

**2021 – 2022 Faculty Senate – Pending Approval Approved at Mtg 18 02.01.22**

Meeting # 17

Tuesday, January 25, 2022, 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Zoom only

**Present:** Becker, Bridges, Chapman, Dahlquist, Fairley, Gauthier, Hickman, Torrey Lawrence (w/o vote), Lee-Painter, McIntosh, Meeuf (Chair), Paul, Quinnett, Rashad, Rinker, Roberson, Rose, Sammarruca (w/o vote), Schiele, R. Smith, A. Smith (Vice Chair), Schwarzlaender, Tenuto, Thorne, Wargo

**Absent:** Ogborn (excused), Mittelstaedt (excused), Rashed (excused), Ahmadzadeh, Castillo

**Guests:** Rebecca Frost, Lindsey Brown, Rebecca Scofield, Jessica Martinez, Jessica Stanley, Emily Tuschhoff, Laurel Meyer

**Call to Order:** Chair Meeuf called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm.

**Approval of Minutes (vote):**

- Minutes of the 2021-22 Meeting #16 – Attach. #1.  
The minutes of the 2021-22 Meeting #16 were approved as distributed.

**Consent Agenda:**

- Sabbatical Leave Committee Recommendations, Attach. #2  
Vice Chair Smith detected an error in the list of approved sabbaticals (Kerri Vierling is listed with the wrong department). Chair Meeuf pulled the item out of the consent agenda for discussion under Committee Reports.

**Chair's Report:**

- The nomination period for the 2021-22 University Awards for Excellence for Faculty and Staff ends at 5 p.m. this Friday. Information about the awards and the nomination process can be found online.
  - Staff Awards: <https://www.uidaho.edu/governance/faculty-staff/university-awards/staff-awards>
  - Faculty Awards: <https://www.uidaho.edu/governance/faculty-staff/university-awards/faculty-awards/award-categories>
- This week is education abroad week here on campus! Please encourage students to learn more about international educational experiences. The schedule of events can be found online: <https://www.uidaho.edu/academics/ipo/study-abroad/education-abroad-week>
- The State Board recently asked all four-year higher education institutions in the state to develop an action plan supporting and encouraging the use of Open Education Resources in the classroom to help make the cost of a college education more affordable. The University Teaching Committee has agreed to spearhead the development of this plan, in consultation with the library, the registrar's office, and other relevant constituencies on campus. A "thank you" is owed to the Teaching Committee for tackling this project, and we'll look forward to getting a report from them later this term on this project. If you are interested in helping to support this work, let the Chair know and he can pass along your request to Dan Eveleth, the Teaching Committee chair.

- The Committee on Committees will send a survey to all university committee chairs to inquire about the typical frequency of their meetings. This is to determine whether restructuring of some FSH 1640 committees in terms of workload and/or scope may be useful.
- ITS is looking for faculty volunteers to provide feedback for the new “My.UIdaho” platform, which will offer each student a personalized dashboard that integrates with Banner and other applications. ITS is hoping to conduct 45-60 minute, one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders, including faculty, to help them design and develop this new interface. It does not fully replace VandalWeb but provides a friendlier and customizable platform for accessing the services in VandalWeb. If you are interested in participating, please email Jason Swanby, the project manager for this effort, at [jswanby@uidaho.edu](mailto:jswanby@uidaho.edu). ITS will likely also be looking for volunteers to test the beta version of this project later in the term.

There were no questions for the Chair.

#### **Provost’s Report:**

- COVID update: Locally, we are experiencing the national surge as predicted by Public Health. The surge is expected to last one to two weeks and is already going down quickly on the east coast. Our COVID protocols remain in place and we continue to communicate with Public Health and Gritman. Testing is available for the university community and has been extended to the upcoming weekend. Our plan as an institution is working and our current situation is manageable. We have 26 students in our isolation space, which is manageable, but we watch carefully for any escalation. NIC has taken a very different approach – they moved partially online but have no mask requirement. Our employees and students are recommended to stay home if sick. They can work from home or take sick leave. Instructors are encouraged to be flexible with student attendance, especially over the next few weeks. Some events have been canceled or delayed. Everyone is encouraged to be vigilant, patient, flexible, and to get vaccinated.

