the elimination of tenure, which is kind of troubling to many faculty members to say the least. The background of education in this country has been tenured. We have the most admired university system in the world precisely because of our academic freedoms. We are not interrupted by the administration or the outside world to meet the goals and ends of our personal and professional lives. So the university set out to move away from tenure to eliminate it and to disable the tenure structure. To this end, they developed a contract called Policy 302. Policy 302 was a rolling five-year contract in which a faculty member could choose not to go into a tenure-track program but go into a rolling five-year contract in which they would, as long as their performance was deemed satisfactory, they would get another year on their contract so they would always have a five-year contract. There was no need to do research, no need to do service, you were merely going to roll over if you were deemed adequate by your department chair. No peer review, none of the basic functions of tenure were implied in your contract. To further make this contract attractive to mostly young faculty, the university guaranteed summer employment with the idea that would give you a ___% pay increase as an incentive. So these faculty members were not only not moved towards tenure line position, but there was also a financial incentive to eliminate or reduce the tenure at the university. Many faculty members around the university chose this, including several members within the Honors College.

The Honors College when it began was never designed or intended to have a tenured faculty. The use of faculty from other departments was the design. If it were going to have tenured faculty members, it would have been designed completely differently, the faculty review process would have been different. But it was never the intention of the university to have tenured faculty within its Honors College. When the 302 contracts were offered, several members of the honors faculty chose the 302 contract.

The university AAUP then moved toward the censureship of the university. A review of the university's policies, its treatment of its faculty took place and ultimately the university was placed on AAUP censure. This was done with great thought by the people at AAUP and with great reason and cause. It is a terrible thing for a university to be on censure, it really indicates the anti-intellectual thoughts of its administration and the other university's that are on that black list are not ones that we would like to be associated with and very very few public institutions would be moved toward censureship, most of them are private institutions with ideologies that are not open or flexible in terms of their academic understandings.

So we are at a place now in which these faculty members have taken these contracts, we are on censureship and we need to move off of censureship. When the Thompson administration left and the Hardin administration came in, it was a stated goal of this administration to move the university off censure. And they moved diligently and with post haste towards that goal. The negotiations took place. A number of individual contracts were reviewed and a number of changes were made to the university handbook. The outcome is that we have at this point what AAUP believes to be one of the strongest Faculty Handbooks in the country if not the strongest Faculty Handbook in the country and much of the thanks can be given to Mike Schaefer, Rusty, Mike, and Becky Williams, who is retired but was a formidable opponent to the Thompson administration and was able to get in language that allows faculty to really preserve tenure and academic freedom at the university.

So now we have a situation where we have faculty members in the Honors College who are on long-term contracts, but not tenure-track contracts. So as part of that negotiation, the university and the Faculty Senate allowed these individuals to move their contracts into tenure-track contracts. This was done with great deliberation and considerable pain to the faculty because the only reason that we did

this was because we recognized that these individuals did nothing wrong and they were put into a difficult situation and we didn't want to hurt these individuals. So now we have a situation in which we have tenure-track individuals into a structure that was never intended to be tenure track. No department, no college, all sorts of difficulties in terms of our new handbook situation. The Faculty Senate met, we put in a sunset provision that froze these positions and said we are no longer going to allow tenure track into the Honors College and we would take and review the situation at a later date. Well, this is the later date and we have reached this point in which this faculty committee was put together to look at a situation of unfairness to lots of people.

Unfairness to the members of the Honors College who have gone through their own tenure process who are now long-term members of the university but with no new people coming in, no additional faculty members to help to mentor to provide peer review within that department. They are marginalized in many ways because of their situation.

An unfairness to the rest of the faculty because the Faculty Handbook with considerable pride from a lot of people, has provisions that we want to keep and maintain, so we are at a situation where we need to deal with the messiness of past administrations, and continue to deal fairly with the Honors College.

With that being said, that's the place we are now. This committee was put together with the charge from Dr. Boniecki, a list of procedures that was put on-line, and the first part of that procedure was a position paper authored by Rick Scott in the Honors College to try to move us towards a reasonable end. Period. Thank you.

Tammy Benson

Thank you. And now Rick Scott, Director of the Honors College, will give us an overview of the Honors College proposal and tell us a little about the history of the proposal and what brought it to this point.

Rick Scott

We were in 1995-1996 teaching at about 165 or 170 students in the Honors College spread over four years offering gen ed courses and a minor. We were teaching probably 12 sections of honors courses at that point. Norb Schedler was the full time director and he was teaching two or three – he was teaching about probably five or six courses a year of those sections. And I was, I had just become full time assistant director in the Honors College or associate director that year and so I was teaching a four/four load in the Honors College at that point having left my position in the Department of Sociology. So between us we were able to cover some portion of those courses -- a substantial portion of those courses really or sections. But we were and had been for a long time borrowing faculty from departments around campus. That was the model, that there were a couple of core faculty members and then borrowed faculty who would cycle in and out.

We were given the charge that year by the Thompson administration to grow the enrollment in the Honors College. There was planned growth, a kind of enrollment management plan was put into place to grow the Honors College to about 500 students. And so that was a virtual tripling of the number. We had tried to grow the Honors College in the early 90's from a prior charge from that administration, and no resources followed. And so we revolted against growing it, and stopped growing it, and took smaller classes in because we couldn't do it without resources.

