Call to Order: President Staben called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

Quorum Count: 63 faculty members were present (Moscow 53, Boise 2, Coeur d’Alene 2, Idaho Falls 5, Twin Falls 1) less than the 107 required for a quorum.

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

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

Regarding revisions to the Sabbatical Leave Evaluation Committee (SLEC) structure, a faculty member was concerned that even if a committee member recused him or herself from consideration of the committee member’s own sabbatical application, there is still a conflict of interest if a sabbatical applicant considers other sabbatical applications. Erin James, the chair of SLEC pointed out that applications are not judged comparatively and that there is no competition for central funding of sabbatical leaves.

Regarding the faculty position description, a faculty member asked whether there was any discussion of what types of changes in position would require an update of the position description. Hrdlicka deferred to Prof. Marty Ytreberg the chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee. Chair Ytreberg explained that the committee discussed this question at length. It decided to leave this question up to the faculty member. For example, Ytreberg pointed out that a faculty member might not change his or her position description because they are teaching a one-time overload course, unless they are in the tenure and promotion process. However, if a faculty member has a permanent change in teaching responsibilities, the position description should be updated. He emphasized that a faculty member can change the position description at any time. A faculty member asked whether the department chair could initiate a change in the faculty position description. Ytreberg responded that either the faculty member or the department chair could initiate the change, however it will still require both to sign off.

A faculty member pointed out that on the Safety & Loss Committee policy, the name of University Support Services has changed to Events and Support Services. The Faculty Secretary indicated that this is an editorial change that will be made before the policy is finalized.

In Memoriam: The president read the list of faculty who have passed away since the last university faculty meeting:

Terry Abraham
Head Emeritus, Department of Special Collections and Archives in the University Library with rank of Professor
-March 2018-
Elbert Barton  
Professor of Naval Science and Director of Personnel Services Emeritus  
-January 2018-

George Bloomsberg  
Professor Emeritus of Agricultural Engineering  
-January 2018-

Ronald Crawford  
Professor Emeritus of Microbiology, Molecular Biology Biochemistry and Director of the Environmental Biotechnology Institute  
-January 11, 2018-

Dennis Dolny  
Professor of Physical Education  
-January 9, 2018-

Robert J. Kearney  
Professor Emeritus of Physics  
-March 2018-

Richard Ohms  
Extension Professor Emeritus  
-December 2017-

Nils Pellmyr  
Professor Emeritus of Biological Sciences  
-December 4, 2017-

Rolland R. Reid  
Professor Emeritus of Geology, Department Head, Department of Geology and Dean, College of Mines and Earth Resources, 1964-1974  
-March 2018-

David Wenny  
Professor Emeritus of Forest Regeneration  
-January 2018-

The president called for a moment of silence in honor of these colleagues.

President’s Report: The President began his remarks by noting that today is denim day which promotes sexual assault awareness. He explained that activist had promoted the wearing of denim after the conviction of a rapist was overturned by the Italian Supreme Court because the victim wore tight jeans and was deemed responsible for her own rape.

President Staben also announced the three new University Distinguished Professors – Professor Ronald Hardy in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Professor Barb Cosens in Law, and Professor Ruprecht Machleidt in the College of Science, who will be named at the Annual Faculty Awards Dinner.
Enrollment continues to be a critical focus of university initiatives and ideas. This is the third year of statewide direct admissions program and the first year of the Apply Idaho common application. Other initiatives are also underway. Last year the university funded a number of Vandal Ideas Project (VIP) Engage initiatives. We have funded i-Go advisors in Boise, i-Drone events introducing prospective students to future STEM careers, Camino el Futuro which focuses on increasing access of Latino students to higher education, and TEDxUIdaho focused on cultivating opportunities for students. Staben praised these initiatives and encouraged faculty, staff and students to continue to develop innovative approaches to enrollment. The university also initiated RaiseMe program which allows high school students to participate in college going behavior. The program enables students to enter different activities such as participating in Future Farmers of America (FFA) into the RaiseMe website to determine whether there are scholarships available as a result of participating in the activity. The hope is that this will incentivize behaviors over a high school career that are associated with going to college, and then reward those behaviors with scholarships.

President Staben noted that Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) and University Communications and Marketing (UCM) have spear-headed many changes including a new branding program and changes in some key student recruitment events such as UIdaho Bound and Meet the Vandals. The university will continue to refine these events to find the best structure and balance for the institution to meet its mission. On Tuesday, Staben worked with a university-wide team working on recruitment. The group was a team in which every member was bringing their expertise to bear on the critical university priority of enrollment. The president noted that the entire university community must engage in this priority -- SEM can’t do it by itself.

The president stressed that “team” should be a theme for this meeting. He believes he has a great leadership team in his cabinet and hopes that the team atmosphere permeates the university so we are all working together.

The president also commented on several additional initiatives. The university expended its participation in the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE). He reminded faculty that the university had reduced our participation in WUE several years ago for good strategic reasons. As we studied our participation we expanded our participation in WUE to target certain states that yield a large number of applicants at Idaho. The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), which sponsors WUE, pointed out that the university’s program of targeted participation violated their rules. Universities are not permitted to selectively offer WUE to only some states. In response, the president indicated that the university was returning to full participation in WUE. The advantage of full participation in WUE is that the program brings more students to Idaho. The negative is that full participation has the potential to reduce tuition revenue from states where the university is able to successfully recruit students without the WUE. The university is monitoring the program over the next several years so our participation can be optimized.

