Chair Teal called meeting #18 to order at 3:31. A motion (Stoll/Brewick) to approve the minutes from the February 2nd meeting passed without objection.

Chair & Provost Report: Neither Chair Teal nor Vice Provost Stevenson had a report although Vice Provost Stevenson did encourage everyone to take a look at the Strategic Plan and to provide input. The plan will be finalized in early March.

FS-16-036 (UCC-16-033a): Natural Resources—Restoration Ecology Certificate. Chair Teal introduced Professor Karen Launchbaugh to discuss the proposed undergraduate certificate in Restoration Ecology. She noted the growing demand in this area. Utah State has seen an increase of around 50 students in the last five years. They are moving their undergraduate degree towards having two tracks—one of which would be restoration ecology. When asked about the possibility of jobs in this area, Professor Launchbaugh noted that they have very high demand in both soils and rangeland management and the availability of jobs is very high. The proposal passed unanimously.

FS-16-033 (UCC-16-031a): Geography—Climate Change Certificate. The Chair introduced Professor John Abatzoglou from the Geography Department to discuss a proposed undergraduate certificate in Climate Change. Professor Abatzoglou explained that the department was proposing to create this certificate in Climate Change while dropping a minor in Climate Change. The minor required 18 credits while the certificate requires 12. He thought that the certificate would be more useful to a larger range of students. Since 2012 3-8 students a year obtained the minor. When asked about the current students taking the minor, Professor Abatzoglou noted that the courses were not going away and he thought current students would be grandfathered in. A Senator wondered why the department should remove the minor since it wasn't in conflict with the certificate. The answer seemed to be that this would be one less administrative issue to worry about. A person can obtain the certificate without being enrolled in a degree program. Thus this certificate would be available to a broader range of students. The proposal passed unanimously.

FS-16-034 (UCC-16-031b): Geography—Climate Change Minor. This proposal was associated with the above proposal. Along with creating the certificate the department is proposing removing the minor. The questions were mainly directed at why it was necessary to eliminate the minor. Professor Abatzoglou thought it was mainly a matter of reporting and we were talking about a small number of students. A Senator noted that the minor contained courses from outside of Geography, but the certificate did not. The proposal passed 11-6-1.

FS-16-035 (UCC-16-031c): Biological Science—Reproductive Biology. Senator Foster was asked to speak to this proposal to discontinue the graduate certificate in reproductive biology. Professor Foster noted that the program never had significant enrollment and some of the professors teaching courses in this area had retired. The proposal passed unanimously.
FS-16-037 (UCC-16-033b): Natural Resources—Ecology Minor. Chair Teal introduced Randy Brooks to discuss this proposed minor. Professor Brooks noted that there is a major in Ecology and Conservation Biology but not a minor in Ecology. Within Forestry they were moving towards requiring minors rather than directed electives so this would fill an important role. The proposal passed unanimously.

FS-16-038 (UCC-16-033c): Tribal Natural Resources Stewardship Certificate. The Chair introduced Kerri Vierling from the Fish and Wildlife Department. Professor Vierling noted that CNR had held meetings with eight tribal groups to determine what their needs were. They indicated that having a certificate like this would be useful since students would not have to be enrolled in a degree program to take classes towards this certificate. The certificate would also help those interested in jobs in natural resources with the tribes. The certificate would build towards a degree, if a student was so inclined. A Senator, noting that this certificate carried a lot more credits than a normal certificate, wondered why they just didn’t create a major. Professor Vierling introduced Lisette Waits, Chair of Fish and Wildlife Sciences to help discuss the proposal. Professor Waits suggested that the tribal groups had indicated a desire to have a certificate which would aid Native American students in obtaining jobs. Later they might be interested in pursuing an undergraduate degree. A Senator wondered about creating a minor instead of a certificate. Since one needs a major in order to obtain a minor, the certificate would be more flexible while making students more marketable. Also, this certificate would be “stackable” with other certificates. One of the goals of this certificate would be to attract tribal students who are not currently enrolled, but it is also hoped that current students might find the certificate attractive. Several Senators expressed concerns about whether some of the students taking 400 level classes would have the foundation courses necessary to succeed. Professor Waits responded that they had checked with those teaching the courses and they indicated that they would be able to work with those pursuing this certificate. The proposal passed 15-1-2.

