Colleagues:

Welcome back and a very special welcome to our 236 new faculty colleagues! I was privileged to meet with many of them during the Orientation and I am still beaming with pride and joy that such a talented group has chosen to be our colleagues. As we start the Fall Semester, here is what USF looks like. As leaders of USF, you may want to know them and include them in your remarks as you represent your University in the community!

Total Students: 43,422
New freshmen: 3,987
Average SAT of freshmen class: 1131
Average GPA of freshmen class: 3.61
New students in Honors College: 425
Average SAT of Honors College entering freshmen: 1321
New undergraduate transfer students: 4,571
New Grad I students (Master’s/EdS): 1,726
New Grad II students (Doctoral): 500
Total faculty in “ranked classifications” (as of Fall 2005): 2,491
Total tenured and tenure-earning faculty (as of Fall 2005): 1,636
Total contracts and grants (C&G) awarded last year: $310 million
Total USF budget (from all sources): $1.6 billion
Percentage of budget that is from the State: 24%
Number of Books in the Library: 2.2 million
Number of Parking Spots: 18,500 – more than in the City of Tampa

Our New National Rankings: While I am not obsessed with these, I must bring this topic up for one reason. Last year, many of you expressed your disappointment as USF slipped from 3rd tier to the 4th tier of US News & World Report ratings. You will be pleased to note that we have regained our position this year. Our weakest spots are retention and graduation rates, but hopefully as the academic preparedness of our freshmen class improves (we started to manage it only two years ago), these measures will rise as well. I am more proud of our Carnegie classification, since it is an academic measure and we can enjoy our status among the top 63 public research universities! At this point, we are getting ready to submit our portfolio to the Carnegie for their “community engagement” classification.

$310 million in Contracts and Grants! USF, for the first time, surpassed the $300 million mark in contracts and grants (C&G) awarded. Congratulations to you…your hard work is showing in all areas of academic excellence!
New Board Chair: A new agenda?: After serving as founding chair of our Board, Trustee Dick Beard passed the baton on June 1st to Trustee Rhea Law. Trustee Law held a Board Roundtable with our deans and senior administrators in mid-August, complimented the university family on our numerous accomplishments achieved over the past five years, and challenged us to set high goals for our next strategic plan. You may not know it, but Trustee Law is a former employee of USF and is extremely passionate about the University. Nationally, university boards are enamored with two issues: accountability and access. Our Board has shown its commitment to quality and I trust that this direction will continue under Trustee Law’s chairmanship.

Congratulations USF-St. Petersburg!: Last month, USF-St. Petersburg received its accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), making USF a network consisting of two accredited institutions. As we congratulate USF-St. Petersburg on this new recognition, please be assured that it has no significant impact on the way we do business. For all practical purposes, USF-St. Petersburg has been functioning like an autonomous unit both fiscally and academically. USF-Sarasota/Manatee, USF-Lakeland and USF-Tampa continue to share the same accreditation and ICAR guides our academic relationships.

Legislative Session: How did we do?

- Buildings -- This year, USF did particularly well with its capital construction agenda. After a dry spell of many years, USF’s Research Campus received its badly needed funding for two buildings: Music and Interdisciplinary Sciences. In addition, we received a match of $5 million for the Patel Center Building. All of these buildings are in the active planning phase. Our next project? A 7-story building to house the Honors College and four floors of freshmen classrooms! In case you wonder how buildings get selected for funding, it involves a lengthy process requiring prioritization by our Board, a final prioritization by the Board of Governors, and then approval from the Legislature.

- Salary – The Legislature gave a 3% base salary increase to faculty and staff beginning October 1, 2006. Additional raise, if any, is being collectively bargained.

- Enrollment Growth Funding – The Legislature funded enrollment growth at the level requested by the BOG, but as you may recall, the BOG did not request full enrollment funding. We continue to carry a large number of unfunded students. One more dark cloud on our funding horizon -- we fell short of our enrollment targets at the Master’s level, and consequently, will be unable to draw all of the funds allocated to us for growth. In case you wonder how enrollment funding works, here is a step-by-step process: (1) each university submits an enrollment plan; (2) BOG approves the plan and makes a legislative budget request; (3) the Legislature funds at a level ranging anywhere from 0 to 100%; (4) universities enroll students based upon the approved plan; (5) universities teach admitted students and carry them in their base irrespective of the level of funding. This is how USF’s funding base, over time, has become
inadequate in comparison to the number of students we teach. One more rule of the game -- if a university is off by 5% for two consecutive years, it cannot use the funds. This is why we must increase enrollment at the Master’s level this year!

- Special Allocations – The Legislature earmarked nearly $100 million dollars in one-time seed money for economic growth initiatives to be used by Florida universities, including $8.5 million appropriated to USF as part of the SUS Research and Technology Investment Program. The programs supported by these funds include Centers of Excellence and World Class Scholars in science and engineering areas. USF is aggressively competing for these funds to build our science and engineering areas. Vice President Chang is managing these programs for USF, in case any of you need more information.

**Faculty/Staff Campaign:** Thanks to your generosity and enthusiasm, the Campaign raised $2.4 million, surpassing the goal of $1.15 million! Wow and more wow!! Even if we consider the $1 million donation given by a single faculty member as an outlier, the Campaign still surpassed the goal by raising $1.2 million through small contributions from its biggest fans -- you. I don’t know of another organization where its own employees care and give so much.

**Collective Bargaining:** The UFF and the UBOT have begun their bargaining for FY 2006-07. Among the issues under negotiation are faculty salaries and domestic partner benefits. AFSCME and UBOT teams continue to meet but have not finalized their contract.

**Executive Searches:** We lost some great deans in June. Two of our departing deans left for positions that affirm USF’s national reputation. Dr. David Shern, 12-year Dean of the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, joined the National Mental Health Association as its President (what an honor!) and Dr. Louis Martin-Vega, 5-year Dean of the College of Engineering, joined North Carolina State University (one of the top ranked engineering schools in the nation!), as its dean. While we are sad for selfish reasons, we should be proud of their accomplishments and of our training. We also said farewell to Dr. Robert Anderson, who retired after 11 years as Dean of the College of Business Administration. More on executive searches...

International Affairs: Dr. Maria Crummett was appointed as Dean.
Business: Dr. Robert Forsythe was appointed as Dean.
Graduate School: Dr. Delcie Durham was appointed as Associate Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School. Many thanks to Dr. Kelli McCormack Brown who served us well as Interim Dean.
Enrollment Planning and Management: Dr. Leellen Brigman was appointed as Associate Vice President.
Marine Science: Finalists are visiting campus.
FMHI: Dr. Bob Friedman has been appointed as Interim Dean. A national search will begin shortly.
Engineering: Dr. Sunil Saigal has been appointed as Interim Dean. A national search will begin shortly.
Lakeland CEO: Dr. Marshall Goodman was appointed as the CEO.
VP for Advancement: The search continues.

On a personal note, I was finally able to finish the book (co-authored) that I have been working on for quite some time. The feeling is incredible!

Thank you for spending some time with me in the cyberspace. I hope you will let me know if you have any advice or words of wisdom for me. If I have failed to include an issue that is on your mind, please do not hesitate to let me know.

I hope to see you at the coffee hour and hope to hear from you about your accomplishments! Have a fantastic academic year!

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