This time, the resources were promised and they began to deliver in terms of money and so on. And so we were really trying to make sure that we could keep the student/teacher ratio to about 12: to 15:1 or

something like that. What that meant, of course, is that over the coming years we increased 12 sections a semester to 24 to 30 as we began to acquire more students.

By 10 years ago, we were preparing for the accreditation visit that took place in 2000, and so I was working on the self-study. And in answering one of the questions there, "What do you need 10 years hence to be sustainable in your program?" I put down we could use some core faculty. And the reason is that we would contact the department chair in many cases and make an arrangement to borrow a faculty member outside the Honors College and in some percentage of those cases, the arrangement would be contingent on the needs of the department -- understandably. And, what we were running into by 1998 was a frequent occurrence where the department would need to pull back the person, not lend them to us, at the last minute. So we found ourselves in a situation that we had to get our schedule up and running. They are all topical seminars, they are not courses that could be, you know, honors students sign up for a faculty member teaching a certain topic, so substituting a faculty member is a pretty difficult thing to do at the last minute. And what it meant is that we were relying on adjunct faculty I thought far too often. That was part of the motive.

We were given permission to teach, actually the first permission we were given we asked for tenure-track faculty, we didn't get it. And we got permission to offer non-tenure-track, one-year, renewable positions -- that was the first thing we were able to do. We searched in 1998-1999 and hired one faculty member, Donna Bowman, who's been here since. And then, I don't remember what year it was, but it was the following year, her position was converted to the kind of position Brian was describing, Policy 302. Her position was a little different than the one Brian describes in that it was a three-year rolling, not a five-year rolling, and she didn't have the option of being tenure-track somewhere else and teaching in honors. It wasn't a choice she made, that was the assignment.

We were then given more positions, more slots to search for so we did national searches. And, again, the faculty that we hired in 2001 didn't have the choice of taking a Policy 302 or a tenure-track position in some department. They could take the Policy 302 or nothing at all. And those were three-year rolling positions, they weren't the five-year at that point. So, as we assembled a faculty with those constraints, we were better able to meet the practical demand of staffing those courses. We were still borrowing faculty at a rate of 25-30% or even 40% of the courses that we taught. So the principle of circulating faculty through the Honors College, which has always been part of the goal of having our courses integrated with faculty throughout campus was still there, but we were able to staff the increasing number of sections.

By 2003, we hit our new target of around 500 students, and since then we have been offering about 42 to 44 sections a semester. So you can see what the need has been. Of course, the precisely as Brian described, when UCA went off of AAUP censure, the faculty members who had been hired under the Policy 302 positions had the choice at that point whether they wanted to stay on those positions or become tenure track. All of the honors faculty chose to become tenure track.

At that point they set about developing promotion and tenure criteria. They turned to various sources including the departments in the College of Liberal Arts, most of the faculty being from the liberal arts areas. We turned to other honors colleges and programs around the United States that had tenure line faculty. In 2003, there were about five or six -- just went to the National Collegiate Honors Council annual conference in San Antonio last week, and one of my colleagues at Western Kentucky University, the dean of the Honors College there, they also have tenure track faculty, and he said there's 15 now but I don't have a list of them so I don't know how rapidly that model is emerging. But we turned to

some of the schools that had tenure for their honors faculty to try to get an idea of how to incorporate those elements, specifically Texas Tech and the University of New Mexico.

And so we built a set of promotion and tenure criteria and we turned to a third source, which was the UCA Torreyson Library. Some of the library faculty were in a similar situation and some of them declared following the handbook change as well. What we picked up from the library was an interim method of assembling a departmental committee until we had enough tenured faculty over time to be able to judge newer, incoming faculty. And that system was to use tenured faculty from departments around UCA who had taught at least two full semester courses during the probationary period of the faculty member going up for tenure. And there was going to be, I think, four of those on the committee. Once there were tenured honors faculty, they would join that committee. And then we would also bring into play a faculty member from outside the Honors College whose expertise in the field of study or discipline of the candidate going up would join that committee as well whether or not they had taught in the Honors College. The idea being that they would bring expertise to judge the professional development components of the tenure file. The honors director was going to serve in the role of the chair at the second level of review. Instead of the library committee, which was the university committee the library was using to serve as the college committee, the Honors College elected to use the Exemplary Studies Committee – the tenured faculty on that committee – and then the chair of that committee was going to serve in the role of the dean and then to the provost. So those were the levels of review.

We built the criteria, built the proposal, submitted it in the spring of 2005 to the Faculty Senate and it was approved with the sunset clause as Brian said. And it was approved because there were faculty members who were getting ready to go up for tenure and so there were contractual issues that required that it be done. This sunset clause was added to create a pause in that hiring so that there could be discussion. And that discussion began the year that followed, but it was not a campus-wide discussion. It was channeled in various ways. It took place in the handbook committee or it took place in starts and fits in the Faculty Senate but without really having some way to include all of the voices of the faculty members at UCA and make it a campus-wide conversation.

