The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m. A suggestion was made to add a sentence to the minutes for meeting #7 reflecting the fact that some departments receiving larger F&A returns have devoted significant amounts of those funds to start-ups. The Secretary accepted this addition as a friendly amendment. It was then moved and seconded (Smith/Karsky) to accept the minutes as amended. This motion passed without objection (20-0-3).

Chairs Report: The Chair reported on coming attractions. Dan Ewart has been invited for next week to discuss “Rebalancing Technology Investments and Videoconference Capabilities.” Next week Terry Ratcliff will also be here to discuss Distance Learning. The Chair reminded everyone of the retirement celebration for Bruce Pitman’s this Friday at 4:30 p.m. on the Kibbie Dome turf. The program will begin around 6:00 p.m.

President Staben delivered a State of University address yesterday afternoon. The President emphasized that a top priority is increasing undergraduate enrollment by 50%. President Staben also hopes to decrease the faculty/staff turnover rate and has requested a 4% increase in compensation from the state legislature.

The Chair thanked Senators for their work last week in approving the Academic Freedom language (FSH 1520). He noted that he had received an email from Kent Nelson indicating that the President concurs with the proposed language and will recommend approval once it is passed at the next general faculty meeting.

Provost Report: Vice Provost Jeanne Stevenson gave the Provost Report. The State Board of Regents is meeting in Lewiston this week. The President and Provost, among many others, will be spending a large part of the week down there. This is Homecoming week and there will be many visitors and alumni returning to the University. The Dean of Students interviews have concluded and those interested in stating their views on the candidates should do that on the Provost page by Friday.

As part of the continued emphasis on retention the Vice Provost talked about initiatives Complete College America and Complete College Idaho (http://www.boardofed.idaho.gov/cci.asp). Students who complete 15 credits each semester can complete college in 4 years and are more likely to finish. Those interested can look at the Complete College America site (http://completecollege.org/).

A Senator inquired as to why mid-terms and Homecoming were on the same week and indicated that his students are stressed because of this. Jeanne Stevenson suggested that this concern should be directed to the Provost.

Committee Reports FS-15-012: The Chair introduced the Dean of the College of Education, Cori Mantle-Bromley to discuss the proposed elimination of various teaching major and minors. She suggested that the programs designated to be discontinued did not have many students in them and schools in Idaho were not hiring teachers with these endorsements. Also, in most cases the faculty in the disciplines had
not provided the evidence of student outcomes necessary to maintain accreditation for these teaching majors/minors. The proposed changes were passed by the faculty of the College of Education and by UCC and come as a seconded motion.

A senator wondered about the physical science-life science teaching major and why that was on the list. It was suggested that this teaching major covered too much territory and not in enough depth. There are other options that students interested in teaching in these areas can pursue. Dean Mantle-Bromley said that they were also working to put together a natural science endorsement that would serve these content areas.

Another Senator noted the large number of programs in the arts and liberal arts that were being discontinued. Mantle-Bromley noted that there were few students in these programs and few jobs available. The Senator lamented the decline of support for the Arts in Idaho schools and suggested that the UI should not acquiesce to this trend but should instead be a catalyst for change in this area. Dean Mantle-Bromley agreed that she too was saddened to see this narrowing of curriculum in our schools. The motion discontinuing the programs in FS-15-012 passed 16-3-4.

**FS-15-013:** This proposal involves a name change to a teaching minor. The old name “English as a Second Language” would be changed to “English as a New Language.” Dean Mantle-Bromley explained that many people in this program were not taking English as a 2nd language but instead as a 3rd or 4th language so the new name would be more accurate. This name change also reflects a terminology change occurring around the country. The motion passed 22-0-1.

**Career ladders:** For a discussion of the development of “staff career ladders” the Chair invited Vice President for Finance and Administration, Ron Smith, to the table. Greg Fizzell, Vice Chair of Staff Affairs, joined senate on the phone. Ron Smith noted that the UI had a salary compression issue and a turnover problem. This compression issue has created a concern about fairness and low morale. Since the UI doesn’t have a large amount of money to address these compression issues it is a good idea to look at creative ways to address some of these concerns. One plan would be a succession plan to allow the University to hire from within at least within certain job classifications. A succession plan would help to address salary compression, increase salaries, and lead to better job satisfaction. He is beginning to develop rules and procedures that would govern such a plan and is creating a committee with appropriate representation across campus to develop the details for this plan.

Greg Fizzell indicated his support for such a plan within certain job classifications but he believes that Staff Affairs also hoped that we might go further and develop a step system within a certain job which might be something like faculty promotion or the federal civil service system. With such a system a staff member would be able to demonstrate that they were making meaningful contributions to the University and shouldn’t have to leave the University in order to obtain a higher salary. This step system wouldn’t just be based on time but would be based on time and merit.

In response, Ron Smith suggested that these were two different projects but both were worth exploring. While he isn’t convinced of the idea of a step progression he is convinced that if an employee makes an extra effort and becomes more valuable to the University then that should be recognized and rewarded. He also thinks that the University could provide training and development to enhance an employee’s ability to advance.

A Senator doubted that thinking of staff advancement in terms of faculty promotion would be very helpful. He believes that there has to be a better solution than asking staff to jump through more hoops
which ultimately would not be fair to staff. He would like to see attention paid to providing some quick help to raise staff salaries. It is an ethical issue and we need to pay our staff more.

The Chair and the Faculty Secretary both made the point that Senate leadership has raised these issues with the upper level administration and they know that there are areas of the staff salary pyramid that desperately need attention.

A Senator pointed out that the recent classification process had a strongly negative effect on portions of the staff and led some to question whether the University valued them.

The conversation that followed flowed across a variety of concerns which included longevity raises, percentage raises versus flat amount raises, and concerns about methods of performance evaluation. Ron Smith responded that we do need to look at the performance evaluation system. He further emphasized that making it easier to hire from within would be a positive step. A Senator agreed that it was demoralizing to staff who participated in creating a program and then had to undergo a national search for a position they helped create.

The Chair noted that he had asked UBFC to have a discussion about how we might go about distributing a 4% salary increase assuming we get a 4% increase from the State. As the discussion continued the question of non-monetary compensation was raised. Many interesting, and potentially controversial ideas were mentioned.

Chair Ytreberg volunteered to serve on the committee that Vice President Smith was creating to look at issues of staff advancement. He also summarized today’s discussion by suggesting that there were three main themes that had emerged:

1) investigate immediate ways to deal with staff compensation
2) look at ways to streamline internal searches
3) consider longevity and/or merit type increases which might help salary compression

It was moved and seconded (Teal/Kennelly) to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously at 4:55 p.m.

Don Crowley, Secretary to Senate
Faculty Secretary/Policy Coordinator