University of Idaho  
FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES  
2001-2002 Meeting #15, Tuesday, February 19, 2002

Present: Smelser (chair), Bitterwolf (vice-chair), Butts-Matheson, Chandler, Dickinson, Fairchild, Haggart (w/o vote), Kraut, McCaffrey, McClure, Meier, Murray, Netzer, Nielsen, Olson, Pikowsky, Pitcher (w/o vote), Dangerfield (for Thompson), Wagner  
Absent: Chun, Goodwin, Guenthner, Hong, Lillard, Nelson  
Observers: 4

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. An amended agenda for today’s meeting was presented to the council.

Minutes. The council accepted the minutes of the February 5, 2002, meeting as distributed.

Chair’s Report. Chair Smelser reported to the council the following items:
- councilor Wes Chun is recuperating from his bypass surgery and will probably return to work within the next month
- an anticipated increased budget cut for higher education (11%) that was rumored last week did not materialize – the Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee (JFAC) approved the original budget, which still contained a 10% cut
- the committee evaluating the performance of the Faculty Secretary is completing its work and will make its report to the university president

Provost’s Report. Provost Brian Pitcher reported to the council the following items:
- praise was given to Faculty Secretary Peter Haggart and Administrative Assistant Ann Thompson for the web sites constructed and maintained by them for the Faculty Council and the Faculty-Staff Handbook – noting that in researching a matter he was able to navigate and find the materials that he needed easily and quickly
- JFAC reported out to the legislature the budget for most of the special appropriations in the U of Idaho budget with only a 7.5% cut – less than other higher education cuts
- an announcement (copies provided for the council) concerning the hiring back of Professor Gary Maki and his 14 member staff who comprise the Center for Advanced Microelectronics Biomolecular Research team to the U of Idaho Research Park in Post Falls – a $3 million a year operation with federal funding and NASA institute designation
- thanked the faculty, staff, and students for sharing our campus with thousands of grade, middle, high school, and college students this week for the workshops, competitions, and concerts associated with the 35th edition of the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival

Associated Students of the University of Idaho (ASUI) Announcement. Councilor Kasey Murray announced to the council and provided written information concerning nomination of students and organizations for “achievement” awards. Nominations are due in the ASUI office by March 8th.

Student Honor Code. Dean of Students Bruce Pitman and ASUI Senator Isaac Myhrum made a presentation to the council regarding the establishment of a Student Honor Code at the U of Idaho. Pitman told the council that the idea of an honor code had surfaced in campus discussion many times, the last time being about three years ago. However, each time the idea faded away due to a lack of continuing interest by students and not having a good honor code model from a public university. Most honor codes exist at private or military schools.

Pitman said that one of the reasons he is again interested in pursuing the establishment of an honor code is because there are now some good public university models. Programs at the University of Colorado (Boulder) and Kansas State University could prove to be useful in researching a possible program for the U of Idaho. In addition, Pitman said that he has also been impressed with the enthusiasm and interest shown by the student government in establishing an honor code.

Pitman stressed that research into the establishment of student honor codes shows that a successful code is tied to 1) heavy student involvement and ownership, and 2) allowing adequate time for the educational culture to change from having no code to enforcing an honor code. Senator Myhrum noted that the process of establishing and enforcing an honor code provided a unique opportunity for U of Idaho students. He believes that having a code would add “weight” to a U of Idaho degree. He said that he realizes that it will put a lot of pressure on students, because a code carries with it high standards of conduct. Having an honor code also sends a strong message to prospective U of Idaho students and future employers of U of Idaho graduates.

Provost Pitcher added that the academic integrity required by an honor code calls for a “holistic” approach that involves not just the students, but the whole university community. An honor code depends on students reporting the violations of others, as well as their own. The penalties for violations should carry penalties that would cause a student to “think twice” before cheating. The council engaged in a discussion of current problems on the U of Idaho campus involving matters of student “honor” in completing classroom assignments, particularly in the use of web based resources by both students and teachers.
That discussion led the council to insist that any study of a potential honor code include a careful assessment of the evaluation techniques that are being used by other public universities, and also how those universities managed to get the necessary “cohesiveness” within their student body to make an honor code work.

