University of Idaho
2010-2011
FACULTY SENATE AGENDA

Meeting #14

3:30 p.m.
Tuesday, January 25, 2011
BRINK HALL FACULTY LOUNGE

Order of Business

I. Call to Order.

II. Minutes.
   • Minutes of the 2010-11 Faculty Senate Meeting #13, January 18, 2011

III. Chair’s Report.

IV. Provost’s Report.

V. Other Announcements and Communications.

VI. Committee Reports.

VII. Special Orders.
   • Brainstorm Future Senate Topics
   • Discussion and Prioritization of Topics

VIII. Unfinished Business and General Orders.

IX. New Business.

X. Adjournment.

Professor Dan Eveleth, Chair 2010-2011, Faculty Senate

Attachments:
Minutes of Meeting #13
Present: Baillargeon, Baker (w/o vote), Barlow, Budwig (Boise), Dakins (Idaho Falls), Duvall (Coeur d’Alene), Edwards, Eveleth, Fairley, Halloran, Hill (w/o vote), Krug (for Horn, w/o vote), Huber, Joyce, Limbaugh, A. Marshall, J. Marshall, Mosman, Padgham-Albrecht Riesenberg, Stark, Strawn. Absent: Hopper, Horn, Hoversten. Visitors/Guests: 3

A quorum being present, the Chair opened the meeting at 3:36 p.m.

Minutes: It was moved to accept the minutes of meeting #12 (A Marshall/Mosman)

Chair’s Report: The Chair welcomed senators back to the spring semester. He noted that the Faculty Secretary had returned from assignment and asked for a brief comment on Professor Hill’s experiences. Secretary Hill recounted that his American Council on Education Fellowship had taken him to the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and Washington, D.C. for the fall semester. His project involved understanding the processes that contribute to higher education policy development and the interactions with the federal government with more than 60 organizations representing higher education in Washington. It had been an exciting semester. Professor Hill looked forward to working with senators and the leadership through the remainder of the year.

The Chair noted that the draft of a new campus transportation plan had been developed; something that Carl Root discussed in senate earlier in the year. This is a longer-term plan covering three-six years. Mr. Carl Root will be hosting a meeting in February of the Transportation Advisory Group to review the plan.

Provost’s Report: The Provost and Keith Ickes, Executive Director of Budget and Planning would be visiting colleges over the next two weeks. The Provost was happy to share some positive news during visits to colleges. He noted that the Governor had recommended a budget reduction of 1.3%. Given that we had worked through budget reductions of the order of 20% in the previous two years, this was a much better situation. With the potential to increase enrollment along with the possibility of tuition increases, it looked possible that the university could avoid a budget short-fall due to the proposed state budget cut.

As part of celebrating Black History Month, on February 7, Jessie Jackson will present “Keeping Hope Alive” at 7:15 p.m. in the Kibbie Dome. Admission is free and all are welcome. Last year the senate had approved the policy change that supported awarding of Distinguished Professorships. The selection committee had been formed and nominations for the first round of awards would soon be sought.

Provost Baker moved on to introduce guest presenter, Ron Baker, Executive Vice-President of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), the higher education accreditation body for the Northwest. The NWCCU helps institutions in the Northwest by establishing standards and accreditation processes. The accreditation processes are vital tools for us to use to improve what we do as an institution. The Provost then invited Dr. Baker to address the senate.

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities Accreditation Process. Dr. Baker noted that a new process of accreditation was being rolled out. This process was on a shorter cycle than the previous process and had been reviewed and voted upon by the membership of the NWCCU. Transition to the new cycle means that some institutions will be on an accelerated track to complete their accreditation in
a timely manner. The University of Idaho will be on a fast track, although not as fast as some others, completing accreditation under this scheme by 2014.

The new accreditation process is centered around two themes: Continuous Improvement and Accountability. The new process also facilitated more regular connection with greater feedback and dialog between the institutions and the commissioners. He went on to describe the five standards that constituted a full cycle of accreditation that was now designed to cover a seven year period:

- **Standard 1 – Mission, Core Themes, Expectations.** This Standard was about developing a broad understanding about the institutional mission and articulating what defines mission fulfillment for the institution. In the new accreditation scheme the University of Idaho Standard 1 would be turned in to the Commission in fall 2011 and evaluated.
- **Standard 2 – Resources and Capacity.** This Standard represented almost the entire accreditation process under the old scheme. This step would normally be completed by year 3 of a cycle. UI will complete this step in fall 2012.
- **Standard 3 – Planning and Implementation and Standard 4 - Effectiveness and Improvement.** These Standards entail planning and review down to the program and course levels.
- **Standard 5 – Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation and Sustainability.** This review standard asks did the institution achieve the objectives set out in Standards 1-4. It also has an element of projecting forward to what the future objectives of the institution will be.

