

Idaho State University
Web Services Council
Minutes for October 19, 2005

Meeting convened 3:00 PM

Present: Blake Beck, Craig Joseph, Janet Higgins, Ali Nelson, Juli Mead, Kent Tingey, Libbie Howe, Randy Stamm

Excused: Roger Egan, Randy Gaines, Tony Lovgren, Ken Trimmer, John Kijinski, Mark Lee

Taken by: Janet Higgins

Agenda Item 1 – Any comments from Campus about web site?

Blake reported that the Webmaster email address has received about 75 messages. Most comments were a positive statement about the new site being more professional and a better representation of the University, a few individuals also made suggestions. Several were questions about finding something, and have been noted for future usability studies. There have been several negative comments saying they just don't like the new site, with no reasons given. One faculty member is very unhappy with the new website.

Juli was asked by various people to have the following changes made, and Council agreed:

Action Items:

- Current and Prospective Students pages, under Student Life, add ADA Resource Center and Early Learning Resource Center.
- Current and Prospective Students pages, remove the word "Student" from Student Living and Wellness – the label is too long.
- Current and Prospective Students pages, remove the word Current Students and Prospective Students from the Resources and Announcements labels. It is obvious you are on those pages and the wording is redundant.

There is also some concern about the new wording on the left-hand navigation bar for My ISU. When the "Alternate MyISU Access" link was added, it necessitated the removal of the MyISU description that had been there. Mark explained the problem, and it is understood why the change was made, but it is hoped that eventually it can be changed back to the way it was. Mark and Blake have an appointment with Alicia, in Computer Services, to see if it is possible to create a MyISU link that all web browsers can use. The current problem is that MAC Safari users can not use the standard link for either MyISU or Faculty Staff Tools.

The Current/Prospective Students working group was surprised to see Athletics added to the left-hand navigation bar. Juli says it is redundant because it is also under Student Life

and Quick Links, making Athletics available in 3 places on the pages. Since the left-hand bar is meant to be “the most important links”, the addition of Athletics seems out of place. The discussion from last week’s Council meeting, in which the decision was made to add Athletics to all 2nd level pages was reviewed. After a short discussion it was decided to leave the links as they are, due to the importance of Athletics to the institution and the fact that the State Board has mandated that ISU focus more on Athletics.

It was noted that some staff had trouble finding things the first few days because they were used to long lists, not drop-down boxes.

Craig said that most of the comments he has heard are positive and Recruiting is much happier sending prospective students to the new web page. One change was requested:

Action Item: On the homepage button for Prospective Students, changed the description from “Register online...” to “Apply online ...” The word “register” is confusing.

Ali reported that many students have had trouble finding Barracuda – it is under the Labs and Technology category. The following change was agreed on:

Action Item: Add Barracuda below the Other Online Tools list, which makes it consistent with the Faculty & Staff page.

Ali was approached by Lori Richards from the Bookstore, who wants to know how to get information on the comprehensive calendar for the book buyback process, and other announcements. Since we don’t currently have a calendar, the only solution is to put it up as an announcement on the Current Students page. Lori should contact July Mead. Lori also asked about getting a link to the Bookstore on the Faculty & Staff page. Most Council members present felt that it was not necessary, but the request will be forwarded to the F/S page working group.

Agenda Item 2 – E-Mail report

Discussed above.

Agenda Item 3 – Quick Links Addition

Blake suggested adding Web CT, Web Mail, and Barracuda to the Quick Links list in order to facilitate access to these tools. Another short discussion about criteria again left the Council wondering how to handle the Quick Links list. For now we will wait and see if it continues to be a problem, now that most users have found where these links are. This will be one of the focuses of the usability study. Council is reluctant to start changing things too quickly, knowing that there is a learning curve to the new website.

Agenda Item 4 – Contact ISU Link

The form that was moved over from the old website needs to be dealt with. It needs to be either changed, the form modified, or turned into an email address. One solution would be to turn it into an information page with various email addresses. Council thinks that may be too confusing and it would be better to modify the form instead. The existing form seems to address both usability and general information questions, which is not necessary.

Agenda Item 5 -- Weather

Requests to have the weather back on the homepage are still coming in. This has been the case since the first draft of the website was put out for public comment. Council agreed to put the link back.

Action Item: Add weather link under the list of buttons, as in Mark's latest version, but change the wording to "Current Temperature".

Agenda Item 6 – Access to the Web Services Council Page

Blake noted that the only way to get to the Web Services Council website is through the news link on the homepage or via the A-Z Index. Since the Council is responsible for the ISU website, access to the Council needs to be facilitated. After a short discussion, Council agreed. It was noted that the Web Services Council would eventually be part of a webpage created for the new Technology Group.

Action Item: Add a link to the Web Services Council webpage in the Footer of the ISU webpage.

Agenda Item 7 – Future Projects for the Council

- Campus Maps
- Comprehensive Calendaring Tool
- I2 Logo on the Website
- Two MyISU and FS Tools Links in the past
- Credit Card Payment Options
- Forms
- General Services vs. Admin vs. Academic
- Style Guide
- Directories linked to Web pages
- Class Schedule link to Syllabus or Webpage

Mark will start working on the campus maps, since he has access to several resources. One is the new map put out by Maintenance and Operations, and the other is the GIS maps.

Blake noted that the General Services Page is redundant in that most of the links are also on either the Academics or Administration pages.

Currently the Administration page is only available from the Quick Links. Administration could be added to the Faculty & Staff page under University Resources and Services. It was also noted that “Administrative Services” seemed to be a better label. The discussion will be renewed when more Council members are present.

Blake has received several comments that the I2 (Internet 2) logo should be on the website. I2 is something the University worked hard for, and it should be acknowledged. Since it is a research oriented tool, the About ISU and Academics pages would be appropriate. Again, the discussion will be renewed when more Council members are present.

Agenda Item 8 -- Other

Blake reported that there were only 8 people at the open campus meeting, so it turned into a very informal discussion. We are not sure if it was a lack of promotion, although it was on the bulletin boards and in *News and Notes* three times, or that most faculty and staff didn't have much to say about it.

Adjourned at 4:40 PM