University of Idaho  
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
2014-2015 Meeting #14, Tuesday, December 2, 2014

Present: Aiken (w/o vote), Boschetti, Brandt, Caplan, Chung, Couture (Boise), Crowley (w/o vote), Earl, Folwell, Foster, Frey, Godfrey (Coeur d’Alene), Hiromoto, Jeffery, Karsky, Kennelly, Lowe, Mahoney, Murphy, Nyavor, Perret, Smith, Stauffer, Stoll, Teal, Wolf, Ytreberg; Absent: Couture (Boise), Miller, Qualls, Safaii, Guests: 8

The Chair called the Senate to order at 3:33. Chair Ytreberg introduced the Consent Agenda as a way of saving time. Instead of discussing all three items independently the Senate could approve all three items simultaneously. If anyone would like to remove one of the items than they just need to announce that desire. An objection to keeping the sabbatical list on the consent agenda was raised and thus removed. The other two items dealing with the fall list of graduates and an editorial clarification to a previously approved Committee on Committee’s proposal were left on the consent agenda. A motion to approve the consent agenda (Wolf/Folwell) was approved without opposition.

A motion to approve the Minutes from meeting November 18, 2014, #13 (Smith/Murphy) was approved unanimously.

Chairs Report: The Chair announced that next week is our last scheduled Senate meeting for the fall semester unless it is necessary to have a meeting to approve a policy before the next general faculty meeting. The UFM is scheduled for Thursday January 15th at 3pm so please remind all your constituents so that we will have a quorum. Among other items Matt Dorschel will rejoin us next week for a discussion of the weapons policy which we had previously postponed. The Chair reminded Senators to submit nominations for the Hoffman Teaching and Advising Excellence awards. The deadline is this Friday and more information is on the Provost website.

Provost Report: The Provost noted that the President was in China on University business but that he would be hosting a holiday reception tomorrow between 4 and 6.

FS-15-023 – FSH 3050 - Position Description: The Chair of Faculty Affairs Ruth Funabiki was invited to discuss the proposed change to the Position Description form. The proposed language reads:

“Instructors will provide syllabi to their unit offices at the beginning of each term for courses for which they are responsible. Each syllabus should include expected learning outcomes for the course and an example of an assignment that can serve as an assessment tool.”

Chair Ytreberg provided some background noting that some language of this nature needed to be added for accreditation requirements. There have been other versions of language floating around campus that have not been approved. The above language approved by the Faculty Affairs is what is being proposed. Ruth Funabiki stated that the proposed language asked that faculty state the expected learning outcomes for the course and provide an example of how these learning outcomes will be assessed.

The wide ranging discussion that followed raised questions as to whether the learning outcomes would be the University’s, the departments, or the specific course. The Provost noted that this shouldn’t be an issue since all of our courses align with the University outcomes. If these are outcomes for a course than they logically fulfill the University outcomes as well.

A senator raised concerns about whether it was appropriate for every course to specify an assignment that would be used for assessment purposes. We don’t need rigid guidelines and we should trust faculty to teach their courses. The Provost responded that this proposal wasn’t asking faculty to do anything that wasn’t already being done. It is necessary to address assessment for the upcoming accreditation review who will not simply accept our word that we were meeting our learning goals. She reiterated that we needed to have language of this nature in order to be accredited. A senator noted that this was something that we were going to have to do and we needed to figure out what we needed to do to protect the University.
The discussion then turned to what actually was needed to be shown on the syllabi. There were concerns raised that the proposed language was too narrow. Several people argued that it wasn’t narrow and merely required faculty to explain to students how learning outcomes would be assessed.

A motion to amend (Brandt/Foster) was made. The motion was to amend the last sentence to say “and should describe how those learning outcomes will be assessed.” A lively discussion followed that focused on whether the amendment was more, or less, demanding than the original and whether it was asking for specific pieces of paper to be provided or a statement in the syllabi of how assessment would be done. Several friendly amendments to the motion on the floor were accepted to the end result of:

“Instructors will provide syllabi to their unit offices at the beginning of each term for courses for which they are responsible. Each syllabus should include expected learning outcomes for the course and should describe an example of how at least one learning outcome is assessed.”

The amended language passed 20-1-3. The conversation returned to the proposed language as amended. After a short discussion of whether this language should be in the position descriptions or somewhere else the proposal as amended passed 16-2-6.

**Sabbatical Leave.** Having been removed from the consent agenda the sabbatical leave list now comes to the Senate as a seconded motion from the Sabbatical Leave Evaluation Committee. An objection was raised to one of the faculty members on the list receiving a sabbatical. The Provost stated that she has carefully read and approved all the proposals forwarded to her from the sabbatical leave committee. The motion to accept the sabbatical leave list passed 20-1-3. (Chair Ytreberg whose name appeared on the list abstained from voting.)

