

University of Idaho
FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES

2003-2004 Meeting #15 Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Present: Wagner (Chair), Bailey (Vice-chair), Baillargeon, Chandler, Cloud, Dockrey, Exon, Guenther, Gunter, Lillard, McGuire, Morgan, Pikowsky, Pitcher (w/o vote), Rinker, Rosholt, Voxman (w/o vote), Woolston, Young, Zemetra

Absent: Burnett, Reese

Observers: 10

Call to Order. A quorum being present, Faculty Council Chair Wagner, brought order to the house at 3:31 p.m. in the Brink Hall Faculty Lounge.

Minutes. With a few minor corrections, the council accepted the minutes of meeting #14 of the 2003-2004 Faculty Council, held on February 17, 2004 as distributed.

Chair's Report. Chair Wagner stated that a positive result of the recent General Faculty Special Meeting could be the review of and possible changes to the current UI policies regarding personnel files. Provost Pitcher noted that there had not been a thorough discussion on faculty governance and academic freedom at that meeting and hoped such a dialogue could occur in the future. Wagner added that there appear to be many varied opinions and ideas as to what constitutes faculty governance.

Provost's Report. Provost Pitcher expressed appreciation for the assistance of Council members in making Tim White's recent visit to campus a great success. He also announced the closure of the UI Press, and he said that the reasons for closure were primarily operating deficits. Pitcher said that most university presses operate in the red, but that the UI is unable to support continued losses incurred by the Press. Efforts will be made to preserve The Hemingway Review. The Provost also said that a search committee for the new Dean of Engineering has been formed. College of Sciences Dean Judy Parrish will chair the committee.

Appeals Panel for a Student Disciplinary Case. Chair Wagner appointed Councilors Dockrey, Fairchild, Gunter, Lillard, and Pikowsky (all volunteers) to a panel to hear an appeal of a student disciplinary ruling. Pikowsky will chair the panel.

Chair Wagner appointed Councilor Zemetra to serve on a task force investigating the possibility of closing the UI between Christmas and the New Year.

FC-04-027 Discussion of UI Role and Mission Draft Statement.

Provost Pitcher introduced the discussion by noting the draft was a result of three convergent circumstances: Upcoming SBOE review and updating of Role and Mission statements for all of the state's colleges and universities; the current UI budget situation; and the hiring of a new UI president and possible revision of the UI Strategic Plan. He said it would be helpful to have UI consensus in terms of our future priorities and that this document could serve as a starting point for that discussion. Dean Steve Daley Laursen said that the draft was the result of the Deans working together on behalf of the entire organization, guided by the philosophy that the UI is greater than the sum of its units. He said it is important that we make choices together and the Deans can facilitate this process. He stressed the importance of graduating students who will be informed and productive members of society in addition to having the requisite technical skills. Dean Jeanne Christiansen emphasized the need to remain a comprehensive university, with a strong foundation in the liberal arts and undergraduate programs, together with areas of distinctive excellence. Dean Joe Zeller said that one of the most vexing problems in CLASS is to redefine the nature of the liberal arts and classical studies in the context of a land grant institution. He noted that 96% of the classes offered in CLASS are at the undergraduate level, the majority of these being lower-division courses. Over the next several months the college will try to determine how best it can use its resources in support of the institution.

Councilor Chandler had two queries: Does the budget drive the academic programs or do academic programs drive the budget; and, do we first build a strong overall foundation and then provide additional resources to designated areas of excellence or do we first assign resources to the areas of excellence and then deal with establishing a strong overall foundation? Provost Pitcher responded that a dialogue is needed to answer these questions and to determine the different roles of various departments. Councilor Young noted that though the title of the draft document is "Role and

