2020 – 2021 Faculty Senate – Pending Approval
Meeting # 12
Tuesday, November 3, 2020, 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm
Zoom only

Present: Ahmadzadeh, Brantz, Bridges, Carney, Chapman, Dezzani, Fairley, Goebel, Hickman, Keim, Kirchmeier (Chair), Lee-Painter, McIntosh, McKellar, Meeuf (Vice-Chair), Paul, Quinnet, Raja, Rashed, Rinker, Sammarruca (w/o vote), Schwarzlaender, Smith, Stroebel, Tibbals, Wargo, Torrey Lawrence (w/o vote)
Absent: Rose (Excused)
Guest Speakers: Scott Green, Brian Foisy
Call to Order: Chair Kirchmeier called the meeting to order at 3:30pm.

Approval of Minutes (vote):
• Minutes of the 2020-21 Meeting #11 – Attach. #1
  The Secretary reported an editorial change to correct a misspelling. There were no other corrections to the minutes of the 2020-21 Meeting #10. The minutes were approved as distributed, with the editorial change.

Chair’s Report:
• Today is voting day! Please, if you haven’t already voted, feel free to use this time to complete your voting. There are no voting items on our agenda today; your absence will be excused if you send a private message via chat to Francesca.
• An update from Dan Ewart regarding the Preferred Name Project: President’s Cabinet met last Thursday to discuss the requested projects in the IT Governance & Prioritization process including the preferred name initiative. Proceeding with preferred name was vocally supported by Cabinet, and President Green instructed IT to move forward with the initiative. Dan will be pulling together the group to accomplish the plan as laid out in the group’s recommendation and we will develop a timeline for completing the necessary steps. More information is to come. Thank you again for your support of and input into this important initiative.
• Yesterday, an email came from Diane Kelly-Riley and Brian Smentkowski regarding mid-semester check-ins with students in your classes. If you haven’t already done so, please take a few minutes to check-in with your students to see how things are going. Please also plan on attending tomorrow’s CETL presentation by Brian and Diane titled "mid-semester check-in: how's it going?," at 10:30.
• Two upcoming deadlines to keep in mind:
  o Honorary degree nominations are due on November 16, 2020.
  o Deadline to request delay for promotion and/or tenure is March 14, 2021.
  Please help us spread the word about these upcoming deadlines by sharing with your colleagues.
Discussion: There were no questions or comments for the Chair.

Provost’s Report:
• The Provost encouraged everyone to attend the CETL event announced by Chair Kirchmeier.
• A session of the “Talks with Torrey” series will be held tomorrow at 11:30.
• COVID-19 update: we had another week of improvement. In fact, this is the lowest number of positive cases since the beginning of the semester. We currently have zero students in isolation,
no Greek Houses in quarantine, and six students in quarantine in one of our campus facilities. We continue with surveillance testing and our positivity rate continues to go down, in contrast to what is happening around us.

- Please discourage students from returning to campus after Thanksgiving break if they travel. Campus will stay open in consideration, for instance, of students who may have no other place to go. We are not closing or telling students to leave, but if they do leave, we encourage them to stay where they have gone for the break.

- The search for a new Dean of Law has been going on since the summer. Four finalists will come for interviews after the break. There will be open forums and events available to everyone via Zoom. The finalists’ names are public and can be found on the Provost webpage http://www.uidaho.edu/provost/administrative-searches/law. Information is still being updated and event schedules will appear on the webpage as soon as they become known.

Discussion:
A Senator asked whether a faculty member who wishes to travel during the break and not return to campus would need to file HR paperwork. Provost Lawrence said that, as long they are able to teach their classes and perform other work duties from a distance, there should be no problem or paperwork. The exception is for employees who need to be on campus to perform their duties.

A Senator wondered how we ended up with the decision to make no changes to the spring. The Provost replied that the results of the survey showed a large variety of opinions but no clear preference. What came out clearly, though, is that students want a spring break. In summary, we didn’t see a clear reason to change. The benefits of making one of the proposed changes did not outweigh the challenges. Testing all students after spring break will be a challenge, but now we can do it faster, and it may not take two full weeks. We plan to have the exact testing dates out in the next couple of weeks, so that faculty will have time to plan ahead.

There were no more questions or comments for the Provost.