Training Modules and HR Update. Chair Teal introduced Vice President of Finance Brian Foisy and Elisa Keim Director of Professional Development and Training. Vice President Foisy provided an update on developments in Human Resources. Greg Walters has left the University for a position at the University of Pacific. A search for a new Executive Director of HR has started. Mr. Foisy stated the President had authorized him to explore a transition to a market-based compensation system. Mr. Foisy is interested in severing the link between classifications and compensation. Thus, the search committee would be looking for a person who had experience in managing a transition from a classification based system to a market-based system. They were also interested in someone who had some experience in managing a market-based compensation system. V.P. Foisy also noted that we need a Human Resources Office that is willing to play an advocacy role in helping employees deal with employment issues on campus.

V.P. Foisy stated that he had first thought the Classification Task Force created by the Senate last year should be put on hold while we are waiting for a new Executive Director of HR. However, in discussions with the Senate and Staff Leadership he had been persuaded that the Task Force could be useful in looking at some of the issues related to transitioning to a market-based compensation system. In that light he thought that we should rename the Classification Task Force to the Compensation Task Force. A motion (Foster/Brewick) to rename the task force the Compensation Task Force passed without objection. Mr. Foisy said he would work with Staff Council Vice-Chair Lisa Miller to get the task force moving. He is interested in making this task force a standing committee at some point.

V.P. Foisy also wanted to address some of the issues related to the rollout of the work-related training modules. He noted that the purpose of creating these training modules was to improve the performance of supervisors on campus. In 2013 a survey showed that the number one concern of staff was that supervisors were not performing as well as they should. At the same time, the SBOE requires that we
have a compliance program. Developing a work-related training system is part of that compliance program. Finally, a training program helps to allow for expanded delegation and streamlining of our processes in key areas like human resources.

V.P. Foisy acknowledged that the rollout of the training programs was certainly not without problems. In particular, he noted that the emails that were originally sent out were a mistake caused by an automatic notification program. They have taken the modules down for revising and he believes the process will be improved. Currently, about 50% of the employees and 50% of the supervisors have completed the modules. They are working on allowing people to opt out of training that they have no need for. They are interested in constructive criticism and will continue to modify the training modules.

Several Senators wondered if there might be ways to bypass some of the verbal slides and just let people read through the material. The answer was that at this time it isn’t possible. Another Senator stated that he liked People Admin but wondered if in some cases a streamlined version might be followed. It was suggested that he would probably be happy with some of the changes they were being planned for People Admin.

A Senator wondered if not having full searches for some of the temporary positions might, over-time, inadvertently end up undermining diversity on campus. V.P. Foisy responded that this was certainly not the goal. There would need to be adherence to our affirmative action goals, while we sought greater efficiency.

A Senator suggested that we needed to ensure that people understood that we were doing this to improve the culture. Learning rules isn’t the best way to improve the culture. We need to build into our training modules that we are doing this to improve the culture not just learn rules of compliance.

Several Senators noted that we just dictated that many over-worked under-paid faculty members needed to take supervisory training as if they were department chairs. Is there a way we can customize the modules so that regular faculty members, who don’t do much supervising, would not need to take the same training as department chairs. V.P. Foisy acknowledged that they cast the net pretty broadly in defining supervisory responsibilities. In future versions, we might be able to develop separate modules for those who don’t do very much direct supervising. In time, we should be able to develop a more targeted approach.

Ms. Keim asked that faculty volunteer to test new modules as they are developed so they can get feedback.

**Adjournment:** With no new business the Chair accepted a motion (Stoll/Mahoney) to adjourn at 4:41.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Crowley
Secretary to the Faculty Senate and Faculty Secretary