Present: Anderson (Mike), Anderson (Miranda), Barbour, Boschetti, Brandt, Brewick, Brown, Cannon (Boise), Caplan, Chung, Crowley (w/o vote), Donohoe, Folwell, Foster, Godfrey (Coeur d’Alene), Hiromoto (Idaho Falls), Hrdlicka, Markuson, Morrison, Nicotra, Panttaja, Payant, Pregitzer, Sixtos, Vella, Wiencek (w/o vote). Absent: Adekanmbi, Stegner, Fisher, Johnson. Guests: 8

Chair Brandt called Meeting #2 to order at 3:33. The Chair welcomed everyone to a new year. A motion (Folwell/Brewick) to approve the minutes for the May 10, 2016 meeting passed unanimously. A motion (Nicotra/Folwell) to approve the minutes for meeting #1 also held on May 10, 2016 passed unanimously.

Chair’s Report: Chair Brandt announced that the early fall University Faculty Meeting (UFM) would not be held this year. A meeting could be held at a later date, if there is business that needs to be addressed. The Faculty-Staff Handbook (FSH) calls for a UFM at the beginning of the fall semester and has historically been used as an opportunity to welcome new faculty. Business is not usually conducted at this first meeting. There is now a new faculty orientation including a welcome dinner and thus we have made the decision not to hold this early fall UFM. Senate Leadership will bring forward a proposed revision to the FSH to change the requirement for a fall UFM.

We will be having a report on the retreat at our next senate meeting. Chair Brandt also wanted to remind everyone to speak up so our colleagues at our other sites can hear what is going on. We are experimenting with a new sound system and the acoustics in this room are not perfect. She may periodically ask people to speak up.

The Chair also asked to reorder today’s agenda in order to maximize the time for discussion of the Compensation Task Force. She requested the Senate to do “special orders” and than return to the Provost’s Report and the rest of the agenda. A motion (Folwell/Panttaja) to alter the agenda order to do special orders first passed unanimously.

Summer Graduates. A motion (Brewick/Foster) to approve the list of summer graduates passed unanimously.

Secretary to the Faculty Senate. FSH 1520 V Section 3. A motion (Nicotra/Folwell) to appoint Faculty Secretary Don Crowley to the role of secretary to the Faculty Senate passed unanimously.

Elections of Senate Members to Committees:
- Campus Planning Advisory Committee - Senator Greg Donohoe agreed to fill the open spot (2017).
- Student Appeals Committee - Senator Caroline Payant asked to be switched to the 2017 spot. This leaves the place open for someone to serve on this committee until 2019.
- University Budget & Finance Committee (UBFC) - After considerable discussion and several Senators contemplating, but not quite being able to commit to serving on the UBFC, the issue was left open for a future meeting.

A motion (Caplan/Nicotra) to approve those (Donohue and Payant) who volunteered was approved. Chair Brandt promised to be contacting people to try to fill the remaining vacancies.
Provost’s Report. Provost Wiencek stated that he is looking forward to working with the Senate in the coming year. He is a faculty member and views himself as part of the Faculty Senate. He felt we accomplished a lot last year and he hopes to accomplish even more this year. Last year the UBFC played a significant role in helping to determine university funding priorities. The role of UBFC in making funding decisions will continue in the future. He worried that the results of UBFC recommendations weren’t communicated until June and many people were unaware of the results. Most of the recommendations from UBFC were funded at least at some level. The UBFC will play an important role in determining university priorities in the future.

As required by the Board, the university will be continuing with the program prioritization process. Now that the strategic plan has been finalized, the cascaded plans from the unit levels will need to be developed during this coming semester. These plans will also guide units as they make proposals to UBFC. He expects that the Faculty Senate will wish to continue with its examination of faculty evaluation forms. He expressed regrets about some of the communication gaps that developed at times last year and hoped that his office will be more engaged with the Senate when necessary.

There are a couple of dean vacancies. The Dean of the College of Science is being filled on an interim basis and a national search will begin this year. The College of Art & Architecture also has an opening. He has been meeting with faculty about how they will fill this on an interim basis. The faculty in the college will also be contemplating a plan for the future.

Compensation Task Force (CTF). Chair Brandt explained that the Senate had created a task force two years ago to consider issues in the classification system. Last year V.P. of Finance Brian Foisy suggested that perhaps it would be more appropriate that the task force was renamed as a compensation task force. This name change more accurately reflects the fundamental reason for moving away from the many problems created by the existing classification system. The Senate endorsed this change. The task force has been working through the summer and V.P. Foisy and the new Executive Director of Human Resources, Wes Matthews, are here to report on their progress.

