Present: Stevenson (for Provost Aiken), Boschetti, Brandt, Caplan, Chung, Couture (Boise), Crowley (w/o vote), Earl, Folwell, Foster, Frey, Hiromoto, Jeffery, Kennelly, Lowe, Nyavor, Perret, Qualls, Smith, Stauffer Stoll, Teal, Wolf, Ytreberg; Absent: Aiken (w/o vote), Godfrey (Coeur d’Alene), Karsky, Mahoney, Miller, Murphy, Safaii, Guests: 5

The Meeting was called to order at 3:32. Somewhat belatedly a motion was made (Wolf/Stoll) to accept the minutes from Meeting #12. The motion passed without objection.

Chair’s Report: The Chair reminded the Senate that we would not meet next week during the Thanksgiving break. On December 2nd Dan Stephens will be here to discuss a new comp time policy. Nominations for University Distinguished Professor should be emailed to Chair Ytreberg by tomorrow.

In reference to last week’s discussion on possible subsidies of Day Care, we received an email from Provost Aiken showing that the UI currently subsidizes the day care program with $225,000 a year. Approximately $141,000 comes from ASUI student fees and $84,000 comes from the general education budget.

Provost Report: Vice Provost Stevenson announced some important deadlines. Position Descriptions are due in the Provost Office on January 9th. Promotion packets are due this Friday November 21st in the Provost Office. Everyone should have received an email regarding a new program on the inclusive workplace. This involves a 35 minute web based program which all employees are expected to complete by March 31. Those who have not completed this program by the deadline will not be eligible for any merit or other changes in employee compensation. The Chair stated that he had heard from some that this email got filtered into their spam. The Senate would be reminding people of the need to complete this program before the deadline.

FS-15-022: (UCC-15-043): CALS - New Major - Sustainable Food Systems. The Chair introduced Jodi Johnson-Maynard to discuss the proposed new major in CALS on Sustainable Food Systems. Professor Johnson-Maynard stated that the new program was aimed at reaching a non-traditional group of students. A growing number of students frequently from urban environments are interested in small scale sustainable agricultural production. A Senator asked how this program differed from other programs like sustainable healthy landscapes. She answered that their more traditional programs focused on conventional large scale agricultural production. The new major focuses on a different type of production and making connections outside of the production process to health policy. The proposal passed unanimously.

The Chair introduced President Chuck Staben to discuss the University’s priorities. The President noted that one year ago today his appointment as President of the University of Idaho was announced. President Staben emphasized that our enrollment has been stable at around 12,000 students over the last 5 years. This is lower than it needs to be. He believes we need to increase undergraduate enrollment by 50% while maintaining the quality of our academic and student experience. Around 40% of Idaho’s high school students go to college and we need to raise that to 60%. Achieving this enrollment increase is critically important to our success particularly in terms of generating tuition to ensure our financial stability.

The UI is doing about what one would expect for a school with our student academic profile, in terms of student retention. Our first year retention is around 80% with a six year graduation rate of 56%. We are doing well but we can do better. There are schools with a similar student profile that perform better on these typical measures. We can improve in providing high impact student experiences like undergraduate research, service learning, and study abroad. We can do a better job of organizing these student opportunities.

In terms of faculty research the UI is doing well. We are currently bringing in about $100 million a year in research dollars with about half of that coming from the federal government. This is important in terms of pushing back the frontiers of knowledge as well as having an economic impact in the region. In an era when federal research dollars are fairly stagnant we need to improve in our ability to work with the private sector. We are working face-to-face
with various regional corporations on research projects. We are a public research university and everything we do must be in the public interest.

The President also discussed the capital campaign that is coming to a close. We did exceed our goal of $225 million and we are currently at $246 million. This is not cash in the door but it does represent commitments of funds that will come to the University. President Staben briefly commented on athletics which he noted was too visible to some and not visible enough to others. He believes that athletics plays an important role in visibility as well as providing access to a higher education for some athletes who otherwise would not have this opportunity. Our athletic programs have been successful just not in football.

President Staben discussed the importance of higher education in the State and the United States. There are many benefits to the student as well as societal and economic benefits. It has been estimated that UI graduates have earned $740 million more than someone with a high school education. Overall the UI has about a billion dollars a year impact on the state of Idaho. The UI is a good investment both for its students and its economic impact on the state.

When we look at our budget of $364 million about 30% comes from the State, 25% from tuition and 22% from grants and contracts. The President stressed that approximately 60% of the budget is under our control pointing out that we don’t have much control over what the state provides. While he will advocate to increase the state share of our budget, we need to work on the parts that we have more control over. He hopes to make the budget process more transparent but he doesn’t assume that the faculty will spend much time worrying about the details of the budget.

Around 70% of our budget goes to salaries. We know that our faculty and staff salaries are lagging behind and we need to reverse that trend. This leads to our highest legislative priority of increasing salaries by 4%. For every 1% we increase salaries this costs us about one million. If the state doesn’t provide all of the requested increase we will need to increase enrollment by 140 students for every 1% salary increase. He does expect some, but not all, of our other legislative priorities to be met.

The President also briefly discussed the status of various administrative searches. We have filled some positions and have several ongoing. The Provost search is already underway and searches for VP for Advancement and an Executive Director of Communication & Marketing are also underway. He has reorganized the Communication and Marketing position to put more emphasis on enrollment marketing.

