

Assurance Argument North Dakota State University

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Welcome Message for Review Team

Welcome to NDSU!

The image above shows a popular tradition at NDSU: *Walk Through the Gates*. First-year students are greeted by a handshake or a fist bump from President Cook and cheered on by NDSU faculty and staff, alumni, supporters, and members of the Gold Star Marching Band as these students walk through the university gates on the first day of the fall semester. It's a high-energy and encouraging welcome to NDSU as these first-year students start their college journeys. Four years later, President Cook shakes their hands again while presenting them with their diplomas during the commencement ceremony. Graduating students often reflect on how memorable the *Walk Through the Gates* experience is for them so many years later.

We hope that your short time on the NDSU campus will be memorable as well, and we greatly appreciate the time that you are investing in NDSU.

Go Bison!

1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A. Mission Alignment

The institution's educational programs, enrollment profile and scope of operations align with its publicly articulated mission.

Argument

NDSU is a public institution that serves the citizens of North Dakota and the region through the delivery of educational programs that prepare students for the future, outreach activities that improve lives, and cutting-edge research that addresses the needs of the state, nation, and world. During the 2019-2020 academic year, the strategic planning committee developed new mission, vision, and core values statements, while developing the [2021-2026 strategic plan](#). The committee (full committee; thematic working groups) was composed of students, faculty, staff, and external stakeholder representatives, and input from the campus community guided the entire strategic planning process with final review by the governance units (faculty senate, staff senate, student government).

The mission statement clarifies how NDSU implements its key messages, which continue to serve as the identity of the institution: "We provide transformational education [key message: student-focused], create knowledge through innovative research [research], and share knowledge through community engagement that meets the needs of North Dakota and the world [land-grant]." The statement, "a student-focused, land-grant, research university," has become NDSU's boilerplate [mission statement](#). The three key messages in this statement embody NDSU's mission to address the ever-changing needs and aspirations of people through 21st-century learning, outreach, and discovery.

NDSU articulates its three key messages—student-focused, land-grant, research university—on webpages, at orientation and admissions events, and in other public forums, such as presidential addresses and [news updates](#). [PowerPoint templates](#) created by the Office of Marketing and Communications (formerly University Relations) for NDSU presentations feature the three key messages.

Educational Programs

Five academic colleges deliver NDSU's academic portfolio. As a land-grant institution, NDSU emphasizes programs in agriculture, engineering, and the applied sciences while maintaining a commitment to the social sciences and humanities. The university offers 92 bachelor's majors, 68 master's majors, and 49 doctoral majors, in addition to minors and more than 60 undergraduate and graduate certificates. The [University Catalog](#) outlines the requirements to complete these programs.

Degree programs and certificates meet student needs and the land-grant component of NDSU's mission. New programs and certificates, such as bachelor's degrees in agricultural technology, cybersecurity, and supply chain management and certificates in energy engineering and entrepreneurship, serve North Dakota's growing workforce needs. The course and degree program approval process ensures that programs are at the appropriate level, meet student demand, and serve the needs of North Dakota and the region (see 3.A).

Enrollment Profile

In Fall 2024, NDSU enrolled 11,952 students, including 9,762 undergraduate students, 1,980 graduate students, and 210 professional students. Of these, 11,661 (97.6%) are degree-seeking. Approximately 40% of NDSU students are North Dakota residents, 53% are domestic students from other states, and 7% are international students from 73 countries. Approximately 79% of all NDSU students identify as white, and nearly 20% identify as racial or ethnic minorities (1.6% did not report race/ethnicity). Female students make up 51% of the student body. About 21% of NDSU's undergraduate students are Pell grant recipients, and approximately 12% are first-generation students.

Scope of Operations

NDSU's academic and cocurricular programs are aligned with the key messages (student-focused, land-grant, research university) and its land-grant mission. Academic programs focus on disciplines relevant to serving the people of North Dakota and the region: applied agriculture, engineering, and sciences; human sciences and education; healthcare; business; and liberal arts and sciences. NDSU offers undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree programs, as well as undergraduate and graduate non-degree enrollment options. Course and program offerings are available in traditional classroom settings, as well as through online options. Students gain further experience through internships, practicums, and undergraduate research experiences. The Office of Teaching and Learning offers continuing education for K-12 teachers. The general education program supports the development of students into global citizens (see 3.B). Graduate programs support the development of students into disciplined researchers and practitioners. Cocurricular programs support well-rounded student development (see 3.E).

NDSU offers a comprehensive set of year-round academic and cocurricular support programs (see 3.D). The organizational charts from the Office of the Provost and the Division of Finance and Administration show the current organization of student support services.

- The Career and Advising Center coordinates assistance for students as they explore academic majors and career goals. A new centralized advising model (see 3.G) provides a consistent, high-quality advising experience across the first two years of a student's career.
- The Dean of Students Office provides a recognizable, central point of contact for students, families, faculty, and staff around issues of student care, conduct, and advocacy.
- The Residence Life and Wellness Center units, in the Division of Finance and Administration, collaborate with other cocurricular units across campus and conduct cocurricular assessment (see 3.E).

- The Office of International Student Services and Study Abroad manages international student recruitment, with oversight by the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Institutional Equity.

The budget process (see 4.B) ensures fund allocation supports NDSU's mission.

New employees are introduced to NDSU's mission through new employee orientation.

Sources

- 1.A._Provost Office Org Chart
- 1.A._Mission Vision Values
- 1.A._Strategic Plan 2021-2026
- 1.A._PDF of PPT Template
- 1.A._2025-09 VPFA Org Chart
- 1.A._News_combined
- 1.A._New Employee Orientation - Intro Org Structure
- 1.A._Floor Banners
- 1.A._Grad School Viewbook
- 1.A._Visit Mailer

1.B. Mission and Public Good

The institution's operation of the academic enterprise demonstrates its commitment to serving the public good.

Argument

NDSU is a public institution and part of the North Dakota University System (NDUS). NDSU does not support external interests that are unrelated to its educational mission, contribute to a parent organization, or generate funds for investors. As a land-grant institution, NDSU welcomes its obligation to educate students, serve its community, and conduct research relevant to people's lives. NDSU's resources are used exclusively to support its public mission.

NDSU Extension, which employs professionals on campus, at Research Extension Centers (RECs), and in 53 county and local offices, reported over 210,000 direct education contacts in 2024 through 7,500 educational sessions and over 15,000 recorded education hours. Extension is a system of trusted community members, meeting people where they live to deliver tailored, innovative, and accessible educational programs, resources, and partnerships. NDSU Extension is research-based and data-informed and connects university science to community issues to change lives. Emphasis is placed on strengthening agriculture and the development and potential of youth, adults, and communities. A quarterly newsletter features state-wide impacts of Extension.

The North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station (NDAES), with its main Fargo station and seven RECs, develops and disseminates research and technology important to the production and use of food, feed, fiber and fuel from crop and livestock enterprises. The Ag Hub website provides public access to a wide variety of agriculture-related topics, including reports and newsletters that summarize NDSU Extension activities, such as the Crop & Pest Report or Agriculture by the Numbers.

NDSU Extension and NDAES offer numerous examples of actions and decisions serving the public in an educational role. Each summer, NDAES sponsors NDSU Field Days where agricultural producers can learn about research, ask questions and suggest projects. NDSU Extension produces publications and educational news columns on topics ranging from crops and livestock, energy and economics, to family issues, nutrition and financial planning. NDSU Extension reaches out to North Dakotans of all ages to offer informal education to develop the potential of youth, adults and communities. Recent efforts also focus on stress management and mental health of farmers and ranchers. NDSU Extension impact reports summarize accomplishments and their impact on the state and its citizens.

See 1.C for examples of student volunteer work that contribute to the public good.

NDSU engages with other identified external constituencies and communities of interest outside of its campus borders.

Some colleges and departments have external advisory boards, such as the College of

Engineering Advisory and Advancement Board, College of Business Advisory Board, and Pharmacy Alumni Advisory Board. These boards provide advice on the relevance of curriculum, the post-graduation performance of students, potential research partnerships, and other needs.

NDSU has programs providing specialized expertise, research, and services to the public in a wide range of disciplinary areas.

- As a land-grant institution in a state with a large indigenous population, NDSU hosts the American Indian Public Health Resource Center, which works with tribes in North Dakota, across the Northern Plains, and across the nation to advance health equity, indigenous-led research, policy development, and culturally grounded public health practices.
- Since 2002, NDSU's telepharmacy sites have provided pharmacy services to rural areas. Currently, 94 pharmacies across North Dakota participate, and the program has impacted approximately 80,000 rural citizens since its inception. The program has restored access to health care in remote, medically underserved rural communities and has added approximately \$26.5 million annually in economic development to the local economy.
- NDSU offers several research opportunities for undergraduates, including summer research experiences for undergraduates (REU). For example, the Collaborations in Discipline-based Education Research (CiDER) REU program completed its 11th summer of undergraduate research in discipline-based education for non-NDSU undergraduate students that includes on-campus housing, a stipend, and a mentored research experience by discipline-based education researchers. In addition, faculty in the departments of Chemistry and Biochemistry and Coating and Polymeric Materials partner to host the Green Chemistry REU. Researchers in the Department of Biological Sciences host Pollination Nation REU, which focuses on projects investigating the development and health of agriculturally beneficial bee pollinators.

