

University of Idaho
University Faculty Meeting Minutes
2017-18 Meeting #2, November 29, 2017

Call to Order: President Staben called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm.

In Memoriam: President Staben asked for a moment of silence in honor for our departed colleague.

Ed Duren
Professor Emeritus of Animal and Veterinary Science
-November 2017-

Quorum Count: 83 faculty members were present (Moscow 66, Boise 5, Coeur d'Alene 4, Idaho Falls 4, Twin Falls 4) less than the one-eighth required for a quorum.

Minutes: In the absence of a quorum, the minutes of the September 20, 2017 stand as a record of the meeting but were not formally approved.

Report of Faculty Senate: The report was given by the chair of the faculty senate, Professor Patrick Hrdlicka. Hrdlicka informed the body that in the absence of a quorum, the policy and curriculum changes approved by senate are deemed approved pursuant to [FSH 1520 Article III, Section 3. Clause A.](#) and will be forwarded to the president. He then reviewed each of the policy changes on the agenda and invited questions regarding each pending proposals. He also reviewed proposed changes in the academic regulations and in the curriculum.

A faculty member made a comment regarding the revisions to FSH 2700 New Student Evaluation Form. He asked that the Teaching and Advising Committee consider extending the timeframe for students to complete the course evaluation. He stated that closing the time period for student evaluation of the course on the last day of classes discourages student participation.

President's Report: President Staben thanked those who worked on revisions to the faculty annual evaluation form and the student disciplinary procedures for their efforts on these major policies. He also thanked Hrdlicka and members of the faculty compensation taskforce for their work on advancing the market based compensation system for the university.

Staben identified several areas that he will emphasize to continue to increase student enrollment.

1. *Apply Idaho.* This program provides a fast and efficient way for students to apply to the state's universities at no cost. The University of Idaho is seeing an increase in the number of applications across the state. It does not appear that students are just randomly applying to all 8 institutions in Idaho. The average number of institutions for each applicant is 2.5. We are continuing aggressive follow-up on these applications. Also, we are changing and improving our admission events and activities.
2. *Raise.me Micro Scholarship Program.* Enrollment management recently implemented Raise.me. The site matches student achievements to scholarships. It also helps students identify ways to prepare for college and qualify for specific scholarships. Accounts in the system are free to students. Students can follow multiple schools. The university already has quite a few followers.

3. *Global Student Success Program with Navitas*. This program complements our own international programs. We have had significant interest in the program.
4. *Student Success*. We have increased our first year to second year retention from 77% to 82%. However, Staben believes the university can make further improvements. We are consolidating advising and implementing the StarFish retention software which will be known on campus as VandalStar. The Associated Students of the University of Idaho (ASUI) Student Senate passed a resolution endorsing the use this software. They want more timely feedback and more support from faculty in their efforts to succeed.

President Staben also addressed some confusion that has arisen from his State of the University address concerning faculty growth. He clarified that his estimate of 10% faculty growth was not intended as a cap. Rather, he believes it is a responsible estimate of how much our faculty can grow. He is optimistic that we can increase the size of the faculty. The institution has to have more resources and more students to fuel growth.

Staben provided his outlook on the upcoming legislative session. He began by offering a disclaimer that he is not a “prognosticator” or political scientist. Rather, he is providing his sense of the issues and challenges relevant to the university in the upcoming session. Staben noted that the state has a surplus in tax revenue. However, he pointed out that because this is an election year he believes that many legislators will favor tax cuts. Although he will urge that the tax surplus be invested in programs that will benefit the state including higher education, he does not think there will be much motivation to make such investments this legislative session. He believes that compensation for state employees will be an issue. Unfortunately, he does not know what the legislature will approve for change in employee compensation.

Another process by which the university receives legislative appropriations, in addition to change in employee compensation, is the “line item” process. During the previous spring the university developed several line item budget requests. Our requests are based on the recommendations of the University Budget and Finance Committee (UBFC). The administration selects and further develops these recommendations which become the basis for our line item budget proposals to the State Board of Education (SBOE). Once submitted, our requests are further developed by the SBOE. This year, the two line item requests that we have moved forward are:

1. *Library Improvement Phase II*. This request is aimed at increasing our library resources to maintain the quality and stature of our research library. Last year the legislature funded Phase I of this project. This year we are asking for funding for the second phase.
2. *Student Success and Support*. This request relates to providing enhanced counselling and psychiatric support for students. This request would, in part, provide enhancements for the Ravens Scholars Program that supports students on the autism spectrum.