And so struggling with this idea in the 2007-08 school year, last school year, Ed Powers who was president of the Faculty Senate last year proposed a process and you probably read about it on-line at the documents of the Faculty Senate from last year, then Brian described that process, too. So, this discussion was initially intended to take place last spring, but for a variety of reasons we decided to wait until this fall to give everyone plenty of time to read the position paper produced by the Honors College and provide responses to it. That's how we came to produce this paper that we finished at the end of February earlier this year.

The case that we are making in this position paper is we are trying to move away from simply a case that describes this in terms of history. That is to say, it's a weak case to make to say that we just backed into something so now we want it to be permanent. What we were trying to do was to reexamine our mission on the campus and to try to understand whether we need tenured honors faculty. What would it mean to have joint appointments instead or what would it mean to move the Honors College as a department inside a college, which would allow for the much more typical process by which tenure is granted.

Our conclusions were that if we became a department in a college, it would dramatically change the mission of the Honors College. We have a university-wide mission. If we were as a practical matter let

us say we became a department of interdisciplinary studies in the College of Liberal Arts, then the presumed scope of our mission would be able to be restricted to the College of Liberal Arts. While it may be possible for that not to happen, our sense, and maybe this is my own bias as a sociologist who has studied organizations, but I think structure means something. I think the relationship between structure and mission is undeniable. My concern is that if we were housed in a college, then one of the key tasks or charges of the Honors College, which is recruiting high-ability students that major in all of the colleges at UCA, all of the departments at UCA, could end up being restricted to a much smaller number of students. So we resisted the idea of moving in that direction and chose the term “autonomy” to describe those needs. “Independence” may have been a better term.

The second case that we were thinking about had to do with mission. And we were trying to think about all of the -- the scope of the things that we do, beyond providing substitutes for gen ed courses in the freshman and sophomore year and the minor. And it is certainly clear that borrowed faculty, even joint appointment faculty, can help teach courses, particularly in the sophomore and junior year. Those courses are relatively open in terms of the rubrics that guide them – the frameworks and motifs that guide them. And we have still to this day a significant number of faculty teaching sophomore and junior courses – again it’s about 25% of the courses that are taught by our faculty.

But in the freshman year, we team teach. These courses represent a kind of port of entry for honors students in which they are socialized into the norms and practices of the kind of pedagogy that we practice in the Honors College – the writing intensity, the emphasis on oral presentation, and even our emphasis on collaborative work which requires faculty members to develop as a community a set of practices that deemphasize the professorial center of the classroom. We could argue about that, and we ought to argue about those things, about whether we should do that or whether we shouldn’t do that. I mean those are – that’s what we should do as a faculty, but that’s been our practice. We also have been trying to create senior seminars as a capstone course and so we wanted a particular consistency to the character of courses in the freshman and senior year, which require I think academically a core faculty. We also have a very elaborate recruiting process that I won’t go into because it would take way too long, but it’s described in the document. That requires training and consistency in terms of how we select honors students. And then finally, part of our charge is to deliver the academic components as faculty in a living/learning community in a residential college that has very elaborate programming beyond just the student service and retention programming.

The argument for mission is that we have a particular mission that is not like a specific department, that is not like a specific academic college, but has a university-wide scope and has elements to it that are beyond the experience and the daily practice of ordinary faculty in departments. Which isn’t to say that any faculty couldn’t do that, it just that that’s not part of what has been done. And that we wanted to develop a kind of consistency. So the proposal that we are making, essentially is that we remove the sunset clause and let us hire faculty with the methodology of a peer review that we’ve developed. We have also been trying to argue the notion of “peer” involves the idea of people in a department who share a mission. That, of course, is a contentious argument, it’s one that we could debate. But, I think we were able in discussions we’ve had to show that, at least in 50% of the departments at UCA, “peer” is not defined by discipline-mate, because 50% of the departments at UCA either in name or in actuality, are multi-disciplinary departments. So, what’s important is that faculty get to know one another and be able to understand their work, especially when it comes to teaching, especially when it comes to a record of service. With respect to scholarship, there does have to be discipline-specific expertise to evaluate the professional development of that work. We felt like we had addressed that by using a

faculty member, having a faculty member from outside the department whose expertise was close to the candidate.

In the end, then, in an effort to move toward a position that tried to minimize, I guess, both the perception of our not being connected with the rest of the faculty and our need to be thoroughly integrated to campus life. We made proposals that included having a mid-tenure review process that mimicked the tenure process – again involving outside faculty – hiring processes that involved outside faculty, and finally the development of a faculty advisory committee to the Honors College, which would serve as a final two-way conduit to make sure that both complaints and suggestions and advice went both ways, from the Honors College to the campus and from the campus to the Honors College.

The final step that we took this summer, and we didn't get to it until this summer, is that we launched a new website. We added on that website an enormous amount of detail that had in mind as part of the audience, faculty members and other folks at UCA. We are trying in that way to be as clear as we can be and as complete as we can be in saying who we are and what we are doing and to try to minimize the amount of miscommunication that might occur between the Honors College and other centers on campus. There's more to it. It's a really long document. If you haven't read it, I would ask you to take some time to read it, even if you don't read it until after all of this process is done. And the reason is, it seems to me, that a university-wide program like the Honors College has an obligation to justify its existence. It always does. I'm part of the national conversation and national leadership in honors, and this is what honors deans and directors do when they are running good, healthy programs. They explain themselves, they justify their budgets, they talk about how stuff works. You will always find this information on our website, and if it's not there when you set up a faculty advisory committee if there is something you need you can always come to us and we will provide it.