#### Discussion on the COVID update:

A Senator reported that in Idaho Falls a staff rotation method has been implemented – at any given time, half of the staff stays home and the other half works in person.

Chair Meeuf asked about the degree of flexibility instructors have to change their class delivery mode – for instance, can they move the class temporarily online if the attendance becomes too low for in-person instruction to remain effective? Having said that it is difficult to make a general statement, Provost Lawrence responded that short-term changes are allowed. If a change is needed, faculty should talk to their unit chairs to discuss arrangements. Vice Provost for Faculty Diane Kelly-Riley confirmed that this is what was usually done, pre-COVID as well. Every class is unique, and faculty should coordinate their plans with chairs and deans. Another Senator asked for and received confirmation that faculty also have the flexibility not to offer Zoom or Hyflex options and, instead, they can provide alternative ways to support students who are not able to attend. This is correct.

Senators shared their thoughts on how the large number of student absences is challenging, exhausting, and stressful for instructors. While we all do our best to accommodate student needs and requests, some Senators feel that there is no support system to help faculty with self-care and setting boundaries and to make sure students understand that instructors cannot accommodate every daily demand. The Provost recognized the challenges we all are facing – childcare is another one – and that morale is low. Perhaps we should consider a committee or

task force charged with proposing creative solutions to alleviate faculty stress and fatigue. Chair Meeuf suggested that a collaborative initiative with Staff Council would be best, because these issues impact both faculty and staff.

- Legislative update:
  - This week is devoted to education (not just Higher Ed), with universities in the state giving presentations. U of I presentations are scheduled for this Friday and will be broadcast by Idaho Public Television at 7AM Pacific Time.
  - The Governor's budget was delivered about a week ago and it looks like there could be some good news – we are optimistic that some of the considerable surplus in our state may come to higher education. Updates will be communicated as they become available.
- Evaluation issues: It is important that all evaluations are done and ready to go by the deadline of March 1, 2022 to process CEC.
- Transition to Canvas: Reports so far have been positive. There will be a survey about the transition, but not right away. In the meantime, people should send feedback and/or report challenges to CETL. The transition seems to be going well.

Discussion on the last three items of the Provost's report:

In response to a question, the Provost reported that the search for the Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives is well on its way. The search committee is narrowing down the applicant pool for the first round of interviews. There was an inquiry about the search for the CDA Center AVP. The Provost said that the position description has been created and the announcement should go out within the next few days.

Replying to a Senator's inquiry about faculty evaluation, Provost Lawrence clarified that the presence of two options (meet or does not meet expectations) was adopted already a few years ago. On the other hand, the changes on the staff evaluation form, (now similar to the one for faculty), are recent and were approved through the normal channels and at the December 2021 UFM. The Senator also expressed concern about student evaluation of teaching (SET) within the new system, particularly during the pandemic. Response rates are very low and often do not meet the threshold. Provost Lawrence recommended faculty to reach out to Interim Vice Provost Dean Panttaja [panttaja@uidaho.edu](mailto:panttaja@uidaho.edu) if they are not getting the information they expect to receive. Low response rates have been a continuing problem for many years. The Teaching Evaluation Senate subcommittee lead by Alistair Smith is doing a great job looking at ways to improve the system. (<https://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/cetl/student-evaluations.asp>)

A Senator reported receiving nearly 100% response rates by having the students do the evaluation during class time. It was generally agreed that the prospect of earning extra credits as an incentive to do the evaluation is to be discouraged.

On behalf of a constituent, Chair Meeuf inquired whether there is any indication that some of the critical race theory discussion of the last legislative season will continue and may impact higher Ed budgets. Provost Lawrence does not know at this time how those topics will be raised again in legislative discussions. President Green is prepared for questions on this topic. Listening to the Friday morning broadcast will be insightful.

