Dear Colleagues:

The terrible tragedy at Virginia Tech has left us all in shock and pain. We lost 5 colleagues and 27 students to this senseless act of violence. Please continue to keep the victims and their families in your thoughts. While we have safety measures in place, we, under the leadership of Vice President Meningall, are reexamining our plans and procedures.

Here are a few items of interest for you:

**UBOT and UFF agree on faculty salary increase**: The two teams have agreed to distribute an additional 1.5% salary pool on the basis of annual faculty evaluations and market equity. For all in-unit faculty, the negotiated formula which is posted on the HR website ([http://usfweb2.usf.edu/usfpers/collectivebargaining/UFF_41207TA.pdf](http://usfweb2.usf.edu/usfpers/collectivebargaining/UFF_41207TA.pdf)) will apply. An increase of 1.5% has been approved for out of unit faculty, A&P and out-of-unit staff. AFSCME (USPS union) and UBOT teams continue to negotiate their first contract.

The good news is that USF has been the 2nd most aggressive university in the State of Florida to enhance faculty salaries! The sobering news is that despite this aggressiveness, we are still far from our goal of bringing salaries to the national average.

**In this game of rankings…**: Let’s celebrate our College of Education breaking into the Top 50 (ranked 48th by the US News and World Report). They are the first college to do so competitively. Our College of Nursing showed an impressive rise from 115th ranking last year to 72nd this year. The College of Business, for the first time, made it on the Business Week undergraduate program rankings list (ranked 93rd), which is an important milestone, considering that there are over 350 accredited business programs in the country. Congratulations to our marvelous faculty and staff!

**Who will you have in your class in Fall?** USF has admitted the strongest ever pool of students for this coming Fall! To date, we have admitted 10,280 of the 23,000 freshman application to USF-Tampa and are hoping to enroll 4,500. More than 1800 students have qualified for Honors Program, the largest ever! And, over 160 National Merit Finalists (including National Hispanic and National Achievement finalists) applied to USF, in comparison to 30 last year. Under your guidance and inspired by your caliber, our Admissions staff have truly raised the caliber of freshmen. In case you are worried about preserving diversity, let me assure you that other than being the strongest ever, the pool is also the most diverse ever!
**Interdisciplinary Research – Beyond Rhetoric:** After talking about valuing interdisciplinary research for many years, we finally made it happen this year by seeding $10 million worth of ideas in four thrust areas (involving over 40 faculty members and approximately 60 new graduate students). These seed grants will groom future centers of excellence and national award winning professors while preparing a new class of interdisciplinary-trained graduate students. The initiative, first of its kind, will not only build a sustainable research base, but will also boost our doctoral degree profile…this is how we are building the pathway to seek AAU eligibility.

**Chief Technology Officer:** After successfully reorganizing the Office of Decision Support, we are reorganizing one more area so we can better serve you. The newly created position of Chief Technology Officer (CTO) will have 65-70 staff positions, brought together from different units across campus. The CTO will ensure that we achieve maximum efficiency in the procurement of technology while having the tools to drive toward our vision. In one faculty’s words, “this is the most significant thing that the University has done in many years!” As I thank Dr. Tony Lewellyn for his outstanding leadership of Academic Computing, I am happy to announce that Dr. Kathleen Moore has agreed to serve as Acting CTO until the position is filled. The search for the first CTO is headed by Dean Colleen Kennedy. If you are interested in reading more about it, here is the attachment that I discussed at the open forum held to announce the initiative. [http://files.acad.usf.edu/Provost/Update-04-2007-Chief-Technology-Officer.pdf](http://files.acad.usf.edu/Provost/Update-04-2007-Chief-Technology-Officer.pdf)

**USF and the new Strategic Plan:** If you have not seen USF’s new Strategic Plan, you may want to do so now ([http://www.ods.usf.edu/plans/acadaffairs/](http://www.ods.usf.edu/plans/acadaffairs/)). After 14 versions and 9 town hall meetings, the Strategic Plan is now a reality. The Plan calls for USF to embark on a journey toward becoming AAU-eligible. It is a significant move even though it may take a few years before USF becomes eligible and gets invited to AAU. By embracing the vision of AAU-eligibility, USF has declared its intention to build both breadth and depth. It will mean changing institutional culture and making it consistent with what is found in AAU institutions. In case you are wondering about USF’s commitment to undergraduate education, please feel comforted by the fact that AAU now includes quality of undergraduate education as one of its measures. What is the next step? All campuses will develop their own strategic plan consistent with the mission and vision set forth in this larger umbrella plan. Once we refine and tune the plan for Tampa, we will ask departments and colleges to prepare their compact plans which will include goals and resources necessary to achieve the next level of excellence. During this Fall, you will have an opportunity to consider the future of your department and what resources would it take for you to get there.

**Legislative Budget:** The Legislature is in session and the budget details are posted on the Budget website ([http://usfweb2.usf.edu/univsvcweb/2007_2008Budget.htm](http://usfweb2.usf.edu/univsvcweb/2007_2008Budget.htm)). USF has several important priorities, among them funding for graduate enhancement, Bio-medical Engineering, Entrepreneurship and community engagement initiatives. Recurring funds are scarce this year, but our Trustees, President and governmental relations staff are hard at work to ensure that we receive adequate funding to fulfill our mission.

**New Buildings on the Horizon:** The Music building is funded; the Interdisciplinary Science building is mostly funded; and the Classroom/Honors College building (to be located in front of the Administration as our signature building) is slated to receive planning money. In addition,
Engineering IV is on the Senate’s list for special projects that have potential to accelerate economic development. Several non-state buildings are also under construction or on the design board. These include the new Marshall Center, a 4-star Hotel and Conference facility next to Embassy Suites Hotel, and another research incubator building in the Research Park. The good news is that there are lots of new buildings to accommodate our growth; the bad news is that we are still dead last among state university system for research and instructional space needs met.

**Executive Searches:**
- VP for Advancement: After a long and hard search, we have found just the right person to head our Office of Advancement. Mr. Jeffrey Robison (Case Western and Florida State University) will join USF on June 11th as Vice President for Advancement.
- Dean of Marine Science: The search is halted at the moment, pending the resolution of some issues.
- Dean of Engineering: The Search Committee invited four finalists. I hope to finalize the search shortly.
- Dean of Libraries: A search firm has been hired and the pool is currently being formed.
- Dean of FMHI: Telephone interviews are currently being conducted.

That is all for now! The end of the semester is near…your efforts will be graduating 4,705 students in seven ceremonies this year -- 3,559 baccalaureates; 997 Masters, 7 specialists, and 142 doctorates! Congratulations!!

I wish you a great semester end followed by a relaxing summer.

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