Other Announcements and Communications:
- P3 Project – President Green and Vice President Foisy
  President Green and his team met yesterday with the Regents and received strong support. Everyone thought the presentation was comprehensive. There were some questions about risk mitigation strategies, requests for clarification about how conservative the model assumptions were, and comments on how impressive the final number was. The concessionaire payment did not go up but the top line number went up by almost $60M, with the benefit accruing to the university. Of the up-front $225M, some will go to pay off debt on the utility assets and fees for the transaction. Some will be placed in reserve, similar to an insurance policy as we start with our investments. The remainder will be invested and will produce about $6M per year to fund our strategic priorities: student success, research, continuing the roadmap in the R1 white paper, bringing in graduate students, postdocs, grant writers, and remote learning. There is a working paper that is close to final, which is quite impressive. The group is providing recommendations on how to best invest in key positions and support faculty who are developing distance learning curriculums. This partnership is a great business deal that will benefit the university for generations to come. It will enable more students to attend U of I, provide much needed investment in our research engine, and support our recruiting and strategic enrollment management efforts. Furthermore, this is a great deal for the taxpayers. It will also create a career path for employees in the steam plant and related areas, especially younger employees. This is a global organization with world-class operations around the world.
We could not offer the same opportunities to those employees. In summary, it was a wise decision that will benefit many stakeholders and gathered unanimous support.

Vice President Brian Foisy provided some additional information on the 50-year lease to the concessionaire (Sacyr/Plenary). The transaction is a long-term lease of our utility system assets to the concessionaire. The concession team selected Seattle-based McKinstry as the operator. Sacyr is based in Spain but has operations in North America. They chose a regional operator that has worked with U of I in the past – around 2008-2011 – as our contractor on energy-saving projects. We are fortunate to partner with a world-class organization while still having connections based in the Pacific Northwest. Of the up-front $225M, the single biggest part, $155M, will be set aside for a “quasi-endowment” which will generate additional earnings. Those earnings, as well as a share of the principal, will be distributed every year to be invested in our strategic priorities. This is about $6M per year, a total game changer for the university.

Discussion:
Are the legislators going to look at us positively? Now that we have repaired our reserve, should we just be content if they do not apply additional cuts to the university? Is there any good news related to the state surplus? President Green said that some informal talks concerning furloughs and the 5% holdback have been going on but the Governor did not make any promises. Although the growing reserves are encouraging, we are still where we were before. The President said he is hopeful but does not wish to over-promise and then deliver disappointing news. We described the deal in the press release as one that will benefit the taxpayers, which is correct. We hope this will play well with the legislators.

Vice Chair Meeuf thanked all who contributed to the success of P3. His question is about spending priorities. Have there been any talks about spending some of the $6M per year to assist units and programs where faculty are especially overworked or are unable to offer classes that students want to take? (Our next agenda item will be a discussion on faculty workload.) Can we do some strategic investments in faculty so that our workload returns to more sustainable levels? President Green noted that increasing research activities will lighten the load for faculty, thanks to more graduate students and postdocs. We need to use these funds to generate more revenue, such as recruiting and increasing enrollment. If it is an area where we can get return on investments, we will invest in it. If it is an area where no revenue is associated with the position, the new financial model should push resources where they are needed most. Hopefully, FY22 will bring some relief. The Vice Chair inquired about the possibility of using some of the funds to bridge the gap until the new financial model becomes operational. The cuts we are facing now were not motivated by strategic decisions. Some units with high enrollment may have been hit harder just because they happened to have an older faculty base who took the early retirement incentive. Have there been conversations about building small bridges until we can feel the benefits of the new financial model, recognizing that it will take time to shift money around? President Green acknowledged that the point about retirement is a good one. He needs for deans to manage their colleges. If a desperate need arises, something will be done, but it would be incorrect to say that the new money can be used for bridging. Nevertheless, to the extent that we are in a healthy financial place, we will do what we can to help. But President Green does not want to raise unreasonable expectations. If we can get more CARES Act funds and keep the university open, we may be able to use some of the new money to help where help is most needed. For now, we still have negative reserves because we are investing in an endowment rather than having the money sit there on our balance sheet. We are
$10M negative in reserve and the Regents want us to be at positive $25M, a swing of $35M. These figures were confirmed by Vice President Foisy.

