After a delay as we adjusted to the new video system, Chair Teal called meeting #15 to order at 3:37. A motion (Wolf/Folwell) to approve the minutes from the December 8, 2015 meeting passed without objection.

Chair’s Report: Chair Teal requested Senators to send nominations for the University Distinguished Professor Advisory Committee. There are openings for two Deans and one faculty member on this committee. Send nominations to Vice Provost Jeanne Stevenson’s office (jespinoza@uidaho.edu) by January 29th.

Faculty Evaluation Form 1: Chair Teal introduced a new faculty evaluation form that a task force has been working on. The core concept in the new form is an emphasis on the use of a narrative evaluation rather than the previous use of numerical rankings. It is hoped that this will move us towards a more formative model of evaluations. The new form is being introduced this year as a pilot project. Faculty can opt into using the new form or continue to use the old form. The new form has been approved for a trial run by the Provost’s Office. Chair Teal also indicated that we were working on making the timing of the evaluation process align better with the position descriptions.

- A Senator suggested that the new form be amended to say Service and Leadership rather than University Service and Leadership since the current wording seems to exclude service to professional organizations outside the University. Another Senator stated that she thought this type of service was included under Outreach and Extension (Faculty Secretary note: see FSH 1565 C-3).
- Chair Teal also noted that if we moved to the new system we would be decoupling the evaluation from the compensation system. There would be a separate compensation form (see packet) which would ask for justification for increased compensation beyond that which everyone who is deemed to be meeting performance expectations receives.
- A Senator wondered how the new system will work since we have long used numbers in evaluations. Chair Teal suggested that this trial program would operate as a bridge and clearly we would have to make adjustments if we adopted the new system. Those on a promotions and tenure committee would have to read the narrative evaluations in much the same way we currently read the comments from peer reviewers. The Provost noted that while he has not yet gone through an entire tenure and promotion cycle, he understood the idea behind the new form was to provide a narrative that would change the focus from numbers to the more substantive comments provided by a supervisor. Ideally the process should provide a positive exercise and if necessary include tough love to help a faculty member further their career.
- There was a short discussion about whether the new form made it clear that the comments from supervisors of interdisciplinary centers needed to be attached.
- Another Senator noted that the check boxes on the new forms indicating that a person was or was not meeting expectations would not clearly match the old system where receiving “2’s” would
potentially touch off certain review processes. The Chair suggested that the new forms were designed to focus on a more holistic evaluation and acknowledged that we would have to work on adjusting the new forms to some parts of our current system.

- A Senator also wondered whether the emphasis on narratives as opposed to numbers will make the new system too subjective. Chair Teal responded that the narratives would need to be based on the same accomplishments and data that the numbers were previously based on. However, the narratives would provide for a much more detailed and holistic way to view the performance of a faculty member. Some Senators suggested that moving to the narrative system would help morale.

- There were some concerns raised about timing. Chair Teal stated that the form will be sent out tomorrow and he expressed hope that faculty would have the option to use the new form this year. One Senator noted that his unit thought it was too late since we were already well into the process. The Provost responded that the ideal is to send it through the deans and let them make the call. Some deans may feel they are too far into the process to use the new form this year.

Provost’s Report: Provost Wiencek thanked all the colleges for hosting him for “getting to know each other” events last fall. He found them very valuable. The Provost then provided the Senate with updates in several areas:

- NWCCU Accreditation Report: In response to an inquiry from Senate Leadership the Provost brought to the Senate a letter from the NWCCU. The letter can be viewed on the Provost’s website. This letter informed the University that the UI’s accreditation was reaffirmed. The report included commendations for: the University’s “innovative and interdisciplinary” program of general education, the “impact of the Leadership Academy on faculty and staff leadership development”, and “significant initiatives to improve public safety and engage the University community in ensuring the welfare of others.” The accreditation report also made recommendations for improvement that included: more clearly identifying the benchmarks for mission fulfillment, more consistently using assessment results, and evaluating institutional planning cycles and results.

- Enrollment Management: Provost Wiencek discussed some developments in enrollment management. He noted that the Enroll Idaho Initiative “Go-On”, the State of Idaho’s direct admissions initiative, was working. However, there are some issues involving students who thought they had been directly admitted but did not realize that they had to complete the application forms. He also noted that he is in the process of reorganizing the Provost’s Office to avoid duplication of effort and provide better alignment among functions. He will be bringing to the Senate his plans for reorganizing the office and also will be initiating a search for a new Director of Enrollment Management after this reorganization is complete.

