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# University of Idaho

## Staff Council

### Staff Council Talking Points

Date: Oct. 14, 2020

[Recording of Zoom meeting](#)

[Archive of all Staff Council meeting agendas, recordings and minutes](#)

Staff Council met on Oct. 14, 2020, for an all-Zoom meeting.

### Staff Member of the Month

Staff Member of the Month for October 2020 is Elise Kokenge, Administrative Assistant II, Natural Resources & Society and Environmental Science. Amy Kingston, Academic Publications Editor in the Registrar's Office, nominated Elise, saying, "Elise always has a positive attitude, no matter what else is happening at the university. When I get in touch with her about an issue and she doesn't know the answer, she is quick to find out and get back to me. She displays empathy for other people's circumstances and places a high priority on accuracy and thoroughness, which shows clearly in the quality of her work. I always smile when my phone rings and it's Elise on the other end of the line."

### Kashable

Brian Foisy, VP of Finance and Administration, and Brandi Terwilliger, Director of Human Resources, gave some background about the new Kashable loan benefit. The benefit was initiated at the request of U of I employees for a loan program. As of Oct. 14, fifteen employees had utilized the program. The University of Idaho receives no financial benefit or kick-back from the program. Note that financial counseling is available in the Employee Assistant Program.

### Annual Evaluations

Currently, all evaluations require a signature by the area VP or a designee. Brandi Terwilliger asked for Staff Council input on whether to continue this practice, to only require an executive signature if the evaluation is above or below “meets expectations,” or to remove the executive signature requirement.

## Healthy Vandals Update

Emily Tuschhoff, SC Operations Officer, gave a Healthy Vandal update.

1. Healthy Vandals Campaign – there has been some complacency seen among the students regarding COVID precautions. The current focus is on reminding the U of I community about the campaign. Staff can help re-promote the campaign by refreshing signs in offices if they are looking worn.
2. Only 30% of staff requested to take a surveillance COVID test did. If you receive an email inviting you to take a test for surveillance purposes, please do so.
3. Flu shot clinic scheduled for Oct. 19 filled up in advance. The university is working on adding additional campus clinics. Remember that you can get a flu shot for free at any local pharmacy through your U of I plan.

## COVID-19 Advisory Committee

Elaina McIntosh-Perry reports the following items:

1. The committee is requesting that U of I leadership add greater detail to the U of I COVID-19 page. Information to include testing protocols, which groups are being selected for surveillance testing, etc.
2. The committee is requesting of U of I leadership that a dashboard be added to the University’s COVID-19 website. Many universities are implementing dashboards; they are a tool for families of students to check in quickly on the campus COVID situation.
3. Spring semester timelines are also under discussion, aiming to determine the best path forward for testing and mitigation strategies.

## Elections

Erika Crossland reports that Staff Council needs a member from maintenance/skilled craft/facilities staff, as well as an Idaho Falls Center off-campus staff representative. If you are in one of these categories, [consider](#)

[joining Staff Council.](#)

## Annual Evaluations

Staff Council, in 2020-21, will focus on the following issues:

1. Creating the Staff Council operations manual
2. Conducting a second staff survey about COVID-19
3. Staff awards/morale
4. Self-care and mental health
5. Compensation/budget, including market-based compensation and job descriptions/salary adjustments for people who have taken on additional duties.



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# University of Idaho

## Staff Council

### Staff Council Talking Points

#### Dates:

Nov. 11, 2020 - [Recording of Zoom meeting](#)

Dec. 9, 2020 - [Recording of Zoom meeting](#)

[Archive of all Staff Council meeting agendas, recordings and minutes](#)

Staff Council met on Nov. 11, 2020 and Dec. 9 for all-Zoom meetings.