The Metro College Alliance is a long-standing partnership between five higher education institutions in the Fargo/Moorhead area. Students registered at any of the institutions can enroll in one class per semester at the other institutions at no additional expense (outside of tuition paid to the original institution) and without an admission application.

Students, faculty, and staff engage with the local community and contribute to the region's vitality. Examples include:

- The Challey School of Music offers a broad range of musical events, often free and open to the public, while the NDSU Music Academy provides music lessons for children and adults throughout the community.
- The Department of Architecture's Freedom by Design program provides design-and-build services for individuals with physical, mental, and/or financial challenges to create safe environments without physical or implied barriers.
- Each year, near the birth date of Charles Darwin (February 12), the Department of Biological Sciences sponsors Darwin Days, which includes displays, a scientific lecture, and public media presentations, all related to evolution.
- Students in the College of Business provide free tax preparation for the local community through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.
- The Center for Entrepreneurship and Family Business connects community members

and alumni with entrepreneurially minded students while supporting and providing resources for entrepreneurs and family businesses.

- The College of Engineering maintains an active K-12 outreach program that features hands-on classroom activities, interactive STEM events, summer camps, and teacher partnerships. The college also hosts an annual First Lego League regional qualifying tournament and an annual First Tech Challenge regional qualifying tournament.
- Students in the Department of Human Development and Family Science participate in service-learning projects and field experience placements in non-profit organizations such as the Alzheimer's Association, North Dakota Autism Center, Rape and Abuse Crisis Center, Make-A-Wish Foundation, and others. Their contributions include developing educational materials, serving as on-call volunteers, and coaching and mentoring program participants.
- Current College of Engineering students reengineer donated off-the-shelf toys to make them accessible for children with physical or motor disabilities.
- The Department of Mathematics hosts Sonia Kovalevsky Day each year. This event is free and designed for students in 8th through 12th grade to encourage young learners to pursue interests in mathematics and related fields.

The NDSU Libraries 2022-2024 strategic plan emphasized partnerships and public awareness as two focus areas to better support research and services to the public.

The NDSU Research Foundation (NDSURF) manages more than 330 technologies, many of which are commercialized by outside companies. NDSURF executed an average of 32 licenses per year during that same period. (See 2.E for intellectual property policies.)

Sources

- 1.B._Extension Impacts 2024
- 1.B._For the Land and Its People July 2025
- 1.B._Impact Statement_2024 Best of the Best in Wheat Program_Clair Keene_2024
- 1.B._Crop and Pest Report September 11 2025
- 1.B._Center for Entrepreneurship
- 1.B._VITA - Tax Prep
- 1.B._Telepharmacy
- 1.B._Pharmacy Alumni Advisory Board
- 1.B._College of Business Advisory Board
- 1.B._Advisory and Advancement Board
- 1.B._Agriculture By the Numbers September 2025
- 1.B._Ag Website screenshot

1.C. Mission and Diversity of Society

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Argument

NDSU provides opportunities for civic engagement through curricular and cocurricular offerings, as well as through policy and trainings, and through NDSU Extension mission and activities.

As part of the existing general education curriculum, students must complete a 3-credit course in cultural diversity and a 3-credit course in global perspectives (see 3.B). Study abroad is also available as an opportunity to engage with diverse cultures (see 3.B). Student internships, co-ops, and practicums offer students the opportunity to engage with industry and community members from a broad array of backgrounds. Academic programs vary in their requirements related to internships, co-ops, and practicums. The Career and Advising Center assists with placing students in these activities.

The NDSU Volunteer Network provides students and student organizations the opportunity to engage with community members through service projects. For the 2024-2025 academic year, students logged over 14,000 service hours equivalent to approximately \$450,000 of monetary impact for the agencies served, such as the American Cancer Society, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Red River Valley, Emergency Food Pantry, Homeward Animal Shelter, Hospice of the Red River Valley, and others. The Bison Service Challenge is organized by the Volunteer Network and recognizes student organizations who average the most service hours per member over the course of the academic year. Recent winners include the Graduate Nursing Student Organization (category: academic organizations), Bison Robotics (category: non-service organizations), Blue Key Honor Society (category: service-based organizations), and Kappa Alpha Theta (category: fraternity and sorority life).

Civic engagement programs emphasize working together to make informed public decisions and taking action toward addressing social issues. Such programs include the Tapestry of Inclusion, which recognizes students, faculty, staff, and alumni for their accomplishments regarding cultural pluralism; and a partnership with United Way to host Poverty Simulations, which creates an experience for participants to understand what it might be like to live in a typical low-income family, working hard to survive month to month and succeed.

The NDSU Extension mission statement states that they “believe that all people belong and deserve respect.” NDSU Extension engages with its Citizen Advisory Council which “serv[es] as the eyes and ears of Extension’s diverse clientele in communities throughout North Dakota.”

NDSU seeks to understand and improve the experiences and outcomes of its diverse students, faculty, and staff. See 2.A for faculty and staff employment policies. See 3.G for

student success outcomes. NDSU evaluates the employee experience as described in 4.C. The 2021-2026 Strategic Plan includes “Diversity, Inclusivity, and Respect” as one of four broad institutional goals.

NDSU Policy 100 describes its commitment to equal opportunity in employment decisions and educational programs and activities for all individuals without regard to age, color, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, status as a U.S. veteran, or participation in lawful off-campus activity. This list of protected classes is more inclusive than what is required by the state of North Dakota.

NDSU tracks bias reports through a bias reporting system and follows up on non-anonymous reports. Policy 156 outlines formal and informal equal opportunity grievance processes. Annual reports are compiled for students and for employees.

Institutional policies undergo updates as necessary to ensure equitable practice. For example, Promotion, Tenure, and Evaluation policy (Policy 352) is reviewed regularly to identify inequitable or biased elements.

Physical resources to support students and employees are also updated regularly. Recent examples include increased numbers of single-stall restrooms, family restrooms, lactation spaces, and reflections spaces, as well as a map available online to identify these locations. Gender-neutral locker rooms are available in the Wallman Wellness Center and in the Bentson-Bunker Fieldhouse. Indoor walkways connect newly constructed academic buildings to other buildings and to the Memorial Union, increasing ease of accessibility to these spaces in the winter months.

The Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs offers several trainings that support a broad array of perspectives. Trainings are updated regularly.

- Searching for Excellence training is required of all committee members serving on executive and faculty searches. The training addresses ways that bias can influence the recruitment and screening of applicants in a search and presents strategies for overcoming bias.
- Safe Zone Ally Training provides education about issues around gender identity/expression and sexual orientation. It supports development of allies for LGBTQ+ individuals.
- Community of Respect seminars are designed to teach about cultural differences and to encourage participants to think critically about the impact of their cultural values in their relationships with others in order to work more effectively with colleagues and students with a broad range of cultural backgrounds.

The Equal Opportunity and Title IX Compliance Office provides general training required for all employees (students, staff, faculty, and administrators) and additional training required of all supervisors to prevent discrimination and foster a safe, productive, and respectful educational and work environment at NDSU.

The NDSU Office of the Ombudsperson provides a safe environment where members of the NDSU community may explore their concerns, consider the impact of all options, receive information and referrals, and design their best course of action to addressing their concerns. The ombud’s annual report (2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024) details the

recent work of the office and provides recommendations to the NDSU community regarding institutional climate.

Faculty Initiatives for Access & Opportunity

With initial funding provided through the National Science Foundation Advance grant program, FORWARD (Focus on Resources for Women's Advancement, Recruitment/Retention and Development) programs for recruiting, training, and advancing women faculty have been institutionalized under the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs.

- The Promotion to Professor Task Force, initiated through FORWARD, helps associate professors apply for full professorship through mentorship, workshops, and institutional policy review.
- FORWARD Advocates and Allies offers a community for male faculty members seeking to support women faculty in their professional pursuits.
- The Commission on the Status of Women Faculty works with NDSU administration and Faculty Senate to address barriers to success for women faculty.

Faculty affinity groups, such as the International Faculty Group and Women in Research, are supported by the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs to create and foster a supportive and responsive environment for faculty.

