University of Idaho
2021 – 2022 Faculty Senate Agenda

Meeting # 6

Tuesday, September 21, 2021, at 3:30 pm
Zoom Only

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of Minutes (Vote)
   • Minutes of the 2020-2021 Faculty Senate Meeting #5 (September 14, 2021) Attach. #1

III. Consent Agenda (Vote)

IV. Chair’s Report

V. Provost’s Report

VI. Committee Reports

VII. Other Announcements and Communications
   • Q&A with Chris Nomura
   • Accreditation presentation with Dean Panttaja and Barb Kirchmeier

VIII. Special Orders

IX. New Business

X. Adjournment
Attachments:

- **Attach. #1**: Minutes of the 2020-2021 Faculty Senate Meeting #5
- **Attach. #2**: 
- **Attach. #3**: 
- **Attach. #4**: 
2021 – 2022 Faculty Senate – Pending Approval
Meeting # 5
Tuesday, September 14, 2021, 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm
Zoom only

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

Guest/Presenters: Scott Green, Torrey Lawrence, Chandra Ford, Mary Kay McFadden.

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

Approval of Minutes (vote):
• Minutes of the 2021-22 Meeting #4 – Attach. #1.
  The minutes of the 2021-22 Meeting #4 were approved as distributed.

Chair’s Report:
• Faculty Senate Leadership is forming two subcommittees to help navigate our policy priorities this year. These Senate Subcommittees will work with our existing committee structure to guide new ideas and proposed policies through our systems.
  o First, we are establishing a Senate Subcommittee on Teaching Evaluations, chaired by Senate Vice-Chair Alistair Smith, that will develop new ideas and proposals for our teaching evaluation systems. This includes coordinating with the University Teaching Committee on a review of current practices. Senators Deb Thorne, Dakota Roberson, and Erin Chapman have agreed to serve on this subcommittee alongside ASUI President Kallyn Mai and other student representatives. We are looking forward to a report later in the year from this subcommittee on ideas for improving our teaching evaluation process.
  o Second, we are recognizing an ad hoc task force on parental leave policies as an official Senate Subcommittee, chaired by Senator Erin Chapman. This group, which includes both faculty and staff, has been working on a proposal to make the University’s parental leave policy more competitive compared to the policies offered at Boise State and Idaho State Universities as well as other regional employers. By transitioning this group into a Senate Subcommittee, we hope to give it more official standing as it works with existing committees such as Faculty Affairs and Staff Council. Moreover, as both faculty and staff are deeply concerned with this issue, we wanted to create a diverse subcommittee with both faculty and staff representation rather than passing the policy back and forth between a faculty-led committee and a staff-led committee. Other members of the Subcommittee include: Rebecca Scofield, Jessica Martinez, Kathryn Schifferbein, Jessica Stanley, and Laurel Meyer. If any Senators are interested in supporting this committee, please let me know.

• Alumni Award for Excellence – Last call!
The Office of Alumni Relations is accepting nominations for the Alumni Award for Excellence. Nominations are open until Friday, Sept. 17. The Alumni Award for Excellence program recognizes U of I’s distinguished scholars. Each year, faculty, staff and administrators from colleges and departments nominate seniors at the undergraduate level, third-year College of Law students and graduate students who have outstanding academic and campus activity records. A committee, composed of faculty, staff and alumni, reviews the nominations and selects the final recipients based on academic achievements and campus citizenship. Contact Sandy Larsen with questions. Submit a nomination.

Discussion:
In response to a question, Chair Meeuf clarified that Senators can support the task force on parental leave policies in many ways, such as sharing their stories, or providing ideas and opinions, even if they are not able to serve on the committee. Senator Chapman, chair of the task force, added that a white paper is being prepared. She would be happy to collect stories and include them in the white paper.

President Green recommended to reach out to Brian Foisy, as his office looked at this issue twice in the past two years. In fact – Chair Meeuf added -- the subcommittee has started conversations with the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

A Senator asked about the authority of these subcommittees. Vice Chair Meeuf replied that anyone at U of I can propose a policy and submit it through our channels. Senate committees (FSH 1640) work on policies within their scope and, when their proposals come before Senate, they can be submitted as a seconded motion. If a project spans the purview of more than one committee, a subcommittee or task force is a centralized and more efficient way to coordinate all the interested parties. For instance, UTC is clearly involved with student evaluations, but FAC and the new University Assessment and Accreditation Committee (UAAC) are also invested. Vice Chair Smith reiterated that the issue of student evaluations was raised multiple times in the past at several committees, but did not gain much traction. A subcommittee working specifically on student evaluations may help build bridges among “silos,” while, at the same time, speeding the process – typically, Senate committees have other tasks to work on.

