



Faculty Senate Meeting

Minutes

April 24, 2025 | 3:15 p.m. | ACW 136

Zoom Meeting ID: 819 414 38273

Attendance: Peter Remien, Rodney Farrington, Jennifer Uptmor, Kelly Fitzsimmons, Julie Bezzerides, Gina Lott, Jennifer Cromer, Jenna Chambers, Katie Roberts, Eric Stoffregen, Jessica Savage, Rachelle Genthos, Angela Wartel, Debra Lybyer, Suzanne Rousseau, Thomas Hill, Charles Bell, Kim Tuschhoff, Lorinda Hughes, Provost Fred Chilson, Isac Ortega

Guests: Laura Earles

I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 3:14 pm by Faculty Senate Chair Peter Remien, welcoming Faculty Senate to the last meeting of the semester.

- II. Approval of Faculty Senate meeting minutes from Feb. 6 and Feb. 20, 2025
Motion to approve Faculty Senate Meeting minutes as written from February 6th and February 20th made by Katie Roberts. Motion seconded by Rodney Farrington. No further discussion. Call for vote. Unanimous approval. Motion passes.

III. New Business

- A. Guest: Gordon Cox, IT Support & Operations on switch to TEAMS phones

Gordon Cox is here to briefly review our switch to TEAMS phones. The goal for the switch was spring break, but due to provider issues, the switch was delayed until June.

Call for questions.

Faculty Senator comment: The training IT made is amazing and helpful. Thank you!

Gordon Cox comment: UI made the switch earlier to TEAMS phones and there was great feedback from faculty/staff with their switch.

Faculty Senator comment: I haven't had a phone in my office for a few years. How would I know what my phone number/extensions are?

Response: If you look at the TEAMS calling icon, it should list your phone number/extension.

Faculty Senator question: Will our phone extensions stay the same?

Response: Yes, phone extensions will stay the same.

Faculty Senator question: Do we have the dedicated bandwidth to maintain good call quality?

Response: From our testing, we should have dedicated bandwidth to support the change.

Faculty Senator question: Will IT be collecting the phones people have in their offices.

Response: Yes, we will be collecting phones, just not immediately after the switchover.

Faculty Senator question: For those that ordered the headsets, when should we expect them?

Response: When the headsets are ordered and come in, IT will contact the department/division, and the department will pick them up and disburse them to those who ordered a headset.

IT comment: You can make yourself unavailable or set your phones to "Do Not Disturb" during timeframes you are unavailable, which will send the calls to voicemails.

No further questions.

B. Guest: Provost Chilson on recent legislation affecting higher education

- *Discussion of Senate Bill 1198, signed into law on April 4th.*

Provost report: There has been some concern regarding what will happen in the future regarding Senate Bill 1198. Administration was told a week ago that there would be a SBOE meeting in Moscow with everyone present to dialogue about the bill. Results from the meeting did not include a plan to relay back to faculty, as there are a lot of variables, and the bill is very open-ended.

The SBOE has guided us to put parameters around what the new bill means, and all institutions will need to follow Bill 1198 the same. All institutions need to be on the same page regarding DEI concepts. One item that we may do is put a disclaimer in Canvas for students to acknowledge that details that if you are enrolling in this class, there may be concepts of DEI included as part of the course.

Higher ed will have more flexibility according to the attorneys present in the room during the SBOE meeting. If students have the option or autonomy to take a different class, then the legislature does not have any concerns.

Regarding accredited majors, when we require the student to have the content in the class that they cannot get out of it, if the course is within a particular major that has accreditation requirements, then the student would need to acknowledge that they are choosing this major of their own free will and are required to take the content. In the meetings, based on discussion, it did come up that students could opt out of those sections of those courses.

The Provost is happy to have discussions regarding building the framework around review of courses. LC State will need a framework in place by July, which includes catalog edits and identification of classes that include those concepts. The courses would need to be spelled out in the catalog. Registrar stated that the catalog is open for edits, so once they publish it, it can be out to the public.

Call for questions:

Faculty Senator question: Are these grammatical changes or do the courses have to go through curriculum?

Provost response: The changes required will be just a change in statement, such as including "This course contains concepts such as ...". These statement changes would need to occur and be included in both the syllabus and the catalog. If you are looking at your curriculum, it is important to identify content areas that you feel may be at risk. Keep in mind diversity, equity, and inclusion singularly means differently to each of us, but to the legislature, these terms all are equitable. We are adjusting based on the legislative definition and viewpoint of DEI.