### Committee Reports:

- **Sabbatical Leave Recommendations**  
It was moved (Lee-Painter) and seconded (R. Smith) to approve the list of 2022-23 sabbatical leaves with the friendly amendment to correct the affiliation of Karri Vierling to “Department of Fish and Wildlife.”  
Vote: 21/21 in favor. Motion passes.
- **UCC 40 Regulation J for AAS Degree – Rebecca Frost and Lindsey Brown, Attach. #3**  
General Education Requirements for AAS degrees need to be added to Regulation J. These changes are in alignment with SBOE requirements for AAS degrees and are contingent upon the State Board of Education approving offering of AAS degrees by the University of Idaho. There was a brief discussion during which Rebecca Frost clarified that the Associate of Science (AS) and the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) are entirely different degrees, with the latter referring to a specific career and typically offered at community colleges.  
Vote: 19/19 in favor. Motion passes.
- **UCC 41 Regulation J-3-b addition – Rebecca Frost and Lindsey Brown, Attach. #4**  
The proposal is to make COMM 101 a three-credit course, which aligns U of I with all other institutions in the state.  
Vote: 18/18 in favor. Motion passes.
- **UCC 42 Regulation J-3-c addition – Rebecca Frost and Lindsey Brown, Attach. #5**  
This is the add GEOL 212 to Scientific Ways of Knowing.  
Vote: 19/19 in favor. Motion passes.
- **UCC 109 Film and Television Studies – Remove “studies” – Russ Meeuf, Attach. #6**  
The change is to best communicate that ours is a production-oriented degree, whereas some programs use the term “film studies” to indicate a degree focused on history and theory.  
Vote: 20/20 in favor. Motion passes.
- **Paid Parental Leave Sub-Committee – Erin Chapman, Jessica Stanley, Rebecca Scofield, Laurel Meyer, Attach. #7**  
Senator Chapman started with a brief introduction of the Paid Parental Leave project, by the Joint Athena Working Group and Faculty Senate Sub-Committee. She introduced the committee members: Eric Chapman, Jessica Martinez, Laurel Meyer, Rebecca Scofield, Katie Schiffelbein, Jessica Stanley, and Emily Tuschhoff. The group first gave an overview of the current U of I policy for family leave and then highlighted the differences with their proposal. U of I is compliant with the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which allows 12 weeks of unpaid job-protected leave, for which employees are eligible after a year of employment. Employees can use sick or annual leave concurrently for “wage replacement” during this time. The flow chart on their website gives a sense of the various steps and options – such as whether one can use short-term disability.  
<https://hrs.wsu.edu/employees/disability-services/pregnancy-parental-leave>

Besides FMLA, there are other types of parenting leave (see FSH 3710). What the working group is proposing is to allow 12 weeks of paid parental leave, ideally available immediately after people are hired and which employees can take within 12 months following the birth, adoption, or foster of a child. The group also advocates for an equitable work redistribution process during this time to ensure support for the employee on paid parental leave and colleagues temporarily hired.

