University of Idaho

2019 – 2020 Faculty Senate – Pending APPROVAL

Meeting # 7

Tuesday, October 1, 2019 at 3:30 pm

Paul Joyce Faculty- Staff Lounge & Zoom

Present: Bacon, Bridges, Caplan, Chapman, Chopin, Cosens, Eigenbrode (proxy for Luckhart), De Angelis, Dezzani, Grieb (Chair), Hill, Jeffery, Keim, Kirchmeier (Vice- Chair), Lee-Painter, Lockhart, Paul, Raja, Sammarruca (w/o vote), Schab, Schwarzlaender, R. Smith, Tibbals, Wiencek (w/o vote).

Present via Zoom: Kern, McKellar, Tenuto, Sears.

Absent: A. Smith.

Guests: 5

Guest Speaker: Diane Whitney (University Policy Coordinator & Compliance Officer)

I. Call to Order
   - Chair Grieb called the meeting to order at 3:35 PM.

II. Approval of Minutes (vote)
   - Minutes of the 2019-2020 Faculty Senate Meeting # 6 (September 24, 2019)
     - A motion to approve the minutes of the 2019-2020 Faculty Senate Meeting # 6 (Lee-Painter/ Tibbals) passed unanimously.
     - Secretary Sammarruca proposed an amendment.
       - Statement "Out of pocket cost would be $3,000" should be changed to "The increase to out of pocket cost would be $3,000"
       - Motion to approve the minutes as amended carried unanimously.

III. Consent Agenda (vote)
   - Committee Nominations from Committee on Committees
     - A motion to approve the Committee Nominations from the Committee on Committees passed unanimously.

IV. Chair’s Report
The Athena Mentorship Program is now accepting applications for mentors and mentees for the 2020 cohort. This program, sponsored by the president's office, promotes the professional growth of female staff and faculty working at U of I. Applications are due by Friday, Oct. 11.

Link: https://www.uidaho.edu/diversity/edu/womens-center/athena/mentorship?utm_source=University+of+Idaho&utm_campaign=1c8848535d-daily_register_042219_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_18a9cb4835-1c8848535d-86347341&utm_source=University+of+Idaho&utm_campaign=4dee7363a7-daily_register_042219_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_18a9cb4835-4dee7363a7-77923641

Members of ASUI, Faculty Senate, Staff Council, GPSA and the Student Bar Association are invited and encouraged to join us for an important meeting with Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy, President of the NWCCU, on Oct. 24 from 11:00-12:30pm, in the Panorama Room, Commons/ISUB building. The meeting will provide an opportunity for our university community to learn more about NWCCU and the new accreditation standards. There will be ample time for discussion and Q&A following the presentation. This meeting is open to all faculty, staff and students; please share this communication and encourage your team members and colleagues to attend this open forum as is appropriate. For those who ask why they should care about accreditation, the answer is short. A degree from an accredited school is valuable. One from an unaccredited school is not. All federal funding (both scholarship and research) goes to accredited schools only. Being accredited means we have gone through a rigorous evaluation, have met the required accreditation standards and are qualified to teach students the programs we offer. Being accredited gives students access to financial aid, supports quality research, and assures students that their University of Idaho degree is legitimate and will be recognized by employers, institutions and others. It also ensures that the credits students receive from us are transferable to another school. Successfully achieving accreditation is perhaps the most important thing we do.

Peer/Benchmark recommendations will be distributed by end-of-day Oct. 2nd. Please comment by Thursday Oct. 10th.

Big changes are coming to health insurance this year, including increased costs and changes in benefits. An email was sent from HR on Sept. 4th to highlight some of the issues. Open enrollment is scheduled for Oct. 21 to Nov. 5th. Staff Council Leadership and Faculty Senate Leadership are in communication with HR regarding an open forum prior to start of open enrollment. Possible topics for the open forum, if there is one, may include:

1. Why are rates going up, and how much will they be going up?
2. Specifics on plan changes (deductibles, copays, etc.)
3. What to expect during open enrollment?
4. Update on moving to the state’s insurance plan (future of UI benefits)
5. Retiree benefits (will they be going away)?

Chair Grieb invited feedback from the Senators.

Some discussion started about whether the topics at the open forum should include reasons to join the state plan.

A Senator commented that the topics are great, but timing is the real issue. This Senator asked for clarifications on the open enrollment period.

Provost Wiencek commented that the open forum should help people understand why rates are going up. Bringing the state plan into the discussion at the open forum may not be a good idea.
VP Foisy (invited to comment by Chair Grieb) said that, after open enrollment, there will be a broad and robust conversation addressing specifically UI joining state insurance as well as retiree benefits. At the moment, all we can do is to acknowledge that retiree health insurance has a significant impact on the net position of the university. We should focus on the task before us now.

A senator felt that the reasons for moving to state insurance need to be communicated clearly before the open forum.

V. Provost’s Report

- Response to Senator Morgan’s memo on administration size

  - The Provost provided a brief history of the conversation initiated with a memo from 03/19/2019 by former Senator Penny Morgan (attach. #3 in the binder of Meeting #7, 10/01/2019).