Faculty Senator question: Is there an agency that will be monitoring this?

Provost response: Our institution will need to self-report. If LC State is found to be out of compliance, we would incur a massive fine. If a student files a lawsuit against the institution, the institution will need to deal with the lawsuit. The Attorney General of Idaho could penalize us as well.

Faculty Senator question: If I teach several classes that involve these topics that are required as part of the degree, does the program need to identify an alternative class?

Provost response: Provost stated our institution needs better guidance, as the students will need to somehow have a digital affirmation that of their own free will, they chose this major or class knowing that these concepts may be included. An option may be to build this affirmation into the registration piece, such as getting the student checking a box or getting an email stating this course does contain assignments, etc. involving DEI topics.

Faculty guest question: There are concerns from the Social Sciences division due to the language of the law regarding sociology course titles, that the course SOC 101 is required by national accreditation standards for example by dental hygiene program. The wording of the law is that we cannot compel a student to enroll in any program, department or course to satisfy any requirements of any degree or program. The interpretation is that this law is a barrier for accreditation standards for dental hygiene.

Provost response: Regarding accreditation standards, the Provost stated he was informed that as long as students choose those majors, they are giving consent that they are aware these types of topics will be addressed with the accredited major.

Faculty guest response: The concern is this is an issue with the interpretation of the law and the verbiage that there cannot be any major, minor or certificate with these topics.

Provost response: Executive director of the SBOE had discussed with the originator of the bill, stating this wasn't the original intent. There may be some rewriting of the law in the future, but these are the current parameters of the law.

Faculty Senator question: There is some concern regarding having someone from an outside entity looking through the offices to see if faculty are in compliance with the new law.

Provost response: The Provost has requested if a situation occurs again where an outside entity is looking through offices, to notify him regarding the off-campus visitor. This will include the new laws involving flags.

Faculty Senator question: In terms of identifying these classes, do we need to have conversations with our chairs, etc. regarding course content/topics?

Provost response: This is a great question. One thing to keep in mind is many people will be off contract soon, and changes need to occur by July.

Reminder that Gen Ed courses are based on outcomes, not teaching. All faculty have the autonomy to teach the course how they want as long as they meet the outcomes. An outside entity looking at the catalog would not know the finite details of the course.

Faculty Senator question: Is there some level of protection to incorporate a liberal statement to label many courses in this way? Can we use the label everywhere so that it becomes less meaningful?

Provost response: The current climate is that it is not a challenge if we will get sued, but when. We have had in the past a student who emailed a complaint based on a misconception in a course and looped in a state legislator, which places eyes on us.

Faculty Senator question: Could the Registrar's office put a checkmark on the course with registration stating, "I acknowledge..."?

Registrar response: Because it is a customization in Warrior Web, when we make updates in Warrior Web, we would have to complete the update for every course involved.

Faculty Senator question: What if a major that is not accredited, such as Justice Studies, discusses a topic involving DEI such as institutional racism. How do we deal with that in a non-accredited major?

Provost response: The individuals making the laws may not have the full working knowledge of the topic. LC State's goal is to notify students these are the concepts that are included/discussed in this major. If they want to opt out, they should not complete the major.

Faculty Senator question: Will this law potentially go as far as someone identifying that they do not want to take a class due to being in the classroom with a diverse individual. What if they say I will not be in this classroom with someone who is diverse?

Provost response: It is our responsibility to show students to be accepting of differences. There isn't a good answer for that.

Faculty Senator question: On page 5, part 3, it discusses the title of the program that is focused on race, ethnicity and gender. The hard part is a program that does not have a title that establishes themselves as a major that may discuss DEI components. How do we address this?

Faculty Senator response: On page 5, Section 2, part 3, it mentions that every institution in the state of Idaho should provide a procedure to put a proposal in front of the board to get an exemption to allow us to provide that major or academic degree requirements of any major, minor or certificate or department where the title clearly establishes the course of study focused on race, ethnicity or gender studies. This law goes into effect on July 1st.

Provost response: Our institution has not received the full guidance yet.

Faculty Senator comment: We might think it's exempt but others may interpret it differently. For example, many may not know the definition of sociology, which may make it confusing to interpret regarding major course requirements.

