

# NDSU STAFF SENATE

## Minutes

Wednesday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Prairie Rose – Memorial Union

Zoom - <https://ndsu.zoom.us/j/92677455224?pwd=OXhjWnprdENibzF1cmRTWG5aeTJBQT09>

*We collectively acknowledge that we gather at NDSU, a land grant institution, on the traditional lands of the Oceti Sakowin (Dakota, Lakota, Nakoda) and Anishinaabe Peoples in addition to many diverse Indigenous Peoples still connected to these lands. We honor with gratitude Mother Earth and the Indigenous Peoples who have walked with her throughout generations. We will continue to learn how to live in unity with Mother Earth and build strong, mutually beneficial, trusting relationships with Indigenous Peoples of our region.*

Information and reminders on hybrid meetings can be found at the bottom of the agenda\*.

**I. Call to Order – 9:30am**

**II. Land Acknowledgement**

**III. Approval of Meeting Agenda**

A. Added potential ad-hoc to New Business

**IV. Student Government Report** by President Christian Walth

A. The biggest event that was hosted was Higher Education Day. It went very well, and they built a good dialogue with the legislators. They are trying to make new connections with the new legislators and creating a foundation of kindness. This is in partnership with UND.

B. Making Student Government go greener this year. There are things that students can do to help the campus community so they will be focusing more on that. There will be a campus wide thrift store where students can donate clothing and all funds will be donated at the end of the semester.

C. They are also focused on retention to see how the students can help and provide that sense of belonging on campus.

**V. Faculty Senate Report** by President Anastasiya Andrianova

A. Passed on set of bylaw changes to expand a Faculty Rights Committee to allow members from all colleges

B. Another set of bylaw changes to reduce number of representatives on standing committees to help reduce workload.

C. Approved a legislative ad-hoc committee to follow the current legislative session.

D. There is a coordinating council for the legislative session consisting of Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and representatives from UND.

1. There will also be a session lead by Chris Wilson to highlight what NDSU employees can and cannot do regarding the legislative session. More information to come once it is finalized, but it will be open to staff and faculty.

**VI. Attendance Report** by Saurabhi Satam

A. Present – 30

B. Absent – 4

C. Excused – 5

D. Guests – 19

**VII. Approval of Wednesday, December 7th, 2022 Meeting Minutes**

A. Approved with no changes.

**VIII. Campus Kudos** by April Helgaas

A. No kudos awarded in January.

**IX. Program**

A. Phil Hunt – Retention Roadshow Conversation

1. Hunt covered the basics of the Retention Roadshow link that was sent out with the agenda. The idea is to help us get out of the retention and enrollment situation we are currently in.

- a. Two big themes came up: advising and teaching quality.
  - b. Highlighted that we lost 859 students from Fall 21 to Spring 22 (for a loss of about \$4 million)
  - c. Academic Enterprise Framework – there is a spot for everyone at NDSU within the framework to assist with retention efforts.
2. Comment from Vieweg: Most of the retention roadshow is focused on undergraduate students. Vieweg works with a graduate level program, so they have a lot of international students, and they have issues coordinating with that office. There seems to be a disconnect between the Office of International Program and this degree program. Departments do not know what they are supposed to be doing to help support those international students. Additionally, they have undergraduate students turning into graduate students through an accelerated program and helping them make that transition. If there was a spot for staff to share ideas or interdepartmental communication, that would greatly help.
  - a. Response from Hunt – the framework is not all inclusive, but its not just for undergraduate students. There is a disconnect with the OIP and a good place to start would be Staff Senate and creating an ad-hoc to discuss then bring that information forward to the appropriate parties. Also, is our structure the best for supporting our students? Don't wait for someone else to do it, let's start having the conversations.
3. Question from Schumacher – at what point are we losing students in their academic programs? When she assists students who are leaving the institution, the feedback she is seeing is not the same as what is being presented. Some of the feedback she has seen (about 20 students withdraw) and they are talking about lack of resources, making friends, and feeling like instructors and programs just do not care about them. Students feel like they are being treated like a number instead of a human.
  - a. Response from Bahe – they are starting to collect that withdrawal data now, but the bigger question is why students do not return after completing a semester. How do we get in front of those situations? We are very siloed on this campus, but there is no reason we cannot have these conversations now with the various departments. There are many people on this campus who are getting good information on why students leave, so how do we collect it and what do we do with this information? Every single one of us has the responsibility to smile and say hi to students, even if they do not respond to it. Too often, we are too quick to dismiss a student. We also need to get away from just sending them to another office if you do not have an answer hoping someone else has one.
  - b. We also must have grace and patience with students who are learning how the processes work.
4. Comment from Lamp – another example of how staff feel like they are supposed to engage but its not located in job descriptions.
  - a. Response from Hunt – Extrapolated some best practices from research to help staff move forward.
5. Comment from Hudson – engage with students. That is a great first step to take.
6. Comments from Boyer and Berg regarding when we lose students: during the first year and we are seeing them leave to other institutions to continue their education.
7. Comment from Engler – their office has some resources to send out to staff to help with engagement.
8. Comment from Hunt – students need to be able to take the classes they need to move forward. Setting up a 4–5-year plan so students can clearly see their path to graduation.
9. Question from DiPalma – works with around 1200 students every semester and right now is in the process of sending out emails about students not making grades. The biggest obstacle she is hearing is that students do not know they are failing until after finals week. There is no policy that grades must be posted regularly or that instructors must use Blackboard. Students are frustrated and will just go to another institution where they can learn their grades as they go.
  - a. Response from Boyer – there is no policy now, but there will be an initiative to draft a policy to enter midterm grades so we can move forward with this. However, just entering midterm grades will not be enough, we need to be better as a campus at providing feedback at the right time for students and that the students can adjust during the semester.

