Present: Anderson (Miranda), Anderson (Mike), Arowojolu, Baird, Barbour (Twin Falls), Brandt (w/o vote), Brown, Cannon (Boise), Caplan, De Angelis, Ellison, Foster, Grieb, Hrdlicka, Jeffrey, Kern (Coeur d’Alene), Kuhl (for Johnson, w/o vote), Leonor, Nicotra, Mahoney, Seamon, Stevenson (for Wiencek, w/o vote), Tibbals, Vella, Watson, Wilson (for Morgan, w/o vote). Absent: Bugingo, Johnson, Morgan, Morrison, Panttaja, Wiencek, Zhao (Idaho Falls). Guests: 7

Call to Order and Minutes: The chair called the meeting to order at 3:31. A motion (Baird/Nicotra) to approve the minutes passed. The chair thanked Professor Kenton Bird who substituted for the Faculty Secretary at the November 7th meeting.

Chair’s Report:
- Nominations for honorary degrees are due by November 15.
- University Faculty Meeting #2 will be held on Wednesday, November 29 at the Vandal Ballroom in the Pitman Center.
- Faculty Senate will not meet on Tuesday November 21 or Tuesday, November 28. The next Senate meeting will be on Tuesday December 5.
- Senators are asked to encourage their colleagues to complete the University Committee Service Preference form by December 1, 2017. The Committee on Committees has received 50 completed preference forms to date.

Provost’s Report:
Jeanne Stevenson gave the report. Provost Wiencek is attending a national meeting of land grant institutions. He extended his best wishes for the upcoming holiday.

A senator asked whether the committee preference form could be attached to the Senate Talking Points. The chair answered that a link to the form will be included in the talking points and that a copy of the form could be attached.

A senator asked about the new multi-factor authentication protocol being implemented by Information Technology Services (ITS) for signing into university networks. He believes the details of the new system have not been adequately communicated and stated that many in his college are experiencing difficulties. Hardware tokens, which are one method of authentication, have not been available for purchase. He reported that the university bookstore had indicated that they are not going to be handling the sale of tokens moving forward. The chair deferred to the faculty secretary who explained that very recently, ITS changed its approach and will be providing hardware tokens to faculty and staff upon request. They will no longer sell the tokens and will refund the purchase price to those who have purchased a token.

The chair announced that an open session and demonstration of multi-factor authentication will be held on November 15 at 1:00 pm in the Aurora room.

Senators offered a number of comments regarding their experiences with the multi-factor authentication process:
- Duo, the application being used by the university to facilitate multi-factor authentication, seems to be causing issues for Apple users.
- Implementation of the system off campus has been a problem.
• Faculty and staff who have been travelling during the implementation period have experienced difficulties.
• Communication has been incomplete – faculty were not aware that authentication could be authorized for 14 days at a time so users do not have to use a multi-factor sign-in every time they access the network. Earlier versions of Outlook may interfere with the selection of the 14-day authentication option.
• Faculty have been told that the multi-factor authentication system does not support the most up-to-date Apple email application. Apple users have to use an older email application, which is a security downgrade.
• Using a browser-based system to remember the authentication raised issues.
• Relying on an external application such as Duo raises security concerns.
• Students also are experiencing problems with multi-factor authentication.

The chair responded that Vice President Dan Ewart presented at the morning’s Presidential Leadership Breakfast regarding security of the various devices employees of the University use to connect to the network. Information regarding Duo had been provided in an email to employees. During the discussion, several senators commented that they had been able to smoothly implement multi-factor authentication and expressed surprise that others were experiencing difficulties. A senator commented that he understood that the university is dealing with time deadlines to implement better security and that there may have been a security crisis that precipitated the university’s implementation. The deadline for employees to enroll in Duo has been extended to Wednesday, January 17, 2018 to allow more time for the transition. The deadline for students to enroll is Wednesday, January 31, 2018.

FS-18-014 – FSH 1640.41 – Faculty-Staff Policy Group. Miranda Anderson, Vice-Chair of Senate and Chair of the Committee on Committees, presented revisions to the committee structure for the Faculty-Staff Policy Group. The proposal is that the Faculty Secretary serve as chair of the committee without vote. A previous version of the proposal did not provide that the Faculty Secretary served without vote. This caused the faculty and staff representation on the committee to become unbalanced. Anderson explained that Staff Council, the Policy Group and the Committee on Committees approved the proposed revision. The proposal passed unanimously.

FS-18-016 – FSH 1640.87 – Teaching and Advising Committee. Next, a proposal to update the Teaching and Advising committee’s membership, and conforming its functions to current practice and to reflect the creation of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, was presented. Anderson explained that the Teaching and Advising Committee (TeAC) originally proposed eliminating the function of serving as an advisory resource for the registrar on classroom use. The Committee on Committees consulted with TeAC and suggested that this provision be retained as issues regarding the availability of classroom space have arisen. Senate Leadership and others are working with Vice President Ewart on developing a new approach to facilities issues that impact teaching and advising. The proposal passed unanimously.

