

University of Idaho  
**FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**2002-2003 Meeting #17, Tuesday, March 4, 2003**

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

**Call to Order.** A quorum being present, Faculty Council Chair, Professor Thomas Bitterwolf, called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m. in the Brink Hall Faculty Lounge.

**Minutes.** The council accepted the minutes of the meetings of February 18 and February 20, 2003 as distributed, with one correction to the February 20<sup>th</sup> minutes. Chair Bitterwolf offered praise to Professor Haggart's writing of the minutes of the February 20<sup>th</sup> meeting; however, just as his head was swelling in acceptance of that praise, it was pointed out by Councilor Lillard that, according to the draft minutes, the week of the previous two council meetings seemed to contain two Tuesday's. The secretary will correct the minutes of the meeting of February 20<sup>th</sup> to show that it did indeed occur on a Thursday.

**Chair's Report.** Chair Bitterwolf reported that the upcoming meeting of the SBOE/Regents will include a revised draft of the role and mission statements for each higher education institution. He said that he also expects further discussion of the circumstances surrounding the loans made by the U of Idaho to the U of Idaho Foundation.

On a matter of personal privilege, Professor Bitterwolf expressed his deep concern over what he characterized as a "rush to judgment" by the media in its coverage of the indictment and arrest of a U of Idaho international graduate student by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He said that this coverage, which implied terrorist connections which were not a part of the grand jury indictment, seemed to paint all international students at the U of Idaho with the same broad brush of terrorism. Bitterwolf concluded his personal remarks by stating that all of the international students were valued members of the university community. He asked that everyone withhold judgment of the arrested student until the legal proceedings had run their course.

**Acting Provost's Report.** Acting Provost Chuck Hatch reviewed for the council some of the temporary changes in leadership that took place when U of Idaho President Bob Hoover went on medical leave March 1<sup>st</sup>. The primary changes are that Provost Brian Pitcher has assumed the role of Acting President and Professor Margrit von Braun has taken the position of Acting Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate College. These temporary assignments will last until August.

In response to several questions from the council concerning the SBOE/Regent's interest in re-writing the role and mission statements for higher education, Hatch made the following observations. The review of these statements is being carried out by the provosts of the institutions of higher education. The provosts make up the membership of a sub-committee of a SBOE/Regents committee concerned with academic affairs. The driving force behind reviewing the mission statements is the development of off-campus learning centers. Off-campus centers have become the rule rather than the exception, and the U of Idaho has been a leader in developing these learning centers. Hatch said that another reason for the review is the board investigation of the U of Idaho's efforts to finance and build University Place in Boise. While it is not clear who generated the original request to review the role and mission statements, it is clear that recent events have made it imperative that the SBOE/Regents look at these policies. It is also clear that the draft statements emerging from that review will result in intense discussion on each campus, and he anticipates that the issue would soon be placed on the council's agenda.

**Academic Calendar.** The council was in receipt of the academic calendars for the years 2003-2004 through 2012-2013. These calendars are prepared every few years by the Office of the Registrar and placed in the *Faculty-Staff Handbook* as a reference document for the scheduling of future university events and activities. The council had no questions or comments about the calendar, and no action was required for updating the handbook.

**Committee on Committees Report, New Function and Structure Statement for the University Committee for General Education (UCGE).** The Chair of the Committee on Committees, Professor Francis Wagner, and University of Idaho Core Curriculum Coordinator, Professor William Voxman, provided the council with background information concerning the reasons for the requested changes. The revisions are necessitated by changes in the content and mission of the university core curriculum over the past several years. While the council was in agreement that the changes were needed, there arose an issue that had never needed to be addressed under the original function statement of the UCGE. The secretary pointed out that under the original core structure, the UCGE added existing or new courses which had already been approved by the UCC for inclusion in the core curriculum. University Curriculum Committee (UCC) Chair John Hammel appeared before the council to argue that references needed to be made in the new UCGE function statement to ensure that all core curriculum courses and curriculum changes were approved by the UCC before they were sent to the Faculty Council.