  - A concern among the faculty is that the university administration is growing more rapidly than the colleges. Provost Wiencek argued that Penny Morgan’s analysis compared the general education budgets allocated to the Colleges to all other budgets, collectively attributed to the “UI Administration.” The Provost proposed that a more accurate view comes from a different definition of what is meant by UI Administration.” The Provost explained that faculty or college funding is primarily represented by instructional expenses whereas administration funding should include the sum of academic and institutional support. The Provost referred to graphs (contained in the memo which he had provided, attach. #4 in the binder of Meeting #7, 10/01/2019), showing that, due to recent program prioritization and market-based compensation efforts, there has been an intentional decrease in administrative expense and increase in instructional expense. Both are near our peer averages. However, instruction expenses appear to be above the average of our peers while administrative costs are below the average of our peers.

  - In summary, the Provost said that the data does not reveal that the administration has grown more than the colleges. On the contrary, the areas receiving more resources (as measured as either increases in total funding or as a fraction of our total budget) include instruction, academic support, and student services.

- The Provost solicited questions.

  - A senator asked (making reference to p.6 and onward of the Provost’s memo) why the institutional support places UI so much above the average of peer institutions.

  - Provost Wiencek answered that budgets were assigned in 1889 and given functional code types which may have not been revisited. There has been a lot of decentralization as we went through budget cuts. For instance, funds may have moved down from the center to the colleges.

  - Referring to his previous question, the same Senator asked whether it would be possible to focus on this particular category and break it down, as he anticipated this to be a recurrent question.

  - Provost Wiencek said that our combined administrative cost is the sum of academic support (which is the Deans’ level of administrative oversight) and institutional support. Although the sum of the two has the right size, one item is too low and the other is too high. He and VP Foisy have discussed and came up with the conclusion that some items may not be coded correctly. Provost Wiencek and VP Foisy will investigate to make sure there are no inaccuracies.

  - VP Foisy: A likely source of differences [with peer institutions] is Facility Services and Facility Management, which include items from electric bills to landscaping to building, and more. The physical conditions (for instance, the age of buildings) could be among the sources of
differences. The entire division of Finance and Administration is by far the biggest component of institutional support.

- In reference to the Institutional Support Expense Graph, Chair Grieb asked whether Vandalstar, Chrome River, software investments, Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM), University Communication and Marketing (UCM) are included there.
- VP Foisy answered that institutional support covers the President Office, the Provost Office, most of Information and Technology (IT), and most operations under Finance and Administration.
- Provost Wiencek followed up observing that SEM is under Student Services. The Provost reiterated that definitions of fund types were assigned at some point. However, it doesn’t happen very often that people go back and audit whether a fund type is still where it started. It is reasonable that, over time, funds may have moved around [with regard to their type].
- A Senator wondered what Penny Morgan’s question actually was, and what prompted the question and the perception of more resources going to administration as compared to academics. Are there better ways to address the original question? A similar perception started in her college, exactly at the time of the economic downturn.
- Provost Wiencek answered that Morgan’s question was prompted by severe budget cuts (5 millions hold backs) in CNR.
- A senator said that Morgan’s question was explicitly stated. Namely: do we have the right size for the administration at this university? Looking at averages may not be the best approach. We are looking across universities whose administrations may not have the right size. A better approach may be to look at peer institutions and how the administration functions in each of them. This would require much time and effort. The Senator asked whether the data are accessible.
- Provost Wiencek and VP Foisy replied that the data is public. It can be found in the UI Financial Statement and is subject to yearly audit.
- The Senator went on stating that the present analysis does a good job with averages, but we should be asking a different question, namely, what is the right administration size for UI.
- To the Provost’s question as to whether one can answer this question objectively, the Senator replied that it is possible, but not with this data.
- The Provost was supportive of pursuing further analyses.
- The Senator thanked the Provost for his attention to this matter.
- Another Senator agreed that the better question to ask is what is right for us and what makes us distinct and unique.
- B. Foisy asked to make a last comment. He said that his responsibility is to minimize the money which is spent on items other than instruction or research. As alternative ways are investigated to face the current budget challenges, he asked everyone to be open to those alternative ways. He hopes we can do more to increase returns on investments.

VI. Committee Reports
- There were no Committee Reports.

VII. Other Announcements and Communications
- UI Policy - Creation and Changes Presentation - Diane Whitney, University Policy Coordinator & Compliance Officer
Chair Grieb introduced Diane Whitney and her role.
D. Whitney delivered a presentation (attach. #5 in the binder of Meeting #7, 10/01/2019) starting with her role as the new Policy Coordinator (51% of her position) and a brief history of the newly established position. She then described the process of making and changing policy, for both the Faculty Staff Handbook and the Administrative Procedure Manual. She emphasized the advantages of involving the Policy Coordinator early in the process of making/revising policy.
Chair Grieb thanked Diane for her presentation and the addition of her expertise to the university.

VIII. Special Orders
   • There were no Special Orders.

IX. New Business
   • There were no New Business.

X. Adjournment
   • Motion to adjourn (Lee-Painter/Dezzani) passed unanimously.
     o Meeting adjourned at 4:51PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Francesca Sammarruca
Secretary of the University Faculty & Secretary to Faculty Senate