Faculty Senate Chair response: Faculty Senate Chair had a meeting with Jennifer White, who also met with other Faculty Senate chairs of all Idaho institutions of higher education. Based on ambiguities in the policy, it could be interpreted to allow DEI-related program requirements as long as students can get out of them, the prohibit any DEI-related requirements not mandated by accrediting bodies, or to prohibit any DEI-related courses, even if they are electives. She said that the SBOE is taking the narrowest interpretation of the law's impact on instruction, so courses should be allowed as long as students have a way of getting out of them if they so choose. Guidance is forthcoming. One of our colleagues pointed out to me that it is the state attorney general and not the SBOE that is charged with enforcement, and another pointed out that a future SBOE that is less committed to academic freedom might interpret the law differently. Jennifer White suggested that the intent of the law was narrower than to ban all DEI-related instruction.

Faculty Senator comment: Could we create a blanket statement in the Conditions of Registration that states the student may encounter course work that includes DEI. If the students have concerns about this, they should contact the course instructor.

Provost response: We asked about a blanket statement, and response was that the affirmation statement or opt out had to be specific to the courses.

Faculty Senator question: What should we bring back to the division?

Provost response: Senators should give their division updates from today. The institution should have more answers this week, so that programs can bring forward programs or concepts to review with the SBOE for approval. In the interim, start going through your curriculum.

Faculty Senator comment: I feel like faculty would rather be a stakeholder and work on reviewing curriculum off-contract, then not be involved in the process. Many faculty would not begrudge email traffic during the summer in order to be included in the process.

Provost response: Bring this back to the divisions and let the chairs know. If we can frontload the work ahead of time, it would be helpful to the Registrar, etc.

Faculty Senator question: If we need to be mindful regarding students opting out of courses, whose responsibility will it be to ensure they have enough credits to graduate or that they have alternative options?

Provost response: With programs like nursing and radiology, they must opt in to the major.

Faculty Senator question: This law goes into effect July 1st. We already have students registered for courses in the fall. How do we address this?

Provost response: We are aware of this and are waiting for guidance to address the students already registered for courses.

Faculty Senator question: If a student requests to opt out of the class with the instructor, should it be on the instructors to accommodate the path and identify their options or alternatives.

Provost response: We may have to identify the process. We don't have a lot of guidance.

Faculty Senator response: In a perfect world, the advisor and the student would be responsible for identifying options, not necessarily the teacher. The advisor may come to the teacher requesting alternatives.

- *House Bill 10: Flag Bill*

Faculty Senator question: Would we be able to get some guidance on the flag bill - House Bill 10?

Provost response: Regarding flag guidance – K-12 requirements are very specific. Higher education, we have more autonomy. As the Provost visited with the President, our goal is to stay neutral on it. It is difficult to differentiate the law, so the request is that all faculty stay neutral.

Faculty Senator question: Was there any direction on the definition of a flag?

Provost response: It is a typical material-based item. There is already dialogue about them revising the bill for the next cycle. Currently, it is what you would typically define a flag to be.

- *University Name Change Updates*

We received approval from the SBOE on the university name change. We still need to get it approved by the Governor and the legislature. He doesn't know where the Governor sits on this item but will provide updates when able.

- *Graduate Program Approval*

Direct confirmation is that the direct entry MSN was approved today. The Master of Arts in Education was pulled for further review as there was negative feedback from sister institutions that we are duplicating efforts, even if our degree is different. This graduate program is on pause.

- *CEC Updates*

President Pemberton has done a great job in advocating with the legislature for raises for institution employees. She was successful in getting \$383,000 for salary adjustments. Those adjustments as dictated by the legislature can only be made for those holding the rank of Instructors and Assistant Professor. This year, the CEC adjustment is based on merit, so if you obtain a 4, you get around a \$3000 raise total. Everyone holding the rank of Instructor and Assistant Professor will be at \$61K moving forward. These changes do not address the compression problem. The President has reassured him that she is advocating for the next subgroup. This subgroup was addressed first to bring salaries up to Idaho K-12 teachers. A new hire instructor would start at a baseline of \$60K.

Faculty Senator question: Does that include people who are going up for tenure?

Provost response: Yes. The President is trying to identify how to address salary compression for Associate Professors for future.

Faculty Senator question: Is the CEC moving forward for the \$1.05 - \$.155 based on merit.