Professor Hammel was afraid, that under the proposed wording of the new function statement, the UCGE could approve and remove courses from the core and alter the core curriculum without going through the established curriculum approval process. While some councilors argued that UCC approval was implied in the proposed language, others were just as convinced that the new language allowed the UCGE too much power. After several aborted attempts to re-write the function statement as a committee of the whole, it was **moved and seconded** (McGuire, Lillard) **to return the proposal to the Committee on Committees for further deliberation.** However, before the function statement is returned to the Committee on Committees, it will be reviewed by the UCC. The motion was **adopted** by unanimous voice vote.

**FC-03-037, Proposed Faculty-Staff Handbook Policy, “Violence-Free Campus.”** Linda Silva, Human Resources Development Specialist, presented a revised policy statement that had been worked on by her office and councilor Dan Schekler. The revisions to the proposed policy, originally sent to the council in January [see *minutes of the January 28, 2003 meeting*], applied only to section B, as follows:

**B. Prohibited Behavior.**

The University of Idaho does not tolerate behavior, whether direct or indirect, that

- a. Is violent (i.e., causes, intends to cause, or creates the potential, for physical or mental harm to an individual);
- b. Threatens or implies violence;
- c. Harasses or intimidates others;
- d. Interferes with an individual’s legal rights of movement or expression;
- ~~e. Is disruptive to the workplace, the academic environment, or the university’s ability to provide services;~~
- f. e. Causes a reasonable person to fear for his or her safety or the safety of others;
- g. f. Causes damage to property, equipment, facilities, communications, and/or others resources.

The administration authors see this proposed policy as a clear statement of the U of Idaho’s commitment to a “violence-free” campus and the need to list procedures to follow in reporting incidents. A central concern is that many workplace “incidents,” that may not be perceived as violent in nature, may slowly build into actions that are violent.

The council engaged in a lively and extended discussion of the proposed addition to the handbook. Most of the council’s concern centered on the impossibility of clearly defining what constituted, not only a “violent” act, but what was meant by the term “indirect” when used in reference to violent behavior. Several examples were provided of actions that might cause individuals to falsely claim a policy violation that caused them “mental harm.” For instance, a failing grade on an examination or paper could be considered by a student to be the cause of considerable mental harm, and thus fall under the policy definition of prohibited behavior.

All of this discussion pointed to the futility of attempting to be specific in defining each prohibited behavior. It was pointed out by one councilor that every listed prohibition would require a legal definition for enforcement. It was also noted that the university would be hard pressed to come up with a list of violations that were not already covered by existing university policy, or local, state, and federal law statutes. Councilor Pikowsky commented that attempting to define some prohibited behavior would have a “chilling” effect on 1<sup>st</sup> amendment rights. Due to the problems that the council was having with section B, some suggested that the best solution was the elimination of that part of the policy. Councilor Cloud went so far as to ask that none of the policy be put in the handbook, arguing that it would create more problems than it would solve. However, most councilors reasoned that the most important part of the proposed policy was section C., which explained how to report incidents. To this end, it was suggested that the policy only contain a brief “non-defining” introduction, and then clearly state the reporting process to let people know where they can go for help. While noting the good intentions of the authors of the proposed policy, the council asked that the proposal be returned for another re-write.

**FC-03-039, Draft Administrative Policy Concerning Discontinuance/Restructuring of Academic Programs.** Acting Provost Hatch reviewed the latest draft policy for the council. However, due to the lateness of the hour, it was decided to postpone any council discussion on this latest draft until the next meeting. Chair Bitterwolf urged the council to review the document carefully and be prepared to offer comments at the next meeting.

**Adjournment.** It was **moved and seconded** (Lillard, Guenthner) to adjourn. The motion was **adopted** by unanimous voice vote, and Chair Bitterwolf adjourned the meeting at 4:58 p.m.

**Next Meeting.** The next meeting of the council will be at the call of the chair following spring break.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter A. Haggart  
Secretary of the Faculty Council