A Senator inquired how, in practice, both the concessionaire and the university make money out of the deal. President Green explained that the project provides an opportunity to improve efficiency of the steam plant and utilities through a long-term maintenance plan. U of I will pay annual utility fees and operating expenses to the concessionaire as part of the agreement. By improving efficiencies and processes, the concessionaire will be able to share in the benefit of cost savings. Of the up-front $225M, $33M will be used to decrease debt, and about $190M will be invested in the foundation at an assumed 5% return on investment. Net positive cash flow of over $350M will come to U of I over the duration of the lease, and could be as high as $1.1 billion if the investments pay off as we hope over 50 years.

There were no more questions from the Senators. President Green asked for the Senators’ feedback on the P3 deal. Many positive comments and words of congratulations were spoken or written in the Zoom chat.

What is next? – a Senator asked. President Green said they may not take on a new project for the time being – there is a lot to do to implement what we have.

Special Orders:
• Roundtable on budget/enrollment/faculty workload Attach. #2
Chair Kirchmeier reminded the Senators that this year Senate Leadership wanted to create a space to hold open conversations. Diane Kelly-Riley and Torrey Lawrence will participate in this roundtable about faculty workload. The goal is to look for solutions, generate ideas, propose policy creations. The Chair started the discussion posing the question: what kind of additional work are the faculty doing due to reduced number of faculty, increased number of classes they teach, and increased class size?

A Senator shared her experience in her unit, where they lost a number of staff members. They are doing the best they can, but things are “falling through the cracks.” She feels the glue that binds faculty and staff together is missing.

A Senator from the College of Law said they lost several faculty to retirement. With the Concordia students merging, they had to rely on visiting faculty, who have no service component in their duties. As a consequence, the regular faculty had to take on a lot more committee work and administration.

Another Senator agreed with the earlier comment about loss of staff. She has seen the number of classes and the number of advisees go up. She emphasized the emotional labor of supporting students with a reduced number of faculty that students can go to.

A Senator observed that we may never go back to the way we were before COVID. He is concerned that students may have different expectations concerning flexibility in class delivery mode. This may be exhausting for faculty. This point was later reiterated by another Senator, who expressed serious concerns about the impact on faculty morale from uncertainty, increased workload, and furloughs.
The loss of institutional knowledge associated with retirements was brought up by a Senator. In his unit, there are many junior faculty who need help and advice. In turn, he needs time to find answers so he can help others move forward.

A Senator reported that his unit lost 50% of the staff as well as a disciplinary colleague, leaving a hole in the program. These losses unavoidably trickle down to the students, who are uncertain about whom to contact to get answers. Of course, COVID has exacerbated these problems.

Chair Kirchmeier proposed to take a break and hear from the Provost and the Vice Provost.

Provost Lawrence did not disagree with what had been said. The retirement and voluntary separation incentives were not at all strategic. We lost institutional knowledge and people in areas that are hard to replace. Some faculty are essentially running two classes at once (in-person and virtual). In the spring, we need to talk about these flexible formats, and the students’ expectations that they have all options, whereas options are the faculty member’s prerogative. The Provost reflected on whether these problems are due to COVID or the budget shortfall or both. As the university has changed dramatically over the past couple of years, we need to ask ourselves: what do we need to stop doing? The only choices are: increasing the workload or changing the work we are doing. We have suffered significant losses in personnel, and we did lose institutional knowledge to retirements. Realistically, the enrollment has been going down for a decade. If enrollment stabilizes, we may be fine, but we are not going to be able to hire 250 people next year. Different units manage cuts differently. We need to talk about to what extent faculty need to be flexible. The graph (from Institutional Research) in Attachment #2 shows the U of I employee headcount at the beginning of each fall semester since 2012. There is a maximum in 2017 with 2644 employees, whereas we now have 250 fewer people. The chart also shows that the number of faculty members went down by 5% between 2017 and 2020 while the number of staff actually increased by a small amount. This is interesting, having heard several comments about loss of staff. During the same time period covered by the chart, our total enrollment went up and down a bit but stayed overall constant. However, the number of our full-time degree-seeking students has gone down, which may be the major source of our financial problems. We had a $21M “turn around” this year, which came at great expense to everyone. Now, we need to change our work to match it with the people we have. For instance, holding many sessions with few students is not sustainable – best to offer them on alternating semesters or combine them.