Tammy Benson

Thank you. Now what we are going to do is talk to the representatives that you have elected to this committee and each one is going to share with you a little bit of the feedback -- the general feedback, which is also posted on the URSA link that Carol Daves sent an email about this week. We are also going to talk a little bit about our college and what feedback we have received informally and formally from our colleges. One thing I would like to note for those of you that have read the feedback, it seems that much of the feedback starts with a positive note. Everyone, it seems, recognizes the outstanding reputation of the Honors College and the excellent students that arrive at UCA primarily as a result of the high standards and the quality programs offered by the Honors College.

Although that support seems strong, there is a lot of concern about some of the issues that are in this proposal. From my college, specifically, the primary criticism of this proposal is that there is overall concern about the lack of collaboration between the Honors College and other departments on issues dealing with hiring new faculty, shared teaching assignments, who teaches in what college and how much, and with the tenure issue. The hot topic seems to always come back to tenure and the primary criticism of this proposal is the idea that all faculty members, no matter what college they are assigned to, go through the same process for tenure.

The two issues that were raised the most were that faculty should be tenured in a discipline, not a college. And that seems to be heard over and over again. And the second point seems to be that faculty should be tenured by their peers, not just peers that they see on an occasional basis, but peers that they work with on a regular basis. It seems that a concentrated effort should be made to support this universal mission of the Honors College, recognizing the autonomy of the Honors College without

isolating it from the procedures and guidelines that are spelled out in the Faculty Handbook for the other colleges. Specifically, on the issues related to tenure.

So I think I've laid out generally what are the primary concerns, and our hope is that the results of this committee's work, your feedback, and this panel presentation today will end up in a spirit of cooperation to move the Honors College forward with their unique mission and also meet the needs and the concerns of interested faculty members in other colleges. So now I'm going to turn it back over to Dr. Bolter, who represents his college, and let him talk a little bit about their critique of this proposal.

Brian Bolter

Our critique of this proposal went something like this...our college gave it an F+. We gave it a plus for lots of attempt to try, lots of effort, way to go, but it's not passing on its face. The faculty had a lot of difficulties with it for a number of reasons. I'm just going to deal with a couple and let my colleagues deal with some other ones.

The first had to do with AAUP issues, with two AAUP issues, and I'm addressing AAUP issues because I am the president of the chapter, the Richard Hudson Chapter, of the AAUP here at UCA. The first one dealt with, in some ways, feelings were hurt that they quoted AAUP as being supportive of this type of program in terms of its support of interdisciplinary studies. The difficulty we had is that interdisciplinary is between two disciplines, so psychology and counseling is an interdisciplinary program. Honors: not a discipline. A pedagogy, an epistemology, but not a discipline. So the first part of the proposal, dealing with interdisciplinary, fell on deaf ears. It's just not a discipline, so why are we quoting AAUP standards on interdisciplinary. We are very pro interdisciplinary, but not in terms of a non-discipline in another discipline.

And then, two, the establishment of a separate but equal tenure process is troubling to AAUP. Having a separate process outside an established process is just ripe for problems. It doesn't address anything in terms of grievances, what does the grievance process look like afterwards, even more messy. So now we get into a situation where we establish very firm guidelines for tenure, supported guidelines for tenure, viewed by AAUP at the national level, the state level, and at the local level, and we are going to create through somewhat of a smoke and mirrors situation, a separate tenure process that's going to rely on made up committees, made up structure, made up departments, made up colleges – just not going to fly. We support in some ways the principles of the Honors College, but the proposal as it stands, and I told Rick, was a non-starter.

And the third was the perception that the Honors College wanted its cake and wanted to eat it too. That it wanted autonomy, but it wanted to be part of the whole tenure process of the university. If you're going to be separate, remain separate. If you want to come into the community of scholars at UCA, you do so under an existing process. That process is well-established. It is the same for every faculty member. It is the same for every discipline. We are not going to change it based on the situation we have here.

Those are the general critiques that I look at from an AAUP standpoint. An F+. If it were resubmitted, a little updating, we might be able to get to a passing grade, and that's what this committee tried to do is to allow a resubmission of the proposal to move it into a passing place. Thank you.

Tammy Benson

Thank you. Steve Butcher is from the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics.

Steve Butcher

Well, first of all, my college, the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, didn't really have a lot to say. They all recognize the fact that until the Honors College can provide laboratory equipment and start up funds of that sort, they probably won't be hiring too many people who would be in conflict with the experimental sciences. So there was a certain kind of shrug of the shoulders on the part of most people I spoke to. But they all did seem to agree that instructors should be located in a department, and that tenure should come from a department. So I didn't get much beyond that.

Tammy Benson

OK, thank you. Margaret Morgan is from the College of Fine Arts and Communication and she will address you next.

