

**FACULTY SENATE – OPEN FORUM
MINUTES**

VOLUME XXIII, MEMO 13

March 29, 2004

Leonard Hall, Room 162

4:00 pm

I. PRELIMINARIES

- A. Attendance: Anderson, Bowen, Branch, Christensen, Fisher, Frank, Hill, Jull, Kantabutra, Kilpatrick, Martin, McGinnis, McLaughlin, Mercaldo, Jack Newsome, Julie Newsome, Nilson (Chair), Norton, Ottaway, Rodnick, Semenza, and Vik
ex officio: Lawson and Naftzger
Guests: David Robinson, Autumn Wilburn
Absent: Allen (excused), DeJesus, Diedrich, Klein, McCurry (excused), and Westphal (excused)
- B. Dr. Nilson welcomed the faculty from Pocatello, Twin Falls and Boise; no faculty was present from Idaho Falls. The open forum meeting was very successful last semester. Many of the issues that were brought up have been addressed in the General Faculty Meeting, and on the Faculty Senate, Deans' Council, and President's Staff's agendas.
- C. Dr. Nilson would like to direct the comments to the following items:
- How can faculty become more effective for higher education faculty and staff raises?
 - President Bowen has been receptive to faculty messages saying that faculty would like a greater role in University governance. What are some practical and effective ways to realize this goal?
 - What can the University do to improve the quality of faculty work life and morale?
 - What can all divisions of the University do to enhance the sense of community on our campuses? Is it possible to transcend divisions based on our several colleges and our University's far flung geography? How?
- D. Faculty, staff, students comments, questions, and concerns:
1. How can the ASISU student government address the concerns that the Idaho legislators have not been kind to higher education? What is the role of the students?
 2. Dr. Nilson explained why the legislators have not been kind to higher education this year. Due to the bad budget year and the anticipation a worse budget year next year; they agreed to sunset the 1 cent tax increase; less federal tax money in the future; and an extra pay period in the next budget year. The governor started with a flatline year with no raises, many agencies gave testimony for raises and the governor mandated a 2% merit increase with unfounded money from the state. The SBOE suggested using the student fee increase to pay for the 2%. Dr. Bowen has promised to provide a 2% raise for

faculty and staff. Some of the adjunct budget will be used for this purpose. The state legislators acknowledge that more messages have come from ISU than any other agency in the state. The Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee (JFAC) was consistent with the governor's recommendation. The House upheld that by 38-31. Thirty-one people voted in favor of higher education. The Senate voted in favor of the JFAC recommendation 18-16. Sixteen voted in favor of higher education. This may be able to improve next year.

3. An email sent to the senate asked for a published statement or work stoppage as a demonstration of faculty's concern regarding the state's neglect of the higher education system. It was mentioned that a work stoppage would ultimately hurt students. There was a lot of discussion concerning a walk out, work stoppage, or an action and statement by faculty done in a strong and organized fashion. Faculty have been insulted by no salary raises in two years. How can the public learn how much work the faculty is already doing? Dr. Lawson stated that the adjunct budget will be only one of a number of budgets used for the 2% increase. This will affect the community college function of the university, but will not affect the major and minor programs. Students are more courageous and they should be engaged as part of the process. The Faculty Senate Chairs belong to ICHEF and could be an active group for a statewide demonstration that higher education is important. Terry Fredrickson, ASISU President-Elect, stated that students would most likely support the faculty if the problems were explained to them. They do not want to see their instructors insulted, however, they don't want the responsibility of higher fees year after year. A consistent, positive, and clear message of the value of the university needs to be explained to the public and the legislators. There is a perception by the public that higher education does not need money, therefore, they do not vote for legislators in regards to higher education. Higher education in Idaho is the economic engine for the state and is vital to the future of the state. The funding issues become a concern when needed classes cannot be added. Next year when the classes offered are full, there cannot be any added due to lack of funding. Faculty must pressure the legislature. This push to the legislators should include students, COPE and CEC members as well as all university communities statewide. It was suggested to celebrate and announce success stories about what it is that higher education has brought to the state. A senator stated that some departments are already in a work stoppage due to lost faculty and open positions. The money spent on interviews could have been saved with a better retention program. It was noted that in the future, without a higher education, the people of the state will be supported by welfare. It was also noted that when a person with a high school diploma vs. one with an Associates Degree, the salary is doubled. Children will benefit from higher education and letters from parents of those children would be helpful to the legislators. Idaho is in the bottom three of the fifty states for those going on to higher education. This is the same rate as in 1964. Many students receiving degrees from ISU are from other states and return to those states after graduation. It was discussed to begin the

Coordinating Board once again for the purpose of a statewide communication with the legislators.

4. ISU is in danger of losing their role in legitimate faculty governance. There should be one strong voice in a dialogue that includes faculty, administration and students. Is the Foundation attempting to raise funds specifically targeted to enhancing the academic environment of the university? Will the administration push to defend their faculty and students or do they see their jobs simply as managing at the whim of the legislature? Are unions and lawsuits the only things that will make the state of Idaho take education seriously? We must organize and push for a strong public denial of what this legislature has done over the past few years. Nilson stated that Dr. Bowen has shown willingness for more important roles for faculty to be involved in decisions.
5. Faculty Senate council members need to realize their responsibility and take their positions seriously. There is a need in financial and planning matters through councils.
6. Faculty members in the remote locations thanked the Faculty Senate for beaming this meeting to them.

VI. ADJOURNMENT at 5:50 pm

Douglas Nilson, Chair

Connie Patchin, Administrative
Assistant I

Approved: April 19, 2004