It was moved and seconded (Meier, McCaffrey) that the Faculty Council encourages and fully supports the Office of Student Affairs and the Associated Students of the University of Idaho in their joint research and writing of a proposal leading to the establishment of an Honor Code at the University of Idaho. The motion was adopted by unanimous voice vote. Pitman told the council that he would report back on the results of their work in about a month and welcomed interested faculty members to contact him if they were interested in helping with the research. [This matter has been placed on the agenda for the March 26th council meeting.]

Fiscal Year Contract Holidays. Councilor Robert Pikowsky talked to the council about the problem of fiscal year exempt employees having to use a day of annual leave in order to be absent from the campus on December 31st. There are two legal holidays that are worked by these employees – Columbus Day and Veterans Day. In exchange for that, there are three days off given to staff employees (because of overtime considerations – 1.5 times normal hours equals three days). However, exempt employees do not qualify for overtime, and those worked holidays only add up to two days. Thus, in order to be off work on that third day, exempt employees must use vacation time or unpaid leave. Pikowsky said that the rest of the campus is basically closed down, and yet there is this one group of employees who are required to be in their offices. Pikowsky said that this situation was bad for morale and he would like to find a solution through a change in policy. He is talking with people in the HRS office and will present the council with a proposed resolution at a later date.

Required Changes in University Policy. University Counsel Georgia Yuan and Acting Assistant Vice President for Human Resources (HRS) Pat Sturko addressed the council concerning changes in Faculty-Staff Handbook policy wording required by changes in the SBOE/Regents personnel policies.

Yuan explained that the SBOE/Regents successfully requested from the legislature that the administrative rules on personnel be repealed, allowing the SBOE/Regents to govern personnel matters by policy rather than by rule. Repeal of the SBOE/Regents personnel rules resulted in the need to combine provisions in the rules with policy provisions, and also provided a prime opportunity for the U of Idaho to review and revise personnel policies completely.

These revisions focus on three objectives, 1) converting all rules and policies into one document, 2) increasing the delegation of decision-making to the chief executive officers of the institutions and agencies, and 3) streamlining the existing procedures, without substantially changing employee benefits. All of the policies can be seen at the SBOE/Regents web site: http://www.sde.state.id.us/osbe/board.htm. Yuan also noted that the U of Idaho is now in the process of building a searchable web site dealing with all university policies.

The council was provided with a table summary of current and proposed personnel policies, and also with several proposed working document changes. Sturko briefly reviewed the process that her office is using to review the personnel policies. The council was able to clearly see in her presentation the nature and scope of the policy revision project. It was pointed out by the secretary that, under normal circumstances, the council reviews all changes to the Faculty-Staff Handbook. Thus, the council would be presented with the task of reviewing a very large number of policies, of which only a few actually contained material of concern to faculty governance or made changes to faculty employment conditions.

As a matter of practicality, and to expedite the process of reviewing and editing these policy documents, it was moved and seconded (Bitterwolf, Wagner) that HRS and University Counsel only bring to the council’s attention those policy changes that obviously would be of concern to members of the faculty, and that the officers of the council and its secretary keep track of and review all changes. The motion was adopted by unanimous voice vote. It was also noted that the editor of the Faculty-Staff Handbook, Douglas Q. Adams, should be consulted on suggested changes to the preamble of sections of the handbook. Chair Smelser thanked Yuan and Sturko for their excellent presentation and their collective concern for communicating policy changes to the council.

Editorial Change to Faculty Job Description (FSH 3050). To prove that the Faculty Council could act with considerable dispatch, the council discussed and acted upon an editorial change to the new faculty job description form that was suggested less than 24 hours prior to the meeting. It was moved and seconded (McCaffrey, Wagner) that the faculty job description (Section 3050 – items 4 and 5) be editorially changed to replace the words “on-campus service” with the words “university service.” The motion was adopted by unanimous voice vote.

Adjournment. It was moved and seconded (McCure, McCaffrey) to adjourn. The motion was adopted by unanimous voice vote, and Chair Smelser adjourned the meeting at 4:44 p.m.

Next Council Meeting. The next meeting of the Faculty Council will be held on March 5th.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter A. Haggart
Secretary of the Faculty Council