



## Chancellor- Questionnaire

### Jimmy Cheek

1. A. Please describe your current position/responsibilities and institution (student population, faculty/staff, mission, etc.). B. Why are you interested in a new opportunity and what is your interest in the University of Tennessee Knoxville?

1A. The University of Florida is a major public, land-grant, sea-grant, and space-grant university. It is the state's oldest, largest, and most comprehensive university, and is one of the nation's most academically diverse universities. The university enrolls approximately 49,000 students in 16 colleges. UF faculty attracted more than \$583 million in grants in 2006-2007, placing it among the nation's leading research institutions. UF is highly ranked among public institutions for the number of National Merit Scholars enrolled and first in National Achievement Scholars. UF is one of the five largest universities in the nation and is one of 17 public, land-grant universities belonging to the American Association of Universities.

As described in my application letter, I am Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Florida. As Senior Vice President, I provide leadership and administration for the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. I report directly to the President of the University of Florida. The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) includes the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS), the School of Natural Resources and Environment, the School of Forest Resources and Conservation, 13 Research and Education Centers around the state, elements of the College of Veterinary Medicine, the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station, and the Florida Cooperative Extension Service with offices in each of the state's 67 counties.

Last year IFAS expenditures approached \$300 million, over half of which are from non-state appropriated money. IFAS employs 1,160 faculty, 570 of which are tenure accruing or tenured, and 1,275 staff. CALS is the fourth largest college at UF, and enrolls approximately 5,100 students, which is comprised of 4,000 undergraduate students and 1,100 graduate students. Approximately 60% of the undergraduate students and 45% of the graduate students are women. Thirty-seven percent of the undergraduate students and 16% of the graduate students are minorities. CALS has 24 undergraduate majors and 20 graduate majors.

1B. At this point in my career, I would like the opportunity to serve as Chancellor of a major university. I have enjoyed my current position as well as my overall experience at the University of Florida and would be content to remain in this situation. However, given my background, experience, and accomplishments I feel that I am ready for my next step to be a position, such as Chancellor, that would provide me a challenge and tremendous opportunity to fully utilize the skills I have honed during my career.



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I have effectively served as a faculty member, assistant chair, Assistant Dean, Dean of a major college, and now Senior Vice President at one of the largest and best universities in the country. Administratively, I have worked with the Board of Trustees, President, Vice Presidents, Deans, Chairs, Directors, faculty, other administrators, alumni, state and federal legislators, the Governor, and a variety of other stakeholders to form the academic, research, and extension agenda and strategic priorities of IFAS. I know from years of experience and study what universities are about, what it takes to make them better and serve more effectively. I know the importance of working with faculty, students, staff, administrators, alumni, constituencies, and elected and appointed governmental officials and I know how to effectively work with them to accomplish critical objectives.

I believe that my experiences at Florida have given me the background and knowledge to execute the duties and responsibilities of Chancellor with a high degree of commitment and expertise and that would be consistent with the expectations of the position. My long-standing commitment and experiences in higher education have prepared me for a position such as this. The duties and responsibilities of this position would offer me an opportunity to become more involved in the overall administration and development of a major university, which highly interests me.

From what I have been able to learn, I like the administrative structure of UT and believe that this position could be a good fit for me and the university. UT is an outstanding university, positioned as a national leader in many disciplines, while still seeking to be a better university and continue to develop. In this way, UT and UF are similar. One of the primary reasons that I have stayed at UF is that it continues to evolve in positive ways, and I have play a role in that gradual yet noticeable evolution. UT is a land grant university and I have spent my career working with land grant universities and helping them to progress. In addition, there appears to be additional opportunity for interdisciplinary strategic initiatives within UT, the UT system, and entities such as the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. These collaborative opportunities are, in my view, critical to the future development of a university and intrigue me. Moreover, I like the community, state, and the general location of UT. Finally, in my conversations with Gary Daugherty I have been convinced that this position might be an appropriate one for me, and therefore, I want to explore the potential and possibilities.

2. How would you describe your leadership/management style? Please discuss your commitment to open, collaborative leadership and give specific examples.

I am a consensus builder and describe my leadership style as situational. I believe that leadership comes through example. I attempt to model collaboration, professionalism, commitment, integrity, inclusiveness, forward thinking, and the importance of diversity. I seek



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input as decisions are made, while retaining the final authority and responsibility for my decisions. I believe in decentralized decision-making and the importance of shared governance. Those affected by decisions should be involved in the process.

