Advisory Board for Student Affairs  
October 19, 2015


**Members Absent:** A. Ghosh, J. Miller

**Guests Present:** Matt Larsen, Director of NDSU Athletics

**Group photo:** taken by NDSU Photographer Dan Koeck at 5:00 pm.

**Meeting called to order** by Chair Breanne Hogie at 5:43 pm.

**Guest speaker**
Matt Larsen, Director of NDSU Athletics was introduced.

After being at NDSU for one year, Matt has been very impressed by NDSU students and their engagement with campus. One of the reasons he was excited about the job at NDSU was the opportunity to build on something that was already really good. It’s important to remember that we have a broad base of athletic success, not just with the football program.

The SHAC is really starting to take shape. Student athletes will be able to train in first class facilities and coaches will be able to recruit in a first class environment. The competition venues in the SHAC will also offer greater comfort for fans. Facility completion is anticipated for fall 2016 occupancy. The phasing of construction will allow some practice spaces to be available as early as the next couple of weeks, more transitioning to take place in late spring or early summer. The Bubble has been a really good option for Baseball, soccer, softball, and football (during playoffs). It was a good investment and a good recruiting tool as well.

Softball was top 25 program last year – the other 24 were mostly from southern areas so given our weather constraints, this is a huge accomplishment. Softball fields will be next renovation project. Anticipated improvements include work on dugouts, grandstand, press box, scoreboard, turf, etc.

With the addition of the Aquatics Center, Matt has been getting questions about the possibility of adding a swimming program. It appears that the facility does not meet the criteria established by the NCAA for swimming competition, so that is an unlikely addition.

It was recently announced that NDSU would provide cost of attendance for all student athletes beginning in fall 2017. Currently, scholarships are calculated to cover five key expenses: tuition, fees, room, board, and books. There are additional costs associated with attendance, such as transportation, general living expenses, etc. The time demands on athletes prevent
them from getting a job. The plan is to implement cost of attendance across the board so that no one team or athlete is more important than another. Offering cost of attendance will help us in recruiting student athletes, allowing us to compete with institutions that are already offering cost of attendance. We need to be well positioned for recruiting, as conferences reorganize etc.

The significance of student participation was emphasized. It is crucial to have engaged students at games; they bring something different than other fan bases. Student attendance at football games continues to be a discussion between Athletics and Student Government. After Homecoming, the numbers really drop off. If students are not going to use all of their ticket allocation, how do we potentially reallocate them so we can minimize the home field advantage? The waiting list for people wanting to buy season tickets is approximately 5000 deep.

Our student athletes know why they are here. The academic standing of our student athletes is a first and foremost priority. In spring 2015, we had 425 student athletes, representing a broad range of academic disciplines. The average cumulative GPA was 3.12, as compared to a 2.98 All-Campus average cumulative GPA.

As enrollment increases, will new sports be added to the athletics program? Facilities and funding are the most significant factors when deciding to increase the number of sports available. Startup costs are substantial, and developing and maintaining a highly successful program is expensive. Currently, 60% of the $19-20 million dollar budget comes from various fundraising activities. Also have to consider whether there is regional competition of if we would have extensive travel required to maintain the sport. Within our region of the country the two most likely sports that would provide appropriate competition would be tennis and swimming. In both cases we have facility needs and issues.

A copy of the 2014-15 Annual Report was distributed to the group.

**Student Affairs Insight Discussion:** Students’ perceptions of “mattering” and its relationship to engagement and retention.

Discussion questions

*What types of activities allow students to gain a sense of mattering?*
Getting involved in student groups or attending campus programs to feel part of a group. Group work in classes or study sessions gets students connected with others.

*Can faculty/staff notice if a student does not feel like they matter?*
In smaller classes faculty get to know students better, for most it’s the best part of their job. Sometimes it’s difficult to tell if a student is feeling like they don’t matter versus general boredom, exhaustion, or home-sickness.

*What types of in-class activities encourage students to feel like they matter?*
Group projects allow students to be accountable to others in addition to earning a grade. Find ways to create buy-in and ownership of the learning process.

*Why do transfer students feel like they matter less than non-transfer students?*
Orientations for first year and transfer students is very different. Make campus tours memorable, personalize them. Attend to the needs of second year and transfer students. It takes time to engage international students. Work to bridge the gap between International and domestic transfer students.

**Next meeting:** Monday, November 23, 2015
Scheduled guest is Bridget Burke, Dean of Libraries

**Meeting adjourned:** at 7:02 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Janna Stoskopf
Assistant Vice President and Dean of Student Life