

Idaho State University  
Web Services Council  
Minutes for July 22, 2005

Meeting convened 1:00 PM

**Present:** Ken Trimmer, Roger Egan, Randy Gaines, Margaret Johnson (for John Kijinski), Craig Joseph, Libby Howe, Mark Lee, Janet Higgins, Angela Drage (for Juli Mead)

**Excused:** Kent Tingey, Ali Nelson

**Taken by:** Janet Higgins

**1. Agenda Item 1 – Approve minutes of July 7, 2005**

Approved as corrected.

**2. Announcements**

Janet asked permission to post draft minutes, due to the time sensitive nature of Council meetings. Everyone thought that was a good idea.

Janet announced that Mark has already made some changes to the published draft ISU webpages, based on public comments. Specifically there were numerous complaints about the orange letters and the text in the banner being too hard to read and the scrolling issue on 2<sup>nd</sup> level pages. Mark made the orange letters a darker color and increased the font size for text, both in the body and in the banner. 2<sup>nd</sup> level pages were put back in the double column format.

**3. Share comments from July 18<sup>th</sup> President's staff meeting presentation**

Libby reported on the short presentation at President's staff meeting that included a live demonstration of the draft ISU website. Dr. Kunze noted that a human factors study is important and often overlooked. Janet said that she would look into it. Dr. Hatzenbuehler noted that there wasn't any evidence of marketing on the page other than the news and events area, which really isn't the same thing. Examples given were: clinics that are open to the public, outstanding facts about our programs and other specialized niches, and campus maps with parking identified (to help onsite visitors).

The Council agreed, which lead to a lengthy discussion about adding an "About ISU" button on the homepage. Also, Libby suggested moving information from

the “Visit ISU” and “Check Out ISU” pages over to the “About ISU” and removing those two links.

**Action Item:** Mark will try out a few of the suggestions for buttons and let us know what works.

#### **4. Change Academics button to read About ISU = marketing tool**

This was not an acceptable solution. Council feels that Academics should focus on programs only and this type of a link is widely used by academic institutions on their websites. Some content suggestions were: requirements, colleges & departments, and information that other institutions regularly need to find. Janet said she will coordinate the effort, but needs help identifying what should be on the Academics webpage.

**Action item:** Everyone send examples of links that should be included on an “academics” page.

#### **5. Reports on progress of content recommendations for:**

- a. Current Students and Prospective Students (Juli/Angela) – both have been submitted to Mark, who will have them coded on Monday.
- b. Faculty & Staff (Ken) – has been submitted to Mark.
- c. Alumni & Visitors (Libby) – has had one meeting, so is making progress.
- d. Site Index (Janet) – making progress.
- e. Colleges & Departments (Janet) – may be moved to the Academics page, so has not worked on this one yet.

In general, there is still concern over accuracy and who will monitor and maintain these pages.

**Action item:** Janet will put page maintenance on the agenda for a future meeting.

Another concern is the navigational links on the left side that are being used as placeholders on the 2<sup>nd</sup> level pages. We either need to have more appropriate links when the site is launched, or to remove the placeholders entirely.

**Action item:** Mark, Libby, and Janet will talk about it at our weekly meeting.

How to maintain the News and Events area on the homepage was once again discussed. One suggestion was to link to an intermediary page that would then link to the various calendars across campus, e.g., Student Union events calendar, Performing Arts and Holt arena events from George Casper's office, and departmental calendars of their local events. There was some discussion about creating an events calendar that all departments could submit entries to. Until these issues are discussed/resolved, news and events postings on the homepage will be a manual process.

**Action item:** Libby will investigate using the Student Union calendar.

Roger pointed out that access to "administrative" type information is currently lacking, or at the very least, hard to find. It doesn't easily fit into any of the portals, because often times it is outside vendors trying to find out what our policies are. An Administrative page could be used for links to the President's office, Academic Affairs, Financial Services, and so on. An additional "Administrative Services" page may need to be created that could be included in the Quick Links box.

**Action item:** Libby will talk to Dr. Wharton and Dr. Bowen for guidance with their respective areas..

## **6. Report on pictures and captions – Libby**

Susan Duncan, the University photographer, gathered together photos that were reviewed by Libby, Janet, and Mark. Libby would like to formalize the process by having a pool of pictures that can be used and rotated from year to year. Also, the picture/splash area of the 2<sup>nd</sup> level pages will be reduced to a more normal rectangle with navigation links in the freed-up space. This allows a wider range of acceptable pictures to be used and puts added value in this prime location. In addition, captions will be added to every picture that identifies what/where the picture was taken. If appropriate there will also be marketing-type captions that stress what makes ISU great or unique.

**Action item:** Libby will work with Susan to get 10 outstanding pictures for the website launch and to develop a pool of pictures that others can also use.

## **7. Review public comment suggestions**

Janet distributed a summary of all comments received during the public comment period. 45 of the 49 comments received stated that the redesign is an improvement. There were many concerns about the text size and color in both the body and the header, so changes have already been made. There were many comments about the pictures, which Libby is addressing. Other comments were

more of a personal preference nature. These were acknowledged, but not moved on. Several items will be brought to the upcoming focus group for input. Most all of the content suggestions were reasonable, and were passed on to the appropriate group working on those pages.

**8. Determine rules for the Quick Links drop-down**

At the last meeting it was suggested that we let the focus group address the issue of what should be in the Quick Links box. Janet feels strongly that the Council should develop a few simple criteria. This issue will be raised again.

**9. Discuss focus group – what do we hope to gain from the process?**

Janet asked for guidance in this process. Suggestions were: have a clear set of questions to ask, keep the session under 1 ½ hours and have a break in the middle, give participants time at the beginning to comment and make initial observations. Janet will be asking for additional comments via email next week.

**10. Discuss new banner and mandate**

This will be addressed at the next Council meeting.

**11. Other layout issues from IT – Randy**

Randy, Tony, Janet, and Mark will discuss this and bring it to the next Council meeting.

Adjourned at 2:45 PM