Present: Stevenson for Aiken (w/o vote), Brandt, Brewick, Caplan, Couture (Boise), Crowley (w/o vote), Earl, Flores, Foster, Frey, Godfrey (Coeur d’Alene), Hiromoto (Idaho Falls), Jeffery, Karsky, Lowe, Mahoney, Murphy, Qualls, Safaii, Stoll, Teal, Wolf, B., Wolf, K., Ytreberg. Absent: Aiken (w/o vote), Boschetti, Chung, Kennelly, Nyavor, Perret, Stauffer, Guests: 4

A quorum being present the Chair called the meeting to order at 3:31. A motion (Murphy/Brandt) to approve the minutes for meeting #25 was approved without dissent (3 abstentions).

All four off-site Senators were present for today’s meeting although at no point could we actually see all at the same time.

Chair’s report: Chair Ytreberg stated that next week is essentially the last week for policies to be passed before the University Faculty Meeting on May 5th. In two weeks we will discuss endorsing a diversity statement coming from the President’s Diversity Council. Also, we plan to have the last meeting of the year on April 28th also be the first meeting of next year’s Senate. Thus elections for next year’s Senators need to be taking place now. Please let the Faculty Secretary’s office know of the election results so we can contact the new Senators. April 28th in the Pitman Center International Ballroom is also the night for the University Excellence Awards Ceremony. Three members of the current Senate will be receiving awards. Senator SeAnne Safaii will receive an award for excellence in Outreach. Senator Brian Wolf will receive an award for excellence in Teaching. Senator Michael Murphy will receive a mid-career award. All three Senators received an ovation.

Senator Brian Mahoney informed the Senate of an opportunity for faculty and staff to obtain season tickets to Vandal Athletics for their families at a vastly reduced rate. Those interested should contact the Kibbie Dome Ticket Office (885-6466).

Provost’s Report: The State Board (and the Board of Regents of the University of Idaho) is in Moscow this week for their April meeting. This is an important fee setting meeting. The fee setting meeting will be on Wednesday and the general business meeting will be at 8am on Thursday. Senators are encouraged to attend. The accreditation team for NWCCU will be on campus next week. Lodi Price from the Provost Office is working to finalize the schedule. The faculty meeting will probably be on Monday at 3 and the all staff meeting will probably be on Monday at 9:45. Stay tuned for specific times and places for these general meetings.

FS-15-060: FSM 3780 Dependent Tuition - Alternative Compensation Task Force. A motion (K. Wolf/Foster) to approve the changes to FSH 3780 regarding full tuition for dependents was made. Professor K. Wolf Chair of the task force noted that the question raised last week as to whether a dependent could combine scholarships and a tuition waiver was complicated and would usually be decided on a case-by-case basis. Also speaking for the task force Co-chair Professor James Foster stated that last week’s minutes suggested that the President was skeptical about the possible cost of this proposal in terms of loss of tuition. However, President Staben made these comments before the survey results demonstrated that the proposal would result in savings from reduced turnover. Foster also noted that both the President and Provost thought this policy could help to improve morale.

A Senator reported that a member of her College had been concerned that the survey was biased since it didn’t include those without children. Also, there was a concern that this was a proposal that only
benefited a few. The task force representatives acknowledged that the survey excluded those who didn’t have children but generally suggested that we needed to get away from an “us versus them” attitude. Other than general salary increases which everyone has agreed is the first priority, it is very difficult to find a benefit that would help all faculty/staff equally. Even if the policy doesn’t benefit everyone it could do a lot to enhance the morale of some members of the campus community.

A somewhat different concern was raised by a Senator who questioned whether a state agency should be granting benefits to its members which were not available to the general public or all state employees. Another Senator responded that this proposal was designed to help reduce turnover at the UI and thus making the benefit to other state employees would not serve that purpose. It was also noted that some of our peer institutions have better tuition benefits for their employee’s families and again this was a reasonable way to reduce the turnover problem. We should aspire to be better than our peers. Finally the case was made that we should try to push the culture by trying to expand our benefits package. Such benefits will also aid in recruitment. Several Senators thought this change would help with recruitment and retention and one Senator said he would consider it when deciding whether to stay at the University of Idaho.

There was a brief discussion as to whether there was a compromise point that might make this proposal more likely to get accepted. Ultimately there seemed to be little interest in searching for a compromise. The motion approving the proposal as written passed 20-0-1.

**FS-15-051: FSH 3710 – Leave Policy for all Employees.** As explained by the Faculty Secretary this proposed addition to E-2 is designed to clarify the intent of the changes passed last week. During the discussion last week it was repeatedly stated that the intent was to make parenting leave available to both parents. The new 3710 E-2 would now read “If both parents are employees of the university each is entitled to take the same amount of parenting leave as allowed for a single employee.” A motion was made (Brandt/Flores) to approve. This motion passed unanimously.

**FS-15-052: APM 55.07—Shared Leave and FS-15-053: APM 55.09—Employee Leave Policy.** These APM’s are brought forward to adjust them to recent changes that the Senate passed regarding leave policies. These are not voted on and there were no questions or discussions.

**FS-15-061: APM 50.50, 50.51, 50.35, 50.55 and**
**FS-15-062: FSH 3080, 3360, 3370, 3440, 3460 - Employee Classification System.** These proposed changes to both the APM and FSH are all interrelated. They relate to changes due to the new staff classification system. They are being introduced together today and the proposed FSH changes might be voted on next week.

The intent of the Senate Leadership in bringing these to the table today is to draw attention to discrepancies between the FSH policies and the APM and to make some attempt to reconcile the differences. Some of the proposed changes have not been agreed to by HR although there will be another meeting before the next Senate meeting. Also, some of the comments in the margins of the APM’s are concerns raised by Staff and Faculty Senate Leadership.

For example, staff and faculty have raised questions regarding the lack of a rubric or some clear list of factors that would allow employees to understand why their job is classified in a certain way and what needs to be shown in order to get their job reclassified. There is also a suggestion for faculty and staff representatives to be involved in reclassification decisions so that the process will become more transparent.
Greg Fizzell, Vice Chair of Staff Affairs, commented that reclassifications are one of the primary ways that staff can move up in the University. They (Staff Affairs) have expressed concerns about the difficulty of a person having to show “significant changes” in their job before they can obtain a reclassification. He suggested that it wasn’t clear what “significant” meant and that generally it is very difficult to understand how reclassification determinations are made. He also expressed concerns about how well a committee would function given the number of reclassification decisions HR has reported occur. However, he reiterated that there has to be some way to clearly articulate why one person gets a reclassification and another person does not. The Chair and others noted their agreement with this point.

Several Senators expressed their appreciation that these issues were being discussed and voiced their belief that concerns related to the reclassification system were at the center of the universities turnover and morale problems.

This led to a question about the Hay Point System. It was explained that this is the system that the State follows for its personnel system. It seeks to provide points for particular job functions being performed. Receiving enough points would allow an employee to move up the classification scale. The UI requested permission to depart from the Hay Point system and now follows its own classification system. Another Senator wondered whether some of what is the APM is really policy and could be moved into the FSH. There was a short discussion about the fairly complicated distinction between what is in the FSH and what is in the APM. Trying to assure that the two are consistent with each other is part of why these issues were brought to the Senate today. The Chair noted that we would continue with this discussion next week and that Senators should come prepared to vote on a variety of policy changes next week.

**Adjournment:** A motion (Teal/Foster) was made to adjourn at 4:44. The motion passed unanimously.

Don Crowley, Faculty Secretary and Secretary to the Faculty Senate