Provost’s Report:
- Nominations for Honorary Degrees are due November 15 and should be submitted to provost@uidaho.edu. The honorary degree policy is in FSH 4930.

Discussion:
A Senator asked whether there is any update about the mask mandate. The Provost confirmed that September 20 is the three-week point after our last evaluation. We will consider many aspects and announce a decision by Monday, September 20.

How many Covid cases do we have among our students? President Green said that we have currently three students in isolation. The actual percentage from last week is on the Covid website. The Provost reported that over 3,000 students have submitted vaccination records and are participating in the incentive program. The number is going up.

A Senator asked if students become ill (regardless the cause) and must miss multiple classes, can we accommodate them via Zoom? Are there any fees? Provost Lawrence confirmed that faculty are encouraged to do whatever they can to help sick students catch up (such as allowing participation via Zoom or recording lectures). There are no fees associated with Zoom – it’s free for everyone at the U of I. Some courses require fees, and those are the same as originally communicated to the students in the course schedule.
A Senator inquired about the status of the searches for upper administrators, particularly the dean of the College of Engineering and the CDA Center Executive Director. Provost Lawrence said that the search for the dean of COE is moving forward. The names of the search committee members will be announced shortly and the position description is nearly done and ready to go out. Regarding the CDA Center Executive Director, he is working on identifying an interim person – it is a unique position, not easy to replace.

The discussion moved to Covid testing. Students are not getting timely access to testing. For instance, a student who had been exposed was not given a test at Gritman because they were not very symptomatic. Provost Lawrence said that, although the university continues to communicate with Gritman, their testing process/protocols are not under our control. The limited testing hours (mornings only) may be part of the problem. Students would be better served if they go to the Student Health Clinic or their regular physician for a testing referral, as directed.

A Senator thought this is a risk management issue. Because Gritman does not have sufficient testing capability, the community will be impacted negatively. Is there any way U of I can partner with some other entity to make testing more readily available? President Green responded that public health officials were very clear about testing being of limited effect with the Delta variant. This virus is so infectious that, even if we ran our testing facility and were able to turn results around in 48 hours, the damage would be already done. We can expect a very steep increase in infection rate among the unvaccinated, followed by a very steep decline. There are shortages all over the country, and yet, if it wasn’t for the Delta variant, we might have resumed testing. As things are, we would be spending a lot of money for little benefit. It is not a financial issue – we spent $2M last year and we would do it again, if we thought it would help the community. The best course of action is to get as many people vaccinated as possible and to wear a mask in the classroom. We are doing our best to give students incentive to get vaccinated.

A Senator suggested that communicating these facts to the university community might help people better understand why testing is not readily available.

Announcements and Communications:
- Campaign working group presentations – Scott Green, Torrey Lawrence, Chandra Ford, Mary Kay McFadden. Attach. #2
  Chandra Ford provided some background and reviewed the process. President Green assembled a diverse group of internal folks (faculty, staff, students) as well as external experts to address different areas his high priorities and strategic initiatives. To date, white papers have been produced for: Sustainable Financial Model, R1/Research, Online Education, and, currently, Strategic Enrollment Management. Next, a sustainability working group will be launched. Today, the presentation is about the Comprehensive Capital Campaign working group. President Green said that he was impressed with the white paper and its well thought-out strategies. The plans are organized in different phases, starting with “Brave and Bold,” which is about student success. In October 2021, alumni and donors will be invited to invest in scholarships, fellowships, and more to benefit Idaho students. Throughout this academic year, the university will continue to build relationships with the Idaho industry. The U of I has already engaged in a series of virtual Industry Summits with executive-level representatives of industries through Idaho. The CEOs were excited and happy that we reached out to them. Building relations with potential employers and asking them what we should be investing in is important.
Our plan to support the state hiring needs, including soft skills (not only high-tech skills) was very well received. This is the largest campaign in Idaho history, with the goal to raise $500M. President Green thanked everyone for the great work they do, which will become known throughout the state as we tell our story. We want to support our faculty by advertising their success.

