

Idaho Falls Higher Education Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
January 31, 2007 – 10:00 a.m.
Bennion Student Union Multipurpose Room - University Place – Idaho Falls

Member Attendees: Marge Foster (Chair), Juan Alvarez, Jackie Beig, George Boland, Nikie Greene, Fred Gunnerson,, Scott Hinchberger, Jim McFadden, Linda Milam, Maureen Parks, Mark Paulsen, Bruce Roberts, Lew Rodriguez, Mark Young

Institutional Attendees: Doug Baker, Carol Baldwin, Ron Campbell, Connie Gomez, Scott Hamilton, Ann Howell, John Knox, Susan Morris, Bill Robertson, Bob Smith, Carol Spain, Kent Tingey, Bob Wharton, Todd Wightman

Guests: Terry Butikofer, Frank Just, Jan Karinen

Welcome and Introductions: Marge Foster welcomed everyone and called attention to the handouts. Attendees introduced themselves

Approval of Minutes: Minutes were approved as written.

Institutional Reports: Eastern Idaho Technical College – President Bill Robertson gave an update on the Health Sciences building. Construction is on schedule. They have been engaged in a number of discussions with the contractor, the Division of Public Works, EITC staff and Idaho State University to work out the details of that facility including some of the furnishings and instructional equipment. Everyone is working from the same page and everything is progressing nicely. There are legislative initiatives that impact the Health Sciences building and Professional Technical Education. The first issue relates to the occupancy of the new Health Sciences building. Typically construction costs on a state building are covered by the initial appropriation and then as the building nears completion there is the new occupancy expense which is a line item budget appropriation from the legislature. EITC submitted in good faith a \$299,000 request for the new occupancy costs associated with the new building when they take over in July. That pays the heat, lights, custodial services, security, etc. Thereafter it becomes part of the base budget of the institution. It was left out of the Governor's budget with the suggestion that it would be up to the institution to find that amount out of their budget. \$299,000 is about 5.5-6% of EITC's total appropriation and is a significant amount for an institution their size. They are a cost recovery, base budget, pay as you go, kind of institution. ISU is also affected because they will need to share in the cost if it isn't appropriated. There is still viability and legislators could be persuaded that this is an essential part of the budget that needs to be considered and appropriated. There are a number of similarly important legislative requests from EITC. The EITC budget is carried by the Division of Professional Technical Education. Within that budget EITC has a significant request of \$65,000 for capacity building which gives an opportunity to expand programs in the area of most need. Past capacity building funding has been used to expand nursing programs. In the next year they will be looking at health programs. Other requests include a large instructional equipment budget of over \$100,000 that would support the state of the art instructional equipment and \$65,000 request for short term workforce industry training. None of the requests were funded in the Governor's budget. Finally, there is the compensation issue for state employees. They are delighted with the Governor's recommendation of a 5% increase this year. EITC Foundation is about to embark on the annual scholarship drive. Last year they raised over \$155,000 for immediate use in student scholarships. The scholarships are an important part of financial aid at EITC which also includes federal grant programs. The Governor's recommendation to create a \$38 million scholarship endowment is worthy of consideration and would support all higher education endeavors in Idaho. EITC is finishing up the extensive and comprehensive 18 month self study for NWCCU

accreditation. The Commission will be on campus April 2-4. EITC is pleased with the opportunity and the self-study has gone well.

Idaho State University – Provost Robert Wharton called attention to the ISU viewbook included with the handouts. The Center for Advanced Energy Studies Groundbreaking will be on February 20. The collaboration on the Health Sciences building at EITC is exciting. Many of the legislative items Bill Robertson discussed will affect ISU. Compensation for faculty and staff is important. It is a struggle to offer competitive salaries. The scholarship endowment is also needed. He compared the differences in enrollment numbers for the 10 day count at the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester figures. Enrollment at the 10 day count for fall was down 9% and at the end of the semester it was down only 3%. The state requires reporting of the 10th day count. Enrollment for Spring 06 is down 2.6%. The biggest challenge ISU has is retention. Tying that in with the scholarship piece, affordability is a key issue and anything that can be done to help is fantastic. ISU hopes to proceed with a medical education study statewide which has a \$300,000 price tag. The cost is reasonable for what is involved. They are in the middle of a strategic planning exercise that will be completed by the end of this term. They are moving to implement an Enterprise Resource Planning system (ERP) which is a large information system that will help them handle finances, human resources, students, and financial aid. It will be a five year project that will cost well in excess of \$10 million. They are pursuing an opportunity to provide more online courses. Efforts are being focused on “EISU.” It is another major initiative for this next year. Access and affordability have been addressed but the big thing for students is flexibility and electronic learning is a way to help with that. They are holding an ISU Night this evening at the Bennion Student Union Building at 7:00 p.m. They have also conducted 15 parent/student nights at high schools in eastern Idaho focusing on financial aid to help parents and students understand how they can afford to attend ISU.