Student Initiatives for Access & Opportunity

NDSU recruits, enrolls, and supports students representing many identities and perspectives, including racial and ethnic diversity, gender identity/sexual orientation, veterans, students from rural areas (particularly North Dakota and western Minnesota), first-generation students, students with disabilities, students from low-income backgrounds, and students with other diverse characteristics. For example, in Fall 2024, 14.7% of domestic NDSU students identified with one or more non-white race or ethnicity. This is reflective of regional racial and ethnic diversity: 17% of North Dakota citizens and 23% of Minnesota citizens identify with one or more non-white race or ethnicity. (See 1.A for additional student demographics; see 3.D for support for a broad range of students.)

Student Success Programs engage all students through intentional experiences and services, such as tutoring, peer mentoring, and orientation and Welcome Week events that prioritize holistic success and academic persistence through the first year and beyond. TRIO Student Support Services provides services, such as one-on-one tutoring, self-improvement workshops, and supplemental writing instruction for eligible students (first-generation students, students with a disability, students with low household income). The Center for Community and Belonging hosts cultural events and programs, provides referrals to support services, and advances community and belonging to promote a more equitable campus environment.

NDSU offers more than 250 student organizations to support students with a broad range of identities, affiliations, and interests, both academic and non-academic.

Approved commencement regalia includes items signifying an individual's cultural heritage, religious affiliation, or other recognized community.

Sources

- 1.C._Ombuds Report 2023-24 with Powerpoint video
- 1.C._Ombuds Report 2022-23
- 1.C._Ombuds Report 2021-22
- 1.C._Google My Maps
- 1.C._Volunteer Network
- 1.C._Tapestry of Inclusion
- 1.C._Civic Engagement Programs
- 1.C._Poverty Simulation
- 1.C._Employee_Cases_2023-2024
- 1.C._Student_Cases_2023-2024
- 1.C._NDSU Policy_352_Promotion, Tenure and Evaluation
- 1.C._NDSU Policy_156_Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Complaint Procedures
- 1.C._NDSU Policy_100_Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

Criterion 1 Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Argument

NDSU's mission is defined by three key messages: "student-focused, land-grant, research university." This boilerplate mission statement is publicly shared on the NDSU website and in institutional messaging, such as recruitment materials and news updates. In addition, this mission is shared with all new employees during their orientation. This widespread articulation ensures that the mission is a core part of the university's identity, visible to both internal and external communities.

NDSU's operations are directly aligned with its three-part mission, as indicated by its educational programs, research initiatives, and community engagement.

Student-Focused Operations

The institution's student-focused commitment is demonstrated through:

- Educational Programs: NDSU offers 92 bachelor's, 68 master's, and 49 doctoral majors, with a course and degree program approval process that ensures programs meet student demand and workforce needs. New programs like cybersecurity and supply chain management directly address these needs.
- Student Support Services: A comprehensive set of academic and cocurricular programs, including the Career and Advising Center, Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources, and Dean of Students Office, support student success and well-being.
- Civic Engagement: The NDSU Volunteer Network logged over 14,000 service hours in the 2024-2025 academic year, demonstrating student engagement with the community.

Land-Grant Operations

As a land-grant institution, NDSU prioritizes serving the needs of North Dakota and the region through outreach and practical applications.

- NDSU Extension: With professionals in 53 counties, NDSU Extension had over 210,000 direct education contacts in 2024. It delivers educational programs and resources on topics like agriculture, family issues, and mental health for farmers and ranchers.
- North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station (NDAES): The NDAES, with its main station and seven Research Extension Centers (RECs), develops and disseminates research important to the state's agriculture industry. Public events like NDSU Field Days connect researchers with agricultural producers.
- Specialized Expertise: Programs like the telepharmacy sites, which have provided

pharmacy services to 94 rural communities and impacted approximately 80,000 rural citizens, directly align with the land-grant mission to serve the public.

Research Operations

NDSU's commitment to research and discovery is operationalized through its broad range of research collaborations and initiatives.

- **Research Focus:** NDSU emphasizes programs in agriculture, engineering, and the applied sciences. New programs and partnerships with entities like the College of Engineering Advisory and Advancement Board focus on potential research collaborations.
- **Undergraduate Research:** The university provides various opportunities for undergraduates to participate in research, such as the summer research experiences for undergraduates in areas like Green Chemistry and Pollination Nation.
- **Technology Commercialization:** The NDSU Research Foundation (NDSURF) manages over 330 technologies, with an average of 32 licenses executed per year, demonstrating the translation of research into practical applications.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A. Integrity

Actions taken by the institution's governing board, administration, faculty and staff demonstrate adherence to established policies and procedures.

Argument

NDSU's commitment to operating with integrity in all functions is evidenced by its fair and ethical policies and processes.

NDSU is governed by North Dakota law, State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) policies, and institutional policies. NDSU's policy manual is regularly reviewed for consistency with external policies and procedures. Section 1 of the policy manual contains policies applying to all employees. Section 2 serves as the staff handbook, and Section 3 serves as the faculty handbook. The policy manual and the student code of conduct include statements on professional and ethical behavior, academic misconduct, and grievance procedures. Alleged violations are investigated according to stated procedures, and respondents are made aware of explicit appeal avenues.

NDSU's policy manual is continuously updated and expanded through a coordinated process under the Senate Coordinating Council (SCC), which involves all campus constituents, including faculty, staff, students, and administration (see 4.A). Transparency is maintained by providing meeting minutes that detail current policy review as well as upcoming agendas and policies pending review on the SCC website. SCC meetings are open to campus. Housekeeping changes may be submitted to or initiated by the SCC Secretary without going through the formal policy process. SCC defines housekeeping changes as changes that do not impact policy intent, including "simple corrections in spelling or grammar, modifications in formatting, fixing broken URLs, updating titles and addresses of departments or personnel to coincide with current organizational structures, and using gender inclusive language."

All faculty and staff are required to complete annual training focused on theft, fraud, abuse, waste, and code of conduct. A hotline is available for anonymous reporting of alleged fraud. The Office of the State Auditor conducts external audits of NDSU and performance audits of state agencies, including NDSU. Operational audits are typically conducted every two to four years. Recent examples include audits from 2021 to determine whether overpayments by international students caused excessive refunds and whether special project payroll was properly awarded and processed and from 2023 to determine whether errors, internal control weaknesses, or potential violations of law occurred and whether the School of Pharmacy followed their admission policies when admitting students.

Student academic integrity is governed by Policy 335: Academic Integrity in Instructional Contexts. Policy 601: Rights and Responsibilities of Community: A Code of Student Conduct outlines requirements for non-academic student conduct at NDSU. Procedures for investigating student conduct violations align with federal guidelines and standards. The NDSU Equal Opportunity and Title IX Compliance Office investigates any student cases that may involve discrimination or sexual misconduct allegations. Once investigations are complete, the Dean of Students Office conducts the official hearings. Student-athlete behavior is addressed in the Student-Athlete Handbook.

Faculty academic integrity is governed by Policy 326. Procedures for investigating alleged faculty academic violations are managed under Policy 326. Alleged violations are investigated by the Academic Integrity Committee, a standing committee of the Faculty Senate comprised entirely of faculty, which recommends action to the provost and president.

Fair and ethical grading practices and accurate record keeping are essential for institutional integrity. Students may appeal course grades with final appeals made to the Grade Appeals Board, a standing committee of the Faculty Senate, as outlined in Policy 337.

Commitment to integrity in personnel functions is supported by various policies concerning recruitment and hiring, dismissal and grievance processes. Recruitment and hiring are addressed by the following policies:

- Policy 100: Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination
- Policy 100.1: Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities and Reasonable Accommodation
- Policy 103: Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy on the Announcement of Position Openings
- Policy 103.1: Recruitment for Executive/Administrative/Managerial, Academic Staff and Other Non-Banded Positions
- Policy 104: Recruitment Period for Position Announcements
- Policy 107: Employment Qualifications
- Policy 304: Academic Staff and Executive/Administrative Positions - Procedures for Filling

To assist in policy compliance, NDSU Human Resources provides guidance for members of search committees and administrative staff who support search committee efforts. Position-specific policies for hiring are available for the following employee groups:

- Policy 103.1: Recruitment for Executive/Administrative/Managerial, Academic Staff and Other Non-Banded Positions
- Policy 200: Recruitment for Professional Staff Positions
- Policy 201: Recruitment for Broadbanded Staff Positions
- Policy 300: Faculty Appointments

Dismissal policies include:

- Policy 183: Nonrenewal and Dismissal of Nonbanded, Nonacademic Staff
- Policy 220: Staff Job Discipline/Dismissal
- Policy 223: [Staff] Reduction in Force
- Policy 350.3: Board Regulations on Nonrenewal, Termination, or Dismissal of Faculty

To uphold the integrity of personnel decisions, various options are available to faculty and staff to mediate and resolve grievances.