I have had numerous opportunities to express leadership during my professional career. Leadership, in my view, involves providing direction, involving others, persuading, seeking input, visioning, creativity, and organizational change. Those in leadership positions must guard against being overwhelmed by managing and must make time for leadership. Leadership is about where an organization should go and how to effectively cause it to move in that direction. Management is keeping the day-to-day operation running smoothly. It involves planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling. Managers manage time, people, and resources. It is critical that the Chancellor spend more time in leadership and less time in management. However this does not de-emphasize the importance of management because effective management is essential for the success of the university. A leader also needs to be concerned about the tasks to be accomplished and the people in the organization. High concern for task and high concern for people should be of high priority for the Chancellor.

In my letter of application, I have written some additional information about this question.

3. Please discuss your experience in working and leading complex organizations within a system, your experience in managing significant budget operations, and your decision making process for resource allocation.

I have been on the faculty of two major land-grant universities: Texas A&M University and the University of Florida. At Texas A&M, I served as an Instructor. At the University of Florida I have served as a Professor, Assistant Chair, Assistant Dean, Dean and Senior Vice President. In my work at the University of Florida, I have always believed in and worked for excellence in academics, research, and outreach. I have accomplished this belief in many ways from participating as member and chair of numerous committees within the university, IFAS, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and my department and serving in multiple administrative roles.

For almost four years, I have served as Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources. There are four Senior Vice Presidents at UF and we typically meet with the President, as a group and individually, for weekly meetings to discuss key issues at the university. In that context, the Senior Vice Presidents have been involved with every significant decision made at the University of Florida. As a result, I have actively participated in the overall decision making process affecting every aspect of the university, from enrollment management, prioritization for new buildings and placement on campus, and allocation of resources for new strategic initiatives.



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I have had direct management responsibilities for significant budget operations as Dean and now as Senior Vice President. Currently, I manage a budget of approximately \$300 million, less than half of which is state appropriated resources. Each year we have maintained a balanced budget, met all of our obligations, despite a very challenging budget environment last year. Prior to last year, IFAS was fortunate to secure additional resources from the legislature for key budget initiatives such as Emerging Pathogens, Geomatics, and Biofuels. We have exercised a high degree of accountability with these funding initiatives and have communicated to legislative supporters about the allocation of funds for the initiative and the major accomplishments to date.

In the decision making process for resource allocation, I seek input from the Faculty Council, administrators, Deans, and others. In each of those deliberations, excellence in research, academic programs and extension has always been a top priority. Our highest priority, even in these tight budget times, is filling critical faculty positions.

4. Please describe your experience in enhancing support for an institution among its many outside constituents (community, private sector, foundations, and government).

Throughout my career at the University of Florida, I have been involved in working with multiple external constituencies such as alumni, private sector clientele groups, legislators, external advisory councils, and professional associations. Each of these external groups has expectations of and for the institution in question. These expectations may be the same, different, competing, or ambiguous; nevertheless, they are expectations. Managing these expectations and relationships among the various constituencies and maintaining positive working relationships with them is a challenging but essential task. Enhancing the support of these external constituencies for an institution is critical to the success of the entity.

During my term as Senior Vice President developing strong support from external constituents has been a strategic priority. I am pleased to report that we have been highly successful in this endeavor. Our relationships with external constituencies are at a very high level, perhaps the highest ever. Evidence of enhanced support among external constituents are successes in securing new appropriations from the Florida Legislature and U.S. Congress, substantially increased private gifts and endowments, county funding for Extension is at an all time high, and various constituencies verbally report their support for IFAS and its programs and express pleasure with the overall operation of the Institute and its responsiveness to critical need of the state.

This high degree of external constituent support has been fostered through a variety of mechanisms. First, the overall IFAS Advisory Council was restructured by expanding the



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membership, adding various membership categories to make membership more inclusive of constituencies, and forming five regional advisory councils that meet twice a year. As a result the senior leadership of IFAS and key stakeholders thought out the state significantly increased communication. Secondly, a concerted effort has been made to increase communication with stakeholders. Being accessible and participating with external stakeholders is critical to developing strong relations and support. I have attended and spoken at meetings, conferences and executive board meetings across the state to foster these relationships. These venues provide the opportunity to listen and interact as well as explain recent developments, new research initiatives, and the state of the university. Finally, responsiveness to questions and concerns is critical in developing relations with external constituencies. It is important to provide timely responses to inquiries. Open, frank communication is essential and honesty and integrity must be at the core of communication. Many times administrators make decisions that are unpopular both internally and externally, despite input to do otherwise. In these situations, I have found that discussing the decision and the general reasons and rationale for the decision will usually satisfy most detractors.