### November Staff Member of the Month

Staff Member of the Month for November 2020 is Sean Sullivan – Technology Solutions Partner 3, ITS. Sean was nominated by Charles Hatfield, Facilities Customer Service Representative, who said, “Sean has a very good rapport with customers, employees and visitors and can smooth the waters with even the most frustrated person. Sean has a can-do attitude which helps put people at ease as he works on your issue. Sean's experience and knowledge of campus and of his services help get answers quickly and efficiently for the customer and those using his department’s services. Sean really is a great asset when it comes to the University of Idaho and it is a true joy to work with him. If it was up to me, I would be happy to give him a 50% pay increase and a three-week paid vacation to anywhere in the world that he wants to go; he deserves it!”

### December Staff Member of the Month

Staff Member of the Month for December is Kris Baird-Anderson – Graduation Specialist, Registrar’s Office. Kris was nominated by Lana Unger, Manager of Graduate Student Services, College of Graduate Studies, who said, “I would like to say “thank you” to Kris Baird-Anderson. She is literally doing the work of three people and still manages to respond to each of my requests and inquiries in a timely manner. She is a dedicated employee who really knows how to put

students first. The College of Graduate Studies appreciates her dedication to making the “graduation experience” a positive one for students at the U of I. I don’t know what we would do without her.”

## **Financial Review**

Brian Foisy, VP of Finance and Administration, updated Staff Council on various financial details of the University of Idaho. The big news: the university has moved from two consecutive years with \$20million operating losses to an operating surplus of \$1 million in FY20.

## **Enrollment**

While total student enrollment (including dual credit and non-degree seeking students) was down 10%, full-time enrollment was down only 2-3%.

## **WUE Program**

The decision to participate fully in the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) program means reduction in tuition of 50% for some current non-resident students. Budgeting for the long-term reduction has created a \$2.9 million one-time benefit for FY21.

## **CEC Funding, Furloughs and Holdbacks**

Money was allocated by the state for raises, but then withheld due to the budget situation. Because of a state record surplus, the President’s Leadership Council is composing a letter for the SBOE requesting all or some of the current 5% holdback be returned and passed along to the employees who had to take furloughs.

## **P3 (Public Private Partnership) Overview**

U of I granted the rights to a consortium to run the steam plant facility for 50 years in exchange for \$225 million up front to be received via wire transfer before Dec. 31, 2020. U of I will use these funds to pay off some existing debt and then will invest \$190 million in the U of I Foundation. The funds will be set up like an endowment that will generate a rate of return (assuming 5%). Projections show U of I receiving \$6 million in earnings annually from this investment, which will be reinvested in student scholarships, online infrastructure, research efforts, grant writing, RAs/TAs, marketing, student

recruitment, etc. U of I will be able to pay back the concessionaire with interest and still earn excess revenue projected at \$351 million (conservative estimate) to \$1.1 billion (expanded estimate) of net gain over the 50-year life of the partnership. The funds generated from the investments will not be held by U of I: a new legal non-profit identity, The Strategic Investment Fund, will have a one member (the U of I President) and an independent governing board.

Twenty-one U of I employees will be transferred over to the operator payroll. President Green has committed to being generous with these employees. Impact for them is top of mind. There will be a comprehensive transition plan, to be released soon, for each employee.

## **Preferred Names**

There is a priority project to allow Preferred Name to be added to Banner and all U of I technologies that use student and employee names. This will allow employees and students to identify a preferred name for system and institutional use. ASUI and Faculty Senate have been drivers behind this effort.

## **Staff Awards**

There was not a Staff Awards Ceremony this year due to COVID. Longevity gifts were available at the VandalStore on December 3-4. If you did not pick up your gifts at the VandalStore, your gift can be delivered to your office.

## **Staff Survey Re COVID-19**

In November, Staff Council distributed a survey to staff about issues around COVID-19 and the university's response. Results are in and have been communicated with leadership.

## **Online Education White Paper Review**

Chandra Zenner Ford presented the white paper produced by the Online Education Working Group. The group recommends a centralized administrative unit and migration to Canvas Learning Management System (as the State of Idaho is trying to standardize on Canvas). The P3 (Steam Plant) project will provide \$1 million per year to build the infrastructure.