Margaret Morgan

Thank you. Although I currently teach a course in Honors and I have the highest respect for all my colleagues in Honors, many of whom are here, I didn't come into this debate with my mind made up just because I was teaching in Honors. And most of the people in my college, I don't think, had their minds made up either. Like Steve, I didn't get a lot of feedback from the members of my college but the people that I did talk to had this concern, and it's spelled out pretty clearly in the statement of mission and purpose of the university. The very first principle in the university's mission statement states: "Teaching and learning flourish where disciplinary integrity and the focused explorations it allows are balanced by the connection building of interdisciplinary collaboration." And this sort of balance or tension between disciplinary concerns and interdisciplinary concerns seems to me, and the tenure thing will come later, is really at the heart of the issue here, especially as far as I am concerned. Many of my colleagues do in fact teach in Honors, and I have a great deal of respect for what Honors does. But we feel that a balance has to be maintained between disciplinary integrity and interdisciplinary connection-building, and the question is how to do that. Neither of those should be penalized.

Disciplinary integrity, as we all know, is maintained by the use of peer reviews. Peer review is vital for maintaining standards. And it is both in the area of academic research and in review of faculty for promotion and tenure. The problem is that this process takes place at two levels, at the department level, and the college level. Now speaking as somebody, as I said, who has taught in the Honors College on several occasions, I believe that for all practical intents and purposes within the university, the Honors College does, in fact, function as a department. I also know that faculty are also housed in departments, but that a department is not necessarily synonymous with the discipline. My own department and others house several disciplines, meaning that faculty in that department are reviewed by faculty outside their discipline. So the fact that honors faculty come from many disciplines is not really a problem for me because within departments with many disciplines, they are your peers in fact. So I believe you do have peer review within the department.

The problem for me in the argument presented by the Honors College was at the college level for two reasons. Number one, the Honors College seemed in the process of conferring tenure to be functioning as both a department and a college. This seems inconsistent with practice regarding other departments in the university and also somewhat undermines the Honors College argument for equal treatment. It's kind of like wanting to have it both ways. The argument made by Honors for wanting to be treated like a department seemed valid and consistent with local practice – I don't think there is that much difference. But the argument for being simultaneously treated as a college was made in the document based on factors outside local, or outside university practice. These arguments were based on things related to national movements, national organizations, and things like that. That seems to be a

separate issue, whether the Honors College is supported by national organizations or by practice outside the university. Anyway, these arguments didn't seem to me to provide adequate justification for being treated as a college, especially in the absence of a dean and a corresponding line of report for budgetary matters. The Honors proposal seems to ask for all the advantages of having a departmental and college status and none of the disadvantages while retaining the advantages of being a program reporting directly to the provost. This is nice work if you can get it.

That said, I would also add that it was important to me that the value of interdisciplinary study mentioned in the university's mission statement be affirmed and supported. Not only in the Honors College, and I think this is really an important point here, but the rest of the university. I don't think this is just an Honors College issue. Interdisciplinary Study benefits students and enhances their learning. Therefore, I believe that faculty who wish to engage in interdisciplinary teaching and research should be supported in all possible ways, not penalized by inflexible policies. I believe that the current proposal that has been drafted by Professor Anderson and has been endorsed by this panel manages to achieve this balance that I talked about at the beginning and the university's mission statement. I think we need a balance between disciplinary integrity and support for interdisciplinary studies. To not support interdisciplinary studies is a step backward. So I believe what this committee has come up with really does affirm both those principles as they are stated in our common mission statement.

Tammy Benson

From the College of Business, we have Michael Rubach.

Michael Rubach

When I started this process and read the initial proposal from the Honors College, I was really torn. I understand and sympathize with the Honors College trying to find faculty, and they have a problem that they cannot promise those faculty tenure-track positions. In my own view, I don't think this committee is really debating the existence of separate Honors College faculty. I think our primary focus is on the tenure process. Given that, I really feel that we have to resolve this issue and try to give the Honors College a procedure that we can follow. The problem that is arising with my own faculty – *[end of side one of tape]*.

At any rate, hearing from some of the business faculty, they were concerned with collaboration across campus and peer review at the discipline level. For me personally, that was my major concern, determining and reviewing the discipline expertise of the faculty. In our teaching we often rely upon the primary discipline from our studies. How do we keep current, how do we show that we are maintaining this expertise. You can demonstrate it through your teaching, primarily possibly through your research, through your service, but that was my concern in the procedure that was proposed, do we really have peer review at the discipline level. And therefore, my feeling was that we should include that in any procedures that come out of our committee. As I said, my concerns personally and the concerns of the faculty of the College of Business, are common with the other colleges' and I think that in the future if we have a proposal that addresses the needs of the Honors College so they have something concrete that they can work with, but also something in my mind that looks at peer review by discipline. Even if it's not by "department." For my own purposes, I've come from an interdisciplinary background in my doctoral studies, and I teach an interdisciplinary course right now, international business, and if you want to look at my own faculty in my own department it's probably five different disciplines in one department. So that's a narrow opinion on how you then hire new faculty, the point is it's a difficult thing, but I think we can go forward by looking at peer review through a discipline.