The President discussed how he hopes to communicate with the University. Besides addresses like the State of the University Address he also writes a Friday Letter aimed mainly at alumni. He meets regularly with his Vice Presidents and his Cabinet. He has a monthly Administrative Roundtable which has about 35 members. There are other events like the Breakfast for Progress where 160 people are invited. He also has office hours and is willing to meet with faculty and staff in a variety of ways. President Staben expressed a desire to see the Faculty Senate turn its attention to major university priorities. He then invited questions.

- How are we proposing to increase enrollment when others are also trying to do the same?
  - The President responded that BYU Idaho is growing the most but we have some opportunities. Idaho is at the bottom in high school students continuing on to higher education. We need to convince these students to go to college. The easiest way to grow enrollment is to retain more students and this is the area that faculty can play the most significant role. In terms of recruiting students we need events like last week’s Envision Idaho which had a 100% increase from past events. If students visit campus they are far more likely to enroll. He noted we were well behind on enrollment management, but we are making progress.
  - We are also making changes in how we offer scholarships. Last year we had a very complicated scholarship structure and were very late with our offers. This year we have simplified the structure and moved up the date. We plan to give more scholarships to students with GPA’s in the 3.0-3.4 range. Students in this category who received no aid came at 11% rate, but if we gave them $1,000 they came at a 42% rate. It appears that giving a little money to high school students in this range can
be extremely persuasive. Other changes involved training tour guides to put the University in the best light. Simple process changes can lead to significant improvement.

- **Can you speak to Idaho’s low rank in Research Funding?** The state is extremely low although it does well in energy funding through INL. The University is doing ok although not great in research funding. We are optimistic that we will get another COBRE grant. In general we need to pick areas that we can excel in on the national level and invest in those areas. This requires a lot of expertise on the part of faculty, deans and chairs.

- **Hiring processes and faculty assistance with grants seem to be institutional barriers to research.** President Staben agreed that our hiring practices were slow and needed improvement but he thought that faculty in most institutions tended to overestimate the degree to which they received help preparing budgets from a centralized research office.

- **New presidents tend to make changes in upper level administration, do you have any plans in this area?** The President suggested that he was not unwilling to make immediate changes but he preferred a more measured approach. He noted that it takes time for a new administrative team to take shape.

- **Our focus appears to be on increasing undergraduate enrollment, what about plans for graduate students and programs?** The President acknowledged that graduate programs are very important to our research programs. He suggested that graduate programs come into two general types. There are programs that are very research intensive which he suggests will grow by growing our research program. Other types of graduate programs are more professional and have excellent potential to serve the state as well as being excellent sources for net income growth. He wants the University to think about these programs more aggressively. These programs can both fulfill our mission and enhance our budget.

- **What about the role of international students?** The President noted that international students increase diversity and great value to the University. He expressed a concern that it is unfair to bring international students to campus and set them adrift. To a related question as to whether there are some hidden costs to students in some programs like study abroad, the President did not believe that these costs would affect recruitment and retention of students. Another Senator suggested that the institutional structure of the UI made recruiting international graduate students difficult. The President suggested that this was something that faculty and deans should work on but that generally this was not a Presidential level concern.

- **How confident are you about succeeding in a 4% increase in compensation from the state legislature?** The President thought that it would be difficult and an uphill push; but, it wasn’t out of the question. The state legislature has many competing priorities and it was up to the University to make the case that this is important.

- **How would such an increase in compensation be distributed, do you favor an across the board increase or one that was more tiered?** The President said he did not think that across the board increases were usually in the best interests of the University. The Chair also commented that he has asked the UBFC to look into the question of how increases in compensation might be structured and to report back to the Senate next semester.

- **Given Idaho’s culture, how might we change the fact that so low a percentage of high school students go on to college?** President Staben thought it was necessary to do a better job in educating parents and why obtaining a degree is important. Thirty-Eight percent of our students are first generation students and we need to know what they are thinking and what their experience is like. The message that needs to be sent to lot of first generation parents is that education can change the life of those who receive that education. It may not be easy to do, but the only way to do it is one step at a time.

- **What might we do to house students if there was a rapid increase in students?** The President suggested that dorms are not completely full now but that if we had a significant increase we would need to plan several years in advance noting dorms could be built in a year. While a rapid increase would make him happy such a development would obviously have to be accompanied by policy changes.

- **How do our scholarships and fellowships compare to our peer institutions?** The President noted that we have a very high tuition discount rate and even though we have lowered this in recent years we are still much higher than most public institutions. He suggested that the only real answer to the financial problems of the University is to grow enrollment. We do try to target our scholarships and some of this is directed to out-of-state students who frequently bring a different perspective and increase the diversity of the campus in a number of ways. Importing talented students that stay in the state is a very good
investment. However, we don't want to discount our out-of-state tuition too dramatically which we may have done in the past.

- The final question of the day related to enhancing student career services. The President felt that this was very important and we need to do a better job of communicating to students and their parents about what career opportunities exist. To many students who are questioning why they are in college we need to help show them how they can turn their college experiences into a career.

Adjournment: The President thanked the Senate for the opportunity to discuss these important priorities and with the hour getting late the Chair accepted a motion (Foster/Smith) to adjourn at 4:59.

Don Crowley, Faculty Secretary and Secretary to Faculty Senate