

PRIORITIES

THE PROVOST'S NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2016

GREETINGS!

The intention of the Provost's Newsletter is to provide timely information and an update on initiatives led by the Office of the Provost for faculty and staff in Academic Affairs. By highlighting specific activities we also hope that you will ask questions and offer your observations and ideas. A link to the newsletter is on the Provost's web page at academics.boisestate.edu/provost.

In this third issue of the academic year we continue to focus on one or more goals outlined in the university's 2012-2017 strategic plan, "Focus on Effectiveness." This issue looks at progress on two of our closely related goals to "gain distinction as a doctoral research university" and "align university programs and activities with community needs."

Of course, the big news since our last newsletter is the re-classification of Boise State as a doctoral research university by the Carnegie Foundation. I believe one of the important distinctions we have earned in this accomplishment lies in our continued emphasis and integration of undergraduate research into the expanded mission that comes with this designation. One only has to look at the expansion of undergraduate research opportunities, including growth in our two annual undergraduate research conferences, as evidence of our commitment to assimilating undergraduate students into our research mission. Furthermore, recent investments in Boise State programs by Micron Technology and the State of Idaho combined with an emerging footprint across the river are evidence of the strong connection between our growing suite of graduate programs and the surrounding community. Finally, a rising appreciation across the state and nation for Boise State's progression through innovation is something for which we can all be proud.

The Provost's office is committed to nurturing the culture of inclusive collaboration that we so enjoy, and to building the support structures necessary for faculty, staff, and students to thrive in our efforts to accomplish Boise State University's mission. Thank you for doing your part, and let us know how we can support you.

Marty

ALIGNING UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES WITH COMMUNITY NEED

As educators, we are guided by one basic yet vital truth: we wouldn't be a university without the community we serve and educate. Generations of families in the Treasure Valley, Idaho, and beyond count on Boise State University as the place for them to learn knowledge and skills they need to become successful employees, educators and leaders in their communities. Many also rely on Boise State for the benefits that derive from research, creative activity, and other mutually-beneficial projects formed in partnership with our university. This is a symbiotic relationship; we cannot do our jobs effectively without the input and feedback of the constituencies we serve.

Based on that feedback, and in line with our strategic plan, we've engaged the community in a variety of ways. For example, after conversations with legislators, nonprofit workers and faculty, we saw the need for a new School of Public Service, whose mission is to tackle real-world policy questions that transcend individual expertise and traditional disciplinary boundaries. Corey Cook, founding dean of the new School of Public Service, is leading the charge to redefine what it means to be a public servant. Under the leadership of Dean Cook the Ph.D. in Public Policy and Administration is moving in a new direction that emphasizes collaboration, real-world analysis, problem solving, and the cultivation of policy skills. The School has also restarted the popular statewide public policy survey of more than 1,000 adults, which collects information critical for public policy analysts and legislators, providing a valuable litmus test of where Idahoans stand on a range of issues.

The College of Health Sciences has long been a leader in community collaboration. After substantial community input, including a focus group that included local health professionals, the college crafted a new bachelor's degree program in public health. That program was approved by the Idaho State Board of Education for launch this fall.

Over the past three years computer science has been the focus of considerable investment by the state and local industry, and in response Boise State is moving its rapidly growing computer science department to a new downtown location where it will be closer to industry partners. A new bachelor's degree in Games, Interactive Media, and Mobile has also been developed to serve the business community. In its first semester this new program received more than twice the applications expected and in this, its second semester, has grown to 63 students.

Boise State also has undertaken efforts to ensure that our graduates are well prepared for the workplace. For example, Make College Count was developed by the Career Center to coach students on the skills and experiences that employers say are critical to employability. Bridge to Career is a multifaceted effort under development in both the College of Business and Economics and the College of Innovation and Design (CID). Students who are non-business majors can now earn a minor or certificate that focuses on providing key business skills to reinforce their degree of choice. In CID students can take a variety of credit and non-credit courses that provide project-driven face-to-face learning coached by leading experts.

These are just a few examples of how the community has informed our programming over the last few years.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CARNEGIE RESEARCH UNIVERSITY?

A little over a decade ago when Boise State University began talking about its place in the West as a metropolitan research university of distinction, it was met with uncertainty. Some people worried that we would abandon our teaching mission; that Ph.D. programs would come at the expense of quality undergraduate programming; or that we would become disconnected from the needs of our state.

This past month we were excited to announce our formal classification as a doctoral research institution by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, and I'm happy to say that we did it the right way. Our efforts to bolster research and doctoral programs have actually strengthened our ability to offer undergraduates the highest quality education, while also addressing the state's needs.

Since rolling out our strategic plan in 2012 we have launched doctoral programs in biomolecular sciences, materials science and engineering, educational technology, nursing practice, and public policy and administration — all in concert with industry and state partners. The Ph.D. in public policy has attracted leaders from throughout Idaho's business and government sectors, and continues to adapt to best address the questions faced by the State of Idaho. The materials science Ph.D. has already produced four graduates; and we expect our first doctoral degree graduates in nursing, educational technology and biomolecular sciences in May. Our first Ph.D. graduates from public policy and administration are likely to arrive in December. These programs are directly translating into a new level of expertise for our state and region.

We continue to develop research and graduate programs with undergraduates in mind, considering how they could benefit and what role they might play — something that research universities do not always do well. The new Vertically Integrated Projects being developed in the College of Innovation and Design join undergraduate students from a variety of disciplines with the research of faculty and graduate students for large-scale, long-term projects that have great potential to impact society.

Our new Carnegie classification is significant to Boise State's future. Classification as a doctoral research institution will help us secure funding from such agencies as the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health; it will also change how position students view us, and the opportunities they will have at Boise State. Our doctoral classification is a testament to the outstanding work of faculty and staff for more than a decade.

Have questions, comments, or suggestions for newsletter topics?

Contact Marcy Harmer at marcyharmer@boisestate.edu.

Wonder who to contact in the Provost's Office for general questions?

Visit the Office of the Provost website to see the [staff listing](#).

PROVOST AND VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Dr. Martin Schimpf

Dr. Martin Schimpf joined the faculty at Boise State University in 1990. He has held several administrative appointments at the University, including Chair of Chemistry and Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. He currently serves as Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, a position he has held since 2010. Dr. Schimpf holds degrees in chemistry from the University of Washington and the University of Utah. His interdisciplinary research on thermophoresis and the characterization of nanomaterials has led to more than 80 internationally distributed publications in the scientific literature.



OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

The Provost's office is committed to building a culture, along with the necessary support structures, in which faculty, staff, and students can thrive in our efforts to accomplish Boise State University's mission. Thank you for doing your part, and let us know how we can support you.

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