

## Open Letter to the Faculty on the Institutional Governance Advisory Committee Report

We would like to thank everyone in our university community who reviewed the Institutional Governance Advisory Committee report, provided thoughtful feedback, and posed insightful questions. The IGAC has considered the comments and questions both articulated during the Faculty Open Forum on August 16, 2010 by numerous faculty members and submitted since then via email and campus mail. We appreciate those of you who elected to share your perspectives with us. Within the feedback, three themes emerged that we would like to address in more detail, specifically the committee's perspective on the involvement of junior faculty, the rationale for not including specific details for implementation of recommendations, and the perceived need for additional committees.

First, the committee members of the IGAC strongly believe that faculty participation is imperative for a university to prosper and function effectively. While the committee did recommend that senior faculty should assume primary responsibility for committee work, this recommendation was not to preclude any involvement by junior faculty. The spirit of the recommendation was to protect the service time commitment of junior faculty, thereby increasing their time to focus on teaching and scholarship. Junior faculty involvement is encouraged and appreciated, and yet an increased involvement of senior faculty is desired.

Second, we were purposeful in our decision to not provide specific details about how to implement our recommendations or how to determine composition and functioning of the governance structure. Our rationale for not being specific was to allow Colleges/Division the authority and responsibility to operationalize how to move forward. It was neither within the committee's scope of activity nor our desire to micromanage the process. Having the Colleges/Division define what it means to be a senior faculty member, who should be represented on different university committees, and other details, encourages a high level of autonomy and responsibility in critical areas of university functioning. It also allows for variations across Colleges/Division that honor discipline-specific differences.

Third, as the IGAC reviewed the current governance structure at Idaho State University, it became apparent that there was a significant gap in strategic-level input from faculty to the administration. Thus, four new committees were recommended to address this missing advice. The scope and focus of the four committees are primarily tackling meta-level, long-term, and inter-disciplinary issues. It is the hope of IGAC that the Faculty Senate's governing structure and the four committees identified above would work collaboratively to complete the necessary strategic and functional work of the university. Recall that our first recommendation was for the administration and the Faculty Senate to review their committee structures, recommending revisions to the President as state board protocols dictate. This we believe is very important to the future of ISU.

We have modified our report based on the feedback and questions that we have received. It has been sent to President Vailas for his consideration. The revised report is available for your review at [www.governance.isu.edu](http://www.governance.isu.edu)

Sincerely,

Committee Members