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Faculty Association Resolution March 5, 1998

Faculty Association

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Resolution

Whereas a gift from golf enthusiast John T. Hayt and his wife Gerri has been accepted by the University of North Florida administration to support the development and construction of a “golf management and learning center” on land owned by UNF, and

Whereas UNF’s current 10-year Comprehensive Master Plan states, “The undeveloped upland habitat will be left in its natural state whenever possible;” and the proposed site selected for the golf center in the southern quadrant of the campus (near the University Center) should therefore be kept for as long as possible as an intact, functioning, 40-acre, forested ecosystem, and

Whereas upland areas suitable for university expansion are becoming more and more scarce and the proposed site for the golf center will most probably be needed for additional buildings in the foreseeable future (as shown in the current Campus Master Plan) requiring the golf center to be relocated or destroyed, and

Whereas the university owns other land that:

- is already damaged ecologically and could be rehabilitated by conversion to a golf center, and
- is nearer to athletic support facilities such as locker rooms with showers, and
- may not be needed for additional buildings in the foreseeable future, and

Whereas conversion of ecologically damaged land to golf courses is a new trend in responsible land management, and UNF may enhance its reputation among environmentally sensitive leaders in Florida and in the nation by rehabilitating land with a golf center rather than destroying a natural ecosystem, and

Whereas UNF’s natural endowment offers the university a unique position among Florida SUS institutions to become a national leader in environmental education.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the UNF Faculty Association that the UNF Administration be asked to move the site for the golf center from the southern quadrant of the campus to a place more suitable for such an activity such as one that is already damaged ecologically and that is nearer athletic support facilities.

Historical Events & Rationale

In 1984, President Curtis McCray proposed that UNF allow a golf course to be constructed on campus. He appointed an *ad hoc* faculty committee to “look at the concept of a golf course, Wee Links, at UNF.” This committee unanimously opposed the use of UNF property for that purpose, and the 1984 University Planning Committee (that included eight faculty members) unanimously agreed with the *ad hoc* committee.

In February, 1997, sixteen faculty members in the Department of Natural Sciences presented to Vice President Bob Fagin strong arguments against building a golf center on campus, including the following:

- the UNF golf team would be better served by having privileges at local “world class” facilities
- golf learning by students, faculty and members of the community would be more effective at one of the 19 public and 8 private facilities in the area
- the proposed site will require pesticides and fertilizers that could damage adjacent natural areas through runoff
- the natural areas adjacent to the University Center would serve a larger segment of the University community as an intact natural ecosystem and living laboratory.

UNF is uniquely endowed among SUS universities. Our relatively rich natural environment is one of the qualities that attracts outstanding students, faculty, and staff to our university. UNF is in a position to be a national leader in demonstrating the interdependence of economic prosperity and environmental quality. We must preserve our natural areas as one of our most outstanding assets and make environmental education a touchstone of a UNF education.

Passed by Faculty Association with only one dissenting vote Thursday, March 5, 1998.