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Democracy in Education—Education for Democracy
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BSU, NIC, and ISU Faculty Vote for Collective Bargaining Legislation

On Feb. 11 the ISU Faculty Senate voted 23-4 to support the collective bargaining resolution printed below. The NIC Faculty Assembly passed the resolution with 44 in favor, none against, and 6 abstentions.

By a vote of 21-4 the BSU Faculty Senate also supported a collective bargaining bill for higher education employees. The issue was also brought before the UI Faculty Council, but because the bill had already been withdrawn for revision, a vote will be held in the fall of 2008.

Legislation granting bargaining rights to higher education employees was introduced by Reps. Tom Trail (R-Moscow) and Shirley Ringo (D-Moscow). The Attorney General's Office offered constructive comments for revision, but they came too late for consultation with the AFT national office. The bill will be re-introduced next year.

In 1976 UI, LCSC, BSU, and ISU faculties voted (99-55 at UI) to support a public employees bargaining bill that lost on a 4-4 vote in the Senate HEW Committee.

RESOLUTION ON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

WHEREAS, one third of America's college and university faculty have voted for union

representation, even though 11 states still deny collective bargaining rights;

WHEREAS, union representation on these campuses has led to increased compensation and better working conditions and the lowest number of strikes in labor history;

WHEREAS, faculty unions work very well within existing faculty governance structures, primarily because their tasks are quite different;

WHEREAS, public college and university faculties in Oregon, Washington, and Montana have bargaining rights, and labor contracts now exist on 33 campuses in Washington State, 44 campuses in Oregon, and 20 campuses in Montana.

WHEREAS, nearly 3,000 higher education faculty are excluded from Idaho's Teachers Negotiation Act;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that Idaho's higher education faculties be granted the right to vote on a collective bargaining representative.

UI 2007-08 FACULTY SALARY SURVEY HAS NOW BEEN DISTRIBUTED

The UI Federation has been doing a faculty salary survey nearly every year since 1976. Since 1982 higher administration salaries have risen 260 per-cent, while full professor salaries have gone up only 187 percent. (The CPI for that period is 210.) For all the salaries and an in-depth analysis see www.home.roadrunner.com/~nickgier/Survey08.htm.

FAR MORE BAD THAN GOOD IN THE YARDLEY REPORT

By Nick Gier, IFT President

The University of Idaho has paid the Yardley Research Group \$130,383 to evaluate UI graduate programs. The Yardley report does contain some good observations, but we in the former College of Letters & Science already knew that it was a terrible mistake to establish a separate College of Science.

We also agree with the consultants that there is a "culture of numbers" that prevents the administration from implementing a more humane vision for the university. Recently the faculty voted down some productivity metrics that UI statisticians thought were totally flawed.

The Yardley team is also right to criticize some graduate programs staffed by too few professors and enrolling too few students. These are good criticisms, but did we have to pay all this money to learn what most of us already knew about our weaknesses?

The good advice from the Yardley team is far outweighed by what could only be described as insults, such as the charge that "destructive aspects of faculty culture are so strong that they have already absorbed [sic!] some of the University's new leadership." Watch out for those amoebic professors!

The consultants contend that UI faculty hold "counter-cultural values," and identifies one of these values as "a vivid sense of entitlement to state funds that support higher education." What could possibly be "counter-cultural" to the idea that state funded institutions should be supported by state funds?

The consultants also charge that our counter-cultural faculty has a view of academic freedom that is too free. They believe that faculty think they can do research on any topic they want, regardless of what the state of Idaho needs, thus failing to match their demand for state funding with "a corresponding sense of service obligation to the state." I devote

much of my time researching the negative effects of religious fundamentalism world-wide, but I'm sure that many Idaho legislators and citizens would not view that favorably. I don't think any faculty member would want to be subjected to such whims, especially when the State Board of Education chose to eliminate an entire research program over a controversy about its refusal to accept a highly rated grant proposal to study Idaho's gays and lesbians.

