

University of Idaho
FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES

2002-2003 Meeting #15, Tuesday, February 18, 2003

Present: Bitterwolf (chair), Wagner (vice-chair), Bailey, Baillargeon, Chandler, Daley Laursen, Fairchild, Guenther, Haggart (w/o vote), Hatch (w/o vote), Lillard, McCaffrey, McClure, McGuire, Nelson, Pikowsky, Rinker, Schekler, Stegner
Absent: Cloud, Hong, Reese **Observers:** 5

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 February 4, 2003 meeting as distributed.

Chair's Report. Chair Bitterwolf provided a brief report on the budget situation in Boise, which remains gloomy. He also announced that General Policy Report #23, dated January 31, 2003, had been approved by the faculty and forwarded to the president's office for action.

Acting Provost's Report. Professor Charles Hatch was introduced to the council. As the Acting Provost, he will be the council representative from the U of Idaho administration while Provost Pitcher serves as Acting President of the U of Idaho. U of Idaho President Robert Hoover will be on medical leave beginning March 1st.

Sabbatical Leave Evaluation Committee Report. The council was in receipt of a memorandum from the provost recommending the approval of a motion from the Sabbatical Leave Evaluation Committee that Professor Beverly Healy be awarded sabbatical leave from October 2003 through April 2004. The motion was adopted by unanimous voice vote.

FC-03-040, Proposed Collaborative M.A. Degree in Philosophy with Washington State University. Professor Michael O'Rourke, along with other faculty members of the philosophy department, provided the council with background information on the proposed collaborative degree program. The program, which would begin in the Fall of 2004, would combine the strengths of the Idaho and Washington State University (WSU) departments. They both currently offer undergraduate degree programs in philosophy. The U of Idaho M.A. program will emphasize environmental philosophy and the WSU program will emphasize ethics.

Funding the new degree program calls for the reallocation of appropriated funds, along with new funds for graduate assistantships, and external grants. The reallocation of funds to the new graduate degree program is possible because of changes being made in departmental faculty teaching loads and responsibilities. The multi-section university core ethics course will change to one large lecture meeting followed by numerous small recitation sections. This change will mean a reduction in the number of faculty members that need to be assigned to that course. Although the shifts in faculty teaching appointments and course offerings are budget driven, the council was assured that the philosophy department would do its best to offer a quality university core ethics course.

In response to a question about meeting university accreditation standards, it was noted that both the U of Idaho and WSU departments would have to make sure that all courses meet the collaborative degree objectives with regard to learning goals and program assessment. In response to a question concerning the timing of the proposal (during a difficult budget year), O'Rourke said that, because of its collaborative nature, the proposal was time-sensitive, adding that the WSU Faculty Senate had already approved the program. Another comment about the substitution of course work in ethics for field work in environmental studies, brought the response that perhaps this program would end up being a model for others to follow. No one ethics course could meet the needs of all the interested academic areas, but the course being used could be the one that would provide students with methods of finding ethical solutions to environmental problems, knowledge they could apply in the field.

Coming as a **seconded motion** from the University Curriculum Committee, the motion was **adopted** by unanimous voice vote.

FC-03-037, Proposed Faculty-Staff Handbook Policy, "Violence-Free Campus." Councilor Schekler told the council that the group working on editing the wording of this new policy had not completed its task. He hoped that a new draft would be ready by the next council meeting.

FC-03-016, Proposed Changes to Regulation K, Concerning the Awarding of Honors. A substitute motion to the original motion returned to the council by the university faculty was tabled at the February 4th council meeting. It was **moved and seconded** (Schekler, Lillard) **to remove the substitute motion from the table.** The motion was **adopted** by unanimous voice vote.

Vice Chair Wagner (originator of the substitute motion), assisted by Student Records Specialist Dennis Lincks, reviewed the honors data that had been supplied to the council. The data supports the view that approving the original motion would lead to a much larger, and therefore less meaningful group of students qualifying for graduation honors. Specifically, using straight grade-point-averages across the university, plus the added honor category, would have resulted in 27% of all May 2002 graduates receiving honors. The current Regulation K resulted in 15% of the May 2002 graduates receiving honors. The substitute motion would have resulted in 12% of the May 2002 graduates receiving honors.

Wagner said that the substitute motion changes the time-frame used to calculate the base grade-point-averages used to determine honors. Instead of a five-year rolling average, the substitute motion would use only the grade-point-averages from the previous year in making those honor calculations. He said that this would solve the problem of not being able to calculate 5-year averages for the two new colleges. Also, calculations would be done individually for each college, rather than using a set university-wide grade-point-average. Thus, the substitute motion maintains parity between colleges and also keeps the total number of honor awards at an acceptable percentage of the total number of graduates.

“ . . . using the current regulation but removing all references to five-year averages in calculating college honor levels and replacing that language with language that would call for the use of only the previous year’s grade point averages that would place candidates in the top 3, 6, and 10 percent of the graduates in each college as the base number for each honor category for each college.”

After a brief discussion concerning college vs. university-wide grade-point-average calculations, the motion was **adopted** by unanimous voice vote. The chair ruled that any discussion of grade inflation would have to be taken up as a separate issue at a later date by the council or one of its standing committees.

FC-03-039, Draft Administrative Policy Concerning Discontinuance/Restructuring of Academic Programs. The council discussed the most recent draft of a proposed administrative policy, and offered the following corrections, additions, and comments:

- instead of using “bullets” in the document, use a numbering system that will allow easy identification of items
- on page one, the first paragraph after “b.,” put commas after “faculty” and after “administrators”
- on pages two and four, where the policy speaks of “accessing program duplication,” change those sentences to read “Assess program duplication or uniqueness, as compared”
- on page two the correct reference to the ISBE Governing Policies and Procedures is “Section III. G. 9.”
- the UI president has already stated that tenured faculty would not be laid off except under conditions that would approximate a financial exigency
- look carefully at the recourses available to tenured faculty members under financial exigency and see what ones might be applied to this policy
- our current financial exigency policy does not match the new financial exigency policy recently adopted by the regents and needs to be reviewed by the council
- any part of the document that calls for consultation with faculty, staff, and/or students should reference the form that the consultation would take and include a process for reporting the results of that consultation, preferably in writing
- the policy must contain a specific and well defined procedure showing how discontinuance or restructuring of a degree, program, or department would actually occur

Announcements. Council members should respond to the recent email sent to them by one of the accreditation committees. The council was reminded that the deadline is near for nominations for staff awards.

Next Meeting. Chair Bitterwolf announced that the next regular meeting of the council would be held on **March 4th.**

Adjournment. It was **moved and seconded** (Lillard, McClure) to adjourn. The motion was **adopted** by unanimous voice vote, and Chair Bitterwolf adjourned the meeting at 4:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter A. Haggart
Secretary of the Faculty Council