In addition, we have additional special program requests. One of these requests is for Agricultural Research and Extension. Last year within this area of budget requests we received a \$10 million appropriation for the Center for Agriculture Food and the Environment (CAFE) program. This appropriation was put into a savings account of sorts. The university match this legislative appropriation with private funds in order to receive the appropriation. We believe the project is a \$45 million project. The plan is that the state would provide \$15 million, we would provide \$15 million and we would also identify \$15 million in private funding. Staben and College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) Dean Michael Parella have developed a proposal for how the university will bring in the private matching support to move this program forward. The governor has committed to advocate for the additional \$5

million in state funding once the university has identified the private funding. We have not completed our process, so we will not see a funding request for CAFE in the upcoming budget.

Forest Utilization Program. We will have a request that will benefit both rangeland and wood science. The wood science position will help support our new arena project. We have made outstanding progress in funding the arena project already. The price of the project has increased from \$30 million to \$45 million. President Staben thinks we can raise the necessary funds. On the rangeland side of this request, we have received gifts that will help us move forward on the Rock Creek project.

WWAMI – We have made significant progress in increasing and supporting the WWAMI program. We have increased from 20 seats to 40 seats. Our curriculum has changed from a one-year to a two-year program. Thus, where we had 20 WWAMI students on campus, we now have 80 students on campus. We are consolidating recent changes and have support for modest budget increases. The university is modifying the former Incubator building for WWAMI and we have leased space on the 3rd floor of the new Gritman building. This will provide high quality new facilities for the program. We are monitoring the new medical school in Boise which is likely to get accreditation.

The president then opened the floor for questions.

A faculty member thanked the President for sharing his thoughts on the upcoming legislative session. He asked what faculty and staff at the university can do as private citizens to help advance the university's agenda. Specifically, the faculty member asked whether faculty and staff can be helpful in engaging students and alumni to support the university's agenda. Is there a fact sheet, or a quick guide, that could be made available?

President Staben asked general counsel about the limitations on how public employees may engage in political activities. General Counsel Kent Nelson who was in attendance at the meeting, responded that employees cannot use university resources to lobby for legislation. He also stated that it would probably be unwise to use university email to send political messages. President Staben further responded that the administration tries to engage students through a legislative lunch during the session. He also pointed out that ASUI employs a student lobbyist who has an office in Boise during the legislative session. Frequently the student lobbyist coordinates efforts with those of the university. Finally, Staben also responded that the university works to engage alumni networks by informing them of how the university will be affected by pending legislative issues. He added that if a faculty or staff member is going to Boise to testify before the legislature, whether as part his or her employment or as a private citizen, it is helpful to let Joe Stegner, Special Assistant to President Staben for Legislative Affairs, know of the planned testimony. Finally, President Staben noted that he has some issue sheets used in public presentations that he will consider placing on the president's webpage.

A faculty member pointed out that at the federal level the pending tax bill may have significant impacts on the university, particularly because of its impact on teaching and research assistants. He asked whether the university has taken a position on this legislation. President Staben responded that the university has endorsed the positions of several professional groups to which we belong. We also have contacted our congressional delegation on these issues.

There are multiple ways we could be impacted. Tuition waivers for graduate students could become taxable income. Another provision would make any tuition waivers to employees, or dependents, taxable. The legislation also may prohibit refinancing of bonds by exempt authorities like the university.

A faculty member commented that he was glad to see the micro-scholarships program. He asked whether there are scholarships available for club leadership. Providing scholarships for such students may have broad impacts since the club leaders are often student opinion makers. Staben replied that the Raise.me program is just getting started. This year will be experimental. After this year, we will examine results and implement improvements. He directed suggestions to Vice Provost for Enrollment Management (SEM) Dean Kahler.

Another faculty member commented that student leaders from north Idaho were on campus for a meeting. He believes the university should focus recruitment efforts on these sorts of events. He also asked why we charge such groups to use our facilities when providing space at no cost could be an incentive to students to attend the university. Staben commented that faculty need to communicate with SEM when we know of these activities.

The end of the agenda having been reached the meeting was adjourned 4:04 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Liz Brandt
Faculty Secretary