University of Idaho – Provost Doug Baker reported on President White’s presentation to JFAC last week. Assets are up, liabilities are down, bond payments are down, and the Standard & Poors rating is A+. That is good news. Quality is good and the student body is very strong. Fourteen new National Merit Scholars came in this fall. UI has started a scholarship program for severely disabled veterans and their families coming out of the war. Quite a bit of private money has been raised for those scholarships. The first two recipients came in this semester. It will be great for them and it will be great for the university to have them on campus as people they can learn from. Retention continues to be high but there is a bit of a dent not only in Idaho but also in the Northwest. Some people point to a strong labor and job market and some point to increased costs. Research continues to be strong. They are excited about Bob Smith’s appointment as Associate Vice President for the University of Idaho in Idaho Falls and Associate Director of Research for the Center for Advanced Energy Studies. They have high hopes for CAES and it has been a wonderful partnership with the other schools. It shows how you can capitalize on the talents of the schools with the strong support of the INL which is appreciated. Faculty and staff salaries at all the public schools in the state are low and they are at about the 25 percentile relative to peer institutions. People leave when you are that far behind. They can love their institution and be there a while but when they can get sizable raises and more resources to go somewhere else, they leave. Over time that will cause problems. Last month, Gordon Woods who led the work on equine cloning at the University of Idaho went to Colorado State for a huge startup package and a salary increase of \$30,000. All of the institutions told the legislature that salary levels are critical. The University of Idaho also made a request for deferred maintenance. The campus is over 100 years old and has over 47 acres of roofs. Just to maintain one roof is a lot of money. There are many needs in the maintenance area. Affordability for students is also one of the UI’s requests. They support the Governor’s \$38 million request for a scholarship endowment fund. While tuition and fees continue

to be low at about \$4,000 per year at the state schools, some people are still priced out of attending. Need based financial aid would help. UI's requests were driven by the strategic plan. The Strategic Action Plan booklet is provided in the handouts. They are in the first year of implementation. There are four goals that address teaching and learning; scholarly and creative activities; outreach and engagement; and organization, culture and climate. Implementation teams are working at college levels and as well as outside academic areas. The plan is leading university to think of themselves as a system and how they can bring together transformational learning experiences for students and the research community in the state and beyond. The CAES project is a great example of how the education of our students and programs will be greatly enhanced by the activities going on to create the next generation of scientists and solutions for energy. That process it is forcing the university to think about how they work and collaborate with partners. He pointed out the smaller version of the UI viewbook also included with the handouts. In conclusion, Provost Baker invited everyone to attend the reception celebrating the appointment of Bob Smith immediately following the Advisory Council meeting.

Brigham Young University-Idaho – Dean Ron Campbell reviewed winter semester statistics at BYU-I. The head count is 13,259 which is up 5.7% from last year. That converts to the FTE of 11,757 which is a 3.1% increase. That indicates the average course load is shrinking and that is not good. 40% of their students come from Idaho, 10% from Utah, 8% from California and 8% from Washington. In 2006 BYU-I graduated over 3,300 and 75% of those received bachelor degrees and 25% associate degrees. On October 31, 2006, two major projects were introduced with a groundbreaking ceremony. A new auditorium will be built that will seat approximately 15,000. It will have a unique design. There will be a large foyer area and part of the seating will be portable. Both will convert to 10 basketball courts. As a residential campus, they have great need for indoor space for their students. The other major project is the addition to the Manwaring Center which is the student building. The current building has 144,000 square feet. The addition has 110,000 square feet. Those two projects will make the campus a mess for the next 2 ½ years. This semester the university launched the new 3 semester calendar. The daily schedule has changed from 50 minute class periods to 60 minutes with 15 minute breaks. That has altered the traffic patterns. There has been no formal assessment of student and faculty opinion at this point but indications are that they prefer the 60 minute class. BYU-I is on a three track system and the goal is to get the summer enrollment to be the same as fall and winter. They have room to grow in the summer with slightly over 10,000 students. They are at capacity for fall and winter. With continued growth, the summer track will equal fall and winter.

