The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:32. A motion (Folwell/Wolf) to approve the minutes of September 22, 2015 passed without objection.

Chair’s Report: Chair Teal reminded the Senate that on Thursday October 8th Jack McIver will be conducting a session in the Faculty-Staff Lounge to assist faculty with research procedures and opportunities. Senators should mention this to all colleagues who might be interested. He also noted that Staff Council has inquired about the possibility of combining staff and faculty excellence awards in the same event. He wondered if there were any concerns about combining these events. One Senator stated that this was a good idea and no one indicated any concerns. The Provost noted that this had been discussed with the President and they were supportive. The Chair recognized Kenton Bird (subbing for Michael Murphy). Professor Bird announced that the Teaching and Advising Committee would be having a brainstorming session on Thursday October 13th at 1:45-3:00. The purpose of this meeting, as discussed last week in Senate, will be to have a conversation about how to improve student evaluations of teaching. This brainstorming session will be held in the Doceo Center which is in the basement of the Bruce Pittman Center.

Provost’s Report: Provost Wiencek reported that the task force to look at the spread pay issue is ready to start its review of the issue. The committee will be chaired by Becky Tallent from CLASS. Other faculty members include Jack Miller (Law), Yun Chung (Business), Marty Ytreberg (Science), and Sarah Nelson (CLASS). Representing the Staff will be Brandy Terwilliger (Human Resources), Melody Miller (Science), Wendy Kerr (Office of Sponsored Programs), Cretia Bunney (Payroll), and Mary Stout (Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President). General Counsel will also be present (non-voting) to provide legal advice, which is the major reason we might want to consider going to a different system. There are some state regulations to which we need to conform. The Provost would like to have a report from this group by the end of the academic year. If there are changes, the key is to mitigate any impact on faculty/staff.

Letters have gone out inviting nominations for people to participate in the strategic plan committee. The committee is up to around 38 members so they will have to break up into sub-groups. There will be opportunities for all members of the community to contribute. They will be working on developing some type of platform allowing for broad participation. A search committee, chaired by Larry Stauffer, is being formed for a new Dean of the College of Business. A search committee will be formed for a new V.P. of Research, which the Provost will chair. Among the issues the Provost has been discussing include how to develop a more transparent budget process and how to provide incentives for enrollment growth.

A Senator asked for further clarification regarding how we intend to measure enrollment growth. At the college level or by majors? The Provost noted that ultimately the budget model incentive will drive behavior. Close to 90% of a program budget will be allocated as it has been in the past. Maybe 10% of a department budget is related to enrollment. The University will continue to have the ability to invest in mission critical programs that might not have the ability to grow their enrollment. We will need to have a discussion about how we count enrollment. Some programs would prefer that we count the number of students they actually teach while others would prefer that we count majors. We will probably want to do both, but it is crucial that we avoid unintended consequences. There might need to be checks to ensure that departments don’t game the system. The Provost ended his report by reminding everyone that the President’s State of the University Address is on Monday, October 5th at 3:30.

Retention Guide: Chair Teal introduced Jeff Dodge (Associate Dean of the College of Law) and Jesse Martinez (Director of Multicultural Affairs) who are co-chairs of the Student Recruitment and Retention Committee. They
have developed a Retention Resource Guide, which has been distributed both in hard copy and electronically as a resource to faculty and staff. The resource guide lists the top ten reasons that students do not stay in college and then provides the resources on campus that might help students deal with these issues. Their plan is to update the guide every two years.

The Chair thanked them for developing this useful guide but wondered if it might be made available on Vandal Web. Professor Dodge remarked that is something they could look into.

**Distance Education:** The Chair introduced Terry Ratcliff (Executive Director of Distance & Extended Education) to discuss the status of distance education at the University of Idaho (UI). Mr. Ratcliff made a handout available, which outlined the basic structure of distance education on campus and reviewed some of the guidelines and plans. He has developed a report for the Provost, which has not yet been fully vetted.

He noted that distance education on campus and in the state has been highly decentralized and acknowledged that there is a need for a plan clarifying the role of distance education in our future. He has spent most of his time in the last year trying to make sure we are in compliance with the various regulatory bodies that have a role in governing distance education. Mr. Ratcliff stated that at least one-third of our students take one of our online courses each semester. He also suggested that distance education can help us meet our enrollment goals. These courses also provide a significant revenue stream for the UI.

Mr. Ratcliff discussed the development of online programs. Many of these programs have developed in an incremental basis and thus we don’t have a clear idea of the breadth or rationale of our online programs. He expects that we will have a clearer picture of our online programs by October 15th. He believes that online programs should be market driven. It currently takes us around 18 months to get from market research to the approval of an online program, which suggests we are not as nimble as we ought to be.

A Senator read a letter from a colleague, which essentially stated that the UI should get out of distance education unless we are willing to support the development of high quality programs. The Provost noted that this is clearly a discussion we need to have. We do not have a ready source of funding that can be tapped, but we do need to decide whether we are going to invest in distance education. He also commented that the President believes that distance education is an important part of obtaining our enrollment goals. Several Senators commented that when we are having this conversation we need to make sure we solicit the views of faculty who have been heavily involved in teaching online courses.

Another Senator stated that we were unlikely to be able to compete with some other major universities that offer online courses, adding that a heavy investment in online education might play against our strength as a residential campus. The Provost noted that we have a presence around the state and some of those students are place bound. Some universities (like Maryland) have completely separated their traditional campus from their distant offerings.

A Senator commented that she doesn’t see why we aren’t moving faster to reach out to students around the state who are place bound. A student Senator reinforced this view by stating that he has taken around 40 online courses. As a Marine he would not have been able to complete his education had he not been able to access such courses. He wondered about the $35 fee per credit for online courses and whether that fee could be increased to improve the quality of our online courses.

A Senator stated that he welcomed the focus on online courses and that such attention was definitely needed. He expressed concern that online courses have been developed rather haphazardly without careful attention to what the impact of that might be. Indeed, he has listened to students who were frustrated with having to take an online course, which wasn’t even offered by an existing UI faculty member. Another Senator emphasized the need for more centralized support for those wishing to develop an online course. Mr. Ratcliff responded that we did lack institutional support, but that there were instructional designers who were an underused resource for those seeking to design a course. Another Senator wondered about the incentives for online course development that
used to be offered. Mr. Ratcliff responded that while we are not currently offering such incentives, incentives would be one of his recommendations.

A Senator noted that we should be aware that there are differences between online courses and distance courses offered by video and that some courses are offered at other sites and beamed back to Moscow. Finally, a Senator asked whether a program had to be approved before it could go online. The Provost responded that if a program was 100% online there was a different fee structure and that the Board was having a debate about what constituted a 100% online program. It was also noted that a proposal to have an online program would need to be on the 5-year plan but that yearly updates to the plan were allowed.

**FS-16-006: FSH 1640.83—Student Appeals Committee.** Vice Chair Liz Brandt explained that this proposal was an attempt to address some issues associated with student appeals from SDRB to the Faculty Senate. In the past we have simply chosen from Senators who volunteered to serve on these appeals when they arise. In order to develop a group of faculty and students who have some background and knowledge of the process of student appeals as well as some training in Title IX issues, this proposal seeks to form a committee of nine members (six faculty and three students) from which an appeals panel of three will be formed. The proposal passed unanimously.

**Adjournment.** With no other business on the agenda a motion (Latrell/Chung) to adjourn passed unanimously at 4:47.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Crowley, Faculty Secretary  
and Secretary to the Faculty Senate