

Idaho State University
Web Services Council
Minutes for June 9, 2005

Meeting convened 10:00 AM

Present: Tony Lovgren, Ken Trimmer, Roger Egan, Randy Gaines, Libby Howe, Janet Higgins, and Juli Mead

Guests: Mark Lee and Randy Stamm

Excused: Kent Tingey, Ali Nelson, John Kijinski, and Craig Joseph

Taken by: Janet Higgins

Agenda Item 1 – Approve minutes of May 26, 2005

Minutes approved as written

Agenda Item 2 – Progress report on identifying liaisons

John was not able to present the item at the last Dean's Council. Randy's staff has started calling the Administrative departments and he will know more at the next meeting.

Action Item: Janet will contact John about getting it on the agenda for the next Dean's Council meeting.

Agenda Item 3 – Progress report on templates

Based on comments from the last Council meeting, the following changes were made:

- Watermark placed in header to add depth
- Fixed width "text area" is now centered so there is open space on both sides, rather than on the right side only.
- The color in the open space on both sides is now gradated from light to dark.

Agenda Item 4 – Comments from Mark on his university website list and statistics gathering

The 100 sites included in <http://www.isu.edu/websc/nosearch/uni-web/> are from Google's top 100 hits for university websites. This does not necessarily mean that the webpages are examples of "good" design and content. However, it is a working sample for our review of what the top universities in the country are doing with their websites.

Action Item: Mark will send out the Excel version of the top 100 websites to the Council mailing list.

One of the issues raised last week was the scroll bar. Mark's research shows that 72% of sites do not have vertical scroll bars for 1024X768 screen size but 80% of sites do have them for 800X600 screen size. Most sites do not use horizontal scroll bars for either size. Also, most sites use fixed width screen layouts, not variable width.

After some discussion, Ken moved that the top-level ISU pages – that the Council is working on – will not use horizontal scroll bars, vertical scroll bars are acceptable for 800X600 screen size only, and fixed width screen layouts will be used. Roger seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. *

*Lower level pages can have a vertical scroll bar on a 1024X768 screen size.

Agenda Item 5 – Start review of "good" content for top-level web pages

Several sites were shown and the discussion went back and forth between look-and-feel and content issues. The following are changes that Council may want to incorporate:

- Include a Site map – basically an outline of the website's organization.
- Use a Search Box, rather than a link.
- Duplicate both sets of navigation bars from the homepage on the 2nd level pages, and maybe 3rd level pages. Princeton's website has them as 2 standard bars just under the banner.

If we do retain navigation bars on following pages, then we may want to move the one navigation bar on our homepage back to where it was above the picture.

Action Item: The above suggestions will be reviewed by the Working Group on Templates and incorporated into the next set of drafts, if appropriate. (Note: I am taking the liberty of referring to Mark, Libby, Craig, and Laird Duncan as a Working Group. Seems reasonable since this is turning into an on-going project.)

Other comments were that consistency 3-4 levels deep is desirable, a Quick Links box may solve the growing problem of groups that want more accessible links on the homepage, and we should think about a link on our current ISU homepage that describes the redesign process we are undertaking – see the University of Arizona's link at the bottom of their homepage.

Action Item: Council members will continue to review the top 100 websites for content. The next Council Meeting, on June 23rd, will focus on what links should be on our homepage.

A concern raised in Faculty Senate was that messages sent to "Contact ISU" need to always be answered. A faculty member sent a comment and never received a reply. If this happens to a parent or prospective student, it would not be good. This topic will be addressed later.

Adjourned at 11:40 AM