

University of Idaho  
**FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**2003-2004 Meeting #16 Tuesday, March 2, 2004**

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

**Observers:** 9

**Call to Order.** A quorum being present, Faculty Council Chair Wagner, convened the meeting at 3:30 p.m. in the Brink Hall Faculty Lounge.

**Minutes.** The council accepted the minutes of meeting #15 of the 2003-2004 Faculty Council, held on February 24, 2004 as distributed.

**Chair's Report.** Chair Wagner noted that there was some state legislative effort underway for more fully funding the 2% pay increase. He also said that the Presidents Council was meeting with the SBOE to discuss higher education funding issues. President Michael will play a lead role in these discussions.

**FC-04-031** Discussion of UI College Multi-year Plans.

The principal item of discussion at the meeting centered on presentations by Deans Christiansen, Daley Laursen, Thompson, and Zeller regarding their respective multi-year plans. To initiate the discussion Executive Director of Institutional Planning and Budget, Wayland Winstead, provided background information concerning budget development over the last several years. He briefly reviewed the budget assumptions made by the UI and the State Legislature during those years and indicated that, for a variety of reasons, these assumptions often proved to be overly optimistic. In light of current uncertainties, Winstead stressed the need for maintaining financial flexibility. In particular, he suggested that consideration be given to not building next year's salary increases into the base (other than promotion or some contractual increases), but rather distributing the funds as merit bonuses. Without creating some degree of budgetary flexibility the UI may be forced to reduce additional staff and faculty positions. Winstead also warned of possible holdbacks and stated that it is likely that the financial situation for FY06 will be even more dire than that facing the UI in FY05.

Provost Pitcher noted that the UI financial challenges are shared by colleges and universities across the nation. He presented the Council with a report, *A Tale of Two Pities: The Story of Public Support for Higher Education in the Northwest*, that illustrates declining higher ed support even though appropriations of state tax funds have risen over the last ten years. The report indicates that state tax/revenue systems have been unable to respond to the needs of higher education. The Provost also distributed documents showing the increased UI Student/Faculty ratios (from 16 to 20) that have occurred over the last few years. With regard to the college multi-year plans he pointed out that it will be necessary to continue to reallocate approximately \$2,500,000 annually for the next three years, and possibly to some degree beyond that time. Colleges have differing plans for achieving their targets, some have had many voluntary separations and others, relatively few. The Provost also noted that the composition of the UI faculty has changed significantly. Currently there are fewer tenure and tenure-track positions, partially offset with an increase in part-time faculty and graduate students.

Joe Zeller, Dean of CLASS, noted that when the new college was formed considerable F and A funds were lost. Exacerbating this situation was the fact that the college had relatively few VSROP volunteers. To deal with the budget shortfalls the college has realigned resources and changed delivery methods for many courses. Student user fees have been increased or instituted and more attention has been given to gift, Y-, and N- accounts. Dean Zeller encouraged department executives to work together to formulate a multi-year plan, but found that they were not particularly enthusiastic in defining their own demise. Department chairs are now expected to raise their own salaries for work in the summer. Though until now, most cuts have tended to be "horizontal," Zeller said in response to Chair Wagner's question that "vertical" cuts may be necessary in the future. Councilor Lillard, in stressing the importance of the Liberal Arts, asked how Zeller viewed his college in the overall context of the university. Zeller responded that it is important for CLASS to support professional education. He said that the Liberal Arts play a critical role in providing a humanistic experience for all undergraduates. Provost Pitcher commented that future planning can't be done in silos. He observed that the deans are fully aware of the importance of CLASS to their own respective programs. He also stressed the need to identify the impact that changes in one college can have on other colleges. Pitcher complimented the deans on working together to effect changes that will be of benefit to the UI as a whole, rather than simply focusing on what might appear to be best for their individual colleges. In response to a question from Councilor Guenther, Zeller said

that criteria for possible vertical cuts would include viability and efficiency of programs as well as minimizing adverse effects on the university.

