

**University of Idaho**  
**Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes**  
**2018-2019 Meeting #13, Tuesday, November 13, 2018**

**Present:** Benedum, Brandt (w/o vote), Bridges, Cannon (Boise), Caplan, Chopin, DeAngelis, Dezzani, Ellison, Foster, Grieb, Jeffrey, Johnson, Keim, Kern (Coeur d'Alene), Kirchmeier, Laggis, Lawrence (for Wiencek, w/o vote), Lee, Lee-Painter, McKellar (Idaho Falls), Morgan, Raja, Seamon, Tibbals, Vella. **Absent:** Lambeth, Luckhart, Schwarzlaender, Wiencek. **Guests: 7**

**Call to Order and Minutes.** The chair called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

A motion to approve the minutes (Lee-Painter/Dezzani) passed unanimously.

**Chair's Report:**

- The chair announced that Senate Leadership will be reaching out to senators to begin a dialog about communication opportunities and barriers around campus. He will be scheduling meetings over the next week including Zoom meetings with off campus members.
- The University Faculty Meeting will be held on December 5 at 3:00 p.m. PST (access information and locations [here](#))
- Nominations for honorary degrees for the spring 2019 graduation are due on November 15<sup>th</sup>.
- The [CALS Speaker Series](#) will host Professor Temple Grandin, from Colorado State University on November 15 at 5:30 PST in the International Ballroom at the Pitman Center. The title of Grandin's presentation is "Educating Different Kinds of Minds.)
- There will be no Senate meeting on Tuesday November 20<sup>th</sup> or on Tuesday November 27<sup>th</sup>. The next senate meeting will be Tuesday December 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Provost Report:** Provost Wiencek is out of town. Vice Provost for Faculty Torrey Lawrence gave the provost report in his absence.

- Final candidates in the [dean search](#) for the College of Natural Resources have been on campus.
- The new position description (PD) system has gone live. The colleges are currently working to get all faculty to complete the new PD before leaving for winter break.
- The UI is sponsoring a [free Thanksgiving Dinner](#) for the entire UI community on Tuesday, November 21 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. PST. The event will be at The Hub in the Wallace Residence Center.
- Vice Provost Lawrence called senate's attention to an email from Provost Wiencek entitled "Meeting Our Mission in Uncertain Times". The email includes a link to the provost web page containing updates and public communications, status, and responsibilities on [major university-wide initiatives](#).

A senator commented that the funding status for University Budget and Finance Committee projects was not included among the updates of university initiatives on the new web page. Lawrence responded that Vice President for Finance and Administration Brian Foisy is working on the response to the UBFC recommendations. Lawrence commented that he has received many questions about the status of the UBFC recommendations and the need to communicate before the deadline to submit new funding requests.

A senator commented that faculty in her college (particularly junior faculty) have expressed concern that the new PDs are too formulaic and not flexible enough to reflect the actual faculty time spent on the activities. She indicated that her colleagues felt pressure to follow an "across-the-board" approach that does not provide the opportunity for individual differences. Lawrence responded that while the new PD should be a more general description to the faculty member's responsibilities, it also should reflect the individual responsibilities of each person. He has encouraged deans and unit administrators to discuss the opportunities for standardization with their colleagues. If issues are not resolved through these efforts, a broader discussion may be warranted. Most who have talked to the senate are junior faculty. The faculty secretary added that aspects of the PD such as

the faculty member's teaching load, may be more standardized than others. Dean Marc Chopin added that in his college faculty have the flexibility to emphasize some aspects of their responsibilities over others. He stated the opportunities for flexibility are narrow, but important.

**Jazz Festival.** Professor and Education Director of the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival, Vanessa Sielert, updated senators on the upcoming festival and opportunities for faculty and staff participation.

1. Volunteer opportunities. The Jazz Festival has a number of volunteer opportunities. These include the Adopt-a-Site program pursuant to which a group can adopt a jazz fest site. This program allows groups of faculty staff and/or students to volunteer together. In addition, there is a need for volunteer site managers, site volunteers and drivers (who transport artists and VIPs). The festival offers a free ticket for every 4 hours of volunteer service. The contacts for the festival are manager Josh Skinner, and graduate students Ben Price and John Stein.

2. Workshops by UI faculty. The festival will again offer workshops presented by UI faculty that tie UI disciplines to jazz. Departments and faculty across campus are encouraged to give a workshop that might tie back into the jazz festival. Many creative workshops were offered [last year](#).

3. Engagement by College and Departments. This year the university will be sponsoring mini "EnVision Idaho" events during the Jazz Festival hosted by college and departments. The plan is that these will be open house events (as opposed to all day events) in each college that might spark interest of students who are on campus. Sielert emphasized that over 5000 students come to UI for the Jazz Festival and 90% of these students aren't going to be music majors. They are active and engaged students. She hopes that colleges and units will take advantage of these opportunities to give student participants an opportunity to explore UI programs. She also stressed that these programs provide faculty an opportunity to engage with the educators who bring their students to campus. She encouraged faculty to attend performances and briefly engage the educators who have student participants by thanking them for attending and welcoming them to campus. These short contacts are significant to the educators who participate.

