University of Idaho  
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
2015-2016 Meeting #25, Tuesday, April 12, 2016

Present: Anderson, Barbour, Brandt, Brewick, Brown, Caplan, Chung, Couture (Boise), Crowley (w/o vote), Dallas, Hiromoto (Idaho Falls), Hrdlicka, Jeffery, Kang, Latrell, Mahoney, Nicotra, Perret, Stoll (w/o vote), Teal, Stevenson for Wiencek (w/o vote), Wolf. Absent: Adams, Boschetti, Flores, Folwell, Foster, Godfrey (Coeur d’Alene), LaPrath, Murphy, Staciesiak, Wiencek (w/o vote). Guests: 3

Chair Teal called meeting #25 to order at 3:32. A motion (Chung/Dallas) to approve the minutes from the April 5th meeting passed without objection.

Chair’s Report: Chair Teal noted that the results of Senate elections are due this Friday April 15th.

Provost’s Report: Vice Provost Jeanne Stevenson encouraged faculty and staff to participate in the Cultural Literacy and Competency Conference which begins on Wednesday.

FS-16-018 rev: FSH 3710—Leave Policy. The Faculty Secretary explained that the proposal from Faculty Affairs is what is on the table for consideration. The Provost Office after consulting with the General Counsel’s Office and Human Resources (HR) have expressed some concerns and offered an alternative proposal. That proposal has been distributed to the Senate. Chair Teal invited Debra Ellers from the General Counsel’s Office to explain the differences between the two proposals.

Ms. Ellers stated the only substantive change between the Provost’s Office version and the proposal from FAC, involves changing the point of eligibility for parental leave from the date of employment to six months. (See E-1 in alternative proposal). She explained that allowing an employee to become eligible for parental leave when they are hired would put the hiring manager in a difficult position. Having a person eligible for parental leave on hire might be burdensome operationally and put additional stress on those already employed to cover for a new hire taking parental leave. Moving the date of eligibility to six months (180 days) would mean that we would be past the probation period for most employees. A reasonable number of new hires do not make it past their probation period. While she understood that the purpose of the policy was to be family friendly, the President felt that this generous benefit should not be made available to those who haven’t made it past probation. Ms. Ellers also raised the point that under this policy it might be possible for a person to get 24 weeks of parental leave. She also stated that the wording in M-3 had been altered to clarify that, rather than the University deciding who the “primary caregiver” is, the couple should decide. Faculty Secretary Crowley commented that this was the intent of the FAC proposal.

A Senator raised a question as to why the provision in E-4 requiring thirty days’ notice was added. Ms. Ellers stated that this language came from FMLA and would provide HR reasonable lead time. However, if the leave was not foreseeable, providing thirty days’ notice would not be required. A Senator noted that this would appear to be a procedural requirement’ not policy, and unnecessary to be in the Faculty-Staff Handbook (FSH).

Another Senator asked if under E-1 (1) an employee has a child join his or her family before the elapsing of the waiting period could the employee then take parenting leave (which is permitted within 12 months after the child joins the family)? Ms. Ellers confirmed that this was permitted under the policy.

Another Senator asked what would happen if an employee who was recently hired become pregnant and had to have an emergency C-section. Ms. Ellers replied that the person would either have to be granted a personal unpaid leave, or perhaps might be told that the position would have to be filled and they would have to reapply at a later date. The Senator suggested that this would be discriminatory. Ms. Ellers stated that it wouldn’t be discriminatory because attendance is a job requirement. If someone in this situation can’t attend and doesn’t have leave, than that person doesn’t have job protection. She noted that it would be up to the unit supervisor to decide and conceded that a faculty member might be treated differently than some staff.

Senator Brandt made a motion (Brandt/Mahoney) that the Provost version be substituted for the FAC version. This motion passed 16-2-3. The Senate then voted to pass the amended version of FSH 3710. This passed 13-3-5.
FS-16-059: FSH 3050—Faculty Annual Evaluation and Position Description Forms. Chair Teal introduced forms for faculty annual evaluation and position descriptions. He also introduced a proposed new form for “additional increased compensation.” The faculty annual evaluation form in the Senate packet was passed by FAC as a pilot form for next year. Chair Teal introduced a slightly different version of the form, also intended as a pilot for next year. The difference between the two versions include whether or not the position description percentages are included, and differences in formatting and arrangement of check boxes. Questions and comments from Senators included:

- **How well did the pilot form work this year?** Chair Teal stated that he had received nothing but positive comments.
- **How many faculty used the new forms this year?** Around 55 faculty used the new forms this year. The relatively low number apparently was due to the late date the new form was introduced into the process. Many departments were already well into the process when the forms were introduced.
- **Some Senators raised concerns about the move away from numbers,** to a narrative evaluation. One Senator stated a department chair felt the narrative form would create problems during the tenure and promotion process. More generally some expressed the view that narrative evaluations were too open to reinterpretation, while the numbers were more tangible. The usefulness of the narratives would be very dependent on the chair.
- **Various Senators expressed support for the move away from numbers to a formative narrative-based system.** There was a belief that the current system led to rankings that undermined morale. Numerical scores tended to be reductionist, and could also be subject to reinterpretation. The scores gave a false sense of impartiality, since the scores didn’t mean the same thing across colleges.
- **A concern was raised about whether deans and department chairs might pressure faculty against using the new forms.** There was a sense that this occurred this year, although that might have been due to when the new forms were introduced.
- **How would the narratives relate to compensation without the numbers?** Chair Teal stated that he wasn’t sure in the current system how compensation occurred. The intent of the new compensation form was to require a justification for increased compensation. The form would not be filled out for CEC, but would be for merit and equity.
- **There was considerable discussion about the extent to which the numbers in the current evaluation system were closely related to merit raises.** This discussion was difficult in part because of the scarce number of years in which merit money was really available.
- **There was a short discussion about whether faculty would have the ability to opt in, or opt out, of the pilot process.** There seemed to be a consensus that faculty should have the opportunity to opt-in to using the narrative system. It was clarified that FAC intended this to be a pilot project from which we can receive feedback about how well it worked. It was also noted that if the narrative form was adopted on a continuing basis, that changes to the FSH would have to occur.

Eventually a motion (Latrell/Mahoney) was offered to adopt the narrative style form as a pilot project for one year. Faculty would be able to choose whether to use the new form, or not. The motion also included the suggestion that a survey should be developed to obtain feedback on how well the new system worked. This proposal passed without objection.

With the concept of using the narrative system accepted, the discussion turned to which version of the form should be adopted. A motion (Hrdlicka/Latrell) was made to create a hybrid between the two forms. The proposal would put the position description percentages on the alternative annual evaluation form proposed by the Chair. This motion passed without objection.

**Adjournment:** A conversation started on the new position description form. However, with the 5 o’clock hour approaching, and our quorum diminishing, it was agreed to put this discussion off until next week. Instead a motion to adjourn passed unanimously at 5:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Crowley, Faculty Secretary and
Secretary to the Faculty Senate