

Idaho State University
Web Services Council
Minutes for February 28, 2006

Meeting convened 3:30 PM

Present: Blake Beck, Craig Joseph, Janet Higgins, Ali Nelson, Tony Lovgren, Ken Trimmer, John Kijinski, Randy Stamm, Libby Howe, Mark Lee

Excused: Roger Egan, Randy Gaines, Juli Mead, Kent Tingey

Taken by: Janet Higgins

Agenda Item 1 – Approval of Minutes for February 14, 2006

Approve as written.

Agenda Item 2 – Report on Web Liaison Meeting

Blake reported that about 15-20 people showed up. He gave a brief demonstration of the Master Calendar product. The only concern expressed by liaisons was fear that staff would be overwhelmed with unsolicited emails from the “notify” function. As a follow-up to a concern expressed by Randy Gains, Blake found that the product will interface with any portal, so should not be a problem for any future EMS (Enterprise Management System). At this point, there are no pending issues that would prevent the purchase the product. Blake did note that the LDAP interface doesn’t come out until April, but since we will still be in the testing/configuration stage that is not an issue.

There are two remaining decisions to be made: how will we structure the 5 calendars and who will be the calendar administrators? Blake proposed keeping the calendars in line with our current Homepage categories, i.e., Current Students, Prospective Students, Faculty, Staff, and Community. Council agreed. Calendar administrator duties should be straight-forward and not very time consuming. Basically we need a responsible individual(s) to monitor and approve postings, i.e., screening out nonsense or inappropriate posts by doing a quick scan of the event and then one click to approve the item. Guidelines for calendar administrators to follow concerning what is appropriate will be developed, for example, any University sanctioned event, whether the administrator thinks it is appropriate or not – administrators do not have the authority to deny an item based on their personal preferences. Also, each calendar administrator will need to identify backup staff, so events get submitted in a timely manner when the administrator is out of town, sick, and so on.

After some discussion, the Council came up with the following calendar administrator recommendations:

- Current Students Calendar: Jason Schlegel, the Student Activities Coordinator
- Prospective Students Calendar: Craig Joseph
- Faculty and Staff Calendars: University Relations

- Community Calendar: George Casper

Action Item: Ali will contact Jason Schlegel and Blake will contact George Casper

Event types will be used to facilitate the “filter” feature to identify specific types of events. Also, one event can easily be submitted to multiple calendars.

Blake hopes to have the server and software installed by the middle of April.

Agenda Item 3 – How much is too much? Working Group Membership, Council Responsibility, Calendar Managers, Formal Charge. What are like Institutions doing?

Web Services Group is still just Mark. Currently Mark is able to handle the workload with the help of two students, who are paid out of Media Center funds. However, he will soon take on responsibility for the overall calendar administration. At some point we need to determine exactly what is reasonable to expect out of the Web Services Group and how to fund the required student help – MC can not continue to use their student funds indefinitely. Namely can one person plus a few students handle the ongoing workload? Council agrees that we need to legitimize campus Web development with appropriate staff and institutional support. No suggestions were made on how to do this.

The Web Services Council needs to look at who we are, do we have enough members, and does membership need to change? Blake and Mark are monitoring a University Web Developers list that is in the process of conducting a survey about how institutions have structured their Web development departments. Currently the sample size is too small to get an accurate picture of institutions the size of ISU.

Action item: Council members will look at the current organizational structure and come back with comments about:

- Are there constituents missing that we need to include a representative for?
- Are there representatives for groups that are redundant?
- Do we need more, less, and/or different membership?
- Are we going in the direction that we want to go?

Another discussion focused on the need to formalize the Working Group concept – by definition, working groups have an ongoing responsibility to stay involved in assessment and evaluation. The current Working Groups met regularly during the design phase. Should they be required to meet quarterly in order to give recommendations concerning needed changes, based on what is working and what is not working? Should this be done before, after, or in conjunction with usability testing or focus groups? Should Council come up with a formal charge for the groups, in order to direct their efforts?

Action Item: Council members will come back with suggestions concerning working groups in general.

Agenda Item 4 – Report on the “Contact ISU Link”

This item was postponed due to time constraints.

Agenda Item 5 – Review Student Living versus Living and Wellness

This item was postponed until Juli is in attendance.

Agenda Item 6 – Review Web Pages for Content and Organization – Usability Study?

A regular review of all pages needs to be built into the process. A formal usability study would be helpful, but time consuming. Council’s thoughts: community members need to be involved; perhaps focus groups should be conducted first with the data given to the Working Groups for final determination; we really need to do a usability study, because it is the only way to see how people use the website, versus how they think they use it; perhaps senior marketing students, communications students, or education students would be interested in taking this on as part of a thesis or summer internship. In the meantime, Council needs to conduct another round of focus groups to start with potential improvements.

Action Item: Blake will draft a letter to Phil Nitse, Al Strickland, Bill Loving, Gordon Brooks and possibly others.

Agenda Item 7 – Webmaster Comment – add a Community Services link to Visitor Page

This item was postponed due to time constraints.

Future Projects for the Council:

- Content Management System
- Credit Card Payment Options
- Forms
- Style Guide
- Directories linked to web pages
- Class Schedule link to Syllabus or Webpage

Adjourned at 4:40 PM