4. New Ideas. Sielert also stated that the Jazz Festival is interested in hearing from faculty about ideas for improving the festival. They are looking for easy ideas that can be quickly implemented this year and for bigger ideas that might inform planning for future festivals. Their goal is to make the festival into an event that supports the broad advancement of UI goals, particularly for student recruitment.

A senator encouraged faculty to volunteer and commented that he had a great experience volunteering with elementary teachers and students. Sielert added that getting UI students to engage with visiting students is also important. Students can communicate the message that UI is a cool place to be. A senator asked about the preparation time for the Adopt-a-Site program or volunteering as a site manager. Sielert responded that the system is very organized. Volunteers need to attend a 90-minute meeting to review responsibilities. The training is very systematic and structured. Each site has a specific site manual.

**FS-19-015: Final Exam Schedule.** University Registrar Dwaine Hubbard presented the final exam schedule recommended by UCC for the 2019-2020 academic year. The seconded motion of UCC passed unanimously without discussion.

**2. Catalog Changes.** The chair suggested the four proposed catalog changes be considered together. The changes were presented by Registrar Dwaine Hubbard and Associate Dean Mark Nielsen.

**Regulation J-5 Credit Limitations.** Hubbard explained that, through technical consultation with the SBOE, UI has determined that the board-prescribed limits for experiential learning does not apply to credits earned by students through programs such as International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement. The regulation revision reflects this determination. A senator commented that he had expressed concern that the limits on experiential learning credits might impact some UI coursework.

He has clarified that the changes will not have this impact because the definition of experiential learning is very narrow.

**Regulation C-3 Withdrawing from a Course.** Nielsen stated that the proposed change was requested by the associate deans. Under the prior language, if a student was assigned a final grade prior to the deadline for withdrawing from a course, the student could erase the grade by withdrawing. This may happen where a student is assigned an early grade because of academic dishonesty. The purpose of the change is to prevent such a student from erasing the grade by withdrawing from the course. A senator asked whether final grades can be assigned that early in the semester? Nielsen and others explained that a grade could be assigned for academic dishonesty and that certain intensive short courses may be completed early in the semester. Nielsen also stated that enforcement of the proposed regulation would be difficult. The registrar does not have a way to block the withdrawal, if the registrar does not know about the academic dishonesty. The associate deans plan to work with the Dean of Students Office to implement a plan for enforcement. Faculty members would have to work with the registrar to make this happen. A senator expressed concern about how this regulation will be communicated.

**Regulation H Final Examinations.** The proposed change would increase the number of consecutive finals students could have before requesting a reschedule and implements a system for re-scheduling. Nielsen explained that the question of how to deal with final exam re-schedules has been discussed frequently by the associate deans. The current rule provides that if a student has more than two exams scheduled in one day, the student can request that an exam be rescheduled. Nielsen stated that this happens frequently. However, the current academic regulation does not provide a mechanism to determine which exam should be re-scheduled.

Nielsen also stated that the printed proposal circulated with the senate agenda did not reflect the actual language approved by UCC. Nielsen stated that the first sentence of the proposal should read “Students with four or more finals...” rather than “Students with more than three finals...” He stated that the change would limit the number of alternative exams that must be given but would provide an improved process to determine which instructor must offer an alternative exam. Nielsen commented that preparing an alternative exam imposes significant workload on the instructor and impacts the fairness of the process. It was moved (Chopin/Lee-Painter) that the motion be amended to provide “Students with four or more finals...” This motion to amend the UCC seconded motion passed unanimously.

A senator asked how many students have more than three finals on the same day? Nielsen responded that he did not know. The senator asked whether the university could resolve the problem with a different approach to scheduling exams. Hubbard responded that this problem is very difficult to deal with through scheduling because the registrar’s office does not know which courses require finals. A senator pointed out that if a class does not have a final it is supposed to meet during the time scheduled for the final. A senator commented that there are many fairness issues involved in exam scheduling. For example, it is not fair that some students may be taking their third final in a day when other students in the same class may only have that one final. Hubbard responded that the registrar’s office has looked at the practices of peer institutions. Most do not reschedule finals unless the student has four or more finals in a day. A senator commented that three finals is approximately 6 hours of exams! The time between finals is barely enough to get to the next final. Several senators expressed concern that the change would impact student performance on finals. Another senator – unclear about the policy – asked how many students would have to be impacted for the professor to move the exam. Nielsen clarified that only one student’s exam is rescheduled. Under the proposal as amended, if a student has four in a day – the instructor of the class with the lowest enrollment would be obligated to provide an alternative exam for that student. A senator commented that focusing on the smallest enrollment class seemed arbitrary. Another senator indicated that the larger enrollment classes

impose a more significant workload on the instructor, so requiring an alternate exam in the smaller class seems fair.