Grievance procedures for faculty include:

- Policy 350.2: Board Regulations on Standing Committee on Faculty Rights
 - The Standing Committee on Faculty Rights is established in the Faculty Senate Bylaws.
 - Recommendations are forwarded to the president for a final decision.
- Policy 350.5: Mediation
- Policy 353: Grievances – Faculty
- The Ombudsperson assists faculty in identifying options to resolve work-related concerns as described in annual reports (see 1.C).

Grievance procedures for staff include:

- Policy 156: Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Complaint Procedures
- Policy 230: Grievance Procedure for Conditions of Employment,
- Policy 231: Appeals Procedure for Discipline and Reduction in Force Actions

Discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and sexual misconduct complaints may be reported to the Equal Opportunity and Title IX Compliance Office (for all complaints) and/or to the Dean of Students (for complaints against students or student organizations).

NDSU's auxiliary units are governed by the same policies as its non-auxiliary units.

SBHE Policy 305.1 outlines the authority and responsibilities of NDUS institutional presidents. The NDUS chancellor evaluates each president annually.

NDSU policies also establish procedures for regular evaluation of employees.

- Policy 221: Staff Responsibility Reviews
- Policy 327: Evaluation of Academic Administrators
- Policy 352: Promotion, Tenure and Evaluation [of faculty]

NDSU has an Assistant State Attorney General located on campus that represents NDSU and provides legal advice and advocacy for NDSU.

Sources

- 2.A._2025-26 Student Athlete Handbook-Code of Conduct
- 2.A._Senate Coordinating Council Process REV 1.15.25
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_353_Greivances Faculty
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_350.5_Mediation
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_350.2_Board Regulations on Standing Committee on Faculty Rights
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_350.3_Board Regulations on Nonrenewal, Termination or Dismissal of Faculty
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_352_Promotion, Tenure and Evaluation
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_327_Evaluation of Academic Administrators

- 2.A._NDSU Policy_231_Appeal Procedure for Disciplinary and Reduction in Force Actions
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_230_Grievance Procedure for Conditions of Employment
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_223_Reduction in Force
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_220_Staff Job Discipline Dismissal
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_221_Broadbanded Staff Responsibility Review
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_183_Nonrenewal and Dismissal of Nonbanded, Nonacademic Staff
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_156_Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Complaint Procedures
- 2.A._SBHE Policy_305.1_Institution President Authority and Responsibilities; Contract Terms
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_300_Appointment Authority and Procedure - Non-Banded Employees
- 2.A._ND SB2003
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_200_Recruitment for Professional Staff Positions (Banded 1000 and 3000 positions)
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_201_Recruitment for Broadbanded Staff Positions (Banded 4000-7000 positions)
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_100.1_Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities and Reasonable Accommodation
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_103_Equal Opportunity Affirmative Action Policy on the Announcement of Position Openings
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_103.1_Recruitment for Executive Administrative Managerial Academic Staff and Other Non-Banded Positions (0000, 1000, and 2000 positions)
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_104_Recruitment Period for Position Announcements
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_107_Employment Qualifications
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_304_Academic Staff and Executive Administrative Positions - Procedures for Filling
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_100_Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_326_Academic Misconduct
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_601_Rights and Responsibilities of Community A Code of Student Conduct
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_335_Academic Integrity in Instructional Contexts
- 2.A._SBHE Policies_All
- 2.A._SBHE Policy_100.1_Constitutional and Statutory Authority
- 2.A._SCC_Schedule
- 2.A._2023 NDSU - SAO Report
- 2.A._2021 NDSU - SAO Report - Final
- 2.A._Auditor screenshot
- 2.A._NDSU Policy_337_Grade Appeals Board
- 2.A._SCC Minutes_22-25 sample combined
- 2.A._SCC Agendas_combined

2.B. Transparency

The institution presents itself accurately and completely to students and the public with respect to its educational programs and any claims it makes related to the educational experience.

Argument

NDSU provides public information about its academic program requirements, including general education requirements, through the University Catalog. Course information is available to students on Campus Connection, the student portal used for course registration, degree tracking progress, and billing. This information includes course availability by semester, course prerequisites, instructor of record, and method of course delivery. Course descriptions, including prerequisites, are also available in the catalog.

NDSU's consumer information webpage provides accurate, current, and complete information to the public, in compliance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act. A Net Price Calculator, which is available on the consumer information webpage, helps students estimate cost of attendance and financial aid. The Student Fee Advisory Board (SFAB) is charged with providing input and oversight for mandatory student fees, which are publicly available on the One Stop Student Fees webpage. Mandatory fees are student fees paid by all registered students on a per credit basis. Entities supported by student fees are able to submit a request to increase their respective fee in a given year to the SFAB as a proposal. The SFAB evaluates the proposal(s) and determines by a majority vote the level at which they will recommend changes to the fees. Any fee increase request must be presented to the student body via an open forum, and feedback must be collected from students on any proposals. This feedback is presented to the SFAB and taken into consideration when voting. The SFAB is responsible for making recommendations on mandatory fees to the president each academic year.

The Office of Institutional Research and Analysis (OIRA) webpage provides key metrics and data, including NDSU Fast Facts, which includes employee counts, student demographics, and enrollment data. Their website includes student outcomes data, such as pass rates on licensure exams. OIRA also maintains a list of accrediting agencies that identifies which academic programs hold specialized accreditation.

NDSU displays its accreditation status with the Higher Learning Commission on the About webpage and the Accreditation webpage.

Sources

- 2.B._Consumer Information
- 2.B._SFAB_Bylaws_2024
- 2.B._Student Fees
- 2.B._2024PassRatesLicensureExams
- 2.B._Fast Facts 2024

2.C. Board Governance

In discharging its fiduciary duties, the institution's governing board is free from undue external influence and empowered to act in the best interests of the institution, including the students it serves.

Argument

NDSU is a member of the North Dakota University System (NDUS), which is governed by the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) under article VIII section 6 of the state constitution. This section states that the SBHE was "created for the control and administration of the...state educational institutions." A 1938 statewide initiative created the SBHE to protect higher education from political interference.

The SBHE is made up of seven citizen members appointed to four-year terms by the governor and one student appointed by the governor to serve a one-year term. The Council of College Faculties selects the board's non-voting faculty advisor, and the North Dakota State Staff Senate selects the board's non-voting staff advisor. The citizen-members are nominated by a five-person committee, appointed by the governor, and confirmed by the North Dakota Senate. Biographies for each SBHE member are available on the NDUS website. The SBHE is independent from the North Dakota Legislature.

SBHE Policy 100.6 defines the authority and responsibility of the SBHE, including but not limited to ensuring achievement of the NDUS mission, maintaining quality of academic programs, and safeguarding and effective stewardship NDUS assets. All SBHE members complete or update a conflict of interest disclosure form prepared by the NDUS Office of Compliance and Ethics as directed in SBHE Policy 308.4.

SBHE Policy 310.2 outlines the selection process for officer roles on the SBHE along with responsibilities for these roles.

SBHE 308.1 establishes a code of conduct for all SBHE members and NDUS employees.

SBHE 310.1 identifies responsibilities for SBHE members, which include an expectation to "[a]ct in the best interests of and advocate for the NDUS as a whole, without special regard to a particular institution, interest, political affiliation, community, or constituency." This policy also outlines expectations for orientation of newly appointed members that is arranged by the SBHE chair with assistance from the NDUS chancellor.

The NDUS was organized in 1990 and consists of 11 publicly supported colleges and universities in North Dakota. The NDUS chancellor (role defined in SBHE Policy 100.6) serves as the chief executive officer and represents the SBHE to the governor, legislature, and other governmental agencies. The chancellor also advises the SBHE and works with institution presidents on matters of policy and procedure.

The SBHE is subject to North Dakota open records laws. The SBHE website publicly provides agendas, meeting minutes (for example, [May 2024](#) and [April 2025](#)), and recordings of live-streamed meetings. The NDSU president attends and presents at SBHE meetings. Other NDSU administrators attend and/or present at SBHE meetings and SBHE committee meetings as appropriate.

SBHE Policy 305.1 affirms that the presidents are the chief executive officers of their institutions and “the Board delegates to the president of each institution full authority and responsibility to administer the affairs of the institution...” in accordance with legal or policy limitations. Institution presidents report to, advise, and work with the NDUS chancellor within the context of the NDUS but have the authority to manage day-to-day activities at their individual institutions.

SBHE Policy 401.1 affirms SBHE’s commitment to a free and open academic community and delegates the control of academic programs to the faculty.

The NDUS Strategic Plan [website displays the strategic plan goals](#) and tracks progress on these goals. Dashboards are updated quarterly and are available to the public.

