

University of Idaho
FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES

2002-2003 Meeting #4, Tuesday, October 1, 2002

Present: Bitterwolf (chair), Wagner (vice-chair), Bailey, Baillargeon, Chandler, Daley-Laursen, Fairchild, Guenther, Haggart (w/o vote), Hong, Lillard, McClure, McGuire, Nelson, Netzer, Pikowsky, Johnson (w/o vote), Rahim, Reese, Rinker, Schekler
Absent: McCaffrey **Observers:** 4

Call to Order. A quorum being present, Faculty Council Chair, Professor Thomas Bitterwolf, called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. in the Brink Hall Faculty Lounge.

Minutes. The council **accepted** the minutes of the September 17, 2002, meeting as distributed.

Chair's Report. Chair Bitterwolf reported that:

- a political forum for local and state-wide candidates will be held the evening of October 16th at the Idaho Commons
- the council will not meet on October 29th
- all councilors should make use of the Faculty Council website for up-to-date information on council business
- the SBOE/Regents will hold its monthly meeting this coming Thursday
- the agenda item concerning health benefits for part-time lecturers has been postponed until the October 15th meeting

Bitterwolf introduced Professor Nels Reese, recently elected to a new position representing the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences and Jawad Rahim who represents the Graduate Student Association. The faculty secretary noted that an additional council position for the new College of Science is now in the election process.

Committee Reports. The University Curriculum Committee (UCC) submitted as a **seconded motion** to the council agenda item **FC-03-005, Proposed Changes to University Regulation L, Academic Standing, Probation, Disqualification, and Reinstatement** (*see the Faculty Council website for the full text*). UCC chair John Hammel and Registrar Reta Pikowsky provided the council with background information on the proposed changes. The changes were reviewed and approved by the associate deans and the UCC. One significant change clearly states that any semester grade point average below 2.00 will trigger a warning to the student and the academic department responsible for advising that student. Overall, the changes in Regulation L will:

- make the regulation simpler to understand
- incorporate into the regulation a standard of "forgiveness" that will prevent students from academically "digging themselves into a hole" from which they can't recover
- trigger an earlier intervention and response to a student with poor grades
- be a valuable asset in improving the undergraduate retention rate

After a brief discussion and an editorial change to remove a repeated word (*higher*) in L-2-b. the motion was **adopted** by unanimous voice vote.

Associated Students University of Idaho (ASUI) Report. ASUI representative Kelsey Nunez reported to the council the plans for the "**Make It Count: Vote 2002**" campaign. Ms. Nunez reviewed the vast assortment of activities, displays, and tactics that student government will use to make sure that students register to vote, actually do vote, and when they do, cast an informed vote in the upcoming November elections. Maps and posters are on display in the Idaho Commons providing information on every Idaho district candidate and ballot issue. Information tables will make available materials relative to each political party, while other tables will allow pre-election day voter registration. The ASUI will also provide information on elections in every state and territory in the nation and will maintain a website devoted to providing visitors with impartial information and links to every candidate and issue coming before the voters. The ASUI effort will be capped off on election day by providing a shuttle service to and from Moscow's two polling places. Ms. Nunez and the ASUI were complimented on their efforts to get informed voters to the polls.

On-Line Instructor/Course Evaluations. Professor Mark Nielsen provided the council with an animated update on the on-line course/instructor evaluation system that will be used by all instructors this academic year. Using a video projection from his laptop computer, Professor Nielsen took the council on a step-by-step tour of the evaluation website and offered an on-line example of how an instructor can construct his or her evaluation document. Failure to construct your own form results in a standard form being used for the evaluation. Nielsen said that safeguards built into the evaluation system ensures the anonymity of the student and prevents unauthorized use. Students have a three week "window" before final exams to fill out the on-line forms.

The course instructor can't look at the evaluations until after the final course grades are submitted to the registrar. Once the grades are recorded, the instructor can have instant access to the numerical question response scores and narrative comments. As an incentive to get students to use the new evaluation system, the university will be giving away a palm pilot each week to randomly selected students who have completed the on-line evaluation. Professor Nielsen concluded his presentation by saying that his own experience with on-line evaluations indicates that there is definitely a higher rate of completion than when using the in-class paper forms. He encouraged the council to spread the word about this new user friendly evaluation system.

In response to a question concerning the use of the results of the on-line evaluations in tenure and promotion proceedings, Vice Provost Leonard Johnson told the council that only the two standardized questions from the on-line form could be used by academic units attempting to compare scores. Questions that instructors pick from the available catalog could not be compared and, of course, the narrative responses can only be looked at individually for each instructor. Johnson also told the council that there would be a lot of publicity aimed at the students, informing them about the importance of completing the on-line evaluations.

Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) Report. Professor Kerry McKeever, chair of the FAC, noted the significant accomplishments of the committee last year in revising the handbook sections relating to the evaluation of members of the faculty. She reported that the efforts of the U of Idaho faculty in this regard are being reviewed and in some cases copied by other colleges and universities across the nation. She said that our success in creating a good faculty evaluation process also led the SBOE/Regents to remove their own previously mandated five-year review from the policies that govern the U of Idaho. This year McKeever said the Faculty Affairs Committee will tackle the two remaining parts of the review process:

1. establishing a positive reward and motivation system for faculty development
2. constructing a review of administrators that has some flexibility, but contains consistency across the university community

McKeever pointed out that with the current budget restraints, it is important to construct a development reward system that can be implemented without causing financial hardships and a system that will be able to grow in its rewards when budget restrictions are lifted in the future. She said that the committee is also looking into what she described as a "Faculty Academy." This academy would consist of a series of workshops for new (untentured) faculty members to acquaint them with the inner-workings of the U of Idaho and provide them with guidelines to follow for the tenure and promotion process.

Future Agenda Items Discussion. The council put forward the following matters as possible agenda items:

- medical benefits for part-time lecturers – what should our policy be?
- retirement medical benefits for employees hired after January 1, 2002 – are there alternatives that need to be explored?
- problems in salary computation – especially summer salaries – are these real problems or just occasional glitches?
- dual enrollment in high school and the university – is the cost to the student too high?
- research assistants' ability to afford taking summer courses – causes and possible cures
- two new college reorganizations – faculty below the department head level are not being consulted in the decision-making process, just informed of decisions
- re-confirm that the faculty has a "positive" working relationship with the SBOE/Regents
- should budget decisions made during the time of budget crisis be permanent or should they be reconsidered when the financial picture brightens?
- who should be allowed to vote when evaluating an academic unit administrator?
- electronic publishing – what is its place within "scholarly activities?"

Chair Bitterwolf said that these items would be reviewed, and he encouraged the council to send him other items that they think should come before the council or a university-wide standing committee.

Next Meeting. The next meeting of the Faculty Council will be **October 8th** and devoted to a "question and answer" session with U of Idaho President Bob Hoover.

Adjournment. It was **moved and seconded** (Lillard, Guenther) to adjourn. The motion was **adopted** by unanimous voice vote, and Chair Bitterwolf adjourned the meeting at 4:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter A. Haggart
Secretary of the Faculty Council