A senator also commented that section H.1.b of the regulation should be revised to change “faculty council” to “faculty senate”.

The chair pointed out that the recently approved final exam schedule refers in the footnotes to the existing final re-schedule rule. Hubbard responded that if the revised regulation passes, these sorts of cross references will be updated to comply with the new regulation.

**Regulation L-7 Fresh Start.** The proposed changes revise the fresh start program so that more students are eligible for the program. Currently the university receives many petitions from students who could have benefitted from the fresh start program but were not aware they qualified. These students then must petition to qualify for the fresh start. In revising the policy, the committee looked at the practices of peer institutions. An example of the problems in the existing policy relates to the requirement that a student must not have been enrolled in any higher education program for the past five year in order to qualify. Thus, a student who takes a couple of online or community college programs is not qualified for the existing fresh start. The new policy provides that the student must not have been enrolled at UI for five years.

At the conclusion of the discussion of the four proposed catalogue changes, the chair suggested that senate vote separately on Regulation H and vote on the remaining three changes as a group. The senate unanimously approved the revisions to Regulation J-5, C-3 and L-7.

Senate then resumed its discussion of Regulation H. It was moved (Vella/Jeffrey) that the third sentence in the UCC proposal be revised as follows to change the order of the last four sentences and clarify the deadline for requesting a reschedule: “Students who need to have a final rescheduled should make arrangements as early in the semester as possible. [The next sentence was formerly the third sentence in this section of the provision and would now be moved to the second sentence.] If voluntary accommodation is not achieved, the instructor of the class with the lowest enrollment will offer an alternative exam. Requests submitted ~~after this date~~ after two weeks prior to the start of the examination week are left to the discretion of the instructor. The rescheduled exam will take place during one of the designated conflict exam periods or as arranged with the course instructor.” This motion passed 19-1.

A senator commented that it might be appropriate to consider the question of how many finals entitled a student to a reschedule from the question of the process for obtaining the reschedule. He stated that while he supported the new process for requesting a reschedule, he would have to vote the entire policy down if the number of finals triggering the reschedule was changed from two to three. It was moved (Jeffrey/Grieb) that the senate vote separately on sentence one of the proposed changes and the rest of the proposal. This motion passed 18-2.

A senator asked whether exams could be rescheduled optionally. Nielsen replied that the department chair could approve an optional reschedule.

After the actions of senate, the first sentence of the proposed motion as previously amended by senate was read by the faculty secretary: “Students with four or more finals in one day may have the excess finals rescheduled.” This motion was defeated 2-18.

Next, the remaining four sentences as amended above were considered. The faculty secretary read the motion: “Students who need to have a final rescheduled should make arrangements as early in the semester as possible. If voluntary accommodation is not achieved, the instructor of the class with

the lowest enrollment will offer an alternative exam. Requests submitted after two weeks prior to the start of the examination week are left to the discretion of the instructor. The rescheduled exam will take place during one of the designated conflict exam periods, or as arranged with the course instructor.” This motion passed 19-1.

**Plus/Minus Grading - Teaching and Advising Committee Report (TeAC).** Professors Erin Chapman and Stephen Flores gave the report of the committee regarding the adoption of a +/- grading system. The chair commented first that the report was being presented to senate for information. Because the recommendations of TeAC require revision of the catalogue, the TeAC report has been referred to the UCC for further action. Flores summarized the history of the issue. In 2005, Faculty Senate narrowly passed a proposal for a +/- grading system. The proposal was approved after the university faculty meeting without a vote (because of lack of a quorum). Then President White vetoed the proposal. The issue arose again in 2015. TeAC took on the responsibility of researching the merits of adopting a +/- grading system. At the time TeAC voted to again recommend the adoption of a +/- system in general and voted separately to recommend a system that did not include an A+ grade. A student survey that was done showed student opposition to the change. The recommendation came to senate at the end of the year and was referred back to TeAC for further consideration. The detailed report prepared by TeAC includes the committee’s research and recommendation as well as proposed revisions to the university catalog.

A senator asked what the process for consideration would be. The chair explained that if UCC endorses the proposal it would come to senate as a seconded motion. If passed by senate, the proposal would go to the University faculty. The faculty secretary and the registrar also explained that in addition to its consideration by UCC input would be sought from the graduate council, associate deans and other interested constituencies.

A senator asked whether faculty would be required to use the +/- system. She commented that problems may emerge if the university does not have a uniform approach to grading. The registrar responded that the policy would apply to every faculty member. It could be the case that an individual faculty member might decide not to give plusses or minuses. However, the system would not be an opt out/in system.

A senator asked for insight on why the policy was vetoed previously. The faculty secretary and a senator who was involved at the time stated that the faculty support was fairly close and several people including students spoke against the proposal at the time.

The agenda having been completed, a motion (Tibbals/Dezanni) to adjourn passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Liz Brandt, Faculty Secretary &  
Secretary to the Faculty Senate