Vice-Provost Diane Kelly-Riley said that last spring, prior to COVID, conversations had started about a proper class size and disciplinary expectations, and how to move towards efficiency. She noted that the pandemic has impacted our ability to adjust to changes in personnel in a proactive way. For the past several months we have been in a reactive mode. We need to distinguish between a change in position description (PD) and pulling extra work for a short time. Faculty should receive instructions on how to document the extra work and make it visible, for instance through activity reports or U of I CVs. It would also be useful for unit chairs to discuss with their faculty what we can let go and how to reorganize. These conversations are in progress. She agrees with the Provost that different colleges/units manage cuts in different ways. Perhaps it may be insightful to look for patterns?

A Senator noted that we are talking about funding research initiatives. On the other hand, Ph.D. students are very time-consuming and require small classes. How are we perceived by the
people of Idaho? Are they interested in our aspiration to achieve R1 status or do they prefer to see Master’s or professional degree recipients to join the state workforce? The Provost clarified that issues of class size mostly refer to undergraduate classes, not graduate.

Vice Chair Meeuf pointed out that there is a lot of additional workload faculty had to take on that is unrelated to COVID – for instance, he is advising 60 students. Is this going to translate into a change of percentages in the PD? Extra teaching duties must come at the expense of another area, which for many is research. Should there be a shift in P&T expectations for faculty who are teaching many more students or classes? Are we open to a conversation about changes in the PD, even if they are short-term, to recognize that less work is going to be accomplished in other areas?

Vice Provost Kelly-Riley replied that these conversations need to happen with unit chairs and deans. A significant change in workload must be reflected in the PD, whereas some changes are small enough that a change in PD may not be necessary. In such cases, the extra work is best documented in the annual report. For instance, if a faculty had to learn a new technology, that would be part of course development that does not require a change in PD.

Provost Lawrence agreed that a change in PD requires long-term and significant changes. We don’t want to change PDs for the COVID disruption (which required more than 100% effort from everyone), and later change back. Long-term changes in workload do require a PD change. It is a big gray area, where individual units and colleges have some discretion.

The Vice Chair reported receiving communications from faculty who have taken on additional duties, but their chairs are not willing to negotiate. Furthermore, junior faculty, clinical faculty, and instructors are not comfortable having these conversations, particularly in a time of budget cuts. They are afraid to be punished for not being a “team player.” Vice Chair Meeuf would like to see a more open conversation about the fact the PD must reflect the actual work done by the faculty so that efforts in the various categories can be properly evaluated at P&T.

Provost Lawrence said people should feel encouraged to speak up. He will bring these concerns to Provost Council and ask the deans to make it clear that PD should be adjusted as appropriate.

Diane Kelly-Riley reiterated that these conversations are taking place. Just the day before, she held a training session for unit administrators and deans about the annual review process. Faculty should not be afraid.

Chair Kirchmeier, speaking as a former lecturer and current non-tenure track instructor, said that junior and non-tenure track faculty perceive an inherent risk in bringing up these issues. Whether it is real or perceived, it is real to them, especially in a time of non-renewals.

A Senator agreed with the Vice Chair’s comments. Faculty have expressed fears of setting boundaries for themselves and pushing for a healthy work-life balance. She thinks the latter is not part of the culture at U of I. Junior and non-tenure track faculty feel they receive mixed messages. She also reiterated the need of students (and in turn, faculty) for emotional support.

A Senator followed up on the loss of institutional knowledge and its impact on our ability to help students and others find answers. She thinks that our web presence is geared more and more
towards marketing and recruiting. Having fewer people who are knowledgeable of the institution creates additional stress. The Secretary expressed gratitude for all the conversations that are going on. But ultimately, the issues we have been talking about today need to be addressed with actual solutions. Those must be in policy. FAC is currently considering many of the aspects discussed today, particularly as they apply to a disruption of the university’s regular activities.

Yet another Senator wished to stress the damaging impact of losing institutional knowledge. He volunteered to be the Director of Graduate Studies in his unit and noted that junior faculty have no experience with recruiting good graduate students. Furthermore, COVID has put international students in an impossible situation. They feel stressed and lonely, and on the verge of a mental health crisis. This Senator also wished to comment on the PD and the current annual evaluation process, which he dislikes because it puts more work on the faculty. Perhaps an unintended consequence of the change?

The last comment was from a Senator who shared that she was born in Idaho and went to school at U of I. She said she wishes to serve the people of Idaho – that will remain her top priority.