Provost response: Yes, there will still be a raise based on merit. The extra money the President advocated for and received is for Instructor and Assistant Professor rank. A different pot of money goes for the CEC. If we do not spend the \$383,000, the money goes back to the state. Same concept, the money for the CEC adjustments on vacant positions that do not get filled will be sent back to the state. We need several million dollars to get all faculty/staff up to our peer institutions. CEC changes were approved officially. The maximum, anyone will get is \$1.55 an hour.

Faculty Senator question: Was there clarification for people who were on 9-month contracts on how the CEC raise would be disbursed?

Provost response: Based on calculations, it was around 2,080 hours for the calculation for the raise.

No further questions.

C. Updates to Policy 2.110: Emeritus/Emerita Faculty

Policy revisions to Policy 2.110 were shown to faculty. The revisions are primarily focused on more clearly defining what constitute distinguished contributions (teaching, scholarship and creative work, service, community engagement, advancement of the college's strategic priorities). The revised policy states that a candidate must demonstrate excellence in at least three of these categories.

Faculty Senator question: The age of 60 in the revised policy, can we define it at 55, the previous age? What about a benefit for Emeritus/Emerita faculty to take classes at reduced fees?

Faculty Senate Chair response: It was noted the Faculty Senator's concern for the minimum age was too high. He will take this feedback back to the committee.

Faculty Senate Chair response: We are not the point of contact for this policy, but it impacts faculty. As the Provost's office revises this policy, they requested to keep Faculty Senate in the loop. The Provost wanted to update the Emeritus/Emerita policy to make awarding Emeritus status less to do with years of service and more to do with merit. This has been included as part of the faculty awards ceremony.

The substantial addition to the policy is that Emeritus will need to demonstrate excellence in 3 of the 5 specific categories, which include teaching effectiveness, scholarly achievements, significant service to college, division, and community, contributions to the community, and advancement of the college's strategic priorities. The minimum age was also set for age 60.

Discussion when looking at the revisions was to reduce the minimum age to 50. The argument made regarding reducing the age is that we want them to feel like they can be included and a part of the campus. We do not want to eliminate this option if a faculty member does not meet the minimum age requirement. There are many scenarios where people retire earlier. Setting the age to 55 would be closer to the 55-75 age where you can draw retirement. Of the last 12 emeriti nominations, or status, three of them have gone to work other jobs here or at other jobs elsewhere. They are not actually using Emeritus status.

Question: What are the privileges a faculty member with Emeritus status gives?

Emeriti will no longer have access to their email. The general understanding was they would have it for one year, then it would expire. Another privilege is access to faculty developmental resources such as use of the library and library databases; invitation to participate in official college ceremonies, campus facility access (library, recreation and event services); eligibility for part-time teaching or mentorship roles.

Faculty feel strongly that having continued access to email is important to maintain communication with the campus community. Also, the question is regarding the review process of distinguished contributions for faculty.

Response: The whole point is not everyone who retires gets emeritus, but those who have made distinguished contributions.

Response: We are no longer hiring CTE faculty as promotable faculty. They are instructors on hire. The idea that a faculty member needed to be tenured was removed from the policy, as certain faculty would never be eligible for Emeriti status.

Every person who has retired in the last 5 years has gone up for Emeriti status.

Faculty Senator question: Who decides this decision or who owns the policy?

Faculty Senate Chair response: The point of contact is office of the Provost. Directly involved in implementation is Faculty Association/Faculty Senate.

Faculty Senator question: Is the changes in policy something we should be voting on?

Faculty Senate Chair response: Senate would be taking this for discussion and vote to the Faculty Association in the fall. We would like to see an expansion, such as having a website page dedicated to Faculty Emeritus.

Library comment: Biggest concern from the library is the faculty emeritus drops out of the database due to losing email access, so the library must contact IT to add them back in, to ensure they can still use the resources and log in.

Faculty Senate Chair response: We have been discussing whether the email would go away.

Often Professor Emeritus is considered an honor regarding faculty, especially in title.

Faculty Senator question: Could we add in the distinguished contributions, within the past 10-15 years, they have demonstrated excellence in at least three of the following areas.

Faculty Senator comment: That is good feedback. The concern on the old policy was that years of service was the only requirement for Emeritus designation/nomination.

Faculty Senator question: Could we present an idea for a meritorious service award to present to all retirees who have been here for a certain number of years if we are making Emeritus status requirements more stringent?

Faculty Senator question: What was the goal to make it more stringent?

Response: Policy requirements were reviewed and adjusted to make obtainment of Emeritus status more exclusive and more of an honor than a status that is given out to all retirees. Of note, every single retiree, outside of emeritus status, gets access to LC State facilities such as the gym, library, etc.

