

## Minutes

# NDSU STAFF SENATE

Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Prairie Rose – Memorial Union

<https://ndsu.zoom.us/j/92605614935?pwd=45L59sVaGQreuWIrJwGamJkDTBTib.1>

*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.*

*Shared governance is the collaborative process through which we develop campus policies, practices, and initiatives that support the common good of our institution. As members of the NDSU community, we are committed to living out our institutional mission and values toward our strategic goals and aspirations, in alignment with the shared governance principles of transparency, responsibility, good faith and respect. In doing so through shared governance, we shall adhere to the framework established by the Constitution of North Dakota and the North Dakota Century Code, while acknowledging the delegated authority granted to each institution and their respective presidents by the State Board of Higher Education.*

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

- I. Called to Order** at 9:32 am.
- II. Land Acknowledgement & Shared Governance Statement**
- III. Preliminary Attendance Report and Quorum Check** by Melissa Lamp
  - A. Final attendance report will be in the minutes.
- IV. Approval of Meeting Agenda** – Approved by unanimous consent.
- V. Approval of Wednesday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2026 Meeting Minutes** – Approved by unanimous consent.
- VI. Campus Kudos** by April Helgaas/Nazrin Ferdousi
  - A. Kelsey Seeba – Academic Advising Center
  - B. Kelsey Turner – Accounting Service Center
  - C. Yoko (George) Kosugi – Ag & Biosystems Engineering
  - D. Simone Ludwig – Computer Science
- VII. Faculty Senate Report** by Lisa Montplaisir
  - A. Next Faculty meeting next Monday
  - B. No new policies coming through but several are being discussed; in conversation with students on dead week policy
  - C. ERP – state level – Blackboard notorious going down first week and last week systemwide – push that issue with CCF and onto SBHE – not feasible to push for online courses and online resources with system going down
  - D. Bylaws updates in November and December
  - E. Alignment between campus policy and procedures
  - F. Post-tenure review became state law rather than functioning under SBHE
  - G. SBHE meeting last week – working with Anna – where can take courses and how you can take courses
  - H. Student government at state level is pushing for fall break sometime between Labor Day and Veterans Day – sometime in October
  - I. Reduced credit hour – somewhere between 90 and 120 – degree is set at 120 h currently – last Thursday that between now and 2030 that institutions can recommend up to 2 “Bachelors of Applied Sciences” – prohibits programs from requiring licensures/certificates – Lisa put forth health care and education which both have shortages and require licensing – resulted in waiver being allowed if someone is willing to sign off on it (i.e. Alerus, Sanford, etc.) – Provost Veil will most likely working on promoting 2 programs

## VIII. Student Government Report by Nic Frello/Caleb Jarvis

### IX. Program

#### A. Mr. Rick Berg – Interim President

1. President Cook spoke first
  - a. gave thanks to all staff for their hard work and the work put forth toward shared governance
  - b. Introduced Interim President Rick Berg – legislature and businessman, has helped Cook during his tenure
2. 3 years in the student senate from the college of ag
3. 3 objectives
  - a. Keep the ship steady and on course – continue the work that Pres. Cook has done
  - b. We're at a critical point for higher ed for the funding formula – working with legislature leaders and committees on the funding formula
  - c. Help set up the new President for success – learn what's working well and what areas can we improve on – what barriers are there to doing the job we need to do
    - (1) Has not been employed in higher education so thought it might be a weakness but from having talked to several people and think that it brings a unique perspective
    - (2) Staff are his “heros” because they are the ones that make the University run
    - (3) Cook put together a good team
    - (4) Really believes in ground up
4. Q & A
  - a. Fred – when you found out that you were selected for the role, what were the top 3 things you were excited about?
    - (1) It's an honor – dad was the 1<sup>st</sup> generation to go to college – dad was really proud that all Rick's siblings came to NDSU
    - (2) Students come here to work hard
    - (3) Collaboration and integrity are inherent to the character of the students that come here.
    - (4) Students are successful when they leave NDSU.
    - (5) Help students connect to that next step. Let companies know the quality of students leaving NDSU.
  - b. Tabitha Thomas – when you were selected, were there any oh my god what have I done moments?
    - (1) Has been really excited but did have one moment where he got a pit in his stomach.
  - c. Kristi Steinmann – Also came to higher ed from outside, allows Berg to come in with the viewpoint of why do we do things the way we do them. Are you involved in the next 4 months involved in other legislative decisions or just the funding formula?
    - (1) Sorting through the role of the board and the role of individual institutions – how can we make everything run as efficiently as possible?
      - (a) Really want the board to be our advocate – focus on policy and not the weeds of day to day management of the university, consistency across institutions within the system
    - (2) Priorities for legislature – human services, K-12, and then higher ed (work force)
    - (3) 2 interim committees regarding higher ed – priority will be funding formula
    - (4) Setting the stage for a better relationship and setting the stage for the legislature to know how it will benefit
  - d. Ben Bernard – as a former legislator, what are the best ways for staff to engage with legislators before and during the next legislative session?
    - (1) Need to build relationships and not go to your legislator with an “emergency”
    - (2) Make sure we have a unified voice going to the legislature