Sources

- 2.C._NDUS Strategic Plan Goal Tracking Snapshot
- 2.C._SBHE Policy_401.1_Academic Freedom
- 2.C._SBHE 305.1_Institution President Authority and Responsibilities; Contract Terms
- 2.C._SBHE Policy_310.1_Board Member Responsibilities
- 2.C._SBHE Policy_308.1_SBHE Member and Employee Code of Conduct
- 2.C._SBHE Policy_310.2_Board Officers; Officer Responsibilities; Elections
- 2.C._SBHE Policy_308.4_Conflict of Interest
- 2.C._SBHE website bios screenshot
- 2.C._SBHE Policy_100.6_Authority and Responsibility of SBHE
- 2.C._ND Constitution Article VIII (1)
- 2.C._SBHE Minutes 202405
- 2.C._SBHE Minutes 202504

2.D. Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression

The institution supports academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of knowledge as integral to high-quality teaching, learning and research.

Argument

NDSU supports academic freedom as outlined in Policy 325, which states: “The primary responsibility of the academic community is to provide for the enrichment of intellectual experience. Essential to the realization of this ideal is a free and open academic community...” New language, updated in 2024, states that the free and open academic community “...takes no ideological or policy position itself. However, the responsible academic community welcomes those who do take such positions and guards, with vigilance, their right to do so. Thus, its meaningful pursuit of truth requires the academic community to be tolerant of disparate thinking and hospitable, even to closed minds. It must further welcome the conflict of ideas likely to ensue.”

New language that specifically addresses research and teaching includes: “Members of the faculty have full freedom to pursue their research and/or creative activities and to publish their results, free from ridicule, recrimination, or reprisal by colleagues, administrators, SBHE [State Board of Higher Education] members or other government officials.”

New language that specifically addresses the rights of students includes: “Academic freedom affords students the right to be taught by instructors who are unconstrained by institutional and governmental political forces and to have access to all views and information pertinent to their subjects of study. They have the right to the widest possible latitude in selecting their plan of study and their instructors. Moreover, they have a right to intellectual disagreement with their instructors and classmates, and to question them without fear of ridicule, recrimination or reprisal.”

The amended Policy 325 continues to extend the “right of freedom of expression” to guests, performers and programs. Revised language states that “the university must not enact explicit policy or act upon any implicit policy that extends the right of freedom of expression to some persons while denying it to others.... The speaker must, to the most reasonable extent possible, be extended the courtesy of an uninterrupted presentation.” When the occasion arises “questions must be permitted from the floor after the presentation.” Speakers must also “accept their responsibility to promptly address those questions and statements.”

Events hosted by the Northern Plains Ethics Institute and the Laurie Loveland Speaker Series, sponsored by the Women and Gender Studies program, are examples illustrating a diversity of viewpoints among presentations at NDSU. The Sheila and Robert Challey Institute for Global Innovation and Growth actively facilitates public discourse by hosting events and speakers from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives. The Institute's Menard Family Distinguished Speaker Series has featured a range of thought leaders, with recent topics focused on "Energy, Human Progress, and the Shale Revolution" and "America in the

World: U.S. Diplomacy and Foreign Policy."

The pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is important to faculty at NDSU, as 77% of full-time teaching faculty in Fall 2024 also had research responsibilities.

NDSU's general education program includes a learning outcome for the quantitative reasoning category (see 3.B) for students to be able to "apply quantitative and qualitative methods to collect and analyze data in order to explain the nature of evidence used for analysis and evaluate the assumptions, evidence, and logic of competing views and explanations."

Policy 154 outlines expectations for freedom of speech, expression, and assembly. The Dean of Students office maintains a webpage for resources related to free speech, which includes a process for planning free speech events.

As stated in Policy 605, institutional officials or employees and student government officers, "except those acting as members of the student media board or committee consistent with applicable laws, regulations or policies, may not attempt to censure or exercise control, directly or indirectly, over the content of student publications and other student media."

Sources

- 2.D._NDSU Policy 605
- 2.D._NDSU Policy 154 - Freedom of Speech
- 2.D._Free Speech
- 2.D._Northern Plains Ethics Institute_Past Events
- 2.D._Distinguished Speakers
- 2.D._Sheila and Robert Challey Institute for Global Innovation and Growth_Events
- 2.D._Laurie Loveland Speaker Series
- 2.D._General Education _ North Dakota State University
- 2.D._NDSU_Policy_325_Academic Freedom
- 2.D._NDSU_Policy_605_Student Publications

2.E. Knowledge Acquisition, Discovery and Application

The institution adheres to policies and procedures that ensure responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge.

Argument

NDSU ensures responsible acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge through policies, resources, and procedures for evaluating and investigating complaints of academic misconduct by faculty, staff, and students in their scholarly inquiry, creative activity, and research.

The Research Integrity, Security, and Compliance (RISC) unit supports the Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use (IACUC), Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), and Conflict of Interest Committee (COIC) operations. RISC provides oversight in the areas of export controls, research security, dual-use research of concern, uncrewed aerial vehicle compliance; provides veterinary care and consultation; and subject matter expertise on promoting research integrity, security, and compliance with federal regulations. RISC reports directly to the Vice President for Research & Creative Activity, who is the Research Integrity Officer (RIO) for NDSU. RISC provides oversight of the following:

- **Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR):** NDSU subscribes to the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI). In 2024, NDSU employees and students completed 2,179 trainings and webinars related to responsible and ethical conduct of research. NDSU follows research integrity guidance provided by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Science Foundation (NSF), and the United States Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA NIFA). NDSU Policy 348 outlines instruction in the Responsible Conduct of Research.
- **Institutional Review Board (IRB)** oversees research projects involving human subjects. IRB review, as well as initial and ongoing training, is required to assure that NDSU protects the rights, safety and welfare of research participants. All faculty, staff, and students engaged in conducting human subjects research complete online or in-person training on the protection of human subjects. In FY2024, IRB approved 304 protocols (both exempt and non-exempt). See sample IRB meeting minutes from February 2025 and April 2025.
- **Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (IACUC)** and the attending veterinarian provide review, initial and ongoing training, facility inspections, and post-approval monitoring to assure the humane care and use of animals in NDSU research and teaching. All individuals involved in the care and use of animals at NDSU are required to complete online and hands-on training. In FY2024, IACUC approved 125 protocols. See sample meeting minutes from December 2024. An audit by the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service via the attending veterinarian in April 2025 highlighted animal care areas for IACUC to address. Discussion of the audit findings is included in the April 2025 meeting minutes.
- **Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)** assures the safe use of recombinant or synthetic nucleic acids, infectious agents, human blood, bodily fluids, and tissues and

maintains compliance with NIH guidelines. In FY2024, IBC approved 68 protocols. See sample meeting minutes from July 2025 and August 2025.

- Conflict of Interest (COI): Possible financial conflict of interest for investigators is addressed in Policy 151.1 (External Activities and Conflicts of Interest) and Policy 823 (Financial Conflict of Interest). Policy 151.1 establishes a university-wide Conflict of Interest Advisory Committee administered through the Vice President for Research & Creative Activity RISC unit. See sample meeting minutes from January 2025 and May 2025.
- Export Controls: The Export Control office assists faculty, staff, and students with understanding and compliance with federal export control regulations. NDSU maintains a subscription to Visual Compliance, an international trade compliance software which aids in initial screening of individuals and entities with whom NDSU interacts. An export control training module is available in CITI, and more individual trainings are available upon request from the Export Control Administrator.

The University Police & Safety Office (UPSIO) administers a portfolio of safety training topics to provide guidance for safe and responsible research activity. Under the supervision of the UPSIO, the Laboratory and Chemical Safety Committee oversees and enforces the NDSU Chemical Hygiene Plan, and the Radiation Safety Committee oversees and enforces the NDSU Radiation Safety Handbook. Biological safety practices ensure measures are in place to protect students, employees, and the environment from biohazards utilized in research. An inspection process is used to identify areas in which additional consultation or mentoring can assist students and employees in being good stewards of resources.

Support for intellectual property items is provided through the NDSU Research Foundation, as well as through NDSU Policy 190.

NDSU provides faculty, staff, and students with information on the ethical use of information resources, including appropriate use of electronic communication resources. Students must pass a quiz on acceptable use prior to activating their email accounts. Information to help students understand plagiarism and copyright issues is provided by the Center for Writers and tutorials from the NDSU Libraries.

Policy 335 provides the minimum standards of academic responsibility and conduct for students and also guides instructional staff members in maintaining academic honesty and integrity. All course syllabi must include an approved academic honesty statement, which refers students to academic honesty policies and resources. Faculty report instances of academic misconduct and student penalties using the Student Academic Misconduct Report Form, which is submitted through a secure platform to the chair/head of the faculty member's department, or the program director for students in interdisciplinary programs, and copied to the student. The chair/head or program director forwards the information to the college dean of the student's primary major, the dean of the faculty member's college, the registrar, and the provost. The registrar compiles this information in a FERPA-compliant database for the purpose of identifying multiple cases of misconduct by a student. In the event of a successful appeal, the misconduct information is deleted from the database.

