

University of Idaho
FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES

2003-2004 Meeting #6, Tuesday, October 14, 2003

Present: Wagner (Chair), Bailey (Vice-chair), Baillargeon, Bitterwolf, Burnett, Chandler, Cloud, Dockrey, Exon, Fairchild, Johnson, Lillard, McGuire, Pikowsky, Reese, Stegner, Rinker, Voxman (w/o vote), Woolston, Young, Zemetra

Absent: Guenther, Pitcher

Observers: 0

Call to Order. A quorum being present, Faculty Council Chair Wagner, called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m. in the Brink Hall Faculty Lounge.

Minutes. The council accepted the minutes of meeting #5 of the 2003-2004 Faculty Council, held on October 7, 2003 as distributed.

Chair's Report. Chair Wagner stated that he, Vice-chair Bailey, and Interim Faculty Secretary Voxman were gathering information about the non-renewal of Glen Grishkoff's contract. They will meet with Provost Pitcher on October 22. Chair Wagner also reported on the action of the UI Council which approved policy guidelines dealing with deficit spending. The intent of the guideline is to prevent such spending; programs having deficits would be asked to repay the shortfalls within a three-year time-span.

Committee Reports. Action on the UCC proposed changes to the Faculty Staff Handbook (FC-04-003) was deferred until the next meeting of the council.

Report on Governor's Executive Order (Danielle Hess) Chair Wagner stated that the purpose of this report was primarily informational and to give council members the opportunity to provide input regarding implementation of the Governor's Executive Order No. 2003-06, entitled Prohibition of the Use of State Funds for Membership in Professional Associations by State Employees. Hess indicated she had consulted with the Governor's office and her counterparts at other state institutions in an attempt to arrive at a common interpretation of the executive order. Final decisions regarding how the order will be implemented at the UI have not yet been made. Hess noted that this executive order replaces a previous one which expired in 2002. The principal change in the new order lies in the sentence "*This policy does not preclude the state or state departments from paying dues to organizations relating to their responsibilities in state government, or where such dues are part of a requirement for employment.*" In response to a councilor's question, Hess stated that state monies include all money held, used, or maintained by the UI. Councilor Cloud inquired if money in his Y-account could be used to pay professional dues? Hess said she would investigate this issue further, but was of the opinion that if the unit approved this use of Y-account funds, such an expenditure would probably be acceptable. In this connection Councilor McGuire inquired about the use of unrestricted money received from private companies. It was noted that while membership in some professional organizations is not mandatory, it is generally expected. Hess said that it would be advisable to include such expectations in an individual's position description. McGuire and others observed that failure to belong to a professional association can result in substantially higher conference fees, books, etc., and hence an overly strict interpretation of the executive order could lead to unnecessary state expenditures. Vice-provost Johnson urged caution in using Y-, K-, N-, or X-accounts to fund items mentioned in the executive order because of the varying limitations placed on these accounts. Councilor Young emphasized that UI faculty should be able to use Y- or K-accounts to pay professional dues and that faculty "should not have to pay to go to work". Responding to Councilor Exon's query, Hess said she was not aware of any abuse of expenditures from the various UI accounts. At the conclusion of the discussion, Hess encouraged faculty to send comments to her regarding the implementation of the executive order. She will take these comments to the Financial and Business Affairs Committee, which is developing guidelines for its implementation.

Report on Pick-a-Prof Project (Caroline Miner, Kris Kido): Caroline Miner, ASUI Academics Board Chair, and Kris Kido, ASUI Director of Technology Integration, presented a report on the new ASUI Pick-a-Prof project. They said that Pick-a-Prof is an evaluation tool intended to provide students with information which allows them to make educated decisions regarding courses and instructors. Pick-a-Prof is based in part on the idea that different students learn in different ways, and the information gleaned from student comments will enable a student to match his/her learning style with the teaching style of an instructor. Pick-a-Prof information will also give students a good idea of what to expect from an instructor. Miner and Kido noted that student comments are screened and that offensive and defamatory comments are eliminated. They also pointed out that Pick-a-Prof allows for instructors' comments as well as student comments, thus permitting instructors to respond to student reviews. Pick-a-Prof can be tailored to meet the needs of

individual institutions. An ASUI committee is currently engaged in establishing guidelines for the UI version of this project. Miner and Kido stressed that Pick-a-Prof is not intended to replace the current UI evaluation forms, and, in fact, students going to the Pick-a-Prof website will be encouraged to complete the UI official forms, which are used for other purposes. In the discussion comparing Pick-a-Prof with the UI evaluation form, it was pointed out that while students have access to numerical scores on the UI evaluation instrument, written comments are considered to be a part of the faculty member's personnel file and are not available to the public. In response to a councilor's question, Vice-provost Johnson said that response rate to the electronic version of the UI evaluation form compares favorably with that of the previously used hard-copy version.

Councilor Pikowsky asked if the Registrar's Office had been consulted about providing individual class grade distributions. It was pointed out that there would be costs involved in compiling such data, costs that would not be borne by the UI. Since Pick-a-Prof will not pay for information of this nature, it is doubtful this information will be available to students. Miner pointed out, however, that such information is not necessary, since it is not the primary focus of the project. Some councilors observed that students are already trading information electronically about courses and instructors and so Pick-a-Prof may have relatively little impact. It was also pointed out that many courses are associated with single instructors, and so no choices are available to students required or wanting to take these courses. Questions were raised as to the effect Pick-a-Prof may have had on institutions (about 100) where it is currently in place. Miner and Kido did not have this information. They said that Pick-a-Prof is used at WSU and that BSU is considering adopting it as well. Councilor Burnett suggested that great care should go into formulating Pick-a-Prof questions so that it could serve as a means for enriching and improving teaching and learning. The ASUI cost for implementing Pick-a-Prof is \$1,500; annual renewal costs are \$4,000. After one year of use, ASUI will conduct a review of Pick-a-Prof to determine if it is worth pursuing in the future.

Chair Wagner thanked Miner and Kido for their presentation. It was moved, seconded and approved that council action on the remaining agenda item, FC-04-003 be postponed until the next council meeting.

Councilor Lillard admirably resumed her role in moving for adjournment. The motion was seconded and duly approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Voxman
Interim Secretary of the Faculty Council