Call to Order. A quorum being present, Faculty Council Chair, Professor Ronald Smelser, called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. in the Brink Hall Faculty Lounge.

Minutes. The council accepted the minutes of meeting #28 of the 2000-2001 Faculty Council and meeting #1 of the 2001-2002 Faculty Council, both held on May 1, 2001, as distributed.

Chair’s Report. Chair Smelser gave his “charge” to the 2001-2002 Faculty Council. Smelser told the council that he would like to clean up the unfinished business from last year (course evaluations and tenure review) and that he would also attempt to make good use of the councilors’ time by not having meetings just to have meetings. He urged council members to come to each meeting prepared; to read the preparatory materials sent to them before the meeting; and to move the agenda along through informed discussion and voting. In turn, he asked the council members to help keep him on task. He said that he is looking forward to a productive year, both for the council and the university. On a lighter note, responding to a councilor’s question, Smelser said that he would look into continuing the McKeever tradition of supplying cookies for the council members.

Provost’s Report. Provost Brian Pitcher welcomed the council to the beginning of the fall semester. He reported to the council that:

- on-campus fall enrollment at the U of Idaho appears to be up 4%
  - there is a challenge to provide curricular offerings to all of these new students
  - off-campus program enrollment seems to be holding steady
  - on the campus this year are 61 new U of Idaho Scholars, 54 Presidential Achievement Scholars, and 25 National Merit finalists
  - enrollment will be up at all Idaho institutions of higher education
- as evidenced at the fall general faculty meeting introductions, the new faculty members are of high quality, and the university has had some success at retaining quality faculty members
- the Northwest Association of School and Colleges (NASC) (our accrediting agency) has accepted the U of Idaho’s plans for meeting the NASC requirement of an “effective review of tenured faculty as required by Commission Policy” – the U of Idaho will not have to make yearly reports, but will need to complete action on post-tenure review proposals begun last spring by 2004
- the provost’s office has expanded the affiliate faculty position titles to include “tribal teacher” as the proper identification for language specialist from Native American tribes who will be working with the U of Idaho
- the governor has ordered a 2% holdback of state funding – deans and academic chairs are meeting this week to discuss strategies for handling the holdback

In response to a question by Councilor McCaffrey, the provost said that in order for the university to provide continuing funding for “unfunded obligations,” all academic units were being assessed 1.7% of their operational budget for the next two years. After two years the university will have budgeted for those “obligations” and the assessment will be dropped. Chair Smelser said that Wayland Winstead, Executive Director of Institutional Planning and Budget, would be on the agenda at the next council meeting to provide information about this assessment.

Year-End Report of the Faculty Secretary. Faculty Secretary, Peter Haggart, noted the distribution and content of the annual year-end report of the activities of the Faculty Council. He said that this report is now traditional and provides incoming and continuing members of the council with a review of council actions and activities during the last academic year. The report will also be available on-line at the Faculty Council web site.
Committee on Committees Report. Faculty Secretary, Peter Haggart, reported that, as authorized by the council, the officers of the council and the secretary had proceeded to fill committee vacancies during the summer. Those committee assignments were now before the council for approval as a seconded motion from the Committee on Committees. The motion was adopted by unanimous voice vote.

Confirmation of the Secretary of the Faculty Council. It was moved and seconded (McCaffrey, Kraut) that Professor Emeritus Peter A. Haggart be confirmed as the Secretary of the Faculty Council for the 2001-2002 academic year. The motion was adopted by unanimous voice vote.

Nomination and Election – Budget Liaison Committee. Councilor Kraut provided the council with information about the functions of the Budget Liaison Committee. It was moved and seconded (McCaffrey, Wagner) that Professor Joseph F. Guenthner be appointed to the Budget Liaison Committee with a term running to 2004. The motion was adopted by unanimous voice vote. Councilor Nelson agreed to remain on that committee until his term on the Faculty Council ended.

Nomination and Election – Campus Planning Committee. Councilor McCaffrey provided the council with information about the functions of the Campus Planning Committee. It was moved and seconded (Chun, Lillard) that Professor Robert Pikowsky be appointed to the Campus Planning Committee with a term running to 2004. The motion was adopted by unanimous voice vote. Professor McCaffrey agreed to remain on that committee until his term on the Faculty Council ended.

Sabbatical Leaves. Provost Pitcher presented the council with the first round (the second will come later in the fall semester) of 13 sabbatical leave applications for 2002-2003 recommended by the Sabbatical Leave Evaluation Committee and approved by the Office of the Provost. The motion for approval was adopted by unanimous voice vote.

