



University of Iowa News Release

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UI names flood mitigation task force to advise on campus changes

The University of Iowa has appointed a 14-member flood mitigation task force that will serve as the university community's voice in planning changes to reduce the risk from future Iowa River flooding.

The task force of faculty and staff members will meet through the fall with numerous faculty, staff and student constituencies to hear their thoughts and concerns about possible actions that might be taken.

In March, the task force will report its findings and conclusions to University of Iowa President Sally Mason, as well as share them with consultants from Ayres Associates and Sasaki Associates, two firms that are advising the university on flood mitigation planning.

"Part of our role is to serve as a conduit for the university community, to gather their thoughts and communicate them to the consultants," said task force co-chair Gregg Oden, a professor of psychology and computer science who has chaired the university's Campus Planning Committee for the past five years.

The consultants will use those comments as one of their guides as they develop flood mitigation proposals, said committee co-chair Larry Weber, professor of civil and environmental engineering and director of the IHR-Hydroscience and Engineering.

In addition, the task force will advise the university's administration on particular flood recovery and mitigation issues that might arise prior to the completion of the final plan, and contribute whatever additional input is appropriate regarding the rebuilding of the campus.

Among the task force's goals will be to consider means to reduce the risk of damage from future flooding in buildings flooded this summer while taking account of the needs of student services operations and research, instructional and artistic programs that were affected by the flood.

Weber and Oden said the task force will consider all options for future flood protection and mitigation, including structural changes to buildings, changes in occupancy, environmental and landscaping changes, and the role of insurance.

"But I hope we aren't too reactive to the flood," said Weber. "We still want to interact with the river on campus, but not from behind a 20-foot high wall. The Iowa River is one of the university's major assets and we hope to continue to engage with it."

Wallace Loh, executive vice president and provost, and Doug True, senior vice president and treasurer, appointed the task force. Other members of the task force include:

--Cheryl Reardon Hoogerwerf, assistant to the vice president for research.

--Joe Kearney, associate dean, College of Liberal Arts & Science.

--Lucie Laurian, assistant professor, Urban & Regional Planning.

--Lola Lopes, emeritus professor, Tippie College of Business.

--George Malanson, professor, Geography.

--Gene Parkin, professor, Civil & Environmental Engineering.

--John Beldon Scott, professor, Art & Art History.

--Mike Valde, environmental compliance manager.

The committee also includes the following ex officio members:

--Barbara Eckstein, associate provost, Office of the Provost.

--Don Guckert, associate vice president, Facilities Management.

--George Hollins, University Business Manager.

--Donna Percy, director, Office of Risk Management.

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