5. Please briefly discuss your experience in the following areas:

- Building and retaining world-class faculty

Based on my experience, I believe that the quality of faculty is the primary determinate of the quality of a university and its programs. Building a world-class faculty begins with faculty recruitment. In today's market place, recruitment must be aggressive, involving announcement to the academy, encouraging the best candidates to apply, selecting the top candidates for interview, deciding on a candidate for an offer, and finally assembling a competitive offer, including salary, space, a start up package, benefits and if we are to attract the top candidate for a senior position, a host of other considerations. In many cases, the candidate being sought is also being pursued by other major institutions. The departmental reputation and potential is a significant factor influencing potential candidates. Faculty colleagues must have a strong program and a compelling futuristic vision.

Faculty development is important to building a world-class faculty. Opportunities for sabbaticals, attending conferences, participating in international activities, and bringing outstanding scholars to campus help strengthen the faculty and the department. Development of a commitment to the university, college, and department contributes to building a world-class university and the ability to retain faculty.

Retention of the most outstanding faculty is necessary for the development of exceptional programs. My experiences indicate that other institutions will aggressively seek the best and



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most productive faculty. To allow them to succeed will weaken programs and thwart the drive to excellence. We have an aggressive retention strategy and it has been very successful with the exception of one area. We have not been successful in retaining faculty who, because of family ties, want to “go back home.” Annually, we also lose a good number of excellent faculty members who receive an offer of an administrative position (i.e. Dean, Associate Dean, or Chair) that may not be available at UF at the time. While we regret these losses, we celebrate the opportunity for the individual.

- Enhancing the quality of the teaching and learning environment

Based on my administrative career, I list the following as examples of what I have accomplished in enhancing the quality of the teaching and learning environment:

1. We initiated an upper division honors program in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. This program was build upon the UF lower division honors program. It is in its tenth year of operation and the only such program at UF.
2. In conjunction with the Teaching Resource Center, CALS initiated a day long Teaching Enhancement Symposium prior to the beginning of the fall semester. The agenda provides breakout seminars and workshop sessions that address topics such as recruiting superior graduate students, making large lecture classes more effective, and teaching more effective laboratories. Also, the Symposium sponsors a luncheon with an external key note speaker. All faculty and graduate students are invited, with attendance averaging 450 annually.
3. I served on a committee to improve undergraduate academic advising and retention. We developed and implemented a computerized tracking system designed to monitor academic progress toward the students’ declared major. Students who were not making satisfactory progress toward their major had their records flagged prior to registration, preventing them from registering. They were required to consult with an academic advisor, make appropriate adjustments, and then are allowed to register. This had a significantly positive impact on retention and time to degree.
4. We sought and secured Student Enrichment Endowments to provide unrestricted private funds to be utilize to enrich the teaching and learning environment in the college and departments. Several endowments have been secured, the largest of which is Sidney Marshall Student Enrichment Fund endowed at \$1 million.

- Enhancing and better serving the student body

Some example of what I have been involved with to enhance and better serve the student body includes:



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1. CALS Ambassadors. Our college developed an Ambassador program in 1989. Appropriately 30 students are competitively selected annually. They participate in an educational retreat in the summer and meet weekly during the academic year. They represent CALS at various functions, provide tours for students, and participated in leadership development activities. An annual Ambassador Alumni Reunion was initiated several years ago.
  2. Career internships. Via the Dean's office and individual departments, the college encourages student participation in internships. Some departments require internship experiences for graduation.
  3. Study abroad. During my time as Dean and Assistant Dean, I actively promoted study abroad among faculty and students. During that time the college developed several college specific study abroad programs.
  4. Leadership development through student organizations. The college and its departments sponsor various student clubs ranging for the Pre-Veterinary Club to National Agribusiness Marketing Association. We believe these co-curricular learning activities are essential to producing graduates who are ready to enter a professional career, as well as their roles in society.
  5. Scholarships and fellowships. We have a long history of creating endowments to provide funds to support academically superior students. Last year almost \$800,000 in scholarships and fellowships were awarded in CALS.
  6. Legislative internships. When I was Assistant Dean, we initiated a legislative internship program in Washington, DC and Tallahassee. It was developed to increase awareness of the political process and issues influencing various profession fields and the citizenry at large. Last year, the first endowment supporting legislative internships was established.
  7. Medical benefits for graduate students. Until three years ago, the university did not provide medical insurance to graduate student on appointments. The President, Senior Vice Presidents, and Deans developed a plan and implemented the program. As a consequence, we have become much more competitive in attracting superior graduate students.
- Fostering innovative research