The university has had interesting and positive success in the area of student success. Our first year retention rate has increased from 77% to 82%. The university is focused on maintaining its higher rate of retention. Staben acknowledged that the retention rate may wobble a bit, but he hoped that we would maintain an upward trend and translate increased retention to increased graduation. President Staben apologized that he would not be at the university for the spring 2018 graduation, his son is graduating from medical school at the same time.

Returning to the topic of student success, Staben stated that the university is implementing the VandalStar student management system. This system collects student information from across campus to assist faculty and advisors in retaining students. If the university is to use the system effectively, the entire
university community must be supportive and our campus culture must change. We also continue to move to a more centralized system of advising. Students need more support than they have needed in the past. Also, advisors need more support than they have had in the past and advising must be more consistent. The provost is working to implement this centralization.

The university decided to defer the VIP Transform project for one year. He is looking for exciting ideas that can provide new opportunities for students.

The university is planning for a new capital campaign. This is a chance to revitalize our commitment to the state of Idaho. It enables our donors to see what we think is important. He encouraged faculty and staff to look for news of the campaign and to anticipate conversations within their units to identify our outstanding needs. He indicated that the campaign would focus on big ideas and interdisciplinary opportunities. The new Idaho Central Credit Union Arena project and the Center for Agriculture Food and the Environment (CAFÉ) will be part of the campaign. The president is aware that many of our facilities need improvement. Current projects include the new Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, Idaho (WWAMI), Idaho’s public and best medical school facilities on Sweet Ave. and the Aquaculture Research Institute facility. Staben indicated that the university is making good progress on the fundraising for the arena with $35 of $45 million raised. The arena is not just a basketball arena and venue for concerts. Architecture, natural resources faculty, and the Idaho wood products industry are involved in the project. The project is an exciting architectural project with novel engineered wood. The president humorously noted that he believed that “Wood Shed” is an appropriate moniker for the arena.

Our new market-based system of Change in Employee Compensation (CEC) is about to be implemented. Many of the resources for this effort are linked to program prioritization. The president thanked all who were involved in the challenging process, particularly the Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Committee (IPEC) and the provost.

This has been a challenging spring for the president and the university with Athletics Title IX issues in the headlines. The athletics director has been placed on administrative leave and the university has hired an outside organization to conduct an independent investigation into the situation. The president believes it should take about 60 days to complete the investigation. At that time the university will know more about what the next steps in addressing the situation should be. A separate but related development is that a taskforce of community members, faculty, parents, and students is being formed to address how the university can improve safety on campus. He acknowledged that we have an extremely safe campus and that the city of Moscow is one of the safest environments in Idaho. Nonetheless, the university must be ahead of the safety challenges that it must confront.

Athletics has also been in the news of late for deficit issues. The president stressed that the financial issues relating to athletics are complex and that “deficit” is not truly the best term to characterize the financial situation. He emphasized that athletics provides great benefits for students and can make college accessible. Yet, at the same time, the university’s primary business is not athletics. Staben stated that the university needs to ensure that it is not overspending on athletics. The SBOE has imposed a flat dollar amount cap on athletic spending in an effort to ensure that the university does not overspend. As currently structured the cap does not account for the impact of enrolling student athletes and the tuition they pay. The majority of student athletes pay full or part tuition. This year, and next year, the university will overspend the cap on athletic spending. We are encouraging the SBOE to re-evaluate how it implements the cap. The $5.3 million we spend on athletics results in $6.3 million in income to the institution. As a result of our analysis, the SBOE agreed to waive the cap for one more year and to consider
a change in board policy. If the SBOE does not change its policy and requires the university to follow it – there will be few options other than to cut sports, and few options as to which sports must be cut.

The president announced that the SBOE had authorized a 5% resident, and 8% non-resident tuition increase. They are working to balance between keeping tuition low, provide access to higher education, and provide an excellent education.

The president concluded by stating that he believed the university had had a good year and he encouraged faculty and staff to continue to help the university grow and thrive. He encouraged to act as a team. Finally, he noted that the day would conclude with a special event in the evening celebrating excellence.

The president opened the floor for questions.

A faculty member asked if CEC is directly tied to program prioritization, will faculty in higher ranked departments receive a bigger share of CEC? The president clarified that the link between program prioritization and CEC is that the resources necessary to support market compensation were made available through reallocations that resulted from program prioritization.

A faculty member asked how much the StarFish software that supports VandalSar cost and where the resources to support the software were coming from? President Staben deferred to the provost to answer the question. The provost responded that the money was from the SEM budget administered through the provost office. The cost of the software is approximately $65,000 per year. Vice Provost Kahler is working on a training and kickoff campaign to assist faculty in using the software. The plan will involve advisors and residence hall staff. President Staben noted that the software was implemented during his time at South Dakota and that faculty buy-in is definitely required.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Liz Brandt
Faculty Secretary