The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:32. While we briefly had adequate connections with all off-site members that soon dissipated. The minutes were amended to correct the meeting number and the date. A motion to approve the minutes as amended (Frey/Foster) passed with no objections and one abstention.

Chair’s Report: The Chair announced that next week Dan Eveleth will come to the Senate to discuss curriculum timelines. In two weeks Brant Miller will be present to discuss a proposed policy regarding allowing Emeritus Faculty and Honored Staff access to software. The Chair asked for volunteers to be Judge for the Student Achievement Award for Outstanding Faculty. Applications for the award are due Friday, March 6. Rodney Frey volunteered.

The Chair also asked for a Senate representative to the Campus Community Coalition on Alcohol and Drug Risk. Finally, the Chair requested that those who attended any of the meetings with the provost candidates to submit feedback to the website at http://www.uidaho.edu/president/search/provost-evp-search. The feedback will go directly to the President although he won’t be able to identify the identity of those providing the feedback.

The Chair recognized Senator Flores to make an announcement regarding the “grade-in” tomorrow as part of National Adjunct Day. The event is designed to raise awareness about the importance and working conditions of adjunct faculty.

Provost Report: Provost Aiken thanked all those who participated in the provost search. She also commented on the annual Jazz Festival starting this week. This is a signature event for the University and noted that the students visiting campus are potential UI students most of them in areas other than Music. The Jazz Festival provides a good opportunity to show off the campus and the work we do. It is also a great opportunity to hear great jazz artists perform during the evening performances and in the many workshops held during the day.

Enrollment Management: The Chair introduced Jean Kim, Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management. Vice Provost Kim briefly discussed the restructuring of administration leadership in the student affairs and enrollment management areas. Last month President Staben and Provost Aiken asked her to chair a new group, the Enrollment Management Council, whose task is to create a strategic enrollment management plan. They hope to have developed their plan by the end of the semester. The goal is to increase the enrollment at UI to 17,000 in the next ten years.

A senator, noting the decline of enrollment in his college over the last five years asked about the need to develop plans at the college and department level to address such declines. Ms. Kim noted that such declines were not unique to the senator’s area and acknowledged that different colleges would need to employ different strategies to address the problems of recruitment and retention.
Another question asked about “bottlenecks” like lab and dormitory space that might affect plans to increase enrollment. She suggested that they were looking at gateway courses and bottlenecks but that in the near term there is sufficient capacity to accommodate enrollment increases.

A senator asked if we had looked at what does and doesn’t work at other institutions seeking to increase enrollment. Vice Provost Kim said that they were looking at national best practices and they were specifically looking at peer institutions that have had similar challenges. Asked which peer institutions were being looked at, Ms. Kim responded they were looking at WSU, Utah State, Montana State and Colorado State among others. A senator suggested that we needed to “cast the net wider” to find those institutions that are being successful.

There were several questions related to the student climate and how we might retain students while also attracting new students. Ms. Kim agreed that we might do more in using “student ambassadors” as well as taking steps to insure an inviting campus environment. She suggested that she would like to return to the Senate as her task force develops its strategic plan.

Committee Reports: Graduate Council—FS-15-040: FSH 1700. Chair Ytreberg invited the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, Jie Chen, to discuss a proposed change to the College of Graduate Studies Bylaws. The proposed change would remove the representative from “university-wide programs” on graduate council. The term “university-wide programs” applied to Bioinformatics & Computational Biology, Environmental Science, Neuroscience, Bioregional Planning and Community Design, and Waters of the West. Jie Chen stated that the reason for the proposed change was that these programs have now been moved into specific colleges and thus are represented through those colleges and no longer have a need for specific representation.

A couple of senators suggested that the nature of these programs suggests that they have interests that are not necessarily reflected by the colleges in which they are now located. This change would dilute the importance of these signature programs. Several of these programs have a large number of graduate students and involve many faculty members across several colleges.

The Chair pointed out that since this proposal did not come to us as a seconded motion that we needed a motion to proceed. The discussion that followed led to several senators suggesting that rather than removing the representation for “university-wide programs” that we should include a definition of university-wide programs.

A motion was made (Foster/Caplan) that the proposed change should be rejected and instead a sentence would be added to the graduate college bylaws that defines university-wide programs. The proposed definition stated that “a university-wide program is a program with graduate faculty from at least three colleges.” The motion passed 19-2-1. There was a concern raised about the fact that the FSH isn’t clear about the method of selecting a representative from a university-wide program. No further motions were made to address this concern.

Focus for the Future: The Chair turned the floor over to Provost Aiken to provide an update on the Focus for the Future process. The Provost emphasized that the FFF process was mandated by the Board of Regents and thus was different than the regular processes followed at the University. She stated that this was an ad hoc process that is now completed. Provost Aiken noted that FFF was transparent and had more input than any in which she had ever been involved. The President considered the results of the FFF process and sent his recommendations to the Board in August. The Board has now approved
the changes and it is a completed process. The Provost reiterated that FFF did not set a precedent for how we would proceed on curriculum issues in the future.

There were several questions about implementation of future changes. The Provost noted that actions to eliminate or restructure programs were completed but that programs that were on the watch list were still being watched. Any future proposed changes would go through regular shared governance processes. In response to a question about action plans, she stated that she has to report that action plans for programs are in place but that this was neither unusual nor particularly onerous.

Adjournment: A senator noted that he could detect a tone of relief in her voice that this process was completed and that many people on campus shared that sense of relief. On that note the Chair entertained a motion to adjourn (Wolf/Brewick) which passed unanimously at 4:46.

Don Crowley, Faculty Secretary and Secretary to the Faculty Senate