10. Comment from Bahe – there has not been any expectations for academic advising on campus so those will be coming out. It is okay to have expectations of students, but we need to be transparent about them and teach them to students. Teaching students to ask questions of instructors or attending office hours.
11. Comment from Lamp – have everyone take a class so they can see the same barriers students are going through when they take classes. Something everyone could do even if they do not work with students.
12. Comment from Platt - We need to incorporate these expectations for transparency/feedback into teaching expectations and evaluation. Blackboard or other LMS use should be baseline.
13. Comment from Swank – Was a freshman in 2007 during the early part of NDSU growth and always saw students studying in halls or there were a lot more things for students to do. Now you do not see students studying around campus.
  - a. Response from Bahe – COVID definitely changes some of that but have seen some increases to the traffic flow in the Memorial Union. Also, staff do not always know what students are getting notified about so there are likely a lot of events on campus that staff do not know about.
  - b. Response from Boyer – also have to be mindful of who students are now and also their work schedules.
  - c. Comment from Vieweg – there is a ton of traffic in Sudro and Aldevron.
14. Question from Helgaas – there are two groups of students who come in their office: those who need a lot of help or those who are very successful. There are these students that fall in the middle, how do you get them to come to the advising offices/appointments? How do you build a relationship with those students?
  - a. Comment from Bahe – Not looking at making academic advising appointments mandatory currently. Instead, they are changing what academic advising is. Need to get away from meeting with advisors to see what classes they need to take and instead making a connection with the student. Would try to use some predictive support models to know who might need more assistance and that would determine how often we need to interact with them.
  - b. Comment from Helgaas – some students are not prepared for how large we are and feel like they are drowning in an ocean. They need small connections rather than overwhelmed by the whole community.
  - c. Comment from Hunt – talk with your department on how to create those smaller communities within your programs and colleges.
  - d. Comment from Bahe – that can come outside of departments, can help them find Student Government or other organizations on campus. There are over 200 student organizations on campus now.
  - e. Comment from Bernard – how many students would identify as small school folks? Can we create an organization for students who are looking for a small school experience?
    - (1) Response from Walth – thinks majority of students are from small towns.
    - (2) Response from Berg – what is a small school? It is hard to measure, so we would have to ask students to self-identify.
15. Question from Swank in chat – Is there a way for students to sign up for a mentor?
  - a. Response from Vieweg in chat: I know the theatre department has New Student Mentors for all new theatre majors - so junior and seniors connect with that new student before the start of the year.
  - b. Question from Steinmann in chat - Do we have data on if we better retain students from smaller communities or MN vs ND?
16. Comment from Hunt – students do not have a sense of belonging, so how to do we instill that for our students so they feel like they belong, can be successful, and are support to graduation.
17. Comment from Bahe – we need to be connectors and facilitate connection. How do we start the connection and then teach them how to continue that? Welcome students beyond Welcome Week.

