

November 11, 2010

Fall semester has been marked with generally beautiful weather, but the cool, cloudy, and sometimes rainy days dominate. The top half of Moscow Mountain is white and excites those who go down hillsides on pieces of wood. The third round of tests is on the near horizon before Thanksgiving vacation begins.

Students are looking forward to Thanksgiving vacation which "officially" begins on Friday November 19th, but parking lots will start to show empty spaces as early as Thursday. A few spaces are still available on the holiday break buses that travel to southern Idaho and the Portland, Oregon, area. Reservations can be made through www.uidaho.edu/dos/holidaybreakbus or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 208-885-6757.

Registration for spring semester classes begins this week and adjustments may be made in the remaining weeks of the semester. In December, your Vandal will receive a bill for spring semester on their Vandal account rather than a bill in the mail.

A "Safe Walk" program is also being introduced this week. Students will be able to call 208-874-7550 to request that campus security personnel accompany them to walk from classrooms, the library, or laboratories to living groups and parking lots. This service is available 24 hours a day and seven days a week. This is an extra layer of safety that has been requested by students, faculty, and parents that is possible with our new contract for campus security services. There have NOT been any "stranger assaults" or new incidents. This service will increase the "sense of safety" at the time when campus becomes a little darker with the seasonal time change.

This week, we will honor our veterans. We have approximately 250 veterans currently enrolled as a growing number of our students are returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. Last weekend, we dedicated our home football game to Military Appreciation Day, and several ceremonies will be held this week to honor our veterans. We are proud of our Vandal veterans and are grateful for their service. Memorial Gymnasium was built in 1928 and was dedicated to UI students who died in military action. One thousand, three hundred, and forty three (1,343) names are etched on plaques.

Two major construction projects are also being completed this week. The north edge of campus that follows the Moscow Pullman highway has been redesigned and landscaped as the US Corps of Engineers changed the path of Paradise Creek to address flood control concerns. The Line Street entrance to campus has been opened after being closed for many months due to this construction. Also, the walkway near the Commons and Memorial Gym will be opened after several months of reconstruction of a crumbling utility tunnel. Several alumni have asked me if we recovered any items that they left behind when they were exploring the lower reaches of campus....these tunnels have been the place of great adventure for some.

On Wednesday morning, a Horizon Airlines airplane was welcomed at the Moscow Pullman airport by the Vandal Marching band, the spirit squad, and other Vandal faithful. This plane has been painted in

University of Idaho colors and logos. The former Vandal football great and Green Bay Packer legend, Jerry Kramer, was a passenger. Great fun!

Our Vandal women athletes rock! Our women's cross country team won the WAC championship while the women's soccer team finished the season with a school best record of 14-7 and earned a trip to the conference playoffs.

Students have been relatively healthy this semester. The common cold has slowed some but there have been no outbreaks of flu... yet. Last year, we were dealing with the substantial challenges of H1N1 flu so this semester is definitely more comfortable than fall semester 2009. Flu shots are available at the Student Health Clinic. Please encourage your Vandal to get one.

Last week, a Constitutional Amendment was approved by voters that involved the University of Idaho. This action will permit the University of Idaho to charge tuition rather than only registration fees. This amendment will simply allow these funds to be used with more flexibility across the university. The cost of attendance will not go up because of this action. The other universities in the State of Idaho already have this authority, and the State Board of Education will still have the final authority to approve tuition and fee increases.

Winter commencement will take place on December 11th at 12:30pm in the Kibbie Dome. It will be a joyful mid-year celebration for many families. It is a difficult time to graduate and move into a stagnant job market. There are no jokes about moving home after graduation with parents under these circumstances. Fortunately, you will now be able to keep your Vandal on your health insurance through age 26 to create a layer of safety for your family.

In a related matter, we are planning an outdoor graduation ceremony in May 2011. The ceremony will be held on the football practice field east of the Kibbie Dome. The Kibbie Dome will be under construction as additional fire safety renovations will lead to the replacement of the east end wall and changes to seating configurations. More information about spring commencement will be announced soon.

Our campus is buzzing with excitement for the Vandal and BSU football game that will be played on Friday evening. Moscow will be flooded with fans wearing silver and gold and orange and blue. The game is sold out, and a special viewing venue is being created for students who were not able to get tickets. The game will be broadcast on ESPNU in 3-D. BSU has a great football team so it will be a very challenging game. Classes will be held on Friday afternoon but most classroom seats will be empty after 3:30pm.

Occasionally, there will be some entertaining entries in the police log that report general goofiness. One sweet and odd call to the police caught my eye. (Oct. 31, 9:10pm—a student reports that a Golden Retriever trick-or-treated with him and then followed him home.) Dude, don't give candy to the dog...and what did you really want the police to do about it?

In a few days, you will receive the Thanksgiving holiday parents' newsletter. It will contain advice about

the holidays and information about the closing weeks of the semester.

Sincerely,

Bruce Pitman
Vice Provost for Student Affairs/Dean of Students