Historical Overview: Linda Milam gave an overview of the evolution of higher education in Idaho Falls as a way to provide context for the facilitated discussion. In order for the Idaho Falls Higher Education Advisory Council to act as an advocate both to the universities and the technical college as well as the legislature, the Executive Committee felt a discussion was needed with the whole council to get a sense of where this community wants to go. Higher education in Idaho Falls has grown over time. It began with the decision of the Atomic Energy Commission in 1949 to locate a nuclear research facility in the “Arco Dessert” aka “the Pocatello Site.” They recognized quickly that to attract and retain the engineers and scientists they wanted they needed higher education opportunities for them. The AEC underwrote offerings by both University of Idaho and Idaho State College. The University of Idaho mainly offered upper division and graduate level courses in engineering, science and computer science. In the beginning, Idaho State primarily offered courses leading to an MBA and a variety of management and finance degrees. Classes were held in a variety of locations around town including high schools. In 1969 Eastern Idaho Vocational Technical School (EIVTS) was established with an emphasis on mechanical trades and soon training in vocational studies needed at the site. In 1976 the Chamber of Commerce led an effort to

build the Intermountain Science Experience Center which is now the Tingey Building. It was built as a public facility that was going to show a variety of science and engineering exhibits aimed at families and children. They built the building and didn't have a lot of money left to put anything in it and it gradually ran out of steam. In the early '80's the Department of Energy approved and helped underwrite the University of Idaho Foundation's purchase of that building. Classes were then held in that location and the university administrations were housed there. In the early '90's an attempt was made to establish a community college in Idaho Falls. Eastern Idaho Technical College would have converted to a community college. There was a considerable effort led in part by the Chamber of Commerce. It would have required local property tax support. There was a vote and the effort failed. It spurred an expansion of course offerings, particularly by Idaho State University. During the mid-90's, there was an expansion of this campus with the Center for Higher Education building and more recently, the Bennion Student Union. On February 20, there will be another step in that direction of expanded offerings with the groundbreaking for the Center for Advanced Energy Studies building. Most recently there has been a lot of discussion about community colleges, not just in Idaho Falls, but in the rest of the state as well. Currently there are two that are both funded in part by property taxes. One is in Twin Falls and one is in Coeur d'Alene. This current activity is generated in large part by the desire of Boise State University to become more of a research institution and spin out some of the traditional community college offerings to a separate institution. The Governor proposed a \$5 million appropriation to efforts to establish a new community college. It is particularly aimed at Idaho Falls and Boise. She understands that if Idaho Falls were to move ahead, the first \$5 million would be matched by a second \$5 million grant. While it a substantial amount, it is not enough to do the trick. Since there is no consideration at this point by the legislature to change the funding mechanism, the assumption is that it would require a local vote and local funding through property tax. There is some discussion about the bill for the requirement to have a two-thirds majority to establish that funding mechanism lowered to 60%. That is not a huge difference but it is something. The community college would then be part of the state system. It would provide opportunities for a broad range of associate degrees in the arts and sciences and would provide for transferability of coursework in the university system. Today, EITC offers Associate of Applied Science degrees that are transferable into the university system. They also offer industry certificates, a technical certificate, an advanced technical certificate and a post-secondary technical certificate. Those are offered in the Business Office and Technology Division, the Health Professions Division, and the Trades and Industry Division. ISU offers six associate, eight bachelor, eight master, and two doctoral degrees and two certificates. University of Idaho offers eight bachelor, 19 master, and 9 doctoral degrees at this campus. We have changed, we have grown, we have needs and we have to decide how those needs are going to be met. She urged member to consider several issues as they think about what they will say. One is the requirement under the law for local property tax support. Another is the difference in the cost per credit hour between the university system and the community college/vocational college system. What is the potential impact on university lower division offerings in Idaho Falls and even possibly degree programs? And, there is the continuing question of whether the technical and/or community college credits are as easily transferable to the university system as the written word says it is. Directions are needed. What do we do? What do we support? How do we get there? Are we happy with the way things are? What do we want to look like.

Higher Education in Idaho Falls Facilitated Discussion: Scott Hirschberger led a facilitated discussion on "What do we want to look like when we grow up?"

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes prepared by Carol Spain, Management Assistant, University of Idaho at Idaho Falls.