

University of Idaho  
**FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**2007-2008 Meeting #13, Tuesday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

**Present:** Adams (w/o vote), Baker, Crowley (chair), Griff, Keim-Campbell, McCaffrey, McCollough, McDaniel, Mihelich, Miller, Murphy, Ripplinger, Rowland, Rush, Schmeckpeper, Schmiede, Sullivan, Ch. Williams, Wilson. Liaisons: Stauffer (Boise), Crepeau (Idaho Falls), Newcombe (Coeur d'Alene).

**Absent:** Fritz, Guilfoyle, Hubbard, Ci. Williams

**Observers:** 12

**Minutes:** It was moved and seconded (Miller, Ch. Williams) to accept the minutes of the November 27<sup>th</sup> meeting as distributed. The motion carried unanimously.

**Chair's Report:** The chair noted with approval that the semester was coming to a close. He reminded the council that fall graduation was this coming Saturday and urged all faculty to attend. Professor Wilson announced that the President's Athletic Advisory Council was looking to forming an Athletics Academic Oversight Committee and asked that anyone interested in being on it contact Professor Carl Hunt.

**Approval of Graduation List:** After a brief preamble on the part of the faculty secretary on the symbolic importance of faculty approval of all who would graduate from the university, an approval delegated to Faculty Council, it was moved and seconded (Miller, Murphy) to approve the graduates for summer 2007 and fall 2007. The motion carried unanimously.

**FC-08-023: Provisional Admittance Policy:** This proposal, a seconded motion from both the Admissions Committee and UCC, would give authority to the Admissions Committee to appoint a specific advisor to those whom it admitted who were deemed at risk. The university had a small grant which would support a specially trained advisor for such students. The motion carried unanimously.

**FC-08-024: NOI: College of Graduate Studies, M.S. in Bioregional Planning and Community Design:** The chair noted that council members had before them revised pages 8 and 10 of the proposal that they had passed at the previous meeting. These revisions incorporated "technical corrections," specifying that \$15,000 of the overall budget would be directed to the library for the purchase of needed library materials. The overall budget was not changed. Review at the Graduate Council level had prompted these changes but for whatever reason they had not been incorporated in the version presented to council. These changes were presented as an FYI and in his opinion no action needed to be taken unless anyone had any concerns.

**FC-08-025: Academic Certificate in Bioregional Planning & Community Design:** This item was withdrawn until such time as the budget page could be appropriately revised.

**FC-08-026: College of Education, add two options: B.S. Technology, business technology and B.S. Technology, industrial technology:** Professor Allen Kitchel from the College of Education provided some background on this seconded motion from UCC. He explained that the existing curriculum was being divided into two options, one the option in industrial technology was unchanged, the other, business technology, was designed for those in industry or junior college instruction who did not need teacher certification. There were no new courses required for the second option. The only cost to the program was a small amount that would be dedicated to advertising it. The motion carried unanimously.

**FC-08-027: NOI: College of Engineering: Certificate in Semiconductor Theory and Devices:** There was no one present to speak specifically to this proposal, another seconded motion from UCC, though those offering opinions thought that this certificate would be largely delivered through web-based courses to those practicing engineers who needed to fulfill continuing ed requirements to maintain their licenses. More generally there seemed to be some consensus that certificates were a low-cost way for programs to have multiple “products” and that, in some cases at least, they provided entry points into MA programs. The motion to approve carried unanimously.

**Yardley Report:** The provost introduced the discussion by saying that a year and a half or so ago the administration had begun a discussion as to how the university could improve graduate education and research. As a result of that preliminary discussion the Yardley Group had been hired to tell us how we stack up nationally. They were asked to identify “metathemes” that are true for the university as a whole. He noted that when he first came some two and a half years ago, we probably could not have had such a conversation, but now we have recovered sufficiently that we can.

Michael Ditchkofsky, President of Yardley Consulting Group, provided more background on their mission and procedures and then introduced some of the report’s major findings.<sup>1</sup> Their task was to assess programs in a national context and decide what needed to be done to make certain promising programs nationally prominent. Members of the group had talked with deans, chairs, and directors of programs, and with other groups. They had sought out further data to inform their understanding. This data-seeking prompted one of their conclusions and that was that the institution needed to beef up its institutional research unit—the people in it were very good, but there simply weren’t enough of them to handle all the necessary tasks. They had compared doctoral programs nationally and master’s programs regionally. They had applied no formula to the data, rather their response was an interplay of what they had been told by the faculty, the narrative told by the data, the direction and development nationally of individual disciplines, and the institutional cultural and infrastructure context.

The critical fact underlying the Yardley report is the fiscal crisis of the institution’s recent past. He hoped that the report would provide the beginnings of a way out. Major components of the report are:

- There is no one set of right actions, but there must be discussion leading to action

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<sup>1</sup> Members of Faculty Council were at something of a disadvantage in the ensuing discussion, not having had an opportunity to see even an executive summary of the report.

- Programs need a critical mass and thus the viability of many small programs is questionable
- Comprehensiveness at the program level is not a virtue—the attempt to achieve it drives up costs and is a recipe for mediocrity
- There is a lot of individual research excellence but not many examples of whole programs with that kind of excellence
- The university needs to make strategic choices at all levels and create budgets that reflect those choices
- Traditional academic master's programs in the sciences (it was unclear whether he intended to include only the sciences or all academic master's programs) were unproductive, obsolete, and cost-intensive
- On the other hand, professional master's programs, where students paid tuition could generate revenue and partially support PhD programs
- The university needs to build research structures that are interdisciplinary and lateral rather than disciplinary and vertical (again, it was not quite clear whether he was speaking only about the sciences, or whether social sciences and humanities were also included)
- Faculty at other UI campuses need to be better integrated into the university's research structure
- Tenure-track faculty should not be teaching undergraduate courses—they should be devoting themselves to research and perhaps supervising PhD students or contingent faculty who teach undergraduates
- Contingent faculty now make up some 20% of the institution's faculty; that number should rise to 30%, as is the case with our peers
- The institution needs to create strong programs in the humanities and social sciences
- Low level discussions about increasing cooperation between UI and WSU should cease forthwith—to be replaced by president-to-president discussions

In the ensuing discussion there were many questions and comments seeking clarification (some of which have been silently included above). One councilor who had, by virtue of his position as departmental chair, access to a portion of the draft report raised the methodological issue of large generalizations based on small slices of anecdotal data.

**Adjournment:** It was moved and seconded (Wilson, Keim) to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas Q. Adams,  
Faculty Secretary and Secretary to Faculty Council