The Chair thanked everyone and reminded the Senators to reach out to one of the FSL members with additional thoughts or questions.

Adjournment:
The agenda being completed, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:58pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Francesca Sammarruca
Secretary of the University Faculty & Secretary to Faculty Senate
2020 – 2021 Faculty Senate Agenda

Meeting # 12

Tuesday, November 3, 2020 at 3:30 pm
Paul Joyce Faculty- Staff Lounge & Zoom

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of Minutes (Vote)
   • Minutes of the 2020-2021 Faculty Senate Meeting #11, October 27, 2020 Attach. #1

III. Chair’s Report

IV. Provost’s Report

V. Other Announcements and Communications
   • P3 Project – President Green and Vice President Foisy

VI. Special Orders
   • Roundtable on budget/enrollment/faculty workload Attach. #2

VII. New Business

VIII. Adjournment

Attachments:

• Attach. #1 Minutes of the 2020-2021 Faculty Senate Meeting #11, October 27, 2020
• Attach. #2 Handout for roundtable
Meeting # 11
Tuesday, October 27, 2020, 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm
Zoom only

Present: Ahmadzadeh, Brantz, Chapman, Dezzani, Fairley, Goebel, Hickman, Keim, Kirchmeier (Chair), Lee-Painter, McIntosh, McKellar, Meeuf (Vice-Chair), Paul, Raja, Rashed, Rinker, Rose, Sammarruca (w/o vote), Schwarzlaender, Stroebel, Tibbals, Wargo, Torrey Lawrence (w/o vote)

Absent: Bridges (excused), Carney (excused), Quinnett (excused), Smith

Guest Speakers: Darryl Woolley, Jan Johnson, Aaron Bharucha, Kristen McMullin, Cynthia Castro, Mary Oswald, Madison Domka, Lisa Ormond, Dean Panttaja

Call to Order: Chair Kirchmeier called the meeting to order at 3:30pm.

Approval of Minutes (vote):

- Minutes of the 2020-21 Meeting #10 – Attach. #1
  The Secretary reported an editorial change to correct a typo. There were no more corrections to the minutes of the 2020-21 Meeting #10. The minutes were approved as corrected.

The Secretary announced that a quorum is present, thus voting can take place.

Consent Agenda (Vote):

- Final Exam Schedule for 2021-22 – Attach. #2
  Chair Kirchmeier asked if anyone wanted to remove this item from the consent agenda and discuss it. There was no such request. The Final Exam Schedule was adopted.

Chair’s Report:

- Yesterday you should have received the questionnaire developed to gather information from people who are teaching this semester. Please complete and submit this survey by Friday, October 30. Please also help us encourage other people to complete the survey by Friday.
- Nominations for faculty to sit on the University Promotion and Tenure Committee are due by Friday, October 30. Please work with your colleagues to nominate faculty from your college to sit on this important committee.
- Please encourage faculty in your colleges to do an informal check-in with students in their courses. ASUI, CETL, the Teaching Committee, and the Provost’s Office have worked together to draft informal questions faculty can use to talk with students in their courses about how the course and the course format are working. This semester is challenging and there may be ways faculty and students can work together to make it as good as possible.
- Five upcoming deadlines to keep in mind:
  - Sabbatical applications are due on October 30, 2020.
  - Teaching Questionnaire is due on October 30, 2020.
  - Nominations for faculty to sit on the University Promotion and Tenure Committee are due on October 30, 2020.
  - Honorary degree nominations are due on November 16, 2020.
  - Deadline to request delay for promotion and/or tenure is March 14, 2021.
  Please help us spread the word about these upcoming deadlines by sharing with your colleagues.
Discussion:
A Senator asked whether an acknowledgement would be sent to those who submitted nominations. The Chair will find out and communicate the information.

Will there also be a formal survey directed to students about their experience this fall, in addition to the informal check-in? Provost Lawrence said that one went out of the Office of the Dean of Students with a variety of questions involving different aspects, such as housing and more. It was similar to one that went earlier in the semester so results can be compared. The third point in the Chair’s report refers to an informal check-in instructors are encouraged to do with their students to gather specific feedback about classes as we move into the spring. Chair Kirchmeier added that these informal conversations allow us to receive student feedback and act on them before the end of the semester.

