

May 29, 2009

Dear FCS Friends and Colleagues:

As you know, budget challenges have kept us very busy here at the University of Idaho. We very much appreciate the support you gave us during the difficult Program Prioritization Process. Our reply to you has been a long time in coming, primarily because the process moved so quickly and we wanted to make sure we had something of substance to report.

The School of Family and Consumer Sciences at the University of Idaho is strong. Our enrollment continues to increase, up to 370 in spring 2009. We believe this is because today's students want to make a difference and this is what we continue to offer. FCS is the largest program in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and enjoys its strong support. We hired four new faculty members last year, all of whom are actively pursuing work that engages our students in the many facets of Family and Consumer Sciences, from dietetics to community building to the Leila Old Historic Costume Collection. Overall, the news from FCS is very positive.

The Program Prioritization Process we mentioned above was initiated at the request of the Provost in response to the impact of the decline in the United States economy and its effect on financial support from the state. While the process went rather more quickly than most faculty are used to, we did follow standard university and State Board procedures. Departments, Colleges, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, and Faculty Council each had their say, which was reported on up the pipeline. Dean Foltz and Interim Director Sandra Evenson attended each of these meetings and spoke on behalf of FCS Education. Unfortunately, between low enrollments and the loss of a faculty position, the decision was made to eliminate the FCS Education option.

What this means is that as of this fall, the Family and Consumer Sciences Education Option within the Child, Family, and Consumer Studies program will not appear in the University catalogue and can't be declared as a major.

However, current declared majors will be able to complete their studies and earn certification to teach Family and Consumer Sciences. We have adjunct faculty to teach the FCS education courses, students can still register for and complete the Praxis II examination, and apply to the College of Education to complete the student teaching practicum.

At this time, FCS is working closely with Agricultural Extension and Education to see where our courses overlap. Ag Ed has the same kinds of "how to teach" course requirements FCS does, so it seems logical to combine courses. For example, FCS, Ag Ed, and Professional and Technical Education all offer courses in working with student organizations like FCCLA. Our thought is to perhaps combine those three classes into one, with break-out sessions for each major. This is what we are working on this summer. If this kind of

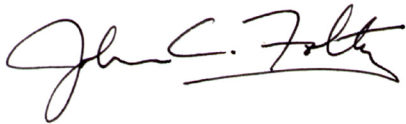
efficiency works, we will explore more options to partner with Ag Ed and PTTE and to continue to offer coursework that allows teacher certification.

So, as students complete their FCS education option, their courses may look a little different than expected, but the content will still be what they need.

Incoming students interested in FCS Education can declare a major in Family Life. This makes them eligible for scholarships and allows them to register for all the content courses required for FCS Education. By the time these students need their pedagogy classes, we hope to have a revitalized FCS Education option in place, though it might be partnered with Ag Education. The College of Education will still offer certification, so students can still become certified to teach FCS.

If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John C. Foltz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent underline for the last name.

John C. Foltz
Associate Dean/Director of Academic Programs
College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sandra Lee Evenson". The signature is cursive and elegant, with a large initial 'S'.

Sandra Lee Evenson
Interim Director
Family and Consumer Sciences