- Budget: The Provost also discussed the University’s budget requests and what parts of it have been included in the Governor’s proposed budget. The Governor’s budget only included part ($790,000) of the University’s request for the “Go On” initiative. The University has also asked for the State to cover the entire cost of the extra 27th pay period. The Governor’s budget does not include the entire cost of this extra pay period and the University will have to pick up the remaining amount. [Update: Based upon further discussion with the Provost the entire cost of the 27th pay period was approximately $3.8 million. The Governor’s budget includes funds for $2.4 million of this cost. This will leave a gap of approximately $1.4 million that the University will need to cover.] In response to a question from a Senator, the Provost suggested that since this is a one-time cost we may be able to use reserves to cover the cost.
Other issues of note relating to the Governor’s budget include:
  o **Enrollment Workload Adjustment.** The State has not been funding this in recent years even though they have withheld funds during low enrollment years. The Governor’s budget included funds for years of past growth. Under this proposal the UI would receive a credit of $360,000 for years when we had increased enrollment.
  o **Occupancy Funds.** These are funds related to maintenance costs for new buildings. There was $1.4 million in the Governor’s budget for this.
  o **Idaho Law and Justice Center.** Rental costs for this program will be about a quarter of a million dollars.
  o **WWAMI Funds.** $278,000 was included to fund four more seats in this program.
  o **Forest Utilization.** $88,000 was included for this program for equipment purchase.

- **Tuition Lock:** The Provost also discussed the Governor’s proposal for what is known as Tuition Lock. The idea behind this proposal is that an entering student will not have to pay for any tuition increase during their first four years. The plan is designed to make it easier for students to plan their college expenses. The UI can still raise tuition for each new cohort, but each cohort will have a fixed tuition for four years. This proposal would include a commitment to provide state funds to offset the tuition lost to each institution each year under this plan. While there are concerns about this proposal among some legislators, the four-year institutions in the state have indicated support for this plan.

- **Strategic Action Plan:** The Strategic Plan is moving along. The committee is currently reviewing the second draft. The committee is trying to identify no more than two metrics for each of the four major goals. With regard to the Culture and Climate goal, they are considering adopting a survey. There is a HERI survey for faculty which has been used before and can be benchmarked. The staff survey has been internally developed and would be harder to benchmark. There is a survey developed by The Chronicle of Higher Education which we could use. The Provost would like the Senate’s agreement to use this survey which has advantages of branding and national recognition and also provide for national benchmarking. A Senator suggested that Staff Council supports the use of this survey. Another Senator expressed some concern that if we hoped to obtain national recognition for being a good place to work that there might be some incentive to make the institution look good rather than responding in a more objective way. The Senate was positively inclined to the use of the Chronicle’s survey as a metric.

**General Education:** The Chair introduced Professor Kenton Bird, a former Chair of Faculty Senate. Professor Bird appears before the Faculty Senate in his new role as Director of General Education. Professor Bird stated that he wanted to provide an overview of General Education and discuss some of the challenges that the program faces.

The General Education program is administratively based in CLASS. While the UI has, as described by the NWCCU, an “innovative and interdisciplinary” general education program, it does fit into and is structured by the SBOE’s governing policies. While the control of our curriculum remains with the UI, the program needs to fit into the contours of the general education requirements outlined by the SBOE. In particular, he has responsibility for organizing the ISEM courses (both 101’s and 301’s) as well as the Common Read. He asked that any Senator who might have suggestions for next year’s Common Read should send these suggestions to him in the near future.

This spring there are 20 sections of ISEM 101’s with 694 students enrolled and 20 sections of 301’s with 651 students enrolled. Generally speaking the ISEM 101’s are taught by CLASS faculty and the 301’s are offered by faculty from six other colleges.
In discussing challenges facing the general education program, Professor Bird noted the number of students who apparently don’t know that they need both an ISEM 101 and ISEM 301 to graduate. There are currently five seniors who have not taken an ISEM 101 and 97 seniors who still need an ISEM 301. He has been working with appropriate advisors to resolve this problem. He has also been working with the colleges to increase the number of ISEM 301’s that are offered.

Other issues facing the program include assuring quality control for the courses taught by new instructors and promoting the general education program to prospective students. The innovative nature of our general education program needs to be better advertised when we are recruiting students. Finally, there remain some problems in seeking to retain the distinctive nature of our program, while also easing the transferability of our courses to other institutions.

A Senator asked if we had any way to determine whether our ISEM courses have proved to be helpful in advancing the careers of students. Professor Bird suggested that the Senior Survey provided some evidence that students thought the UI general education courses had provided better preparation than the state core. He noted that part of our challenge was to demonstrate that our general education curriculum has provided better preparation for critical thinking and the other skills necessary for a successful career.

**Adjournment:** With no other business before the Senate, the Chair entertained a motion (Chung/Stoll) to adjourn. This motion passed unanimously at 4:59.

Don Crowley,
Secretary to Faculty Senate and Faculty Secretary