The components of the assessment include both analysis and synthesis. It considers not only the standards of the elements of institutional program offerings, but also how they intersect to consider what the institution is achieving collectively. The notion is to establish culture and models for institutional continuous learning and improvement.

Questions:

*Does the assessment reach to the level of the cultural engagement of the faculty and staff at the institution?* These elements might be noted in a review. However, the review is more focused upon the long-term and sustainable achievements of the institution.

*For Colleges that have professional or disciplinary accreditation as part of their regular process, does the NWCCU work with those accrediting bodies to streamline the accreditation process?* The NWCCU is more focused upon how these units’ activities fit into the matrix of the institutional activities as a whole.

*Are the reviewers the same individuals over the seven year period?* No. Different people will make up the teams over the visits that occur through the cycle. New people bring fresh perspectives to the process.

The Provost noted that the new University of Idaho Strategic Plan that was being rolled out this month closely aligned with Standard 1. For completeness, in fully addressing Standard 1, further details on metrics would be required. The presentation that Dr. Baker had delivered to a leadership group earlier in the day would be available on the Provost’s website tomorrow (Wednesday, January 19) for those interested in greater detail.

**Flexibility in Dealing with Curriculum Issues.** The Chair noted that in curriculum development important tasks for faculty were to test and refine new and novel courses by running them and working on continuous improvement. This meant that flexibility is needed. In contrast, faculty, as a group
implement accountability for curriculum standards and in this respect bring rigidity and review to the curriculum. There had been some concerns expressed that there was inflexibility in current policy. The issues for discussion are whether current policy allows sufficient flexibility for faculty to try new and novel curricula under temporary course designations and also whether policy around naming these temporary courses may be too restrictive. UCC has formed a sub-group to address these types of issues with the intent to bring suggested policy changes back to senate later in the semester. The Chair was hoping senate could provide additional insight given personal experiences with the same or similar issues and provide some feedback to the UCC sub-committee. Registrar, Nancy Krogh joined senators for the discussion.

Discussion centered around issues for courses numbered 499 – Directed Studies and 404/504 Special Topics and similar designations.

Special circumstances arise that require the use of such courses for example:

- Students might be unable to enroll in a regular section for specific reasons: a student pursuing double or triple majors in areas that are heavily structured with sequential classes could be in a situation in which they needed specific courses to complete their degree but would be precluded because of timing of classes offered in competing courses.
- In some cases faculty and staff advisers assist students to identify courses that could be used as a suitable substitute for a mandatory course and to petition for approval to substitute. This case can arise when a student has only one or two courses left for degree completion and the standard course may only be offered in alternate years. Course that may be substituted might be regular courses but in some cases they may be 499 or 404/504 courses.

Other factors for consideration in offering such courses:

- The topic of whether the same considerations and principles should apply to graduate and undergraduate courses was discussed. There was support for the notion that closer examination of the issues might benefit through separate consideration of graduate and undergraduate courses. There was a regular need for graduates to receive specific training in a specialized area. This training might be available to small groups of graduates and these types of courses might only be needed every two or three years. Thus, it was not efficient to generate a specific course number and catalog entry for such courses.
- In some departments practice is to determine which courses might be needed as Special Topics for the department as a whole while others were less involved in determining individual student needs.
- In the development of novel interdisciplinary courses, the Special Topics option was used to facilitate their development. It would be nice to extend the two year limitation on special topics courses before officially entering these courses in the catalog, as it typically takes three or more years to fine-tune a course.
- There were multiple discussions around the reasoning behind the limitation and use of course titles for Directed Study, 499 or for Special Topics 404/504. Senators and the Registrar agreed that the intention was to ensure that regularly offered courses undergo formal review and adoption to the regular curriculum. The purpose of the temporary designation was not to be used as a way to avoid collective faculty review and approval.
- Another question raised was how are standards assured for such courses and how are they considered for accreditation purposes.
- In recent times, the university had been focused upon minimum student numbers in courses. In considering the needs and fulfillment of specialized requirements would it be more efficient or
less efficient to have courses listed as Special Topics renamed and more permanently entered into the catalog or to continue with the more temporary course naming process that avoided the catalog listing and full approval protocols.

Other Business. The Chair called for and obtained volunteers to serve on an appeals panel under FSH 2450 policy.

Future Senate Topics. In consideration of topics that senate might discuss during the spring, the Chair requested that senators provide any topics they may wish to discuss. Other topics include: Partner benefits, an update by Vice President of Research and Economic Development Jack McIver on Instituting Institutes, Vice President of Finance and Administration Lloyd Mues and the Benefits Advisory Group to update on benefits’ policies and status of the program. In addition, Associate Vice President for Facilities, Brian Johnson had offered to provide a guided tour of facilities for senators. This would occur later in the spring. The Committee on Committees would review faculty participation in volunteerism and service on senate committees.

Adjournment: It was moved (Fairley/Baillargeon) to adjourn at 5:02 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Rodney A. Hill, Faculty Secretary and
Secretary to Faculty Senate