In the area of fostering innovative research, there have been a variety of accomplishments during my tenure. When I was Dean, we created an annual Graduate Student Research Symposium. This day long symposium provides graduate students the opportunity to present papers, present posters, and attend a luncheon featuring an address by a distinguished research scholar or administrator. In addition, the outstanding thesis and dissertation awards are presented, including a cash award and a plaque for the selected students and faculty advisors.



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Second, under the leadership of the IFAS Dean for Research, a Research Innovation Fund was created and implemented. It provides funding for three target areas: projects that provide faculty with preliminary data to be more competitive with large scale national grant applications; high risk research projects (lower odds of success) with potential for spectacular scientific payoff; and projects that need funding to position them for commercialization. In FY08 we awarded \$458,728 in support of 10 projects plus \$42,000 in support of one project extended from the previous year. In FY09 we have allocated \$500,000 in support of approximately 10 projects.

Third, a Writing Grants Seminar has been initiated and is designed for faculty members and administrative staff who have had some exposure to writing grant applications. Emphasis is given to such things as idea development, identification of the most appropriate granting agency, how to write for reviewers, and tips and strategies that are of proven value in presenting an applicant's case to reviewers. Participants are taught to organize their presentations using a linear progression of logic, which leads reviewers through their applications.

The Successful Grant Writing Workshop, the second phase of the program, teaches investigators how to write a grant application, a subject that is missing from the educational background of most junior faculty members. This Workshop provides discussion of organizational structure of the major federal funding agencies, how priority scores are calculated, what facilities and administrative costs are, and how to analyze a critique. Up to thirty faculty members participate in each workshop which extends over four to six months. Some of the activities are group based; however, ample one-on-one time is included to ensure that the specific needs of each participant are addressed. The program has three objectives for each participant: to write and submit the best application of which he/she is capable; to better understand the dynamics and psychology of the review process; and to develop an appreciation that constructive criticism from colleagues can make the difference between an application's success and failure. Off-site interactions with consultants are conducted by telephone, fax, and email. These seminars have improved the competitiveness of our faculty for competitive grants and contracts, and as a consequence the seminars have fostered innovative high quality research. The seminar and workshop are presented by external consultants.

- Globalization

I believe that our commitment to excellence must include a commitment to globalization. We must include global perspectives in the courses we teach, our research and outreach. We live in a time of global interdependence and a global economy. Every day we are reminded that what happens in India and China makes a difference in the price we pay for oil, concrete, and food as



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well as impacting other aspects of our lives. It is clear we must foster a sense of global understanding in our faculty, students, and citizens.

We have globalized IFAS' programs in several ways. We have made study- abroad opportunities available to students and have actively encouraged their participation. We have recruited a globally diverse student body, 3% of the undergraduate students and 31% of the graduate students are international. We encourage international exchanges and sabbaticals for faculty and welcome international visitors from around the world. We have developed partnerships and build collaborative programs and memoranda of understanding with selected institutions globally.

IFAS has a longstanding International Programs Office, and have recently hired a new Director. The office is designed to enable faculty, individually and collectively, to contribute to institutional globalization, further develop active international engagement, and serve as a vehicle to foster interdisciplinary international grants and contracts. The IPO develops cooperative agreements and international contracts and is IFAS' link to UF's International Center as well as other centers on campus such as the Center for Latin American Studies. The office encourages and enables international activities and involvement by IFAS faculty and students.

6. The successful candidate must have a demonstrated commitment to creating and nurturing diversity among faculty, staff and students. Please discuss your experience in enhancing diversity at your institution.