Mary Kay McFadden joined the presentation to talk about campaign strategy. During the “silent” phase of the campaign (2015 to present), we raised $276M – a number that grows every day. This is a very comprehensive campaign, where all gifts are counted. On October 8, we will launch the public phase at the new ICCU Arena. This will be a phased rollout. The first phase, “Brave and Bold,” focuses on student success with three high-level initiatives: 1. Access for all, with both need- and merit-based scholarships; 2. Experiential learning, such as studies abroad or UG research; 3. A career support center. With these initiatives, we can support student from the time they enter U of I to graduation. Mary Kay added that donors are usually more inclined to invest in initiatives that support students.

One year from now, we will launch the second phase, “Unstoppable.” For that, we will be working with colleges, deans, faculty, to define our academic priorities from now to 2025, when the campaign will wrap up. In closing, Mary Kay noted that initiatives such as the Arena, CAFÉ, and the Vandal Promise Scholarship give momentum to the campaign.

**Discussion:**

A Senator asked about the primary goal of the campaign. Do we hope to become less dependent from state funds? President Green replied that, while the state should continue to fund education, private support will allow us to lower the cost of education for our students.

The Secretary asked about academic priorities mentioned in the context of Phase 2. Who sets those priorities? Provost Lawrence responded that it will be a discussion among the colleges. Of course, not everything can be a priority – we will also go in the direction of interdisciplinary programs that are growing, or cutting-edge programs. Mary Kay added that we must identify the state needs and find solutions.

The discussion moved to health care as one of the areas where specialized workforce is needed in the state. The power of meeting a state’s need is likely to lead to large gifts. WWAMI is a medical school program – students are dual enrolled at the U of I and the University of Washington School of Medicine. While WWAMI does not meet the only health care needs of the state, opportunities can be found there. Mary Kay mentioned, as an example, a very large gift recently received by Montana State to support nursing in rural Montana.

A Senator from the Theater Department was excited about the emphasis on soft skills. Her students would love to contribute to the campaign through the healing arts of theatre, dance and music. President Green suggested the Senator to get in touch with Teresa Koeppel, our new Marketing and Communication director.

In response to a Senator’s concern that investing in a medical school may end up draining a large amount of resources, President Green clarified that we are not planning to establish a four-year medical school, but we see opportunities in bridging, for instance, the College of Education and WWAMI.
Some Senators thought that we should do better at marketing ourselves. A lot has changed since last year, with new opportunities such as virtual internships. We need to advertise those unique aspects that make us especially interesting and valuable.

Chair Meeuf had positive comments for the campaign emphasis on the question: what does the state need? He noted that the quality of equipment/facilities we offer to our students is closely related to successful experiential learning. Will fund raising for facilities be part of the campaign? Mary Kay replied that, although facility fund raising is more difficult, our donors step up when they see that their gift will help meet state needs.

Following up on the previous point, Vice Chair Smith underlined the importance of new instructional material and equipment for successful experiential learning. Departments can’t afford to pay for those, nor can research dollars be used for such purposes. Could some of the funds raised towards experiential learning be used to update our instructional material? Mary Kay said that there is opportunity there. President Green reiterated the importance of letting potential donors know what we do and why it is important.

A Senator inquired about the “major gift officers” mentioned in the white paper. What is their role and are they hired specifically for the campaign? Mary Kay responded that they are development officers assigned to colleges with potential for large gifts. A data-driven analysis has shown the need for 24 major gift officers for a campaign of this size.

Mary Kay concluded with suggestions of what faculty can do to help, such as: strengthen connections with students, think about their own networks of potential donors and help the campaign access those networks. Deans will reach out with opportunities for interdisciplinary initiatives. And of course everyone’s philanthropy is appreciated.

New Business:
Chair Meeuf opened the floor to ideas for future conversations.

- U.S. News & World Reports ranked U of I second best-value university. This is a great marketing tool!
- Volunteers are needed for the search committee for the Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives.
- More information on course fee structure.
- The “Affinity Groups” policy created last spring by the Faculty & Staff Policy Group with the help of Barb Kirchmeier is currently in legal review.

Adjournment:
The agenda being completed, Chair Meeuf adjourned the meeting at 5:00.

Respectfully Submitted,

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