FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
about the Vision 2020 Task Force
March 2013

What is the Vision 2020 Task Force? President Nellis appointed the task force in January 2013 to identify a model of key considerations to achieve the following by 2020:

- A system-wide enrollment of 16,000 students.
- A 50% increase in research expenditures.

Why form a task force, rather working through existing structures? The university must increase its enrollment to remain financially viable while meeting goals set by the State Board of Education (such as Complete College Idaho). The university must grow its research enterprise to fulfill the mission of a land-grant institution and to address the problems faced by the state and region. President Nellis asked the task force to develop a model to connect these interdependent goals as no existing structure is addressing both goals simultaneously.

Who leads the task force? Bob Smith, Associate Vice President and CEO of the UI’s Idaho Falls Center, is chair. Keith Ickes, executive Director of Budget and Planning, is co-chair.

Who are the members? In addition to Smith and Ickes, the committee consists of three deans, seven faculty members (including several with administrative appointments) and a representative of the Staff Affairs Committee. For a complete list of members, please see the opposite side of this sheet.

Why is there no one from the Division of Enrollment Management or the Office of Research and Economic Development on the task force? President Nellis asked the task force to provide a fresh perspective on the inter-relationship between funded research and enrollment. Representatives of those two offices will meet with the task force about their goals, resources and initiatives.

How is the committee approaching its task? The task force gathered historical data about enrollments and sponsored research at the University of Idaho and similar data from our peer institutions. It also reviewed our institutional mission to assure that the University continues to fulfill our responsibility to the citizens of Idaho. It now is identifying potential changes in key university characteristics that are central in addressing the 2020 goals, such as the profile of the student body (graduate vs. undergraduate, in-state vs. out-of-state, Moscow vs. state wide centers) and the mix of faculty (teaching, research and creative, outreach and engagement).

What types of recommendations will the task force make? The task force will not make specific recommendations of particular actions the University should take. Instead, it will give President Nellis and senior administrators a model of key variables that will be important to consider and several scenarios using the model of the university’s future direction. These scenarios will inform how to achieve enrollment and research goals in ways that sustain growth and enhance quality.

What about programs that don’t generate high enrollment or attract large research grants? The task force recognizes the wide breadth of scholarly and creative activities at the University of Idaho, including research that is not supported by external grants. It also acknowledges that enrollment growth at the undergraduate level will increase demand for General Education courses, as well as additional student services to assure successful retention and higher graduation rates. The task force will not recommend expansion, contraction or elimination of particular programs.

When will the task force complete its work? The task force plans to submit a completed model with several reasonable scenarios by the end of spring semester.

Will there be opportunities for the faculty and staff to respond to the scenarios? Co-chairs Smith and Ickes will report the Faculty Senate at its March 19 meeting and welcome comments and questions.
2020 Task Force Members

Bob Smith, Chair
Keith Ickes, Co-Chair
Alison Johnson, Administrative Support

Kenton Bird
Mary Ellen Brewick
Sanford Eigenbrode
Larry Forney
Paul Joyce
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