#### B. Brent DeKrey – Facilities Management

1. In this role since October 2025 but have been with Facilities for about 15 years
2. NDSU Grad – Mechanical Engineering and MBA
3. Office in Thorson Maintenance Center
4. Facilities Management – mission of NDSU Facilities management is to help plan, create, maintain, and operate an environment conducive to learning and research, all of which is to be accomplished through the most economic way possible.
5. Tasks
  - a. 2,000,000 sq ft parking lots plowed and maintain
    - (1) 28 miles of sidewalks, 4 hours to clear all sidewalks once
  - b. 140,000 flowers propagated – 36 floral beds
  - c. 40 acres of sports fields maintained
  - d. Over 100 buildings encompassing 258 acres
  - e. Average 45+ work orders per day
    - (1) Have to prioritize – heating and electrical, residence
  - f. Change 5,500 air filters/year
  - g. Maintain 30 emergency generators
6. Richard Offerdahl '65 Engineering Complex
  - a. Million dollar project
  - b. Offerdahl Hall and Offerdahl North opening Fall 2026
  - c. Offerdahl West renovation starting Fall 2026 – will take about a year
  - d. South skywalk connecting to FLC
  - e. North skywalk connecting to Aldevron Tower
  - f. Hope to move into Offerdahl Hall and Offerdahl North early summer
  - g. Skywalks will open when Offerdahl Hall and Offerdahl North open
  - h. Focus was on engineering on display – lots of windows
  - i. Key area – senior design studio
  - j. Will have some road closures this summer due to utilities and repaving – wanted to wait until project done to repave so didn't wreck new pavement with heavy construction equipment
7. Bolley Agriculture Laboratory
  - a. Plant pathology, plant breeding, weed science, agronomy, soil science, and horticulture
  - b. ~\$90 million
  - c. Wrapping up Spring 2026 with move in to follow.
  - d. More of a working building than a showcase building.
  - e. Henry Bolley – one of first faculty in Agriculture
  - f. Demo Wiidikas, Potato Research, and L&B South Greenhouse summer 2026
    - (1) Grass and green fields in their place for now
8. Intramural fields
  - a. 2 fields
  - b. Fencing, lights, bleachers
  - c. Storage south side – current HVAC building, also has a couple of bathrooms
9. Seim Hall
  - a. Full renovation underway
  - b. Student input sessions during design
  - c. Connecting stairwells between lounge space on one floor and floor above
  - d. Study space on each floor
  - e. Improved lounge space
  - f. Opening fall semester 2027
  - g. Unlike Pavcek where left walls, Seim was entirely gutted so floorplans are changing too
  - h. Next will be Thompson and the other high rise

10. University Village
  - a. 2 apartment buildings
    - (1) 206 units
  - b. ~\$54 million project
  - c. Central club house
  - d. Open field, volleyball
  - e. New maintenance garage
  - f. Demo Phase 1 summer 2026
    - (1) Demo east side first
    - (2) Demo west side after new buildings open
  - g. 1<sup>st</sup> building opens Fall 2027
11. Memorial Union
  - a. 2 components
    - (1) Student vote for renovation (\$25 million)
    - (2) Fundraising for Welcome Center addition (\$25 million)
      - (a) Go where Dinan is
      - (b) Combining services (i.e. One Stop)
      - (c) Mostly offices
    - (3) \$50 million total project
  - b. Hope to start Summer 2027
  - c. Basement remodeled this past summer
  - d. Focus on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors
  - e. Likely will include moving functions and groups within the Union and possibly to Ladd Hall
  - f. Focus on legacy of what you leave for future students more so than benefit to current students
12. Lots of other smaller projects going on

**X. President's Report** by Joshua Schroetter

- A. Federal Actions
  1. [NDSU Federal Actions Updates](#)
  2. No new updates, no recent meetings.
- B. President's Cabinet
  1. Had meeting on 2/2 – 1<sup>st</sup> meeting for Provost Veil and Interim President Berg, meeting was mostly introductions
- C. Leadership Assembly
  1. On Monday, email went out yesterday
- D. President Search by Shiloh Susag
  1. Deadline for full consideration is Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>
- E. Provost listening sessions
  1. Shwa sent email for Staff focused listening session on Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> at 11
  2. Staff and Faculty is Mar. 18<sup>th</sup> at 10
  3. [Provost Listening Sessions](#)