Faculty and students at NDSU contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge. NDSU reported \$190 million in total research and development expenditures on the National Science Foundation Higher Education Research and Development Survey in FY2023, which supersedes previous amounts of \$164 million in FY2021 and \$174 million in

FY2022. Disciplines reporting the highest amount of research expenditures were agricultural sciences, natural resource and conservation sciences, health sciences, and social sciences. Research is communicated to the public through NDSU News, as well as publications by various academic units, and NDSU Extension.

The tenure review process explicitly includes research and creative activity as a part of faculty members' responsibilities. Individual research productivity is also evaluated in annual performance reviews. Many staff members also have research as part of their job responsibilities. Faculty and staff communicate their research findings through presentations at national conferences, research publications, and other creative activities.

Sources

- 2.E._NDSU Policy_190_Employee Responsibility and Activities Intellectual Property
- 2.E._Radiation Safety Handbook
- 2.E._Radiation Safety Committee
- 2.E._Chemical Hygiene Plan
- 2.E._NDSU Policy_823_Financial Conflict of Interest PHS NSF or Other Applicable Sponsored Research
- 2.E._NDSU Policy_151.1_External Activities and Conflicts of Interest
- 2.E._NDSU Policy_348_Instruction in the Responsible Conduct of Research
- 2.E._NDSU_IRB Training and Requirements
- 2.E._NDSU_IRB Members
- 2.E._NDSU_IACUC Membership
- 2.E._NDSU Policy_335_Academic Integrity in Instructional Contexts
- 2.E._NDSU Policy_352_Promotion, Tenure and Evaluation
- 2.E._NDSU research news_combined
- 2.E._2025JAN COIC Meeting Minutes
- 2.E._2025MAY COIC Meeting Minutes
- 2.E._4_2025_IACUC_Meeting_Minutes.final
- 2.E._7_2025_IBC_Meeting_Minutes
- 2.E._8_2025_IBC_Meeting_Minutes
- 2.E._12_2024_IACUC_Meeting_Minutes
- 2.E._IRB 02_28_2025_Minutes
- 2.E._IRB 04_11_2025_Minutes
- 2.E._4-2025 Report from Dr. Secor
Delivered_IR_1565_NorthDakotaStateUniversity_08APRIL2025
- 2.E._NDSU Policy 347 Institutional Biosafety Committee
- 2.E._NDSU awarded nearly \$4 million to deploy supercomputer for AI research

Criterion 2 - Summary

In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Argument

NDSU operates within a comprehensive and transparent framework of North Dakota law, State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) policy, and its own institutional policies. The NDSU policy manual outlines standards for professional and ethical behavior. The Senate Coordinating Council (SCC), which includes representation from all campus constituents, regularly reviews and updates policies to ensure consistency and transparency. Meeting minutes, agendas, and pending policy reviews are publicly available on the SCC website, and meetings are open to the public.

NDSU ensures accountability through various internal and external measures:

- **Required Training and Reporting:** All faculty and staff are required to complete annual training on theft, fraud, and code of conduct. An anonymous hotline is available for reporting alleged fraud.
- **External Audits:** The Office of the State Auditor conducts regular operational audits of NDSU. Recent audits have focused on issues such as student refunds, payroll, and adherence to admissions policies with no negative findings, confirming a commitment to responsible conduct.
- **Internal Grievance Procedures:** NDSU has established clear and explicit procedures for investigating and appealing alleged violations of conduct for students, faculty, and staff. For example, the Dean of Students Office handles student conduct hearings, the Academic Integrity Committee investigates faculty misconduct, and Human Resources manages staff misconduct.
- **Personnel Functions:** NDSU's hiring and dismissal processes are governed by a robust set of policies, including Policy 100 on Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination and specific policies for different employee groups. Grievance procedures for both faculty and staff are available and are supported by resources such as the Ombudsperson's office.

NDSU maintains integrity in its financial and public-facing operations by providing clear and accurate information to its stakeholders:

- **Academic and Financial Transparency:** The University Catalog and the consumer information webpage provide public details on academic program requirements and costs, including a Net Price Calculator. The Student Fee Advisory Board (SFAB), which includes student representation, ensures a transparent process for setting mandatory student fees, requiring open forums and student feedback.
- **Public Data:** The Office of Institutional Research and Analysis (OIRA) makes key metrics, such as enrollment data, licensure exam pass rates, and accreditation statuses, publicly available on its webpage.
- **Commitment to the Public Good:** NDSU operates as a public institution and part of the

North Dakota University System (NDUS), ensuring that its resources are used exclusively to support its mission and that it does not serve external interests unrelated to its educational purpose.

NDSU protects academic freedom and ensures responsible conduct in its pursuit of knowledge:

- Freedom of Expression: Policy 325 on Academic Freedom and Policy 154 on Freedom of Speech explicitly protect the right to freedom of expression for all members of the academic community, including students, faculty, and even guest speakers, ensuring an environment that is tolerant of diverse perspectives.
- Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR): The Research Integrity, Security, and Compliance (RISC) unit provides oversight and training for research involving human subjects, animal care, and biosafety, ensuring compliance with federal guidelines from agencies like the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation. NDSU reported \$190 million in research and development expenditures in FY2023, and its policies, such as Policy 348, ensure ethical conduct in all research activities.
- Intellectual Property and Information Use: Policies are in place to address the ethical use of information resources and intellectual property. All course syllabi must include an academic honesty statement (Policy 331.1), and a Student Academic Misconduct Report Form provides a clear process for reporting and tracking instances of misconduct.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning for Student Success

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

3.A. Educational Programs

The institution maintains learning goals and outcomes that reflect a level of rigor commensurate with college-level work, including by program level and the content of each of its educational programs.

Argument

The NDSU Faculty Senate Constitution states that the Faculty Senate is responsible for policy related to all curricular matters. The University Curriculum Committee (UCC) , a standing committee of the Faculty Senate, handles curricular matters on behalf of the Faculty Senate and provides a monthly UCC report at Faculty Senate meetings. The UCC has developed procedures for submitting, evaluating, and approving new courses and academic programs and changes to existing courses and programs.

The curricular review process for proposing new courses or changes to existing courses includes the following workflow approvals after the course proposal is initiated in NDSU's curricular management software (CourseLeaf). Approval steps include:

1. Department Chair or Head
2. College Curriculum Committee
3. College Dean
4. General Education Committee (GEC), for general education courses only
5. University Curriculum Committee
6. Faculty Senate (consent agenda as part of the UCC report to Faculty Senate)

The committees included in these approval steps consist primarily of faculty with representation from across the institution for the GEC and UCC or across a specific college for the individual college curriculum committees. The UCC has provided guidance for college curriculum committees on reviewing new courses or changes to existing courses. Policy 331.1 outlines requirements for a course syllabus, which must be submitted as a supporting document for new course proposals and changes to existing courses. Course objectives, goals, or outcomes are one of the requirements. Some courses at NDSU are considered dual-listed, which means that a course is offered at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in the same course schedule. That is, both undergraduate and graduate students will be enrolled in their respective sections of the course, though these students will participate together in the course. According to Policy 331.1, course objectives for dual-listed courses

need to clearly define the increased expectations for graduate students in these courses. In addition, the graduate level of the course must require a significant, identifiable higher level of expectations for the performance of graduate students, and the syllabus must clearly describe the additional requirements for graduate students.

The curricular review process for making changes to existing academic programs includes the following workflow approvals after the program proposal is submitted to CourseLeaf:

1. Department Chair or Head
2. College Curriculum Committee
3. College Dean
4. Graduate Council (for graduate programs)
5. University Curriculum Committee
6. Faculty Senate (consent agenda as part of the UCC report to Faculty Senate)

The Graduate Council consists primarily of graduate faculty and two graduate students with the dean of the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies serving ex-officio. This council reviews curricular changes to graduate programs and proposals for new graduate programs as seen in meeting minutes from December 5, 2023, and May 6, 2025.

Some program changes require additional review by the North Dakota University System (NDUS) Academic Affairs Council (AAC) and approval of the NDUS Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs (VCASA), as described in State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) Policy 421 and NDUS Procedure 421. The AAC consists of chief academic officers from all NDUS institutions in addition to the VCASA. The changes include:

- CIP or title changes
- Modality changes

The curricular review process for proposing new academic programs occurs in two distinct stages: the program exploration stage and the program request stage. New programs require final approval from the SBHE Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASAC). The first stage is the new academic program exploration notice. The goal of this stage is to announce the intent to offer an academic program not currently offered at NDSU. The second stage is the new academic program request. Both stages include the following approvals after the new program proposal is initiated in CourseLeaf:

1. Department Chair or Head
2. College Curriculum Committee
3. College Dean
4. Graduate Council (for graduate programs)
5. University Curriculum Committee
6. Faculty Senate (consent agenda as part of the UCC report to Faculty Senate)
7. Provost
8. NDUS AAC
9. SBHE ASAC (program requests only)

For example, during the 2024-2025 academic year, this process was followed to propose the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design .

