

University of Idaho
FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES

2004-2005 Meeting #2, Tuesday, August 31, 2004

Present: Bailey (Chair), Baillargeon, Bechinski, Cloud, Exon, Greever, Gunter, Hammel, Houle, McGuire, McLaughlin, McMurtry, Pitcher (w/o vote), Reese, Reid, Rinker, Rosholt, Voxman (w/o vote), Woolston

Absent: Beard, Morgan, Young, Zemetra

Observers: 3

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

Minutes. The Council approved the minutes of the 2003-04 Faculty Council Meeting #22, May 4, 2004 and the minutes of the 2004-05 Faculty Council Meeting #1, May 4, 2004, as distributed.

Chair's Report. Chair Bailey reported briefly on two SBOE meetings that occurred over the summer. He noted that President White was well received at the meeting he attended, a meeting where the Board agreed to the granting of waivers for the use of alcohol at certain campus events. Bailey also asked for Council volunteers to assist Doug Adams in organizing visual displays of research projects and other UI highlights that would be on display during the accreditation team's upcoming visit. Councilors Gunter, McLaughlin, and Woolston agreed to help. Bailey also announced that there would be elections at the next Council meeting for two members of the Institutional Budget and Planning Committee. He said that this committee will work with Jay Kenton, Vice-president for Finance and Administration and will likely play a more prominent role than it has in past years.

Provost's Report. Provost Pitcher said that the twelve-member accreditation evaluation team that will visit the University in October. The UI self-study, prepared by Doug Adams, will be posted soon on the Provost's webpage. The Provost complimented Adams, Archie George, Jane Baillargeon and others for the work they have done in connection with the self-study. Pitcher encouraged Council members to review the current document and reminded them that changes to it still could be made. The Provost said that at this juncture enrollment this year appears to be essentially level. Slightly more students have enrolled on the Moscow campus, while fewer have enrolled at Idaho Falls where there have been changes that are offered in their education program. Pitcher said that Enrollment Management will remain a high priority for the university. He also noted that the SBOE recently presented its 8-year plan for the state's institutions of higher learning. This plan will be revisited every two years, giving the institutions the opportunity to revise their plans and propose adjustments to their assigned roles.

Discussion with President White. The President thanked the Council for inviting him to the meeting and was eager to hear Council members' comments and questions. He began by describing some of the administrative changes that he has recently made. He replaced the Executive Council with the President's Cabinet, consisting of the Vice-presidents for Research and for Finance and Administration, two College Deans (Jeanne Christiansen and Don Burnett), the Dean of Students, University Counsel, the Special Assistant to the President for Governmental Operations (Marty Peterson), the Chair of the Faculty Council, the Chair of the Staff Affairs Committee, the President of ASUI, and the Director of University Communications and Marketing. White indicated that the Cabinet would not be a voting body but rather would serve as an advisory or sounding board to ensure that ample views are expressed regarding potential decisions. White has prepared a document, which he will share with the Council, outlining the role and responsibilities of the Cabinet. The President emphasized the need for shared leadership which the Cabinet can help provide. He also said he favored greater decentralization which can lead to more expeditious and informed decision making.

The President said that in order for him to gain a better understanding of faculty perspectives and concerns, he plans to initiate a series of informal visits with groups of faculty. The groups would generally consist of 8 – 10 faculty members who might or might not have common interests.

In response to a question regarding how the Faculty Council could become more actively engaged and empowered in his administration, White said that he would meet on a weekly basis with the Chair of the Council. He added that the Council needs to play a prominent role in curricular matters to ensure that students are prepared for the world they will face. The Council should also be involved with issues dealing with faculty well-being. White said it is essential that the faculty have the necessary tools to be successful and establish a culture of creativity. He stressed once more the virtues of shared leadership and the importance of faculty informing him about student progress and concerns. The President indicated that there will be ample opportunity for Council to be involved in budget matters. He called for increased transparency in the budgetary process including opening the books of the various UI divisions, his office not excepted. White said that the Vice-president for Finance and Administration will work with the Institutional Planning and Budget Committee in determining priorities and establishing decision-making processes. He noted that there are a number of variables outside our control (legislative appropriations, precise enrollment estimates, etc.). However, the UI can set priorities for funding once the level of funding is determined. In response to a Councilor's comments the President said that the budget information infrastructure leaves much to be desired but this is now under review. He anticipates this problem will soon be corrected allowing for a better decision-making process.

White remarked that today's students are a more complex group and as a result the UI may need to spend more on meeting regulatory requirements, remediation, and other student support areas. With regard to the issue of trust, he said that trust cannot be decreed--it must be earned. He will insist on openness, integrity and accountability. The President encourages candid discussions of difficult issues and invites dissent in the process leading to achieving desired outcomes.

In response to a Councilor's question regarding legislative support, White said emphatically that he will not place blame on the legislature, the SBOE, or the Governor for budget shortcomings. He said it is our responsibility to make the case for adequate support and not settling for mediocrity. If we don't succeed at first, then it is incumbent on us to come up with better information and strategies in building a stronger case for the significance of higher education in regard to the state's society, economy, and workforce.

University Vision and Resources Task Force (UVRTF): Monte Boisen, spokesperson for the UVRTF provided a brief update on the work of the Task Force. He said that members of the Task Force have gone beyond parochial interests in working for the overall interests of the university. He views the Task Force's efforts as the first step in the process to address the challenges facing the institution. Boisen said that while these challenges are formidable they nevertheless provide great opportunities for reshaping the university. The Task Force has learned a tremendous amount about the complexities of the university and are currently engaged in putting the collective pieces they have studied into a coherent whole. Boisen remarked that they have had excellent cooperation in gathering needed information. He emphasized that the Task Force will not make decisions, rather it will make recommendations to the President. At this point, he is not sure about the level of detail those recommendations will take. In response to a Councilor's question the President said that funding reallocations will occur and that he did not sign on to manage mediocrity. He also described a coordinate system with cost on one axis and value on the other and pointed out that we need to empty the "box" defined by high cost and low value. He stressed that we need to take advantage of the university's unique blend of land-grant programs with a strong emphasis on the Liberal Arts. Boisen noted that a subgroup of the Task Force visited UI centers around the state. The group came back highly impressed with work being done at our off campus sites. He said we should consider the entire state as our campus. Boisen concluded his remarks by saying that we will not only survive, but thrive. We have a lot to build on and the unique niche we occupy should serve us well in the future.

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Voxman
Interim Secretary of the Faculty Council