18. Comment from Platt in the chat – A curricular issue related to what we are talking about is the prevalence of large enrollment courses in the Red Zone of the first year. One thing programs can think about is how to increase the number or impact of smaller courses in that timeframe. Or build mini-communities in the larger courses. The Architecture cohort model and Theatre Arts student mentor model are examples of taking that approach.
19. Comment from Boyer – “The institution” does not exist separate from us, we are the institution. First, we need to be self-reflective. If every unit were to increase the standard of care and focus on what they can control, we would see improvements.
20. Comment from Talcott in the chat - Do these conversations include adding services? We have LGBTQ students who do not come here because we have no real LGBTQ services. No safe place for BIPOC students and one victim advocate for the whole campus
  - a. Comment from Platt in the chat - Definitely an area worth investing in (rather than subjecting to continuous cuts).
  - b. Comment from Hunt – Because we have had such substantial cuts, we have not added programs that are needed to support students. President Cook is hoping to reinvest in some of these areas. Students want this support and when they do not see it, they leave. We need to be making actionable steps. Expected that these conversations will also continue in the PCDIR.
21. Comment from Vieweg – part of the Faculty and Staff PRIDE group that is starting again and there is concern that Administration is going to back them up and take care of them and the students. They want to have some of these conversations, but they do not want to get hurt in any capacity. In past times, there is fear and queer individuals are in danger in this state and if they do not have support from Administration then they cannot continue.
  - a. Comment from Hunt – If there are people on our campus who feel unsafe, that is a climate issue. We need to support these individuals. Hunt has very direct conversations with the President and Provost on these issues. We need to make sure we have a supportive community regardless of how people on the outside feel.
22. Additional Information from Bahe on the Dance Floor Theory of Engagement:

<https://youtu.be/0WxeJBVC01Y>

B. Ben Bernard – Legislative Engagement

1. ND Legislative Branch website:
  - a. <https://ndlegis.gov>
  - b. Map showing the districts and legislators for those districts.
  - c. Can track bills and their progress. There is also a mobile app for Apple and Android devices.
  - d. Some legislators have social media you can follow or listservs you can sign up for to get more information.
2. How the legislature works:
  - a. Legislators are broken up into committees. Some of this division is based on their background.
  - b. We are likely interested in Education (due to our jobs) and Appropriations (where the money is allocated) committees.
  - c. Bills are introduced in committees and the committee can make recommendations such as pass, do not pass, etc.
  - d. There will be some bills that will not make it out of committee. Keep an eye on bills that pass either the House or the Senate.
  - e. Much like other legislatures, bills must pass both House and Senate and can have amendments along the way.
  - f. If there is different language in the bills passed by each chamber, then there is a small group to hammer out the differences in the bills.
  - g. Once the bill is finalized, goes to the Governor for signing or vetoing. It would take a 2/3rds majority to overcome a veto by the House and Senate.
3. Reaching out to legislators:

- a. ND legislators do not have a staff, so when you call your legislators, you will get the actual person. These are citizens who are not in the legislature full time.
  - b. They meet for 80 days every two years starting in January. This is a break in the farming season historically.
  - c. In ND you can testify to the committee(s) and there is documentation on how to do that. The legislators want to hear from the citizens on their feedback.
  - d. You might consider letting your district representative know your subject area expertise and help, so they have a go-to person on those topics.
  - e. Put the bill number in the email subject line so its easier to find. Also introduce yourself and why you support or do not support a specific bill.
  - f. Keep communications professional and factual.
  - g. Every legislature is a new legislature. Make sure you treat everyone as an individual, regardless of your opinions on favorites or least favorites.
  - h. Use the bill tracking to make sure you contact the right individuals. If it's a House bill, contact your House legislators and vice versa.
  - i. Just because you saw something on social media does not mean it's true, the best tracking is using the bill tracking site or apps.
- 4. Staff considerations:
    - a. Staff employees cannot use state resources to lobby. So, a friendly reminder, do not use your NDSU email to contact your legislators. Also make sure you are representing yourself and not the institution.
  - 5. If you want more information from Bernard, you can connect with him outside of NDSU for more information.
  - 6. Question from Hudson – how do we provide feedback but also follow state law as state employees?
    - a. Make a call off personal phone during non-work hours or using a personal email address. Should also identify which district you live in, and you can mention your career as a reason you are interested in specific bill.
  - 7. Question from Otto – Something we all want to know about is the process for cost of living raises?
    - a. Response from Bernard – this is handled in the Appropriations Committee. Currently there seems to be support for some raises in the next biennium. If contacting about this type of question, highlight the workforce and keeping people working in North Dakota rather than taking on potential remote positions. Competition for employees has changed. Can enjoy North Dakota tax benefits without working for a North Dakota company.