Mission, Strategic Planning and Budget Planning, little attention appears to be given in the draft to the latter two items. Dean Daley Laursen responded that the Deans felt it was important to first define what the UI can be in the future and then determine the means of achieving those objectives. Young also pointed out that one paragraph of the document calls for the UI to “share responsibility, with other public higher education institutions, to support strong undergraduate, graduate and research programs in business, education, and engineering.” Young stated that the UI should do more than share responsibility—it should provide leadership in these areas. The Provost and others agreed that strengthening of this paragraph was in order. In response to Councilor Zemetra’s question, the Provost said that it is essential that the UI have a statewide, rather than a regional mission in many areas, including many College of Agriculture and Life Sciences programs. The Provost indicated that a primary focus of ISU is in the realm of health programs while BSU has recently placed increasing emphasis on policy “science” and public administration. Councilor Chandler asked about the emphasis on UI programs such as many of those found in CLASS that do not have a statewide mission. In this connection Councilor Lillard expressed concern about the UI’s willingness or ability to provide the best liberal arts education in the state. Councilor Gunter suggested that the UI should pursue higher admission standards in order to attract the best students, reduce the amount of remediation currently occurring, and enhance the quality of the institution. To conclude the discussion the Provost encouraged Councilors to send their comments regarding the UI Role and Mission to him or to the Deans.

FC-04-030 Emerging Issues in Building the FY05 Budget. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to a briefing by Wayland Winstead, Director of the Office of Institutional Planning and Budget, on the challenges facing the UI in balancing the FY05 (and subsequent) budgets. He said that for a variety of reasons, including legislative actions (or inactions) and less than anticipated funds from student fee increases, the UI is faced with some very difficult decisions in order to achieve a balanced budget for FY05. In large part the FY05 budget had been based on the assumption that the legislature would provide a “normal” amount of funding for the UI; however, this has proved not to be the case. Winstead indicated that the situation may become even more dire in FY06. He also indicated that there is a strong possibility of a holdback next year. In March, the UI will petition the SBOE for permission to ask for a student fee increase in excess of 10%. However, such an increase, even if granted, will not be sufficient to cover the current projected FY05 deficits.

Winstead said that members of the UI Finance and Business Affairs subcommittee of the UI Council and members of the Institutional Planning and Budget Committee would form a working group to provide recommendations for addressing the FY05 budget challenges. Secretary Voxman pointing out that the recommendations of that group could have a significant effect on academic programs, questioned if the group had sufficient faculty representation. Winstead did not think this would be a problem. He then briefly discussed the various lines of the document provided to the Council. Winstead said the \$7,500,000 suggested outlay for deferred maintenance was needed to begin to address the \$75,000,000 total amount of deferred maintenance that has accrued over the years. Councilor Lillard noted that the figures presented were predicated on achieving a balanced budget and questioned if balancing the budget was an absolute necessity and if so, who made this decision. Winstead observed that we currently have an \$13,000,000 deficit in the FY05 budget. Moreover, it is unlikely that SBOE would accept an FY05 budget that is not balanced. Winstead strongly emphasized the need for fiscal discipline and accountability. The Provost indicated that the resolve and controls for achieving this are now in place. He also stressed the importance of engaging the SBOE in discussions on how to adequately fund all the state’s institutions of higher learning. He said that the other institutional presidents favor such discussions and that Gary Michael is in an excellent position to advocate the necessity of increased UI funding to the Governor and the SBOE. Councilor Bailey mentioned that we are dealing with both a short-term problem, the FY2005 budget, and a long-term problem, budget process. He questioned how the university goes about making the estimates for the annual budgets. He suggested that there are a number of ways to make those estimates. He questioned why it seems like every year in late February the university has to deal with not getting as much as was estimated. Winstead said that there are a number of things the university does to estimate revenues, including listening to what the legislature is saying about priorities within the state. Winstead said that these estimates are in flux and will remain so. As the meeting approached its close Winstead made brief mention of facility issues and discretionary items that will need to be considered in the upcoming budget deliberations. At the end of the meeting Councilor Young indicated it would be useful to continue the budget discussion at the next Council meeting. As time permits this discussion can proceed but Chair Wagner said that the main focus of the next meeting will be on the multi-year plans developed by the various UI colleges. Chair Wagner urged councilors to inform their colleagues of the immediate budgetary challenges facing the UI. A somewhat subdued Councilor Lillard moved adjournment. The motion was seconded by Councilor Fairchild and the meeting adjourned at 5:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Voxman
Interim Secretary of the Faculty Council