Faculty Senate Talking Points: February 4, 2020

- Encouraging news on the Open Educational Resources (OER) matter, Policy III.U. After productive communications with the Board’s new Chief Academic Officer, T.J. Bliss, SBOE recognized the importance of academic freedom and that the current policy may have been too strong. The chair of the IRSA (Instruction, Research, and Student Affairs) committee, Dr. Clark, and T.J. Bliss discussed best practices for OER. The Provost, who was part of the IRSA meeting, confirmed that Jonathan Lashley and T.J. Bliss have the necessary experience to communicate effectively with the Board.

- Update on Dean searches: The interview process is completed for CLASS. A comparable internal search is taking place for CNR. The search committee for Arts and Architecture will be inviting finalists to campus soon. The search has begun in the College of Law, but candidates will be brought to campus in the Fall.

- Dean Kahler, Vice Provost for Strategic Enrollment Management, and Chris Cook (Director of Career Services) presented the Vandal Gateway Program (VGP). The intent is to increase the number of students at U of I who would not be admitted under ordinary circumstances. Although everyone understands and agrees with the importance of growing enrollment as well as greater access to higher education, a number of serious concerns were raised, including procedural issues which circumvented shared governance polices. Faculty Senate Leadership is in the process of assembling a taskforce to advise on future developments of VGP.

Important dates:

- The first University Faculty Meeting of the Spring semester will be on Wednesday, February 26, 2:30pm PT. More information will be available soon. Save the date!

All Faculty Senate agendas (including attachments and supporting documents) and meeting minutes are made available on the new Senate webpage: https://www.uidaho.edu/governance

Remember to share this email with faculty and staff in your colleges!