Throughout these processes, faculty serving on committees have the opportunity to review,

discuss, and approve. Once approved, all new courses and course changes are published in the University Catalog, along with new programs and program changes, for the following academic year. The University Catalog is the official source for all program requirements, course descriptions, and academic policies. This catalog is publicly accessible online and provides information for undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs across all of NDSU's academic colleges. The catalog also links directly to official university websites for the most current details on academic colleges and departments.

The Degrees Offered and Accelerated Degree Programs section of the University Catalog defines various degrees and articulates their requirements.

Faculty review programs (see 3.F) and assess student learning (see 3.E) after implementation.

NDSU requires appropriate levels of student performance for its degrees and certificates.

- To be eligible to register continuously without conditions, an undergraduate or professional student must maintain good academic standing, defined as a minimum cumulative institutional grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 (on a 4-point scale).
- Student progress committees in each college determine whether to suspend, continue on probation, or readmit undergraduate students who failed to maintain good academic standing. Graduate students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 (on a 4-point scale).
- On the recommendation of programs and colleges, the dean of the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies suspends or dismisses students who fail to meet academic standards, to maintain appropriate academic or professional conduct, to make progress toward a degree, or to meet professional expectations or standards.

Program quality and goals are consistent across all modes of delivery. Online program and courses, whether delivered synchronously or asynchronously, are offered by NDSU academic departments and follow the same program and course approval process (described above) as in-person, on campus programs and courses. Departments monitor programs and courses offered in multiple modalities to ensure that learning outcomes and level of student work are consistent across all modes of delivery (see 3.E). Resources supporting effective instructional practices include support for technology and online instruction (see 3.D).

Course Prerequisites and Rigor

Faculty maintain the final authority over course prerequisites and rigor through the UCC (see above), which approves all new courses and changes to courses, including prerequisites. Prerequisite requirements are listed in the University Catalog (see example) and are enforced by the Office of Registration and Records through the Campus Connection course registration system that prohibits enrollment unless the identified criteria are met. Departments monitor and review fulfillment of prerequisites and submit administrative drop requests for those students who do not meet the requirements. Course placement guidelines and procedures in mathematics and English are set by NDUS procedure and NDSU policy (see 3.D).

At this time, NDSU does not offer dual-credit courses. However, a proposed change to

SBHE policy, if adopted, will permit NDSU to offer dual-credit courses in the future.

Sources

- 3.A._Graduate Council Minutes 2025-05-06
- 3.A._Graduate Council Minutes 2023-12-05
- 3.A._Graduate Council By-Laws
- 3.A._Graduate Council
- 3.A._Graduate Faculty Appointments _ North Dakota State University
- 3.A._Catalog - Degrees Offered and Accelerated Degree Programs
- 3.A._PLO Report in Excel
- 3.A._University Curriculum Committee Website
- 3.A._Course Submission Checklist
- 3.A._NDSU Policy_331.1_Course Syllabus
- 3.A._SBHE Policy_421_Academic Program Requests
- 3.A._SBHE Procedure_421_Academic Program Requests
- 3.A._FS Bylaws_UCC Highlights_AdoptedFeb2024
- 3.A._FSConstitutionRevised20220630
- 3.A._UCC_Course_Submission_Checklist_Fall2023
- 3.A._UCCMembershipResponsibilities_Feb2022
- 3.A._TOC+Combined UCC Reports for Fac Sen 11.2024 to 5.2025
- 3.A._TOC+Combined UCC Meeting Minutes 9.2024 to 5.2025
- 3.A._CourseLeaf-NewProgramApproval_BFA-GraphicDesign

3.B. Exercise of Intellectual Inquiry

The institution's educational programs engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in practicing modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

Argument

NDSU students engage in intellectual inquiry by completing NDSU's general education (GE) requirements, which must be completed by all bachelors-seeking students. The University Catalog states that the purpose of GE at NDSU is to ensure that students acquire knowledge, perspectives, and skills basic to a university education, enabling them to anticipate and adapt to changes in their professions and in society. Students also will be able to integrate and use the knowledge and perspectives they have gained to live productive, intellectually rewarding, and meaningful lives.

Undergraduate students fulfill the GE requirements by completing 39 credits from a menu of courses within the following categories (required credits in parentheses).

- Communication (12)
 - Public Speaking (3)
 - Writing
 - Lower Division (6)
 - Upper Division (3)
- Quantitative Reasoning (3)
- Science and Technology (10)
- Humanities and Fine Arts (6)
- Social and Behavioral Sciences (6)
- Wellness (2)
- Cultural Diversity (integrated into a course in one of the above categories)
- Global Perspectives (integrated into a course in one of the above categories)

Each GE category has a set of learning outcomes (referred to as GELOs) associated with it, and GE courses validated for a particular GE category are expected to address the GELOs for that category. The GE Committee (GEC), a standing committee of the Faculty Senate, validates newly proposed GE courses when submitted and revalidates current GE courses on a five-year cycle. During the validation and revalidation process, academic units responsible for a GE course complete the General Education Proposal Form for New Courses and Course Revalidations to show how a course for a particular GE category will help students learn the knowledge or skills identified in each GELO for that category and how evidence of student learning will be generated and reviewed. Examples of completed forms include the revalidation of ANTH 204 in March 2020 and the initial validation of MICR 100 in April 2024.

All courses validated for a GE category are required to list the appropriate GELOs on course syllabi as identified in Policy 331.1.

The GEC has hosted workshops and presentations on the validation/revalidation process and related assessment activities, maintains a FAQ document on its website, and has shared a repository of successful proposal forms. GEC members have also met with individuals or departments on an as-needed basis to improve weak or misaligned assessment activities shared on GE proposals.

The current GELOs were approved at the May 2020 Faculty Senate meeting, and a revision to the GELOs was recently approved at the September 2025 Faculty Senate meeting. Revisions include:

- Reducing the number of GELOs to 2 per category and modifying the language of the GELOs to provide clarity.
- Merging the existing Cultural Diversity and Global Perspectives categories into a single non-credit bearing category, Intercultural Knowledge and Competence.

The newly revised GELOs will take effect during the 2026-2027 academic year.

In May 2024, a new requirement for digital literacy was mandated by the State Board of Higher Education. The GEC created a new GE category and associated GELOs to address this requirement, and the Department of English committed to addressing these GELOs in ENGL 120: English Composition II. This change was approved by the UCC in April 2025 and by the Faculty Senate in May 2025 to become effective for the 2025-2026 academic year.

NDSU has developed cocurricular learning outcomes (COLOs) based on a collaborative effort by representatives from several cocurricular units, including the Career and Advising Center, Residence Life, Office of Student Engagement, Health Promotions, and Student Success Programs. Additional units have joined in this collaboration, including the Dean of Students Office, Wellness Center, and International Student & Study Abroad Services.

Specific examples of learning outcomes that address aspects of intellectual inquiry include:

- Collecting, analyzing, and communicating information
 - Students will effectively communicate analysis, knowledge, understanding, expression and/or conclusions in a range of contexts. (Communication GELO)
 - Students will apply quantitative and qualitative methods to collect and analyze data, in order to explain the nature of evidence used for analysis and evaluate the assumptions, evidence, and logic of competing views and explanations. (Quantitative Reasoning GELO)
 - Students will clearly and effectively exchange information while building and maintaining collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals. (Connect COLO)
- Practicing modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work
 - Students will understand, use, and apply technology to demonstrate creativity and solve problems. (Science & Technology GELO)
 - Students will apply methods of scientific inquiry to enhance their understanding of the natural and physical world. (Science & Technology GELO)
 - Students will actively grow through advancing critical thinking. (Grow COLO)
- Developing skills adaptable to changing environments
 - Students will evaluate the accuracy and relevance of digital information. (Digital

Literacy GELO)

- Students will actively discover through leveraging resources. (Discover COLO)
- Students will actively thrive through pursuing career and self-development opportunities. (Thrive COLO)

Major-specific curricula emphasize acquiring knowledge and skills that students demonstrate by engaging in intellectual inquiry and creative work. Curricula may build on the general education foundation, for example, by focusing on written and oral communication, critical thinking, defending one's position, or using peer-reviewed research to produce logical arguments.