**X. Senate Coordinating Council** by Joshua Schroetter

A. Schroetter mentioned the changes in each of the policies listed on the Consent Agenda.

**XI. Consent Agenda** – (policy details here: [https://www.ndsu.edu/policy/senate\\_coordinating\\_council/](https://www.ndsu.edu/policy/senate_coordinating_council/))

- A. Policy 136 – Flexible Spending Accounts Program
  - 1. Changes to the name of the group that provides the FLEX benefits.
- B. Policy 155 – Alcohol and Other Drugs: Unlawful and Unauthorized Use by Students
  - 1. Changes to update the policy to match the current practices used by Athletics.
- C. Policy 309 – Minimum Qualifications for Instructional Faculty Policy
  - 1. Added language to cover teaching dual enrollment courses.
- D. Policy 348 – Instruction in the Responsible Conduct of Research
  - 1. Updated policy to match the current requirements from multiple funding sources for research at NDSU.
- E. Policy 325 – Academic Freedom
  - 1. Updated based on past conversations to include staff.
- F. Motion to approve from Hopkins. Second from Cronin. Consent agenda was approved.

**XII. Treasurer's Report** by Justin Swank

A. Skipped.

**XIII. Public Relations Officer Report** by Olivia Buller

A. No report.

**XIV. Day of Honor** by Corey Landowski

A. The only update I had for the Day of Honor is that we're meeting on January 13th to finalize any remaining details otherwise the event is still scheduled for February 8th at 2 PM. We haven't had a meeting scheduled for the University Athletic Committee yet for the spring semester so nothing to report on that.

**XV. Committee Reports**

A. Elections by Joshua Schroetter

1. No report.

B. Legislative and Bylaws by Maggie Latterell & Kristi Steinmann

1. Coordination happening between faculty, staff, and student groups along with administration on monitoring ND Legislative activity; combined NDSU/UND group formed to provide additional consistency across campuses.

C. Information Technology by Daniel Erichsen

1. No report.

D. Scholarship by Kay Hopkins

1. I hope to finish up the application updates today and send to you or Shwa for posting to the website yet this week. I'll email out an announcement on Monday (since there's no students this week). We brought in \$5.27 at the last Blaze fundraiser in Dec. and we have an upcoming one on Jan. 25.

E. Staff Development by MD Sharijad Hasan

1. We are working on next month's program section. Also, team members are working to get in touch with speakers for a half day event for the staff.

F. Staff Recognition by April Helgaas

1. We will have Campus Kudos for the February meeting. The SRC committee also needs to meet soon to start planning for the Staff Recognition Awards.

G. Campus Engagement by Olivia Buller/Jordan DiPalma

1. No report.

H. Gunkelman Award by Jenna Reno

1. Just getting started, event will be May 3, 3-4 at Alumni Center, call for nominations will go out in February, nomination window will be March 1-31.

I. State Staff Senate by Kay Hopkins

1. Current State Staff Senate President stepped down as she took a non-university position. Laura Fetting from DSU (president elect) will be completing the term. And the secretary also stepped down and we reelected so that the position was filled for the remainder of the year. Other than that – just prepping for legislative session.

J. Joint Committees

1. Campus Space and Facilities by Ben Bernard

a. No report.

2. Library by Alicia LaFerriere

a. No report.

3. University Athletics by Corey Landowski

a. No report.

4. Learning Space Advisory Committee by Emily Vieweg

a. No report.

5. Student Voice Project by Jordan DiPalma

a. No report.

K. Ad Hoc Committees

1. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee by Jordan DiPalma

a. No report.

**XVI. Staff Senate Executive Committee** by Kristi Steinmann

A. They are working on wellbeing initiatives for Staff Senate.

**XVII. President's Cabinet** by Maggie Latterell

A. Emily presented the Campus Climate Survey findings – nothing new since the January Executive meeting. Cabinet meets next Tuesday.

**XVIII. Advisors Comments** by Mark Genkinger

A. No report.

**XIX. Old Business**

**XX. New Business**

A. Staff Senate Wellbeing Initiatives

1. Skipped

B. Potential Ad-Hoc Committee

1. Motion from Lamp to form an ad-hoc to explore adding a service/engagement component to staff position descriptions and then submitting the information and/or recommendation to the Director of Human Resources. Seconded by Latterell. Motion passed.

a. Question from Vieweg – would this be required or optional.

(1) Comment from Lamp – this is what the ad-hoc would explore.

b. Question from Reno – would this be for on-campus or off-campus service?

(1) Comment from Lamp – likely on-campus but something that the ad-hoc would explore.

**XXI. Announcements**

A. Retention Roadshow Link

1. <https://ndsu.zoom.us/rec/share/NYIIHPmSlea1I2nk0eoOBN0w9gZlhwRvEbmbI3bnu4TwuCM2ngPxBijtC4jmHE67.EMrA5N9NukDsn6Vt>

**XXII. Adjourn – 11:25am**

Scheduled meetings:

- Staff Senate: Wednesday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 9:30 am by Zoom or Prairie Rose– Memorial Union

- Executive Committee: Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022, 9:30 am by Zoom or Nueta – Memorial Union