**XI. Old Business**

- A. Bylaw revisions
- B. Legislative priorities
  1. Group work

**XII. New Business**

**XIII. Senate Coordinating Council** by Kay Hopkins

- A. **Consent Agenda**
  1. None
- B. **Input Agenda**

1. None

**XIV. Treasurer's Report** by April Helgaas

- A. Appropriated: \$5,714.82
- B. Local: \$1,264.28
- C. Scholarship: \$318.83
- D. Staff Senate Support Fund: \$992.91

**XV. Staff Senate Executive Committee** by Shiloh Susag

**XVI. Advisor's Comments** by Mark Genkinger

**XVII. Other Business Reports – Check end of agenda for more reports.**

- A. Public Relations Officer Report by Libby Hardwick-Nelson
- B. Staff Senate Committees
  1. Elections by Kay Hopkins
  2. Legislative and Bylaws by Jeremy Kopp/Kristi Steinmann
  3. Information Technology by Daniel Erichsen
  4. **Scholarship by Jenna Reno**
    - a. Scholarship applications will open today or tomorrow
  5. **Staff Development by Melissa Lamp**
    - a. February 26<sup>th</sup>, 10:00-12:00
    - b. Joy Lab – Darcy Bakkegard
  6. Staff Recognition by Nazrin Ferdousi/April Helgaas
  7. Campus Engagement by Maggie Latterell
  8. **Gunkelman Award by Jenn Young/Tyre Leapaldt**
    - a. Ceremony will be May 4<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm; nominations will be open March 2<sup>nd</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>
  9. Access and Opportunity Committee by Val Jones
    - a. 1<sup>st</sup> session for Digital accessibility yesterday – session tomorrow morning as well
    - b. Feb. 21<sup>st</sup> at 1 pm is the Sensory Friendly Men's Basketball Game – Autism friendly game
- C. State Staff Senate by Jenn Young
- D. Joint Committees
  1. Campus Space and Facilities by Jenn Young/Ben Bernard/Megan Hubbard
  2. Library by Alicia LaFerriere
  3. University Athletics by Connor Copeland/Matt Diischer
  4. Learning Space Advisory Committee by Alicia LaFerriere
- E. Ad Hoc Committees
- F. Day of Honor by Jeremy Kopp/Corey Landowski/Kristi Steinmann
  1. Two weeks from tomorrow – 2 pm on Feb. 19th

**XVIII. Announcements and Open Discussion**

- A. Reminder that next month's meeting will not be in the Memorial Union – it will be in the Reimers Conference Room in the Alumni Center.

**XIX. Adjourned** at 11:15 am.

Future Staff Senate Meetings:

**Regular meetings: All in Prairie Rose in the Memorial Union unless otherwise noted.**

- March 4, 2026 – Will be in Reimers Conference Room in the McGovern Alumni Center
- April 1, 2026
- May 6, 2026

**Exec committee:**

- February 18, 2026
- March 18, 2026
- April 15, 2026
- May 20, 2026

Business Reports Submitted through Form:

**A. Public Relations Officer Report by Libby Hardwick-Nelson**

- No report.

**B. Staff Senate Committees**

**1. Elections by Kay Hopkins**

- No report.

**2. Legislative and Bylaws by Jeremy Kopp/Kristi Steinmann**

- No report.

**3. Information Technology by Daniel Erichsen**

- No report.

**4. Scholarship by Jenna Reno**

- Will open staff and dependent scholarship application window from Feb 2nd to March 20th.
- We have some local corporate companies interested in sponsoring a scholarship, so checking with the Foundation if that is possible.

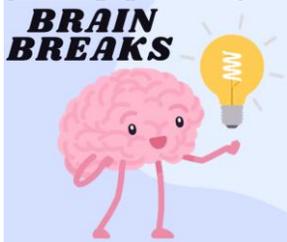
**5. Staff Development by Melissa Lamp**

- Hold the date – Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 to 12:00 for Professional Development speaker

**6. Staff Recognition by Nazrin Ferdousi/April Helgaas**

- Continue work on Campus Kudos
  1. Getting Tax Withholding Forms signed for those that received gifts in January
  2. Emailed nominees for February meeting
- Please let the committee know if you have any suggestions for them

**7. Campus Engagement by Maggie Latterell**



- 1. February 10<sup>th</sup> (1-3 pm) in MU – Nueta
  2. Theme: NDSU Trivia
- Cans for Candygrams – February
  1. Piloting with only senators sending (limit 3)
  2. 1 canned good for each candygram delivered to a person of your choosing on campus
  3. February meeting: collecting cans & optional notes to include with candygram
  4. Candygram delivery on February 13<sup>th</sup>
  5. Additional information and reminder prior to February meeting
- This year we're continuing to support Goods for the Herd but shifting how we do it. We'll be collecting empty egg cartons ALL YEAR. We can save money by buying eggs in bulk, but we need containers to put them in. We'll take paper, plastic, foam! Any type you have – we want!
  1. Drop off locations include:
    - a. ACE Tutoring (West Dining Center – Lower Level)
    - b. Admissions Office (Ceres)
    - c. Student Affairs and Institutional Equity Office (Old Main)
    - d. Student Government Office (Memorial Union)

