

**FACULTY SENATE TOWN HALL MEETING  
MINUTES**

**VOLUME XXIII, MEMO 5**

**October 27, 2003**

**SUB Little Wood River Room**

**4:00 pm**

**I. PRELIMINARIES**

- A. Attendance: Allen, Anderson, Birdsong, Bowen, Branch, Christensen, Fisher, Frank, Gantt, Hellwig, Hill, Jull, Kantabutra, Martin, McGinnis, McLaughlin, Mercaldo, Newsome, Nilson (Chair), Norton, Ottaway, Rodnick, and Vik  
*ex officio*: Castle  
Absent: DeJesus (excused), Diedrich, McCurry (excused), Semenza (excused), and Westphal
- B. **ACTION**: Moved by Branch and seconded by Anderson to suspend conventional business and convene a Town Hall Meeting.

Nilson welcomed the faculty and explained the intent of the Town Hall meeting.

- The Faculty Senate sets goals for themselves and would like input from faculty.
- The Faculty Senate would like to put faculty concerns in an order of importance; the senate has interest in faculty values and interests.
- The Faculty Senate has a task force on Public Communication and would appreciate input from faculty.
- Representative Gary Schroeder will be visiting campus on October 28, 2003 at 7:00 in the SUB Wood River Room for a public hearing and would appreciate our input.
- Nilson will be meeting with the Governor with the other Faculty Senate Chairs on November 3, 2003 and would like to hear from faculty opinion before going to Boise.
- The Deans' Council is addressing low faculty morale as their number one priority.
- President Bowen will hold a general faculty meeting on Wednesday, December 10, 2003.

Castle addressed the faculty to explain the structure of the forum.

Vik addressed the faculty to explain the guidelines for speaking at the forum.

C. Faculty speakers to the Senate –

- Make an honest attempt to reverse the trend of ISU being run as a business and go back to the academic excellence of a university. ISU should push toward efficiency and avoid sacrificing quality for an agenda.
- The nursing program has too many applicants and not enough faculty. They cannot match the salaries offered by hospitals to retain faculty. ISU faculty RNs should match the salaries of hospital RNs – especially in Boise.

- Many are concerned with faculty salaries. It was suggested that political changes in the state are needed. Faculty Senate was urged to persuade the legislators that higher education does serve the public good. If the legislative minds cannot be changed, change the legislature. It was suggested the Faculty Senate work with the other campuses in Idaho to move the legislative session from winter to summer. This was set when there was a need for farmers to be in the field in the summer, now there is a need for teachers to be heard during the sessions. Idahoans need to be sold on the idea that education is a long-term benefit for Idaho. Salaries affect the quality of the education and affect the morale of the providers. Faculty salaries in the public schools exceed those of higher education salaries for nine-month positions. It was mentioned that faculty stand up, stand together, and freely discuss this issue as it is important for faculty to make their voice heard. Faculty Senate was asked to take an aggressive stance on recruiting and salary by looking at all remedies. ISU cannot either attract or retain quality faculty due to salaries. It was stated that the legislature is the problem. Faculty need to get organized and give the legislators incentive to care about faculty. The legislators are happy with the cuts.
- The standard and excellence of ISU. Many faculty remain mute and some students do not meet standards to receive a degree in higher education. There should be some strategic planning.
- Idaho taxpayers do not see that higher education is important and they believe that students should pay for their education, not the state. There is a need for a major shift in the state funding perspective. The message needs to get out to the taxpayers of the state that cutting higher education is not a way to save money. A better understanding of the budget allocating process is in order.
- It was suggested that ISU move forward and pay more attention to the graduate programs and to compete more for graduate students. ISU has tried to serve in too many educational areas from research to a community college mission. Who should ISU serve and how it would impact the university? ISU is trying to be too many things for too many people.
- It was mentioned that ISU devise a long-term and short term strategic plan with thoughts to the future. Where is ISU heading?
- New faculty are recruited and then forgotten. There should be a value placed on security for new faculty.
- It was suggested that faculty have a stronger voice with one visible face and person to speak for ISU. Can senate fulfill that function?

#### D. Student speakers –

- The fees that students pay do not go to faculty salaries. Where the fees go? Education is important and it was noted that there are many good teachers at ISU.
- The loss of faculty affects students. The legislators feel that students should pay for their education and that it is a state law that student fees cannot go toward faculty salaries. ASISU are working on some common problems that faculty are facing.

#### E. Senate responses to faculty –

- Thank you to all faculty that came to the meeting and the thoughtful candor, dedication, and commitment.
- Faculty were reminded that each college elects their senators and faculty were assured of senate's dedication to the faculty as a whole.
- Legislators are representatives of the people and that faculty should talk to the public via the media. Most people do not realize that education is part of their life. Faculty need to be more involved in making change. The community needs to be educated as a whole as they are the people who put the legislator in power. Faculty need to come together with a collective, strong, bargaining voice.
- Reexamine the government system and change it.
- Should ISU be a four-year graduate university or a community college?
- A need for creative communication and open lines.
- Strive for academic excellence. ISU should maintain a high standard and there should be an appreciation for faculty. There has been a dramatic shift in students in the last 15 years; now there is a lower caliber of students.
- The faculty salary issue is important; it is time to address the issue and make it the top priority. Faculty need to force the salary issue. Teachers should be paid what they deserve. There is concern for the length in which faculty can afford to teach.
- A short-term emergency plan that lists the expectations of faculty.
- Retention and recruitment are very important.
- Continued encouraging comments from faculty; senate needs creative solutions and ideas for change.

F. Where do we go from here? –

Mercaldo suggested future strategic planning. There is an opportunity to change public perspectives on higher education.

He reminded everyone of the public input meetings organized by Senator Schroeder.

He asked for faculty to generate questions for Dr. Bowen for the General Faculty Meeting on December 10, 2003.

The Senate Joint Task Force of Public Communication is working on internal and external communicating between Senators and constituents, but also between Senators and external decision makers.

G. Adjourn 6:00

Approved: November 17, 2003