

University of Idaho

Office of the Provost
& Executive Vice President
provostevpwiencek@uidaho.edu
www.uidaho.edu/provost

TO: University of Idaho Faculty and Staff
FROM: John Wiencek, Provost and Executive Vice President
DATE: October 26, 2017
SUBJECT: Advising, Retention and a Path Forward

I have heard the reactions and concerns regarding the recently announced move to centrally managed advising and recruiting. I realize now that the announcement was sudden and without adequate context. This has caused anxiety and confusion that might have been minimized through direct conversation. I apologize for causing anxiety and confusion, especially for advisors, recruiting staff and associate deans who feel they were not included in the planning process.

We have an ambitious strategic plan that is worthy of our best effort. We have defined our highest priorities, including competitive wages and an improved teaching environment. Although the enrollment picture at the University of Idaho is getting better, the fall 2017 enrollment report indicates that we are falling short of our strategic plan's enrollment targets and the gap is widening. We are not going to reach our goals

unless we substantially improve retention and recruiting within the next two years. Program prioritization reallocation is not a sustainable way to meet our goals.

Centralizing management of advising and recruiting has resulted in significant improvements at many public research universities. Currently, we are not keeping up with national best practices and we need to accelerate our efforts. The deans and the president agree that centralized advising and recruiting will help us achieve the vision of our ambitious strategic plan.

Most staff impacted by this change will remain in their current offices. They will continue to work collaboratively with faculty and staff in their current colleges to meet the advising needs of our students and to represent their colleges in the recruiting process. Student success and recruiting is everyone's responsibility. The primary goal of this change is to afford a more coordinated and impactful approach.

The Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) team is meeting with impacted staff, college leadership and other key stakeholders to jointly clarify next steps. After collecting this input, SEM will convene an all-campus meeting to discuss approaches, collect input and answer questions. I anticipate this meeting will occur before Thanksgiving. Our goal is to evolve toward a more unified and consistent advising and recruiting model over the next year.

It is time for us to come together as Idaho's premier research university – the University of Idaho.