**8. Gunkelman Award by Jenn Young/Tyre Leapaltd**

- Ceremony will be held on May 4<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm.
- Met 1/13/26 at 1:30 pm.
  1. Made committee assignments.
  2. Decided nomination open period would be March 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup> (30<sup>th</sup> when Jenn gets to work and closes them).
  3. Set future meeting dates.
- Next meeting 2/17 – discuss what to put in the folders – have done buttons and magnets in the past
- Meeting 3/17 to touch base, 4/8 to select winner, and 4/23 to assemble folders.

## 9. Access and Opportunity Committee by Val Jones

- No report.

## C. State Staff Senate by Jenn Young

### 1. NDUS COO Meredith Larson

- Prior to becoming the COO, Meredith served as an Assistant Attorney General and legal counsel to the SBHE and a number of NDUS institutions. She graduated from UND and holds a BA in Psychology and JD with distinction. She launched her legal career as a prosecutor in Grand Forks County State's Attorney's Office, focused on cases involving interpersonal violence and played a key role in major public initiatives. She also currently serves as a board member for the Community Violence Intervention Center and the North Dakota State Bar Foundation. She lives in Grand Forks with her husband and 3 children.
- Joined the NDUS office in August and has enjoyed working with Commissioner Sanford. Busy time at NDUS office with 3 presidential searches (NDSU utilizing search firm but BSC and VCSU searches going through NDUS) and a big governance study going on with consultant Sagency out of Fargo.
- Day to day varies: working as Commissioner's right hand; liaison with staff, with presidents; manages a lot of the higher level HR issues that come up; work a lot with people on campuses; point person on some of the searches and system alignment project; managing a couple of independent investigations going on in the system
- Change to council reporting – HRC is now going to report directly to the governing board instead of being part of Administrative Affairs.
- Discussion regarding tuition waivers – still a lot of unknowns about how tuition waivers actually work in the NDUS system, differences between in-person and on-line, Meredith suggested working with faculty counterparts to bring something to the board
- Question/comment regarding employees learning important information from the news rather than from campus communications – there are things that they can't disclose until SBHE makes an announcement; will try to be mindful of letting staff know but some things that Meredith can't do anything about
- Very willing to work with staff on whatever we need – feel free to reach out to her via email or text

### 2. Campus updates:

- BSC – working on Bylaws; looking into offering CPR training for all staff
- VCSU – interim president has started; Staff Senate put forth names for presidential search committee
- DCB – search for Campus Dean is under way – hoping to have someone hired by the end of February; met 1/8 to narrow down applicants and will start interviews in a couple of weeks
- UND – starting master planning process that will take about a year; community coat project; suggestion box has been inundated with concerns regarding snow removal and closings and safety of staff especially during the break
- WSC – new healthcare building opens for students on 1/13; formed committee designed to see who takes over the spaces that healthcare vacated

### 3. SBHE update:

- Haven't had an official board meeting since NDSSS December meeting. Did have an emergency meeting that went straight into executive session regarding compliancy issue at DCB and DSU.
- Next regular board meeting is 1/29. Special board meeting 1/22 to determine NDSU's interim president.
- Conversations at 1/29 meeting will likely concern interim legislative sessions, reduced credit hour degrees, and shared services

### 4. Committees:

- Bylaws: first reading was conducted, will vote on updates at the next meeting
- Staff Recognition: ready to move forward once have approval from the Commissioner; Chris Peske gave feedback to make sure the award is awardable; will be sending an email to join the decision committee for the Award

- Professional Development: December meeting cancelled due to storm closures on campuses and some additional conflicts; next meeting 1/29
  - Staff Affairs: gathering information; collecting it on Teams
5. ND SSS email – got an email that will be monitored by the President, President-Elect, and Award Chair
  6. Nominations for SBHE rep – Anna Kinney was nominated again – voting will be at the next meeting per our Bylaws, allows nominee(s) to confirm with their supervisor that they can commit the time to being on the SBHE board

**D. Joint Committees**

**1. Campus Space and Facilities by Jenn Young/Ben Bernard/Megan Hubbard**

- No report.

**2. Library by Alicia LaFerriere**

- No report.

**3. University Athletics by Connor Copeland/Matt Diischer**

- No report.

**4. Learning Space Advisory Committee by Alicia LaFerriere**

- No report.

**E. Ad Hoc Committees**

**F. Day of Honor by Jeremy Kopp/Corey Landowski/Kristi Steinmann**

- Ceremony will be held on Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm in the Oceti Sakowin Ballroom and on Zoom.