Tammy Benson

Thank you. We do have one more college to be represented here today, but before I turn it over to Dr. Phillip Anderson from the College of Liberal Arts, I just want to say that being added to this meeting late, you can imagine that I stepped into something that I hadn't kept up with as closely as I should have. I just want you to know that this committee, each and every member, has passionately shared their views and have spent – our committee meetings aren't those one hour meetings, they are two to three hours – and just at the point when I was about to bang my head against the wall, thinking what in the world is going to happen with this – Dr. Anderson, who had been listening to everything came up with a possible idea that perhaps we could compromise, and we all had that idea, but he put it into writing. So before I turn it over to him, and he will represent his college, but I also wanted to thank him and express my appreciation as well as the committee's for putting down some of our thoughts and trying to make a compromise that this committee is pleased with and his very creative and imaginative intellect has led us well, so I will turn it over to Dr. Anderson now.

Phillip Anderson

I think the comments from my college were both more numerous and more engaged perhaps than was generally the case, and I think that is a direct result of what has already been mentioned, and that is that we have more in common with the Honors College than perhaps any other college. There is more overlap, and where there is commonality and overlap, there can easily be differences of view. I think many people in my department and my college feel that in a sense what the Honors College does is so close in certain respects to what we do in our college, that there should be a greater connection between the two entities. And I think this particular concern raised itself in a way among some of my colleagues that maybe it didn't in other colleges, and that is the feeling that integrity of program is closely tied to peer review as well. It's not just tenure. It's a matter of...if you are offering a course in history because you have one history person in the Honors College, that is not the same thing as having the course vetted by the entire history faculty. I think it was the feeling in many quarters that for peer review, which obviously has to do with tenure too, but also with curriculum that it really was important to have what I would call critical mass of knowledge. I specifically say "knowledge" rather than "expertise." Just as I would try to make a distinction between "discipline" and "specialty," in other words, I think what we've been hearing about departments full of people from different disciplines, is really more departments full of people with different specialties. There is a sense, of course, in which a Medievalist and an African-American Literature specialist do very different things. But there is, I think, very clearly, a substantial not just point, but many points of contact between those two. I think, in fact, departments are not just administrative units. They have some degree of actual intellectual coherence and integrity. And if they really don't, then I think we should probably rethink those departments. I think that's the way my college would see things.

For me personally it came down to four issues. One issue was, that I've always believed very strongly, that if you are going to evaluate a person for tenure, that you must be a peer in the sense that you work with that person. There is a reason that in no discipline as far as I know that we have that we pack up the materials of the application and send them off to New York or to Boston or somewhere so that the American Historical Association can vet the tenure application. It is handled by the department in question. And I think it is largely because it is crucial that the tenure decision be based on commonality of not only mission, but experience. That is we teach the same students, we have a lot of contact with one another, we learn a lot about each other as we discuss our teaching, our research, as we argue about the things we argue about, and I think that's crucial.

Secondly, I think, it is very, very crucial that there be a critical mass of scholarly and intellectual knowledge. Not necessarily expertise, but knowledge. In other words, if one is being evaluated as a 19th Century European Historian and there's somebody in the history department who is a specialist in 20th Century South American History, I understand that they will not meet at all points, maybe not even at most points, but I would maintain very vigorously that there is substantial commonality in many, many respects.

There is a reason we have tenure committees at this institution made up of a committee of the whole and I think the purpose of that is to not worry about whether one person or another person knows enough to evaluate adequately a candidate, but to feel that that critical mass that is of all people that have earned tenure in that department collectively will arrive at some sort of common wisdom that is not only wise, but informed. And I don't believe you can do that in just a collection of people who are put together in a more miscellaneous kind of way. But on the other hand, I was very concerned, Rick convinced me, that the independence of the Honors College is important. I think the university mission is indeed one that would be difficult to carry out in a conventional college or departmental setting. So I think that is a real concern. I want the good work that they do in that way, which I think does depend in a degree, on that independence that that independence be maintained. But the independence cannot be maintained at the cost of unfair treatment of individual faculty members.

We have got to find a way of maintaining, at least for me, the two points of tenure that I mentioned a minute ago. That is it must be decided by people who work with you, and it must be decided by people who have at least some degree of commonality in their intellectual background. On the other hand, how do you do that and have that independence and treat the people in the Honors College who are colleagues after all with fairness and humanity. And that's the way the problem presented itself to me as I tried to consider it. And the proposal that I came up with was born out of an attempt to reconcile those considerations. Now once that proposal was written up, this committee reviewed it, improved it, polished it, and I think refined it in a number of ways. So I guess that's where we stand at the moment.

Tammy Benson

It is, and, by the way, this proposal will also be added to the URSA link in a few days, as well as a transcript of today's proceedings. But last of all, we are going to let Rick Scott speak one more time, respond, and make some final remarks.

Rick Scott

Is it a good idea to speak into the record the proposal itself? *[discussion among committee members – agreement to do so.]*

Phillip Anderson

It's fairly short, at least I hope it seems so.

It is called, "A Tenure Process for Honors College Faculty
- A Proposal –"

Brian Bolter

I want to say this was unanimously approved, we all have agreed that this is what we would like to see to move forward.

Phillip Anderson

[reading]

The purpose of this proposal is to outline a possible process whereby the integrity and traditional meaning of tenure might be maintained, while allowing the Honors College the greatest possible degree of appropriate independence.

