

WORK TEAM NUMBER:

4A

WORK TEAM NAME:

Diversity, Inclusion, and Respect/Access at NDSU

This team will work to make NDSU a better community for historically underrepresented populations and to operationalize belonging and the diversity and inclusion goals of the strategic plan.

Recap of the goals we established at the start of the year:

- Goal #1: Review and reframe the Office of Multicultural Programs
 - The Office of Multicultural Programs (OMP) was renamed and rebranded the Center for Community and Belonging (CCB) in the Fall. This change was communicated to campus to increase awareness of name, brand, and function of office. Staff was encouraged to work with different and multiple entities across the university to build or strengthen relationships or partnerships, and the Center hosted a variety of programs ranging from activities for students to professional development opportunities and workshops. There was an effort to increase the frequency of programming and to be more expansive in what programs were offered to highlight student perspectives, lived experiences and in building a more welcoming and supportive campus community.
 - The Center, for the first time this year, celebrated and brought awareness to the history of the LGBTQ population and their experiences. The Center, in their efforts to build awareness of and foster an understanding and appreciation of their peers, the NDSU community and the world around them invited the NDSU community to attend heritage and awareness month programs and other activities. In total, forty-four programs were offered this AY.
 - The challenges encountered were mostly related to the intricacies and steps needed to make such changes and to implement a new vision. However, the support was there and that made achieving this goal possible.
 - The next steps for this goal are to continue to build or strengthen relationships across campus, be more engaged and involved in university-wide initiatives, programs, or events, and to be more active in recruitment and retention efforts. In addition, work will be done to closely align future programming with the co-curricular learning outcomes.
- Goal #2: Re-evaluate and restructure the PCDIR
 - The President's Council on Diversity, Inclusion, and Respect (PCDIR) met monthly during the Fall semester. This provided the opportunity to assess membership and its process for recruitment, establish and communicate participant engagement and attendance, and identify short and long-term goals. The PCDIR did explore and discuss these items and how to move forward with the council. It was determined that the council would be dismantled with the possibility for a new council with a new name and framework. Members were thanked for their service and excused and the council was ended December 2024.

- The council did meet during the Fall and did have an opportunity to revisit past goals, celebrate accomplishments, and address challenges and opportunities for future work. They were formally excused and seemed to understand the decision and vision for a new council.
- The challenges to this goal relate to the anti-DEI executive orders issued, the Dear Colleague Letter, and the uncertainty of what it all meant and how could this work be done or navigated with these new mandates and regulations. Essentially, the introduction and enforcement of external policies and guidelines made this goal more difficult to meet.
- Continue to explore and reimagine the work of the PCDIR in a more holistic, all-encompassing and thoughtful way. Currently, and continuing throughout the summer months, the PCW and the PCDIR are exploring a merger and The question remains of how does one continue to do the work, while already compliant, with a wider focus, reach, and that truly creates and maintains a welcoming and supportive environment for all stakeholders.
- Goal #3: Develop uniform naming around DIR initiatives and sub-committees
 - Earlier this AY, meetings were held with campus partners and other DIR units across NDSU community. Some efforts were made then to develop a naming system that was uniform and consistent across these groups. In fact, most DIR units renamed themselves to better align with the access and opportunity title.
 - A total of three roles and one unit renamed themselves after access and opportunity. And many more were in the process of renaming themselves with the same name change or something entirely different.
 - Since the new administration and its executive orders pertaining to DEI, the work to completing this goal has been stalled. This is, in large part, due to what language, if any, was acceptable as we considered the changing of names and re-imagining the work and how to better serve all members of our community.
 - This may need some more thought and careful review and consideration. With the merger of the PCW and PCDIR, this goal may be one that the group tackles in its earlier meetings for the next AY.
- Goal #4: Bison Bridge 25-26 Vision
 - Bison Bridge will take place this August and is set to welcome 47 incoming students to participate in the three-day program. Our goal was 50 and we were close to meeting that goal. We will also invite five former Bison Bridge students to help support the program during that time as well as to establish relationships with the new students.
 - We were successful in getting the word out earlier this year and that greatly impacted our recruitment efforts, and we were able to get 50+ students to register for this year's Bison Bridge. After reviewing registration materials, we ended up with the number we have now but that is an increase from last year's number of 32 participants.
 - A challenge for us, this year, was that in our efforts to be more inclusive in the language used in marketing materials, we ended up with a less diverse student group participating in this year's Bison Bridge program.

- Continue to meet with staff at the Foundation to explore options for funding and continued support for this program. And revisit with Admissions to discuss recruiting efforts for the next cycle.
- Proposal for new initiatives and/or resources needed to move forward:
 - This upcoming year, there will be more of a focus on connecting units, offices, and services to better align with a broader vision for student support. Some of the ways in which this can be accomplished are as follows:
 - The PCW and PCDIR merger and the identification of goals that support the well-being of NDSU and its stakeholders while ensuring that it is a more welcoming and supportive community for all students, staff, and faculty
 - The completion of goals long left unattended, such as the Grandmother Earth Garden and the repatriation plan
 - Unique and creative ideas and solutions to requests that haven't been met such as the Native American Center for our NDSU community
 - And discussions around the potential departmental alignment within Student Affairs and Institutional Equity this is ongoing and that will explore the efforts that support student engagement, identify opportunities for improved collaboration, and consider structure/colocation options
 - Bison Bridge will continue to be a priority and conversations with the foundation and other supports will be ongoing to better support the program and institutionalize it, if possible.