The UI does indeed find itself at a crossroads. President Tim White declares that the UI should become the residential liberal arts college of choice in the West, but it cannot do this if it accepts the Yardley team's incredible proposal to use part-time faculty for undergraduate instruction and grant tenure only to research professors.

The Yardley vision of the UI, one with centralized authority, with less academic freedom, and a two-tiered faculty is not one that I recommend either to prospective students or faculty.

**THE METERLEY REPORT:
ALWAYS GIVING 3.37 INCHES MORE THAN YARDLEY**

By Felix Iusemetriks

I believe the UI has been poorly served by highly paid consultants, especially the Yardley Research Group, who just submitted a bill for \$130,383 for a report insulting to the faculty and dismissive of undergraduate education at the Moscow campus.

I have therefore hired Meterley Associates in Sophia, Bulgaria, who always promise at least 3.37 inches more than Yardley. Even though they demand payment in Euros, their charges are always one tenth those of Yardley.

The UI has also been ill advised by other consultants. Consider the PR firm that gave us the infamous motto “No Fences.” This is a poor message to Idahoans who, for generations, have fenced their land, and certainly don’t want their children to attend a college that apparently places no limits on their behavior.

That motto has now been withdrawn, the PR firm has been fired, and a Boise firm MMG has now given us "A Legacy of Leading." The total budget for the UI's "brand marketing effort" is \$900,000 a year, with \$500,000 coming from the UI Foundation.

Many have despaired at the decision to give up the beautiful sunburst logo and instead we now have a simple University *of* Idaho, where the slanting *of* gives the impression that we are bending into a very stiff head wind. We certainly don't want a Legacy of Leaning Over.

The Meterley team has one specific recommendation: please repaint the water tower on the golf course to its original color and please return the sunburst logo with its clever “Uis” on the tower. The new color is horrid.

The Meterley Report recommends that the new UI motto be “A legacy of excellence in letters, arts, and science, rather than losing on field and court.” Yardley rightly pointed out the national reputation of our theater department and the UI Jazz Festival, which just won a National Medal for the Arts. Recently it was announced that nearly every faculty member in the UI creative writing program had won an award for their work and/or published a book.

Three million dollars a year in appropriated funds, monies that should go to academic programs, have been poured into athletics. Meterley's researchers propose that that this appropriation be given instead to the letters, arts, and sciences for increased salaries and scholarships. The \$900,000 a year wasted on logos, mottos, and poor PR could be better used as a scholarship fund for all UI students.

The Meterley team also recommends that the UI Press, one of whose titles garnered national attention, be brought back. During the financial crisis after 9/11, the UI Faculty Council voted to eliminate the press because it required a \$300,000 subsidy. Later Faculty Council refused to phase out the huge subsidy for athletics, even though it served, unlike the press, no direct academic purpose.

In the 1980s the athletic programs had no state subsidy and yet the teams won Big Sky championships year after year. I loved attending those games.

If the athletic department is adamant about remaining in the big leagues, the Meterley team has a modest proposal for winning on the field and court.

- Meterley recommends that one half of the Kibbie Dome football field be re-stripped in meters. Vandal captains would always choose to defend the metered goal, if they won the opening toss. At least for one half of the game, the opposing team would have to gain 5 more yards for a touchdown and never know that they were at a disadvantage.
- To improve our miserable win/loss record in basketball, the Meterley team proposes that both the Kibbie Dome and practice courts be secretly changed to meters. Practicing every day on the meter courts, the Vandals would have a distinct advantage over opposing teams, whose shots, especially from behind the 3-point circle, would always be short of the basket.

Some Vandal fans may be offended by these proposals, but it is too bad that they can't take a joke. Others might say this is cheating, and they of course would be right.

The only solution, says Meterley, is to return to the Big Sky Conference so that the

Vandals can start winning on the field, as they have always done so in letters, arts, and sciences.

Felix Iusemetriks is a very distant relative of Nick Gier, President, Higher Education Council, University of Idaho, and Professor Emeritus at the University of Idaho.

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