FS-18-018 – FSH 2700 – Student Evaluations of Teaching. Allan Caplan, a senator and member of TeAC, presented the proposal to remove the currently employed transitional student evaluation of teaching form from the policy. Caplan explained that two years ago TeAC was charged with revising the university form for student evaluation of teaching. The committee made a proposal that was not approved by the President. In response to the President’s concerns, a new form was devised by the committee. The “new form” was discussed and approved by the Senate on February 17, 2015. Because of the role of student evaluations in the tenure and promotion President Staben charged TeAC to determine whether and how evaluations on the original form and the new form correlate. As part of this process, a “transitional form” containing components of both the original and the “new form” was created and included in the policy.
The “transitional form” was discussed and approved by the senate at two meetings – February 2, 2016 and February 23, 2016. The study was conducted by Dale Pietrzak, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation. Senate was updated on the study on October 11, 2016. An executive summary of the study and Director Pietrzak’s recommendations were included with the agenda. Based on this past work, TeAC recommends that the “transitional form” be removed from the policy.

A senator asked Director Pietrzak about his recommendation that 0.4 points be added to each mean score on the “new form”. Pietrzak explained that this enables scores on the original and the “new form” to be compared. The senator followed up asking how this process would be implemented. Pietrzak responded that the provost’s office could ensure that this addition is highlighted as part of the tenure and promotion process.

A senator asked whether TeAC discussed the low student response rate on evaluations. Caplan indicated that the committee has discussed the issue but does not have a recommendation on how to address it at this time. Several suggestions were made including holding grades until a student has completed evaluations or using class time to complete evaluations.

A senator asked whether the response rates for the validation survey were good. Pietrzak indicated that the response rates were appropriate for the study. Chair Hrdlicka added that only the executive summary from the study was provided with the agenda and that the entire study would be made available to senators. The senator complimented Director Pietrzak for the depth and thoroughness of the study.

A senator asked whether TeAC has considered eliminating student evaluations given that some research suggests that they do not provide an accurate portrayal of faculty teaching abilities. Pietrzak indicated that while the data do not provide a basis for measuring teachers’ skills or student learning, it does provide a strong indication of the students’ perception that the faculty member is able to assist students in learning.

A senator asked whether faculty members will have the ability to customize the questions. Pietrzak responded that for the time being faculty will be able to select from a list of predetermined questions for inclusion on the evaluation, but not create their own. However, he added that changes in the university’s administrative computing software, Banner, may lead to changes in the customization of evaluations. TeAC is examining how evaluations will be made available to students once Banner is upgraded, as it will no longer support UI’s unique student evaluation system. There are a number of possibilities, but not all support customization of the evaluations.

A senator noted that the study showed that questions 1 and 2 had no predictive power on quality of performance in the course. He asked whether the committee considered eliminating those questions. Caplan responded that the committee believes the questions provide useful qualitative information about the student and the course. They also impose an expectation that the student evaluate their own participation in class and prepare students for answering the rest of the evaluation – for the amount of effort you put in, did you get what you expected.

The elimination of the transitional form was approved with three abstentions.

**Great College to Work For Report.** Director Pietrzak presented the results of the Great College to Work For Survey. He noted that, in general the results are similar to the 2016 survey results. The university had a higher response rate on the 2017 survey, but it was similarly representative. The error rate for comparing the 2016 and 2017 results is 2.2%. If a difference in scores from the two years is less than 2.2% in any category it cannot be considered statistically significant. He concluded that across the different job
categories, faculty seem to feel slightly better about their work, administrators do not feel quite as good, and exempt and non-exempt staff show a fairly significant decrease in their feelings about work.

A senator expressed frustration that the data do not tell us why employees report dissatisfaction. She asked how the institution plans to follow up on the survey results. Pietrzak agreed that the survey is basically a screening tool that pinpoints issues and areas of concern. He stated that some follow-up is already underway. He reminded the senate that last year the university convened focus groups to explore more deeply the reasons for low employee morale. The provost has created a cascaded planning group charged with looking into the reasons for low morale and recommending how the institution might respond. He also commented that in looking at the overall results of the study, the communication issues stand out as an area of concern. It appears that the institution is siloed -- we trust our closest colleagues but not others outside our immediate workgroups.

Chair Hrdlicka added that he is a member of the ‘Great Colleges’ Cascaded Plan Workgroup. Last week the group met with a representative from the survey company who led the group through a detailed analysis of the extensive data set provided to the institution. Director Pietrzak also provided the following error rates for those interested in comparing responses across job categories: administrators -- 4.49%, faculty -- 3.33%, exempt staff -- 5.61%, and non-exempt staff -- 5.2%.

A senator stated that she has heard many comments from faculty regarding compensation, benefits and work/life balance. Faculty believe they are continually being asked to do more with less. The President’s statements in the State of the University address indicating that the institution is placing a cap on faculty and staff hires has contributed to negative faculty perceptions. The announcement of the hiring cap was surprising to many faculty and staff. She encouraged the cascaded planning committee to address these sorts of sudden messages about major policy changes.

Director Pietrzak concluded his presentation by offering to be available to speak to smaller groups to answer additional questions.

Having completed the meeting’s business, a motion to adjourn (Foster/DeAngelis) was made and the meeting was adjourned at 4:34.

Respectfully Submitted,

Liz Brandt, Faculty Secretary &
Secretary to the Faculty Senate