University of Idaho  
Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
2017-2018 Meeting #12, Tuesday, Nov. 7, 2017

Present: Anderson (Mike), Anderson (Miranda), Arowojolu, Baird, Bird for Brandt (w/o vote), Brown, Cannon (Boise, attending in Moscow), Caplan, De Angelis, Ellison, Foster, Grieb, Hrdlicka, Jeffery, Johnson, Kern (CDA), Leonor, Mahoney, Morgan, Morrison, Nicotra, Panttaja, Seamon, Tibbals, Vella, Watson, Wiencek (w/o vote), Zhao (Idaho Falls)  
Absent: Barbour, Brandt (w/o vote), Bugingo. Guests: 11

Call to order and minutes: The chair called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m., noting that this was the third-to-last meeting of the fall semester. He introduced former senator Kenton Bird, who took minutes in the absence of Faculty Secretary Liz Brandt. A motion (Morrison/Tibbals) to approve the minutes of the Oct. 31 meeting was approved with three abstentions.

Chair’s Report. The chair announced a number of important dates in the next month:
- November 10 – State of the University Address by President Staben, 2:00-3:30 p.m., International Ballroom, Pitman Center
- November 11 – Veteran’s Appreciation Dinner, 5:30 pm, International Ballroom, Pitman Center
- November 15 - Honorary Degree Nominations for Spring 2018
- November 29 – Fall UFM meeting – 3:00-4:30, Vandal Ballroom, Pitman Center
- December 1 – Preference forms for University Committee Service are due.

In addition to those events announced by the chair, it was later mentioned that the annual observance of Veterans Day will take place at 11 a.m. Friday, November 10, on the steps of Memorial Gymnasium.

The chair then turned to the topic of compensation for post-doctoral fellows. He reported on a meeting with Wes Matthews, executive director of Human Resources, about progress in identifying discipline-specific market rates for post-docs. In November of 2016, due to impending changes to the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) for exempt employees, the university instituted a minimum salary for post-docs that met the FLSA salary test for exempt employees. Because these changes to FLSA did not materialize, the university will utilize market-based data and the new UI salary test ($37,440) to inform future post-doc salary determinations.

In response to a question from a senator about how much post-docs should be paid, the chair said that the market levels are discipline-specific and will be determined by units that hire post-docs in consultation with the Office of Human Resources. Another senator asked about funding for graduate teaching assistants. The chair reported that Jerry McMurtry, dean of the College of Graduate Studies, is conducting a compensation analysis in consultation with deans, chairs and Graduate Council. Dean McMurtry will be invited to a future Senate meeting, as more details are known. The chair noted that TA salaries will be discipline-specific and not uniform across the university.

The chair then invited Senator Mike Anderson, a member of the University Budget and Finance Committee (UBFC), to elaborate on a recent email from the committee calling for proposals for FY2019 and FY2020. UBFC will consider requests that are at least $100,000 in one-time money and/or $40,000 in permanent funding. The timeframe is as follows:
- Jan. 31: Proposals due.
- May 1: Proposals reviewed by the committee.
- Fall 2018: Funding decisions announced.
Prof. Anderson noted that the committee’s memo contains advice for those seeking to submit proposals in the next round, along with a list of previously funded proposals.

**Provost’s Report.** Provost Wiencek announced that he had called a meeting on Nov. 9 to provide background and context for changes in the university’s advising and recruiting structure. Among those attending will be deans, associate deans, directors of student services, academic advisors and students. The provost said the goal was to help everyone involved better understand the enrollment challenges the reorganization intends to address. He described the meeting as a chance to “hit reset” and to signal that there is no rush to implement changes; instead, he wants to do what is in everyone’s best interests.

Meanwhile, the provost reported that his office is working with Human Resources to finalize a spreadsheet for deans to show market-based compensation for faculty. This document will show the differences between market and target salaries for faculty. Although the mid-year raises will not include a merit component, he indicated that the long-term approach will allow administrators to give merit-based raises, which are a high priority for faculty.

A senator praised the decision for a “reset” in the reorganization of advising. The provost responded that the immediate reaction to last month’s announcement arose from concerns about where advising staff would be located and to whom they would report. He believed that meeting face-to-face with advisors and advisors would enable a productive dialogue to allow the university to move forward with a more effective advising structure.

**Twin Larch.** The chair then introduced Prof. Mike McCollough of the College of Business and Economics who described efforts to establish a non-profit organization to take over ownership of Twin Larch Sanctuary. Twin Larch is eight miles from Moscow and was donated to the university for use by employees and/or students and university business, e.g., retreats, overnight stays, and student projects. The university intends to sell the property. (Prof. McCullough previously discussed this idea at the Oct. 3 Senate meeting.) He described the house and surrounding property as a potential resource to the university and community. Organizers are seeking faculty and staff volunteers to serve on an exploratory board. They face a deadline of Feb. 28, 2018, and hope to raise $30,000 to address some deferred maintenance issues. In response to a senator’s question, Prof. McCollough acknowledged that the road needs attention to make the house more accessible. Anyone interested should contact Prof. McCollough at mccolou@uidaho.edu.