FC-02-001 – Revision of FSH Section 2700: Student Evaluation of Teaching. The secretary explained that this item was given an agenda number and distributed for information purposes to the council. The Faculty Council and the university faculty approved the implementation of an on-line format for instructor/course evaluations. The implementation is to be “under the guidelines recommended by the Faculty Council Task Force on the Teaching Evaluation Process” [2000-2001 Faculty Council Minutes – Meeting #23 – March 13, 2001]. That proposal suggests that the on-line evaluation system “be reviewed after its fourth consecutive semester of use” [FC-01-023, dated March 13, 2001]. The 2001-2002 Faculty Council will find a copy of the approved procedures attached to these minutes. Any substantial change in the evaluation method will necessitate a change in Section 2700 in the Faculty-Staff Handbook. A temporary change has been made (see attached copy) to the 2001 edition of the Faculty-Staff Handbook that reflects the two year trial of the on-line evaluation system. The final handbook changes (FC-02-001) must be brought before the university faculty for approval.

FC-02-002 – Revisions of the Teaching Evaluation Instrument. Councilor Nielsen provided the council with background information on the work of the Faculty Council Task Force on the Teaching Evaluation Process during the last academic year. That work led to the adoption of an on-line evaluation system by the university faculty at its May meeting.

The task force is now proposing a revised evaluation instrument composed of the following elements:

- a preamble consisting of student self-reported information concerning expectations and realizations for each course
- an instructor rating section consisting of an instructor/department selected menu of questions; a standard summary instructor rating question; and a linked open-ended comment question
- a course rating section consisting of an instructor/department selected menu of questions; a standard summary course rating question; and a linked open-ended comment question
Councilor Nielsen emphasized that many of the elements of the proposed evaluation instrument follow current research in the field and have been used and tested by other institutions.

The full text of both FC-02-001 and FC-02-002 will be made available for printing and/or viewing at the Faculty Council web site.

The council, as well as council observers, engaged in a lively and informative discussion of the evaluation instrument. Some of the issues raised included:

- academic units considering using both paper and on-line evaluations to compare the response rate
  - some are concerned that the response rate on-line will not match the current rate using paper
  - others are concerned that using paper will cause confusion and perhaps even undermine the on-line system
  - provost has the final word on any use of paper evaluations
  - good teachers will be rated as good teachers no matter what the form of the evaluation, paper or on-line
- concern by students about the length of the evaluation – especially when they need to evaluate 5 or 6 courses
- concern about the on-line system being ready by the spring semester
  - the programming is now 80% complete, but it needs testing before implementation
  - should only be implemented under optimal conditions
- customizing the on-line forms – instructors or departments need the ability to have specialized questions in addition to the standard menu items
- need for feedback from both students and faculty – before implementation and after
- concern about the elimination of parts 3 and 4 of the original proposal – assessing the “instructional environment” and “technical support” in the classroom
  - especially for distance education courses
  - these areas could be addressed in the standard menu items or with special items for certain courses
  - other methods could be used to collect that data from students taking tech heavy courses
  - classrooms should be evaluated separately by the instructor using that room – gather lots of data on each room using a different survey instrument
  - technology issues occur infrequently – instructors are better evaluators than students
- bias problems built into salary, tenure, promotion decisions because the evaluation questions are chosen by the instructor – picking questions to emphasize strengths rather than known weaknesses
- evaluation “culture” will need to change as we move to on-line evaluation at all levels of the university
  - for instance, the way these new evaluations are used in annual evaluations of faculty members by departmental administrators
- assuring that the new system is carefully explained to all levels of users – create a good environment for the implementation of the on-line evaluation system

At the end of the discussion it was moved and seconded (Nielsen, McCaffrey) (1) that the university continue to use the current printed teacher/course evaluation system this fall and (2) that the university not implement the on-line evaluation system until the instrument has been thoroughly tested. The earliest implementation date will be the prescribed evaluation dates for the Spring 2002 semester. The motion was adopted by majority voice vote (18 yea, 1 nay).

Chair Smelser said that the council can discuss the other items presented by the task force – handbook revision, instrument questions, and the deleted parts of the instrument – at a later date.
Employee Benevolent Fund. Chair Smelser told the council that work continues to facilitate the establishment of a benevolent fund, as proposed to the council by a staff member last spring. The final touches are being put on the document, and it is being reviewed by the university legal counsel. It should be ready for approval in a few weeks.

Proposed Agenda Items. Councilors suggested the following issues and concerns as possible agenda items this year:

- bring to closure the post-tenure review/development process proposals
- items of interest/concern to intercollegiate athletics
- health care issues
  - a mechanism to review health care issues
  - benefit packages for employees
- the current policy for excused absences from class
- personnel policies
  - exempt personnel dismissal policy
  - graduate student dismissal policies – other than poor grades
- undergraduate student integrity issues – honor code
- responsibility center management (RCM) update
- plans for campus buildings – particularly dormitory plans
- implications for teaching with the renovation of the UCC building
- electronic publishing as a part of scholarly activities
- advising – how are we doing – a joint study with the ASUI
- educational benefits for children of university employees
- outreach and extension issues
  - resources
  - scholarship credit

Smelser encouraged council members to send other possible agenda items to him in care of the Faculty Secretary’s Office (1106).

Adjournment. The chair indicated that he would entertain a motion to either extend the meeting time or adjourn. It was moved and seconded (Lillard, Chun) to adjourn the meeting. Chair Smelser adjourned the meeting at 5:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter A. Haggart
Secretary of the Faculty Council