



**Provost and  
Vice President for  
Academic Affairs**

921 South 8th Avenue  
Stop 8063  
Pocatello, Idaho  
83209-8063

January 8, 2010

**ISU Faculty and Staff**

Dear Colleagues,

I hope that you had a restful and relaxing holiday break, and I look forward to an exciting new semester. I am writing with another update on Academic Affairs related issues.

I am happy to report that student enrollment continues to climb. Currently, spring enrollment is 14.4% higher than this time last spring. These strong enrollment numbers represent exceedingly good news for ISU in light of the state's current economic climate. Increased enrollment gives us additional flexibility in how we continue to meet the institution's budget challenges. I am even happier to report that we are meeting the student needs posed by this increased enrollment through a combination of increased direct instructional support from Academic Affairs, increased scheduling efficiencies, and a truly impressive level of temporary capacity and load adjustments offered by our faculty and chairs across the colleges. For that, I would like to thank you all. The fact that we can continue to meet increased student instructional need with ever-shrinking resources is a great credit to our institution and a remarkable accomplishment on your part that speaks to our shared commitment to our students.

As you know, the Governor has announced in his Thursday press conference that we will be receiving another holdback, which will be effective for the current fiscal year, FY 2010. Although we have some general expectations of what the range of this holdback may be, the Governor did not provide the specific amount of the new holdback, stating that he will do that in his Monday State of the State Address. We expect that this and the prior holdbacks will also be made effective for next fiscal year, FY 2011, which begins July 1, 2010. Clearly, these new developments dramatically illustrate what we have consistently said: that although there are some positive signs, overall the financial situation of the state continues to worsen, and we will have to cope with this increasing financial emergency. We will be taking actions through our Special Budget Consultation Committee, and the Faculty Senate Budget Council to accelerate our current plans and devise new ones to ensure we can address these new financial challenges.

Although the economic situation in Idaho is extremely challenging, other states are in an even more dire condition. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* recently reported on a just-released study by the Rockefeller Institute: "State tax revenues declined by nearly 11 percent over all in the third quarter of 2009, the third consecutive quarter of double-digit declines, according to a report released today by the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government at the State University of New York at Albany. But states in the Western half of the United States fell further into the red than the rest of the country, with likely implications for higher education and other recipients of state funds. Total tax revenues fell more than 19 percent in the Southwestern states of Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas in the quarter that ended in September. The 11 states in the Southeast had the smallest total decline in tax revenues, 7.5 percent, over that period." *Inside Higher Education* reported on Wednesday that the University of Illinois will be instituting furloughs for 11,000 employees but that this would amount to only a small fraction of its deficit.

ISU Faculty and Staff  
January 8, 2010  
Page Two

I would like to reiterate that both President Vailas and I are committed to finding other ways of dealing with our fiscal challenges than furloughs and across-the-board pay reductions. Preserving core faculty, academic programs, and student services continue to be our highest priorities.

I had the pleasure of attending a university-wide faculty forum sponsored by the Faculty Senate this Wednesday, and I believe it was a very productive meeting. I applaud the Senate Executive Committee for organizing this forum. I was able to clarify a number of misperceptions about the reorganization process. Because a number of the questions had already been answered in previous update letters, I realized that some people are reacting to rumors and may not be reading the updates. If you are interested in these issues—and I hope you are—I urge you to read the update letters so that you are well informed. You can find all of them on the Academic Affairs website at this address:  
<http://isu.edu/acadaff/>

In past forums, I announced that eventually we would form a fourth reorganization task force, and I am pleased to report that this new committee is now in place. This group will consider any reorganization issues that don't fall within the immediate purview of the three ongoing task forces. For example, a group of faculty recently circulated a letter recommending a number of cost-saving actions, such as the possibility of closing the graduate school and shifting control over graduate curriculum back to the individual colleges. This might be a topic that the new task force could consider. The task force has complete freedom to consider whatever topics they choose. It will be chaired by Barbara Adamcik and will include the chairs of the three other task forces, the chair of Faculty Senate, and a number of unit heads:

Barbara Adamcik, chair  
Pamela Crowell, task force co-chair  
Steve Adkison, task force co-chair  
Linda Hatzenbuehler, task force chair  
Kandi Turley-Ames, task force chair  
Alan Frantz, faculty senate  
Kay Flowers, library  
Tom Jackson, graduate school  
Ken Smith, business  
Paul Cady, pharmacy  
Lyle Castle, Idaho Falls campus

As usual, I will give you periodic updates on Academic Affairs issues as they become available. I wish you a productive semester and a happy new year.

Cordially,



Gary A. Olson  
Provost and Professor