A Student Senator noted that another survey coordinated by Dr. Chris Richardson had gone out of the Psychology Department with many questions related to mental health, stress, and coping. Chair Kirchmeier added that a survey will also go out to staff. Staff Council is currently preparing one.

There were no more questions or comments for the Chair.

Provost’s Report:
• COVID-19 update: The numbers continue to improve. Last week testing showed a 2.3% positive rate. No Greek Houses are presently on formal quarantine, from 14 only a few weeks ago. But there are challenges ahead of us. The recent Governor’s order has put Idaho back to a “modified stage 3.” We had no advance warning and we are still working through the details. It is not yet clear how our events will be impacted. There are large exemptions for educational and other activities.
• Following up on last week’s conversation with Vice President Foisy regarding budget: On October 20 we received a memo from the President concerning enrollment and budget. At the end of the section on financial impact, the President states that “we do not anticipate the need to make additional reductions in the FY21 budget.” Some clarification: the budget news is good. The 2.7% holdbacks that colleges and departments were expecting to take at some point during the current fiscal year are on hold, and no additional furloughs are planned. Financially, the remaining large variables for us are: (1) large impact from COVID, need to shut down; and (2) spring enrollment. Both variables will be unknown for some time. For the time being, we can move forward without the 2.7% holdbacks.
• Please read the President’s message about enrollment and its financial impact.

Discussion:
A Senator asked whether we can expect additional holdbacks from the state. The Provost said he has not heard of any concrete plans. We take it one day at a time, as there is a lot of uncertainty. The Provost agreed with another Senator that, with so much uncertainty, it is hard to make plans.
There were no more questions or comments for the Provost.

Committee Reports:
• UCC; Name change of the Accounting Department (Vote) – Darryl Woolley – Attach. #3
  Darryl Woolley explained that this change of name is to better reflect the composition of the department, because the Management Information System has moved from the Business Department to the Accounting Department.
The Senators proceeded to vote. The UCC proposal passed with 21 votes in favor.

- Ubuntu; Diversity Resolution (Vote) – Jan Johnson and Aaron Bharucha – Attach. #4

Jan Johnson thanked the Senate for the invitation and the opportunity to present the Resolution on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice (formally just Resolution on Diversity). She gave a brief history of the Resolution and how it evolved through several changes as the result of feedback and input from new committee members. She recalled that one committee member was not comfortable with the term “inclusion.” So she developed a small glossary for these four terms, see footnote on the first page of the document. Another reason for keeping “Inclusion” is that our own Office of Equity and Diversity has it as an important value. Aaron Bharucha, undergraduate representative for ASUI, expressed appreciation for everyone who contributed. The committee worked hard and tried to incorporate all feedback they received.

Discussion:
A Senator said that he likes the statement in its generality. But he would like to see one condition—that we are open and will not discriminate by gender, race, or other factors—provided they meet the university admission requirements. Jan Johnson was not clear about the concern, as admitted students have met the standards. Aaron Bharucha said that adding those contingencies takes away from the overall message of the resolution. Nowhere in the document does it say that anyone will be accepted regardless of grades or accomplishments – there is no reason to believe that the Resolution has this intent. The Senator argued that one cannot make that assumption. He reiterated that he is concerned that the Ubuntu document could be used to weaken the admission standards. Jan Johnson emphasized again that the Resolution was certainly never meant to be a “back way” for non-qualified people to enter the university. It is about our community as it exists today, not about changing or lowering standards. The Senator referred to his concern for the way the Vandal Gateway Program (VGP) was presented to Senate a year ago as a “done deal,” thus bypassing the faculty’s prerogative to determine admission standards – but perhaps, he noted, this may not be a valid concern. Being unfamiliar with the aforementioned program, Jan Johnson was unable to comment on that particular issue, but she said that she has never seen that language on websites of other groups concerned with equity and diversity.

The Secretary expressed support for the arguments put forward by Jan Johnson and Aaron Bharucha. When writing the Resolution – she stressed – we must not “justify” ourselves by explaining that we do not intend to lower the standards. The Resolution is a broad statement of commitment to equity and social justice. It has nothing to do with VGP.

Vice Chair Meeuf recalled that Senate had concerns about how the roll-out of VGP unfolded last year. Senate has not yet given a formal endorsement of the program. When in its final form, it will come back to Senate and faculty will retain the privilege to determine admission standards. There is no need to make a clarification because nothing in the Resolution suggests that it would have any impact on admission standards.