The main points of this proposal are as follows:

1. Hiring for Honors College faculty positions would be done jointly by the appropriate departments and the Honors College.
2. The Honors College would have the freedom to define the special areas of training, competence, expertise, knowledge, etc. needed by the Honors College in the hiring of a potential faculty member. The appropriate departments would have the right to ensure that potential faculty members have sufficient breadth and depth in background and training to teach that department's general courses for general education and majors/minors.
3. Faculty members hired under this plan would spend the probationary period for tenure (the first six years of their appointment) working in both a department and the Honors College.
4. Faculty members hired under this plan would be funded by the Honors College and by the university with the intention that after six years and successful tenure decision, they will move from a joint appointment to a permanent full appointment in the Honors College. Thus, departments would practically use such faculty not as permanent departmental faculty occupying lines in the department but as long-term temporary faculty filling places otherwise filled by other forms of temporary faculty. In no case should the presence of such a faculty member in a department prevent or hinder that department from being able to fill its normal and appropriate positions based on existing or new lines.
5. During the six-year probationary period, faculty members hired under this plan would do substantial work in both the Honors College and the discipline appropriate department and would thus build a body of teaching, scholarship and service that could be appropriately evaluated by both the tenured Honors College faculty and the tenure committee of the discipline-appropriate department.
6. The actual department-level decision regarding tenure for these faculty members would be undertaken by the departmental tenure committee with the addition of tenured Honors College faculty (so long as Honors College faculty do not make up a majority of the committee making this decision.) The chairman level review and recommendation regarding tenure would be carried out jointly by the chair of the department and the Director of the Honors College. Mid-tenure reviews would be conducted by the departmental tenure committee, tenured Honors College faculty, the departmental chair, and the Director of the Honors College.
7. Following the probationary period served in a department and the Honors College and a favorable tenure decision, a faculty member under this plan would become a full-time and

permanent member of the Honors College faculty. His/her tenure would follow him/her into the Honors College.

It is hoped that this plan would allow for an appropriate and genuinely discipline based tenure decision, while allowing the Honors College to recruit and retain appropriate faculty without losing its present independence and character.

[end of reading]

Rick Scott

When I presented this proposal in its first draft and again the second draft, to the honors faculty I think there has been genuine support for this proposal. Some are here now – you'll have to turn thumbs down if you are changing your mind. We haven't had a lot of time to think about this because it is a relatively new proposal, but I certainly support it and I had the opportunity when I was in San Antonio last week for the national honors conference to share an earlier draft of this proposal, just orally share it with some of the other directors and deans of honors programs and colleges that have faculty, tenurable faculty. And I think they all found this rather compelling. The plot twist at the end after tenure, after the tenure process occurs, then the faculty member moves to the Honors College full time, becomes a permanent member was the unexpected piece of this and I think that's part of the brilliance of this too, that it solves a number of problems all at the same time.

It does allow for the independence of the honors college to – well the university-wide mission and therefore its structural position on the campus – to take place. But it also solves problems that our proposal, our initial proposal did not have good answers for. In using faculty member from outside the Honors College who teach at least two full semester courses to be on the departmental committee can certainly mean, as the number of those faculty increase, that we could have people that serve on the departmental committee under the old guidelines who didn't know our faculty very well and didn't understand what it is we do all that well and were not really peers in any sense of the word that it means in the descriptions that we were hearing about sharing a department.

I think, early on, in the development of that departmental process, the particular folks we knew who would qualify to serve on the departmental committee, were people who had in fact taught for a long time in the Honors College, but you have to have a process in place, and having said that, they knew our faculty well, reasonably well, they knew what we were doing reasonably well. But this has to be a process that is sustainable 10 years from now, 20 years from now, 30 years from now, really to confer legitimacy. And that process did not confer legitimacy. I think you could made a good argument that those folks are not really peers in the sense that they need to be and I agree with that.

Another problem that our proposal, our initial proposal could not address and this one does address, is the question of why the Honors College would spend any money on faculty development to help an Honors College faculty member become stronger in his or her area of training. And this is something we were doing, something we are doing. Why would we do it if all of the tenure process was really in something that one might call interdisciplinary studies. This clearly resolves that issue because for a faculty member going up for tenure in this joint process, the emphasis would be in the early part of that person's career on continuing to develop his or her field of study. That makes sense in a practical way and it makes sense in the way Margaret was talking about, and Brian was talking about, and Michael was talking about too, if you are going to have this course with interdisciplinary components, it's going to be centered someway in a discipline. You look at the folks who come to our campus, come to any

campus as junior faculty members, they come, if we hire well, with a research program under way. And so to suddenly ask that faculty member to veer off into some other area, let's say honors studies, you know whatever that might mean, is both inappropriate and would be discombobulating, I think really to the faculty member.

This process would, I think, push our faculty member and push our mentoring process to continue to develop their work coming out of graduate school or coming out of early teaching experience to work on journal articles, presentations, book projects and so on that continue to further their scholarship. In many ways it seems to me, it seemed to honors directors that I talked to about this, that this is a proposal that represents a true compromise. Everybody gives something, everybody gets something. And this is something that I think not only can be sustainable but can give real legitimacy to the tenure process here at UCA. It's probably something that's portable, not that that's the charge of this committee to try and figure out something that can be used elsewhere, but it seems to me that it in fact can.