Faculty Senator question: Is this a change in policy or a change in policy and procedure? What really are the benefits outside of keeping an email address that

is given to those with Emeritus status? An email address is of little to no cost to the institution with what privileges they currently receive.

Response: It is a convention at Faculty Association meeting that you deliver an auditory letter that makes this case. Most people who have gotten Emeritus status have met the Distinguished contribution status.

Faculty Senator question: If the goal is to be more stringent, why not offer more benefits, such as office space?

Response: Historically, we offered office space until COVID, but the office space was never used. There was an Emeritus office in Spalding at one point. In the library, they converted the unused Emeritus offices into individual study rooms.

Faculty Senator response: We also shouldn't be punishing them by adding in requirements about working until the retirement age after being awarded Emeritus. We shouldn't be micromanaging how they spend retirement, and faculty should have some autonomy in how they spend their retirement.

Faculty Senator question: Would faculty who have retired and went to work elsewhere want the Emeritus status designation?

Response: They would want the achievement or honor.

Faculty Senator question: If there was no raise associated with Promotion, would we still want the title? Would we still want the designation if everyone received the designation?

Response: If a faculty member is nominated for Emeritus and faculty members are against this nomination, the Faculty Association can vote against nomination.

Response: This year, we had a total of 9 retirees and 2 Emeritus awards given, so the process was selective this year.

Faculty Senator response: The email connection is important if it keeps retirees connected to our college. It should be our concern where people live or move. Many people work in retirement because they need money.

Faculty Senate Chair response: Thank you for the feedback to take back to the Provost.

Faculty Senator question: Does we take this back to our divisions or are we waiting for our feedback to be taken back to the Provost first?

Faculty Senate Chair response: If something substantial comes out in conversations with the Provost, Charles Bell, Faculty Senate Chair-elect, will email all Faculty Senators to take back to the divisions.

Faculty Senator comment: Our request was to obtain more feedback from Divisions before we move to a vote at Faculty Association.

Faculty Senate Chair response: The timeframe is that this will be voted on in the first Faculty Association meeting in the fall, to allow more time for feedback so we do not blindside faculty.

Faculty Senator question: The way the policy reads with the new updates, will nominated faculty need to prepare a portfolio? Would this put more work on division chairs to evaluate this information or could it be part of their last evaluation process?

No further discussion.

III. Committee Reports

a. Budget, Planning & Assessment (*Peter Remien*)

No report.

b. Curriculum (*Marcy Halpin*)

No report.

c. Faculty Affairs (*Charles Bell*)

The committee will meet next Tuesday. Otherwise, no new information to report.

d. Student Affairs (*Lorinda Hughes*)

Question from Student Affairs Chair: The graduation list that we vote on, what are we voting for when we bring the list to Faculty Association for approval. Are we looking at if that the student qualifies for that degree or if the student applied for the degree? Follow up question: we have been told if a student applies to graduate after we approve the list, they can still graduate as well.

Registrar response: We graduate students in fall and summer, and Faculty Association does not vote on them during those semesters. Is there somewhere in the policy of why this is done historically?

Faculty Senate Chair response: It is symbolic in nature, so we can say by vote of faculty, then the degree is conferred.

Faculty Senator question: Do we mark people off the list prior to approval if they cannot graduate?

Registrar response: The Registrar's office runs degree audits on graduates and reaches out to advisors if they do not meet requirements. We are not checking who is graduating and walking. It is more of a symbolic thing for commencement.

No further questions.

IV. Good of the Order

- Graduation is **Friday, May 9** with two ceremonies: **10:00 a.m.** is CTE, Social Sciences, PLMSS, & Humanities and **2:00 p.m.** is TEAM, BUCS, and NHS. *Faculty are expected to attend both ceremonies in regalia. Lunch will be supplied in between ceremonies.*

- Evidence-Based Practice Symposium begins tomorrow, Friday, April 25th in ACW and SGC. Starting with Social Sciences presentations. Keynote speaker planned for next Thursday.
- For the finals this semester for hospitality and traveling tourism students, the students are completing edible centerpieces for the graduation banquets for TEAMS and BUCs. Stop by on the 7th or 8th to look at the edible centerpieces the students have made.
- No further items for the good of the order.

Motion to adjourn made by Rachelle Genthos. Motion seconded by Katie Roberts. No further discussion. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 4:35 pm