Chair Kirchmeier recalled asking Jan Johnson whether the draft had been shared with other groups on campus to make sure the language is consistent with the one adopted by other groups active in equity and diversity matters. Jan Johnson confirmed that many people had participated and contributed, including Ubuntu, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the faculty in Africana Studies, and some faculty in Sociology and Education.
Vote on the Ubuntu Resolution: the Senators voted unanimously to support the Ubuntu Resolution.

Other Announcements and Communications:
- VandalStar Attach. #5 – Kristen McMullin, Cynthia Castro, Mary Oswald, Madison Domka, and Lisa Ormond.
  Cynthia Castro introduced the Team. The VandalStar Team will make a joint presentation. (The slides for the presentation are attached to these minutes.) An additional handout will also be provided and included in the next binder.) Mary Oswald pointed out two important facts: (1) while faculty use VandalStar in many ways, some may be unfamiliar with the appointment scheduling feature, which avoids multiple emails to figure out a day/time that works for everybody; (2) VandalStar provides a connection point between the instructor, the student, and the broader university. An example is the VandalStar managing of the early warning grade Progress Surveys. Lisa Ormond explained that VandalStar Progress Surveys go to the, appropriate, broader community the student is involved with. For instance, there is no separate handling of warning grades for student-athletes – Mary Oswald noted. Kristin McMullin talked about how VandalStar helps faculty support the students. It is a university-wide system, including, but not limited to, tutoring, academic coaching, career services, financial aid, Dean of Student Office, and equity and diversity units. Additional student support units continue to be onboarded with VandalStar. The Student Success Network is university-wide, coordinated, collaborative, and student-focused. Kristen moved to acknowledging University-wide contributors and the Data Assessment Group. Their charge is to evaluate the data available in VandalStar and make recommendations. A chart showed that 69% of all course sections submitted early warning grades in fall 2020 (compared to about 15% in fall 2016). Of the many features, students like most: Connections and Community (which include My Success Network and Services Directory), Appointment Scheduling, and Course Performance Feedback. The presentation concluded with a reminder that the VandalStar Team is available to help faculty. Faculty should explore the many available features and embrace what they find helpful. Please encourage students to use VandalStar.

Discussion:
A Senator asked whether the Student Success Network populates automatically or whether it is something that the instructor builds. Also, this Senator would find it helpful to hear from one of the student representatives who are familiar with this tool. Madison Domka explained that when she adds new classes or a new role is assigned to her, those items appear automatically. Using the Student Success Network has been very useful for her, especially to keep in touch with her advisor. It is faster and more practical than composing an email message.

A Student Senator confirmed that scheduling appointments with VandalStar is easy and user-friendly. Students really enjoy using this feature.

Chair Kirchmeier asked whether graduate students have the same access to VandalStar as undergraduates. A member of the Team replied that, while graduate students have access to the system, we have not yet implemented VandalStar with the College of Graduate Studies.

Vice Chair Meeuf noted that some faculty are hesitant to use a tool that doesn’t communicate with other tools. For example, if one is using Outlook for scheduling, there is no need to use VandalStar. A member of the Team replied that connecting Blackboard with VandalStar is not currently being explored but it has been explored in the past. As for the Outlook calendar, it is
possible to sync it with VandalStar. It has worked well. Vice Chair Meeuf asked for some more clarification: VandalStar has a function where instructors can let students know when they are available. Can this be done when the sync is in place? Some students send Outlook invitations for times when the instructor appears to be available although those may not be official office hours or hours reserved for students, which can be frustrating. Is there an IT solution to this problem? The Team suggested to sync the Outlook calendar so that everything appears in VandalStar, and then set specific times allocated for office hours. It may be best to have this setup only for a limited time window.

The Vice Chair inquired about the costs of VandalStar and whether we have seen an increase in retention rate as a result of it. The Team answered that we have a four-year contract, from June 2020 to July 2023, at the cost of $143K for the first two years and $153K for the last two. It is an investment in our student success. The retention rate for first-time, full-time 2019 cohort held steady at 77%, despite the pandemic. We are working on measuring the direct impact on retention – the data to back it up is coming soon.

The VandalStar Team concluded by emphasizing that they are happy to help. Fall and Spring retention rates are a concern, and so is mental health. They hope that VandalStar will be able to help.