At the U of I employees are able to use wage replacement, meaning that they can use their accrued sick leave, which disadvantages many newer employees who have little or no leave built up. Furthermore, using sick leave depletes people's ability to take sick leave in other situations – when they are ill or for caregiving responsibilities. Employees can also use accrued annual leave, but this obviously disadvantages faculty who do not accrue annual leave as well as new staff employees who have not accrued much annual leave. The latter is also based on the type of employment, in that classified employees earn less annual leave than exempt employees, and it's also based on years of service. Faculty and staff can apply through human resources for short-term disability due to a medical reason, which limits this type of wage replacement option to birthing parents only. Additionally, it only replaces 50% of the employee's income up to \$500 per week and less than the employee has already opted for. One can pay for additional short-term disability through their payroll deduction, in which case the employee could be paid up to 67% of their income. Short-term disability begins on day 31 after the event or whenever the employee's sick leave is exhausted, whichever comes later. The time for the employee who has given birth to be medically able to return to work is six weeks for a normal delivery and eight weeks for a typical Cesarean birth. Thus, employees who gave birth and used short-term disability would receive at most two to four weeks of short-term disability at 50 to 67% of their salary depending on the type of delivery. Shared leave is an option but it's not available in all instances. Presently, there is no clear policy on work redistribution, so colleagues are not getting compensated for the extra work they're doing. Furthermore, faculty fear for their promotion and tenure if they take their full amount of leave. With the proposed policy of 12 paid weeks, we hope that people will not need to use wage replacement, so they get to save their accrued sick and annual leave for when they actually need to take those. At the same time, we need a consistent and equitable work redistribution policy to compensate colleagues, to allow for adjunct faculty and temporary hires, and to help protect the P&T process. Compared to State of Idaho employees, Idaho federal employees, Boise State, Lewis & Clark State College, and Idaho State University employees, the U of I is the only employer who does not offer paid parental leave. The university would particularly benefit from changing its policy in the sector of recruitment and retention. A major goal of the U of I is enhancing our ability to compete for and retain outstanding scholars and skilled staff and reduce staff turnover rates. There are numerous recent studies showing that companies with paid parental leave and benefits have higher rates of employee retention and engagement. Another advantage is improved diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility on campus: paid parental leave is essential for retention of women, a major issue at both the local and global level. Paid parental leave has been shown to close the gap in workforce participation between women with young children and those without young children. And from a perspective of social, cultural, and racial justice, Latinx workers are 66% more likely, Black workers are 80% more likely, and Indigenous and Pacific Islander workers are 100% more likely to be unable to afford unpaid leave compared to white workers. Lastly, the lack of paid parental leave has created significant hardships for employees during the pandemic. Part of the group's research involved collecting feedback through the stories of some U of I employees. The group feels that "Vandal Family" should signify a holistic culture of support, respect, and care. The Vandal Family continues to grow only if everyone is afforded real care.

This connects with earlier discussions about COVID and the need to have a holistic support system for employees. The group spent the fall semester talking about this issue in many forums. The Faculty Affairs Committee supported the initiative and so did Staff Council. The student body resolved to support the initiative and many units and departments across campus sent letters of support. The committee would be happy to receive a letter of support from Senate.

The team met with HR members, the Office of Civil Rights & Investigations, and Fiscal Operations. The people in the Division of Finance and Administration were extremely helpful in aggregating data to forecast different fiscal scenarios for offering paid parental leave and created a fiscal model from 2020 aggregated data that accounts for different factors. The model is a starting point to help identify what's financially possible so that we can adjust the different indicators as needed if we need to look for a more affordable option. The biggest cost is the loss of salary saving because, under the new proposed policy, people would continue to be paid their salary. They hope that this policy can be supported through some level of cost sharing across the university (central funds, colleges, and units) and do not propose to reduce other benefits. From the Office of General Counsel, this is strictly a policy issue – the university can choose to offer paid parental leave. So they are going to continue to advocate for the very best policy and a model that supports new parents and their units. They hope that Staff Council and Faculty Senate Leadership may present this proposal to President Green and other senior leadership. Hopefully, they can then move forward with redlining FSH 3710 and go through the shared governance process for formal approval by the Faculty and the President. At this time, they ask Senate to go on record with their support of moving on with this initiative.

It was moved and seconded (Lee-Painter/Quinnett) that Senate officially support this initiative. There was no request for further discussion. Chair Meeuf reminded that voting for the motion means support for the initiative – any specific policy that would be put in place will come back to Senate for detailed discussions. This is just a show of support for moving forward.  
Vote: 17/17 in favor. Motion passes.

**Adjournment:**

Due to the late hour, New Business could not be addressed. Chair Meeuf called for a motion to adjourn. So moved (Chapman/Lee-Painter). Meeting adjourned at 5:04pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Francesca Sammaruca  
Secretary of the University Faculty & Secretary to Faculty Senate