## **AbilitiCBT**

Brandi Terwilliger, director of Human Resources, presented on the possibility of adding AbilitiCBT to our suite of benefits. AbilitiCBT is a clinical tool that offers cognitive behavioral therapy on a digital platform. It would be relatively cheap for the university to add this benefit.

## COVID-19

The COVID-19 advisory committee has been planning the implementation of a graphical dashboard to better envision university COVID-19 statistics. Staff Council voted to support implementation. Also, a Staff Council survey of staff showed that the biggest concern is staff not knowing how to access resources, or knowing what resources are available.

## President Green

President Scott Green visited the December 2020 Staff Council meeting. He thanked U of I staff for all we've did in 2020. He noted that Spring 2021 semester will be similar to Fall 2020, with COVID-19 testing and course delivery.

He sees expanding online class offerings to create new opportunities across the state for high school students and for teachers seeking continuing education.

The P3 Steam Plant deal will not directly help with market-based compensation, as we cannot use P3 monies directly for staff salaries unless there is a revenue component to it. Using the funds to make a stronger institution could have a ripple effect of improved compensation down the road.



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# University of Idaho

## Staff Council

### Staff Council Talking Points

#### Dates:

Feb. 10, 2021 - [Recording of Zoom meeting](#)

March 10, 2020 - [Recording of Zoom meeting](#)

April 14, 2020 - [Recording of Zoom meeting](#)

[Archive of all Staff Council meeting agendas, recordings and minutes](#)

### Staff Members of the Month

#### February

Krista Bateman – Management Assistant, Auxiliary Services

“The PTS team is so grateful for Krista's efficiency, thoroughness and assistance in moving searches through the hiring process in a timely manner. Thank you, Krista, we appreciate you!!”

Nominated by Rebecca Couch, Director, Parking & Transportation

#### March

Renee Jensen-Hasfurther – Admin Financial Specialist, GeoSciences

“With the combining of the former Departments of Geography and Geological Sciences into one unit this year, the workload of Administrative Assistant doubled almost overnight, but Renee has handled the transition calmly and with grace. She is always reliable, always knows the answer, and has been willing to share her knowledge with other departments in the college as they have struggled with their own staffing shortages.”

Nominated by Jerry Fairley, Chair – Department of Geography and Geological Sciences

#### April

Travis Gray – Finance & HR Business Analyst, Business Systems

Travis assisted me with an Argos report that needed to be updated and he did it rapidly and made the process so easy and now I have the data I need. I can always count on Travis to provide great service with a smile!

Nominated by Wendy Kerr, Senior Cost Accountant, Office of Sponsored Programs

## Change in Employee Compensation

We are expecting a 2% CEC this year for most employees. Staff Council continues to advocate with the administration for market-based compensation.

## Working Conditions

Staff Council is working to improve the onboarding process for new employees and advocate for better flex-location rules. Staff Council also heard from Dr. Greg Lambeth – Director, [U of I Counseling and Testing Center](#) and Joyce Lyons, [Public Health Rural Crisis Project Manager of Public Health – Idaho North Central District](#), to discuss university and community resources available for members of the university.

Staff Council heard from Nancy Spink, Risk Manager at Risk Management, concerning worker's compensation. The university recently named Gritman Medical Center as the designated provider for employees with occupational medical conditions. Gritman was chosen in consultation with Tristar, the university's claims adjustment firm. Gritman does refer patients to other providers in the region when necessary.

Staff Council regularly monitors COVID-19 information and participates in Faculty Senate meetings. Staff Council has also heard from Teresa Koepfel, Chief Marketing Officer/Executive Director of University Communications and Marketing, to hear about integrated brand marketing and communications at the University of Idaho.

Staff Council often has openings for staff representatives. [Learn more about joining staff council](#). You may also consider [joining a university-wide committee](#).



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