New council's focus: Quality student experience

By Diana Pounds
November 15, 2012

Iowa State has a reputation for offering its undergraduates a rich educational experience -- inside the classroom and out. President Steven Leath wants to ensure that the high-quality student experience endures as enrollment surges, and he's created a new council to help.

The Student Experience Enhancement Council's mission is to find ways to maintain and enhance the experience for all Iowa State students.

The council, led by senior policy adviser Tahira Hira, will look for "pinch points" -- anything that might limit the quality of academic or co-curricular experiences. It also will serve as an information clearinghouse and sounding board for administration on the student experience.

Leath told the council in its first meeting this week that he wants the group to "identify our bottlenecks, where our critical issues are, where we need to put resources."

Hira said the council will examine the many parts of the student experience, such as academics, internships, study abroad opportunities, leadership development, cultural events, health and safety, student organizations, intramural activities, housing and more.

The Iowa State experience is all about making sure that students are successful, in college years and beyond, Hira said.

Members of the council are:

- Pamela Anthony, dean of students
- Dave Biedenbach, assistant vice president for financial planning and budgets
- Pam Cain, associate vice president for business and finance
- Jim Davis, vice provost and chief information officer
- Pete Englin, director of the residence department
- Mary Jo Gonzales, associate dean of students and director of the academic success center
- Tahira Hira, senior policy adviser to the president
- David Holger, associate vice provost and dean of the Graduate College
- Kathy Jones, assistant vice president, records and registration
- Richard Reynolds, director of the Memorial Union
- Margie Tabor, assistant director of facilities planning and management
- Darin Wohlgemuth, interim director of enrollment services
- Karen Zunkel, director of the Program for Women in Science and Engineering