- Online Idaho Questions – Dean Panttaja
  Dean Panttaja came back to Senate to address any follow-up questions from his earlier presentation on Online Idaho. He has no new information to share, except that the state-wide Steering Committee had one more meeting where they primarily discussed how the work of the Idaho Workforce Council will feed into Online Idaho.

  A Senator said he discussed the Canvas system with his constituents and received good feedback. They asked whether there is or will be some kind of workflow to transfer easily from Blackboard to Canvas. Dean Panttaja noted that we can use Canvas for a year at no charge and decide whether it works for us as an institution. He communicated with the CETL Team about transportability from Blackboard to Canvas. He hopes for a smooth integration, but doesn’t know for sure. At the moment, this is an opportunity to try different Learning Management System (LMS) and decide what is best and easiest for everybody. (Chair Kirchmeier suggested Dean Panttaja to write down for Senate the information that is not presently available. If there are more questions, we can meet again at a later time.)

  A Senator wondered how the performance of VandalStar will be assessed. It costs about $0.5M over four years. In a time of budget cuts and financial stress, should we even do it? We need to discuss a better assessment. Chair Kirchmeier recalled that Canvas is free this year, which will be an opportunity for evaluation. She asked Dean Panttaja how the committee ended up with this particular product. Dean Panttaja explained that the Office of the State Board of Education (OSBE) and the State Board (SB) are trying to find a common LMS for K-20, that is, a simple LMS for all Idaho schools and through postsecondary education. Canvas happens to be the best product according to specialists, as the CETL Team may be able to verify. Jonathan (SBOE) was able to negotiate a discount from $40 to $13 per seat for us and our sister institutions. The hope is that the legislators will pay for it, in which case we all may have a free LMS. For now, they are using CARES Act funds to let us experiment with it at no charge for one year.
Provost Lawrence clarified that the university does not rush into purchasing a new systems. For instance, when VandalStar was adopted, there was an extensive and careful process to select among numerous bids. The Canvas opportunity is unique in that we can try it out without risk. No school has moved from Canvas to Blackboard.

A Senator asked whether there was an assessment plan. Dean Panttaja said they are currently working with CETL on how to evaluate the pilot. The project is not yet approved by the President’s Cabinet. Hopefully CETL and ITS will be engaged in the assessment process. In response to a question, Dean Panttaja said that our contract with Blackboard is up for renewal in two years.

The Chair announced that in the future she will no longer call for a motion (and second) to adjourn. This is consistent with Robert’s Rules of Order, which do not mandate a seconded motion to adjourn as long as the agenda has been completed. For the current meeting, the Chair still called for a motion to adjourn.

**Adjournment:** There was a motion to adjourn (Fairley/Tibbals). The meeting was adjourned at 5:02pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Francesca Sammarruca
Secretary of the University Faculty & Secretary to Faculty Senate
## UI Faculty Position Description Breakdown

*Reminder: no common calculation/policy for determining %
*Reminder: no common % for any type of faculty
*Does not include Temporary faculty (semester or annual) or Part-Time faculty (FTE < 0.75)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Teaching &amp; Advising</th>
<th>% Scholarship &amp; Creative Act.</th>
<th>% Outreach &amp; Extension</th>
<th>% Service &amp; Leadership</th>
<th># of Faculty</th>
<th>% of Faculty</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ALL FACULTY</strong></td>
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<td>Faculty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part-time (FTE &lt; 0.75)</td>
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**Note:** 117 Administrators and 29 Part-Time faculty were removed from all calculations below on this page:

### BY COLLEGE

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<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>% Teaching &amp; Advising</th>
<th>% Scholarship &amp; Creative Act.</th>
<th>% Outreach &amp; Extension</th>
<th>% Service &amp; Leadership</th>
<th># of Faculty</th>
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### BY STATUS

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<th>% Service &amp; Leadership</th>
<th># of Faculty</th>
<th>% of Faculty</th>
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### BY RANK

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### BY STATUS and TYPE

#### Non-Tenure Track (NTT)

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<th>% Scholarship &amp; Creative Act.</th>
<th>% Outreach &amp; Extension</th>
<th>% Service &amp; Leadership</th>
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#### Tenure Track (TT)

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*Type appears in both NTT and TT*
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<td>4%</td>
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<td>Teaching &amp; Advising: &gt; 50%</td>
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