The early proposal, the first draft, didn't make it as clear, I think, as this one does to why a department would want to do this, why would a department want to affiliate with us for six years. And I think the incentive is quite clear in this version that Phillip brought back, which is that the budget is not going to be housed in the department, but the department is going to get teaching, knowledgeable teaching, strong teaching, stronger presumably than one would get from an adjunct, for a good six years without having to pay for that. And it doesn't preclude the department in any way from getting other lines as a result. It even occurs to me that if I were a department chair that I were able to link up with the Honors College, one of the things that I might look at is if that faculty member represents a new area or new specialty in a department and there was considerable student interest in it that may allow a chair to make a case to the dean, to make a case to the provost, that this is an area that we probably need to staff in the Honors College. So this kind of collaboration can serve both the department and the Honors College.

I can tell you, I guess, in closing that this has been a long and debilitating process – I just can't even begin to tell you the amount of personal suffering I've gone through here [*chuckles*] – and I really want to get past this, we all want to get past this. The Honors College faculty are like anybody else. We believe in tenure. We believe in the principles you all believe in. We are trying to all do the same thing and we want to be connected. I think it just didn't occur to me as we were putting this together and maybe it's because really in some ways we had to back into this, we were setting ourselves up for this kind of difficulty. But sometimes, you know, when you get put into a position where it seems like there is no way forward you can come up with something or some people can come up with something, thank goodness, that really is kind of a genius solution to something. So I think we are pretty happy with it and will continue to think about it in the Honors College as we continue to go forward with this. I guess the final thing I want to say is I want to thank this panel for a pretty outstanding series of conversations. It got a lot better at the end of first ones, the last ones have been much better.

Phillip Anderson

I might just add one word, because it relates to something Brian said earlier, he made the point that we have a tenure process and that it is really important in our sense that that process exist across the board. I recognize and I'm sure this committee as a whole recognizes that this is in certain respects a modification of the existing tenure process, but it is not I think inconsistent with either the letter or the spirit of the existing process. All it does, and this leads to Margaret's point, all it does is recognize the interdisciplinary side of these particular faculty members and these particular appointments, so there

will be a departmental role that is very, very heavy. That is the reason we have it there that in no case can the Honors College tenured faculty on this committee, which is operationally the departmental tenure committee plus tenured faculty members in the Honors College, can they outnumber -- can they be a majority. So the disciplinary contingent, if you want to put it that way, is always going to be a majority, and I suppose that a chairman, and for my sins I was a chairman for a long time, and I sympathize with chairmen who say, oh God, you mean I've got to develop a statement that is basically... we have to co-author or at least cooperate... that is the Honors College director and the chair, but I really will be surprised if that represents a real problem. It seems to me again that it simply goes back to the fact that we have an interdisciplinary as well as disciplinary faculty member.

And finally, I realize, and the committee realizes that we cannot make this work even if this is a decent proposal. It will require the university, for instance, ponying up the money for the appointments and making sure -- what will kill this quicker than anything is if Dr. Ruud has a faculty member under this plan and he goes to the administration and says we need to hire a faculty member because Dr. So and So has retired and the administration says you don't get to hire to replace that person because you just got this person with the Honors College. If they do that, that will kill it. But, Rick knows that, we know that, and the department knows that because it is written into the proposal and I think at that point we just raise hell if that is what happens. As far as I can see that is the only operational disaster that could lurk. But it will not lurk if the administration accepts this proposal in good faith.

Rick Scott

I would like to make one last point, I know we were trying to end by 3:00, but since we are reading things into the record, I think it's important. You are exactly right, Phil, the other part of this that represents a little complexity, and you alluded to it is just the collaboration and the negotiation that has to happen between the two committees and the chair and the director. I guess I'm thinking that if we can't work that out then we probably don't deserve to be running programs. I mean for heaven's sake, that shouldn't be that difficult. That's just a matter of communicating and just a matter of keeping in touch.

The final thing I want to say, and the reason, we didn't mean to upset anybody in AAUP, I joined AAUP this year, I'm in it for life, and I didn't want to upset anybody by citing them. What we were citing instead are numerous AAUP documents that have said along the lines of what Margaret was saying, that interdisciplinary is a real and permanent feature of American higher education and that universities need to be sensitive to developing sustainable, legitimate ways of conferring tenure upon faculty who are in those situations. I think that's what this does. I think this gets us to a point that I think anybody reviewing this from AAUP would think this is well thought through.

Tammy Benson

You might wonder what happens now, normally you would open something like this up for discussion, it was pre-set that this panel discussion would not take questions it would just be presented. Again, you will have opportunities to offer feedback, you can e-mail any member of this panel. Dr. Boniecki has been very helpful, you can e-mail him with concerns. We set up a week -- [*someone interrupts*, Five working days, so it is essentially a week from today.] But I believe it will take us a day or so to get this transcript up, and I think it's only fair that it be five days from when it's posted. So we're working on that tomorrow, and hopefully we'll have that tomorrow maybe Monday, and you'll have five days to respond. We really appreciate your attendance and thank the audience for caring enough about this to come out today. I want to thank the panel.