I believe that a firm, continuing commitment to diversity and creating, nurturing, and promoting diversity are an essential core value of a university. We live in a world that is increasingly diverse; embracing diversity must be one of the strategic priorities of a university. As I have stated previously in this document, IFAS can be proud of its accomplishments as they relate to diversity. For example, the CALS student body at one time was almost exclusively comprised of Caucasian males. Today, women outnumber men and 37% of the undergraduates and 16% of the graduate students are minority. We have also recruited a globally diverse student body, 3% of the undergraduates and 31% of the graduates students are international.

This change has occurred as a consequence of a strong commitment to diversity by the administration, faculty, and student body. As I said in my letter of application, "Another accomplishment is the increase in faculty and student body diversity. African American enrollment increased from 7% in 1998 to 11% in 2007 and Hispanic enrollment increased from 9% in 1998 to 12% in 2007. In tenured or tenure accruing positions from 2004 to 2007, African Americans increased from 14 to 17, Hispanics increased from 11 to 18, Asians remained constant at 35, and women increased from 87 to 105." For almost a decade and a half, I have worked hard to help make our faculty, staff, and students more diverse and to better reflect the



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state of Florida. I am proud of the success we have experienced. But, we still have much to accomplish.

#### 7. Please describe your involvement with the strategic planning process?

I have been involved with strategic planning during my entire career at the University of Florida. As a faculty member I participated in numerous strategic planning processes. However, it was not until 1992 when I became Assistant Dean of the college that I had an in-depth introduction to not only strategic planning but also implementation. Dean Larry Connor came to UF as Dean of our college in 1991 and immediately appointed several strategic planning committees. I became intimately involved with two of them, the undergraduate education task force and the distance education task force. I chaired the distance education committee, and then with my appointment as Assistant Dean, I was charged with implementing of the undergraduate strategic plan. Many institutions develop strategic plan, but few utilize the plan as a road map for programmatic innovation and change, and a mechanism for benchmarking success by monitoring progress toward the strategic vision. In the case of the undergraduate strategic plan, new majors and minors were developed, some existing majors were deleted or merged, courses were revised and course names were modernized. At the end of the process the college section of the undergraduate catalog was completely re-written. Various student and faculty development programs were initiated as well as new student recruitment and retention strategies were initiated. As a consequence of these curricular and programmatic changes, undergraduate enrollment increased 150% and minority enrollment increased to 24%. Because of enrollment increases, additional resources were allocated to the college which funded 58 new faculty, 52 new staff, and \$2.3 million in operational funds.

In recent years, I have been involved with development and implementation of the Strategic Work Plan for the University of Florida and the Florida First strategic plan for IFAS. From my perspective, it is important to develop a shared vision for a university, which includes input from includes input from faculty, staff, students, alumni, and other constituencies, captures the vision in a strategic plan, utilize the plan as a roadmap for action, and as a monitoring devise to show progress toward the strategic vision over time.

#### 8. Please discuss your involvement in shared governance and provide some specific examples in your past positions.

Soon after I arrived at the University of Florida, I had the opportunity to provide input and make recommendations regarding who should be hired as an Assistant Professor. While I did not make the final decision, my input and recommendation was seriously considered, and the person I believed was best for the job was hired. This is the essence of shared governance. I have



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always believed in the importance of shared governance. As Senior Vice President I do not make a major decision without consulting with other and soliciting input. The Deans and I meet monthly with the faculty council, discuss major issues, and receive input and recommendations. Also there are numerous faculty committees that provide input and recommendations on issues such as tenure and promotion, curriculum, and grievances.

Examples of my participation and involvement in shared governance include the following. First, the President appointed me to a Presidential-Faculty Senate Joint Task Force on Shared Governance. The objective of the Task Force was to recommend an operational framework for an effective partnership of faculty and administration in the shared academic governance of the University of Florida. The report recommended three levels of faculty and administration participation in shared governance: determination, recommendations, and consultation. The report also recommended a committee structure and five areas of partnership. Secondly, IFAS has traditionally had a series of Internal Memoranda that outlined shared governance processes and procedures and a Faculty Council that represented the faculty. Recently, we decided to develop an IFAS Constitution which will codify shared governance processes and procedures. The Faculty Council took leadership for developing a preliminary constitution and a committee of faculty and administration worked to finalize a proposed constitution. The document has been reviewed by the Deans, Office of the General Counsel, and the Senior Vice President. It is now being prepared for submission to the faculty for ratification.