**FS-15-025 (UCC-15-045): Regulation J-3:** Senator Rodney Frey in his role has Director of General Education was invited to discuss the proposed changes to the UI general education requirements. Professor Frey discussed that these proposed changes are designed to bring the UI requirements into alignment with SBOE guidelines. The main changes are to insure that all students graduate with a minimum of 36 general education credits. The proposal also establishes a two-discipline requirement for Science (J-3-b) and Social Science and Humanities (J-3-d). This requirement will apply to both the UI general education requirements as well as the SBOE Core. A Senator asked whether the ISEM courses could be transferred to the other state universities. Professor Frey stated that they would be able to be transferred to other schools but not as part of general education requirements. The proposal passed 22-0-2.

**FS-15-026 (UCC-15-052): Split Writing Minor:** This proposal dealt with splitting the current writing into a “Professional Writing Minor” and a “Creative Writing Minor.” Professor Slovic explained that this is being done to provide clear options to students. The proposal was approved unanimously.

**FS-15-027 (UCC-15-053): Rename Profession Emphasis (English B.A.)** This proposal is related to the above and renames the Professional Emphasis to the Professional Writing Emphasis. This passed without objection 23-0-1.

**FS-15-028 (UCC-15-054) Add History (B.A.) Emphases.** This proposal involved changes to the History BA. Professor Quinlan suggested that adding emphasis areas to the History BA were in response to feedback from students and would provide a more integrated curriculum. This proposal passed 23-0-1.

**FS-15-024: FSH 2700 – Student Evaluations:** Last year’s Senate Chair Patricia Hartzell in her current role as Chair of the Teaching and Advising Committee was invited to discuss proposed changes to the forms for student evaluation of teaching. The proposed changes move away from the current numerical ranking system while allowing for more open ended responses from students. Professor Hartzell also addressed some possible incentives that might be given to increase the response rate among students. She also discussed the possibility of developing an App that could be used by students with smart phones.

The ensuing discussion raised issues related to the poor response rate and whether having an option to hand out paper forms might be in order. Other practices like setting aside time in class where students using either their
laptops or smart phones might complete the forms were discussed. The notion of giving extra credit points to encourage students to complete the evaluations was also discussed.

A Senator inquired as to how the new form which was not based on a numerical scale would fit into the current campus culture which is based on numbers. How would these results be used in the promotion and tenure process? Professor Hartzell noted that even the proposed agree/disagree responses could be converted to numbers. Several Senators noted that they weren’t advocating retaining the number system but they were still concerned about how the new system would translate into our current culture. The Provost noted that we have changed the evaluation system before and that tenure and promotion committees would just have to take note of the changes during the transition. The Chair agreed stating that there would be no way to map the new system onto the old system. There were several comments from Senators suggesting that the new form would require a culture change in how we evaluate teaching but this would be a good development.

A series of suggested edits to the wording of specific parts of the form were addressed, including an amendment to add a section allowing for further comments. Among the many edits discussed of specific note were:

- consider an option that allows for the use of a paper form which yields more responses,
- look at a phone app that fits our form, do not create a form to fit an app, and
- the strongest advice was in applying the form results, there should be clear instructions during the faculty evaluation process making it clear that the new system can’t be made to fit with the current system.

As the hour was getting late a motion (Wolf/Folwell) was made to return the form to the committee to address the Senate’s suggestions. It is hoped that the proposal could return to the Senate as early as next week. The motion passed 21-1-1.

**FS-15-029 FSH 3460 - Overtime Work, Compensatory Time, and Holidays** and **FS-15-030 APM 50.10 Processing Compensation for Overtime Work.** These proposals deal with overtime and compensatory time policies. Dan Stephens and Ron Town were invited to discuss the reason for these changes. Dan Stephens explained that the revisions were the result of an IRS audit of our past practices. In the past employee’s had elected to receive cash in place of comp time when they requested it. The University suspended the current policy and practice and began a review to bring our practices into compliance. The proposal brought forward today would allow employees to elect at the beginning of each calendar year to either receive a cash payment for overtime or to receive comp time. If an employee chooses comp time they could not later decide that they would like a cash payment for overtime during the year. The proposed policy would allow those working overtime to bank up to 240 hours in comp time. This would allow for more flexibility across the University. However, the maximum amount of comp time that can be carried over to the next year will be 80 hours. So employees who have banked over 80 hours during the year will receive a cash payment at the end of the calendar year to bring their banked time back to 80 hours. A person with less than 80 hours would not receive a cash payment but would carry the 80 hours over into the next year.

A Senator asked how the choice would be made and would the choice be the employees or the managers? Dan Stephens noted that it was the employee’s choice but they should do so in consultation with their manager. The manager must determine whether their budget would be sufficient to pay overtime. A Senator thanked Mr. Stephens for the policy which would help solve a significant problem.

The Faculty Secretary and Kent Nelson, General Counsel noted that the intention was to make this policy effective once it received final approval from the President. A motion (Teal/Lowe) was made to accept the Counsel’s suggestion that the policy would take effect immediately upon final approval. This motion passed unanimously. A motion was then made (Mahoney/Smith) to accept the proposal. The proposal was unanimously approved.

**Adjournment:** A motion (Foster/Folwell) was then made to adjourn the longest Senate meeting of the year. The motion passed unanimously and enthusiastically at 5:34 pm.

Don Crowley, Faculty Secretary and Secretary to Faculty Senate