David Thompson, Dean of Engineering, described the process used in his college to develop a multi-year plan. He had several meetings with department chairs and ad hoc committees in developing steps to meet the budget challenges. In order to preserve the college's core program the leadership looked at the least productive elements of the college. The Mining and Geological Engineering undergraduate program was closed, and eventually almost all vacancies in the college were frozen. Across-the-board uniform cuts were not instituted since some departments, e.g., Chemical Engineering, would not have had the resources necessary for meeting the budget deficits. Dean Thompson noted that even though there has been a 10% decrease in faculty in his college, graduate student enrollment has grown by 66%, undergraduate enrollment is up 30% and research funding has increased from \$4,000,000 to nearly \$14,000,000. Thompson concluded by saying that though he hopes additional vertical cuts will not be necessary, there remains the possibility of such actions in the future.

Steve Daley Laursen, Dean of the College of Natural Resources, emphasized the land grant role his college plays. He stated that faculty and staff have actively participated in the planning process to address the college's financial challenges. The college's basic philosophy in dealing with the budget shortfalls has been to expand on its strengths and mitigate or eliminate its weaknesses. In the face of twelve retirements the first priority of the college faculty has been to retain as many faculty lines as possible in lieu of salary increments. Faculty are now paying for services and looking for possible consolidations. All vacancies revert to the college, and when possible, are strategically assigned according to a set of criteria and priorities. Daley Laursen repeatedly emphasized the importance of working closely together not only with the other deans, but the university community as a whole, in making decisions in the best interests of the UI. He stressed that it is important not to be pushed around by realities but rather one should get ahead of them and set a course towards greatness. In response to Councilor Morgan's question, Daley Laursen said that discussions continue regarding increasing or shrinking enrollments. He also said that the college continues to look at its property holdings to determine which are within the mission of the college and which might be subject to future divestment.

Jeanne Christiansen, Dean of the College of Education, commented also on the collaborative efforts of the deans and reaffirmed Daley Laursen's statement of everyone working together, recognizing that the sum total is greater than the individual parts. Christiansen briefly traced the process used to develop plans to meet the college's financial challenges. Councilor Fairchild has played an important part in this effort. The college had only five faculty members who opted to take advantage of the VSROP retirement incentives. The college has primarily used a horizontal approach to budget reductions; but, if necessary, may look at more vertical steps in the future in order to sustain quality. Councilor Chandler noted the strong overlap between programs in the College of Education other colleges. He wondered if the college would continue its strong efforts in teacher education and inquired about the future of some of the college's teaching majors. Christiansen stressed the reciprocity of the programs between colleges and indicated that the present intent is to maintain strong academic programs. She said that attention is being given to determining the capacity of programs and to internal restructuring to enhance program quality. She also mentioned that there has been considerable growth in the area of adult education.

Dean Daley Laursen asked for councilors' reactions and whether anyone was surprised by any of today's presentations. The general feeling of the Council members was that the presentations had been informative, useful and laid many rumors to rest. Councilor Exxon inquired about the overlap between central administration restructuring and the initiatives of the deans in the academic areas. Provost Pitcher said that greater communication would be helpful in this regard. He also said in responding to a question by Councilor Zemetra that the various Center targets will be met. Secretary Voxman asked if over time the college targets might be adjusted with respect to each other in order to adjust to changing circumstances and priorities. Councilor Chandler asked if the minutes of the UI Council could be made more readily available and was assured that this would be the case. In closing, Chair Wagner asked the deans to report back to the Council when vertical cuts or any significant changes were being seriously considered. Councilor Woolston followed up on this comment in saying that it would be useful to be aware of dates that vertical cuts might be made. He noted that the natives are restless and he would like to be as well informed as possible in order to answer questions from his constituents.

With relatively little fanfare, Councilor Lillard moved adjournment and the meeting ended at 5:02.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Voxman  
Interim Secretary of the Faculty Council