Mr. Foisy began by noting that since he arrived on campus a year ago he has been promising that they would do something about staff compensation. The staff turnover rate has been around 18%. This is unacceptable. After Wes Matthews was hired in the early summer of 2016 he was tasked with “slaying the dragon” of our current classification system. The goal is to “build our team” and not lose highly qualified people. If one looks at our existing classification system the average pay rate inside the classification bands made it appear that we were already at market. We know this isn’t true. Our classification system grouped all of our staff into eleven pay grades. Grouping employees performing very different jobs according to various job value factors resulted in many employees not receiving a market rate for the job they were performing. If, as Mr. Matthews has been doing, one looks at the actual market rate of specific positions on campus, we are well below the market rate on average.

The conversation was turned over to Director Matthews to provide some of the details of the plan the task force has been developing. The task force has been trying to develop a system which will move our employees towards receiving a market rate for their jobs. A market rate-based compensation system seeks to provide employees with a salary that matches what other similar institutions pay. A market rate is the statistical average of the wages paid for a particular job.

While it isn’t always easy to identify our market, the task force has sought to use statistics provided through salary surveys. The idea will be to establish a market rate for every position. Paying market rates will help us recruit and retain highly qualified employees.
Determining what the market is has been the biggest issue facing the task force. One approach has been to determine market rates by using Idaho and the states in the surrounding area: Washington, Oregon, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, as well as Colorado. Colorado is included because it is used by the State Human Resources in Idaho. The CTF have also tried to look at institutions that are similar to us which basically means looking at schools with a Carnegie High-Research classification. Using the above, it should be possible to obtain market data using either the Idaho Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) or CUPA (College and University Professional Association).

Director Matthews provided a handout showing how this might work for a specific employee. For instance the Idaho BLS data provides data for an entry level position. It also provides the median and the mean for that position. CUPA provides similar data. Using data of this type we can establish a “compa-ratio” to better determine what an individual’s salary should be. Our expectation is that no one should be below 80% of the market rate, assuming satisfactory performance. In some cases the entry level salary might be above 80%.

The goal is to get our average salary to the market rate. That doesn’t mean that everyone would be paid exactly the market rate since some employees would be above the average and some below. Using these tools does tend to centralize decision making about salaries. This approach provides a model to guide the entire university in making decisions about salaries. V.P. Foisy commented that following this system will also allow us to deal with the internal equity problems. Employees in different parts of the university performing the same job, with the same experience, should be paid the same, unless there are documented differences in their evaluations.

Mr. Matthews discussed some of the other factors that might affect one’s salary even after the market rate has been determined. The factors that the taskforce has discussed are:

- previous experience
- education beyond minimum requirements
- longevity with the University
- experience in the position.

The proposal suggests that a person starts at 80% of the market rate and then is given credit for these factors. For instance, an employee might be given an extra % increase for time in service and time in a position. Once a person reaches the market average the yearly increases for longevity/experience would be reduced. Overall, the plan anticipates that an employee would reach the market rate in eight years.

Vice President Foisy noted that there will be a memo coming out which will detail the times for open sessions and forums to present this plan to employees. Eleven meetings are scheduled during September. The plan is to have these meetings to obtain feedback and then make any necessary changes and adjustments. The current plan is to take this proposal to the State Board by mid-October to formally change our compensation system. This new plan should be in place in time for the next CEC (change in employee compensation) cycle next spring. A question was asked about how this applies to faculty. V.P. Foisy stated that many of these same principles could be applied to faculty, but the task force has not dealt with faculty salaries. Chair Brandt commented that Senate Leadership has discussed the idea of creating a similar task force to examine the issues of applying these market based concepts to faculty salaries.
Mr. Foisy briefly discussed the question of whether the UI has the resources to implement this plan. He pointed out that the UI has the resources to fix our compensation system. We might not have the will, or be willing to prioritize this issue, but if getting salaries to market was our highest priority, we could find the resources. If we grow our enrollment, there will be more revenue available to address this issue. In response to a question, Mr. Foisy clarified that the state does not tell us exactly how to use our general education budget. This leaves us with some discretion about what we prioritize. Obviously there are practical constraints, like the need to pay our utility bills, but he wanted to emphasize that we can make decisions about what we prioritize. Another Senator inquired about what processes might be available to look at our expenditures. V.P. Foisy noted that the Board does mandate us to look at our expenditures and what we prioritize. Provost Wiencek commented that this is what the newly proposed Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee will be working on. He also expects UBFC to play a central role in this process.

Adjournment: Chair Brandt noted that we were past our usual adjournment time. She thanked V.P. Foisy and Director Matthews for their time and then accepted a motion (Foster/Panttaja) to adjourn at 5:10. This motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Crowley
Secretary to the Faculty Senate and Faculty Secretary