**Ombuds Annual Report:** University Ombuds Barbara Beatty next presented a report showing an increase in the number of cases she saw in 2016-2017, partly due to more participation by students (21 percent of cases, up 7 percentage points from the previous year). She also identified the most common reasons for visits to the Ombuds Office and suggested ways the university could better address them. She noted that many employees, particularly staff, are reluctant to raise concerns to supervisors out of fear of retaliation. A senator asked if any of this information, the section on “Ombuds Observations and Comments” in particular, would be shared with the recently formed “Great Colleges to Work For” Cascaded Plan Workgroup, as it seems to align with many of the themes of the survey. Ms. Beatty stated that she would be willing to discuss this with the workgroup, if invited. In response to a senator’s question about comparisons to other institutions, Ms. Beatty said that nothing stands out about the UI; rather the concerns raised may reflect societal trends. She said the university is on the right track in updating its policies to better address workplace issues. She finished by saying that many seem to misunderstand the purpose of an ombuds, who does not advocate or take sides. Instead, she assists with conflicts and offers suggestions of how to better address them.
FS-18-012 – Sabbatical Leave Policy. The chair then introduced Prof. Erin James, chair of the Sabbatical Leave Evaluation Committee (SLEC). Prof. James explained that the committee began to examine the policy under former chair Jeff Dodge. The goals of the revision were:

- Clarify the application deadlines.
- Specify review procedures (including a statement that incomplete applications would not be considered).
- Eliminate the need for a separate report by faculty members after returning from leave; instead, providing that sabbatical activities be addressed in the faculty members’ annual performance review.
- Allowing a member of the committee who is concurrently applying for sabbatical to participate in SLEC’s evaluation of applications (except for recusing oneself from the meeting at which that application was considered). This provision will alleviate the need to find a substitute when a SLEC member’s application is before the committee.

A senator requested clarification of how the changes to this policy would affect a college’s own sabbatical leave guidelines. The provost quoted Faculty Secretary Liz Brandt pointing out that whenever the Faculty-Staff Handbook (FSH) conflicts with a college’s policy, the FSH wins. General Counsel Kent Nelson, in attendance, indicated his agreement with this observation, saying “The Senate makes the rules.” In response to another senator’s question, the chair indicated that this amendment deals only with FSH 3270 [Sabbatical Leave] and not with FSH 1640.74 [Function and Structure of the SLEC].

The Senate briefly discussed whether a tenured or tenure-track senior instructor would be eligible for a sabbatical. A senator noted that a former provost would not allow senior instructors to be considered for tenure, even though the FSH defines senior instructor as a tenure-eligible position. The SLEC’s recommendations do not address which faculty ranks are eligible for sabbatical; thus, the current policy (limiting sabbaticals to tenured or tenure-track faculty, including senior instructors) remains in force. Prof. James noted that her committee discussed whether clinical faculty would be eligible for sabbatical. However, relying on the policy’s definition of the purpose of a sabbatical, chose not to expand the eligibility to include clinical ranks. Hearing no further discussion, the chair called the question on the seconded motion from the Sabbatical Leave Evaluation Committee. It passed with three abstentions.

FS-18-013 – FSH 1620 – University-level Committees. Prof. Miranda Anderson, vice chair of the Senate and chair of the Committee on Committees, presented proposed changes to university-level guidelines for committees [FSH 1620]. The first change affects appointments of students and staff to university-level committees. Under the change, Staff Council and the three student groups (ASUI, GPSA, SBA) would submit their appointees as informational items to the Committee on Committees, rather than as nominations that required the committee’s approval. As a seconded motion from the Committee on Committees, this change was approved unanimously.

FS-18-014 – FSH 1640.41 - Faculty-Staff Policy Group. This amendment would designate the Faculty Secretary/Policy Coordinator as chair of this newly formed committee. Prof. Anderson explained that Professor Brandt, the current holder of this position, proposed this change because her office is better able to coordinate issues coming before the policy group. The current policy indicates that the group would choose its own chair. A senator noted that this change potentially would lead to an imbalance in the ratio of faculty to staff on the committee (i.e., by making the Faculty Secretary chair, there could potentially be four faculty members as opposed to three staff). Because of this concern, a senator suggested referring this change back to the Faculty Secretary’s office. A motion to refer (Morgan/Tibbals) passed 17-5, with 3 abstentions. After the vote, a senator asked the chair to allow Staff Council an opportunity to review the amendment before it returns to the Senate.
FS-18-015 – Teacher Education Coordinating Committee. This change amends the committee’s membership, designates the director of teacher education as chair and reflects the College of Education’s new name: “College of Education, Health and Human Sciences.” As a seconded motion from the Committee on Committees, the changes passed unanimously with one abstention.

FS-18-008 rev – Campus Recreation. This was previously discussed at the Senate’s Oct. 24 meeting, at which Senator Brian Mahoney (associate director of Campus Recreation) proposed deletion of FSH 6880 governing Campus Recreation. In response, the Senate recommended that the section be moved to the Administrative Procedures Manual (APM) to keep a record of procedures affecting Campus Recreation. Senator Mahoney indicated that his office would address deficiencies in the program’s website raised by senators. He noted that the current policy was written before construction of the Student Recreation Center and contained outdated provisions. After additional discussion, the chair noted the late hour and called attention to his swirling gavel. A motion (Foster/Tibbals) to delete the relevant section from the FSH and insert the new language in the APM was approved with one dissenting vote and one abstention.

Adjournment: There being no other business to conduct, the chair called for a motion to adjourn, which Morrison gratefully made and Panttaja enthusiastically seconded. The motion carried unanimously and the chair gavelled the meeting to a close at 5:10 p.m., admonishing senators to “bring out your flashlights” in the dim light of the early evening.

Respectfully submitted,
Kenton Bird
Secretary pro tempore to Faculty Senate
Associate Professor of Journalism and Mass Media