Specific courses and programs incorporate inquiry, creativity, research, communication, and the development of adaptable skills. Some programs require capstone experiences, internships, and field experiences or clinical practicums. Upper-level undergraduate courses may require projects focused on research, creative activity, or problem solving.

All graduate programs include a research, practical, or creative activity component. Requirements vary based on degree type and program.

There are a variety of options available for students who wish to study abroad. Each year, several hundred NDSU students from a wide variety of academic programs participate in study abroad activities. The Office of International Student and Study Abroad Services maintains an active directory of student exchange agreements with international institutions and many program-level relationships that provide additional opportunities for students to develop skills adaptable to changing environments.

NDSU EXPLORE Undergraduate Research Showcase is an annual opportunity for undergraduate students in all majors to share current or recently completed research and academic projects. The Three Minute Thesis Competition challenges graduate students to succinctly explain their research in terms that general audiences can understand. Both of these events engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information and in practicing modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work.

Sources

- 3.B._SBHE Policy_461_Digital Literacy
- 3.B._GeneralEducationCourseProposalForm_February2021
- 3.B._MICR 100_GeneralEducationCourseProposalForm
- 3.B._ANTH204_GeneralEducationCourseProposalForm
- 3.B._General Education Courses
- 3.B._General Education Learning Outcomes
- 3.B._NDSU Experience COLOs Jul2025
- 3.B._Fs_Meeting_Minutes_20250908

3.C. Sufficiency of Faculty and Staff

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

Argument

NDSU has sufficient faculty and staff to carry out roles and responsibilities in alignment with its mission. The total number of faculty at NDSU has decreased between 2020-21 and 2024-25; the student-to-faculty ratio remained stable, approximately 18:1, during the same time period since overall enrollment has also decreased until recently. Compared to IPEDS data reported by regional land-grant research university peers in 2023, NDSU's student-to-faculty ratio was close to the median of this peer group.

Departments utilize graduate assistants, adjuncts, and non-tenure track faculty (including lecturers, senior lecturers, and professors of practice) as needed to meet instructional demands while providing tenured and tenure-track faculty time to engage in research or creative activity. Professors of practice typically have appointments consisting primarily of teaching and service and are eligible for promotion to associate and then full professor of practice.

Both tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty are eligible to serve on Faculty Senate, which is responsible for the review and approval of policy related to academic matters. Faculty Senate standing committees engage in oversight of curricular requirements (University Curriculum Committee; see 3.A) and oversight of the general education program (General Education Committee; see 3.B).

Policy 309 outlines minimal qualifications for instructors and charges units with the responsibility to ensure that instructors of record meet minimum qualifications. NDSU publicly shares faculty composition by tenure status and by highest degree obtained; for example, over the past 3 academic years, at least 93% of tenured/tenure-track full-time faculty earned a terminal degree and at least 91% earned a doctorate.

Position descriptions for academic and executive/administrative staff indicate minimum and preferred qualifications, including required academic credentials. Faculty search committee members are required to participate in training to reduce bias against candidates during the search process (see 1.C). Part-time and adjunct teaching faculty appointments are approved by the department, college, and Office of the Provost.

NDSU follows policies and procedures to ensure regular evaluation of instructors.

- The Office of Teaching & Learning (OTL) sets up and administers Student Course Experience Surveys (SCES) for every course each semester in alignment with State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) Policy 605.1 (Academic Appointments) and NDSU Policy 332 (Assessment of Teaching). These surveys are typically offered three weeks before the final exam period and can be accessed online through the course instance in the learning management system (Blackboard) and via emails sent to students. The

current set of survey items were approved by Faculty Senate with first implementation during the Fall 2020 semester. Once SCES responses are released through an online dashboard after final semester grades are submitted, instructors can view responses for their courses, department leaders can view responses for instructors in their departments, and college deans can view responses for departments within their college.

- In addition to survey responses provided by students, each academic unit should conduct a critical peer review of the instructor's range of teaching activities ([Policy 332](#)). The faculty or instructional staff for each academic unit decide how this peer review should be conducted, including determining requirements for appropriate reviewers and frequency of review.
- Per [Policy 352](#), the promotion and tenure process includes an evaluation of teaching, focusing on:
 - the effective delivery of instruction,
 - continuous improvement of courses and programs, and
 - effective advising and mentoring of students.
- [Policy 352](#) also ensures that all full-time faculty, including tenured faculty, are reviewed annually. Each academic unit determines its own review procedures.
- A December 2024 change to SBHE [Policy 605.1](#) added a requirement for post-tenure evaluation. In response, NDSU Policy 352 was modified to outline expectations for post-tenure review. The post-tenure review process begins with the award of tenure and is distinct from annual evaluation. Colleges and departments are currently working on developing specific post-tenure review policies appropriate to their faculty.

NDSU has both formal and informal processes to ensure faculty are current in their disciplines and teach effectively. The university also offers a variety of related professional development opportunities.

NDSU supports excellence in teaching through on-campus activities, including:

- The OTL provides central leadership for teaching and learning-related activities and supports innovative and emerging pedagogies across the institution.
- OTL coordinates a [Peer Teaching Partnership](#) to facilitate peer teaching evaluations in a collaborative environment.
- The New Faculty Mentoring Program includes sessions at new faculty orientation and continues with [monthly workshops](#) on topics such as time management, developing a sponsored research program, and promotion and tenure.
- OTL organizes annual faculty conferences that feature sessions presented by NDSU faculty, with topics ranging from using technology to managing large-enrollment classes. The Faculty and Staff Academic Conference and the Graduate Teaching and Learning Conference, held before the Fall semester begins, and the Teaching and Learning Conference, held at the end of the spring semester, offer opportunities to learn from and connect with colleagues.
- NSF Advance FORWARD (see 1.C) provides programs for training and advancing women faculty.
- Individual colleges and departments also provide professional development opportunities.

NDSU provides resources for faculty to hone their teaching skills:

- Within the Information Technology Division, the Instructional Design Center (IDC) offers instructional design service that pairs instructors with an instructional designer (ID) and an academic technologist (AT) to enhance course development. The IDs focus on pedagogical strategies, course design, and accessibility, while ATs assist with the integration of educational technologies. Additionally, student employees develop resources to help faculty create accessible materials, organize multimedia content, and specialized course resources such as lab videos. These students also assist their peers with course projects, providing technical support and valuable feedback that is relayed to faculty through established ID and AT partnerships.
- The Digital Fabrication Lab in the main library partners with teaching faculty to develop learning opportunities in a student-centered workspace that provides access to tools, training, and the support needed to produce prototypes and projects to enhance educational experiences and democratize access to novel technologies. The Libraries also have two virtual reality rooms that provide immersive learning experience for a variety of majors.

Many accredited programs require faculty to pursue continuing education to maintain licensure, including architecture, athletic training, counseling education, dietetics, educational leadership, counselor education, exercise science, interior design, nursing, pharmacy, and teacher education.

NDSU provides resources to encourage faculty and staff professional development:

- Benefitted employees have tuition and fees waived, as well as release time, to attend one class per semester.
- NDSU employees may apply for developmental leave for retraining and/or professional development.
- Colleges and departments fund professional development for faculty and staff, including travel expenses.

Faculty are required to maintain office hours and to list their office hours on syllabi. Most instructors also are available at other times by email or phone. Instructors teaching online are expected to be accessible for student inquiry through email, phone, and web-conferencing.

Residence Life hosts the Faculty in Residence Program, since 2008, inviting faculty to live in an apartment in two upper division residence halls, providing a unique way for faculty to connect with students as a mentor and educator outside the classroom.

Currently, 350 faculty and staff play an active role in advising student organizations.

Staff members providing student services receive initial training and continuing professional development.

NDSU's Department of Human Resources and Payroll has procedures in place to ensure all staff are appropriately qualified at the time of hiring. All benefited and many non-benefited faculty and staff must have a criminal background check and must participate in the annual responsibility review process. Some examples of additional departmental practices include:

- In Residence Life, assistant directors are required to have a master's degree with one exception (in which the position requires a bachelor's degree). All associate and senior

associate director and director positions require a master's degree. Residence hall directors must have a bachelor's degree, with a master's degree preferred.

- Tutors in ACE Tutoring and TRIO student support services (see 3.D) must complete tutor training prior to beginning tutoring work. Undergraduate students who tutor for ACE and TRIO must earn an A or B in any class they tutor and must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0. Tutors are required to complete introductory training and participate in ongoing developmental sessions.
- Members of Athletic Academics receive continuing education through attending applicable conferences.
- Student Success Programs provides ongoing training regarding best practices to serve NDSU students.
- Residence Life's professional hall director team participates in annual summer training onboarding new professionals and providing updated information to current hall directors. Hall Directors participate on regional association committees and attend regional conferences for ongoing professional development.
- Dining Services employees, including student workers, frontline employees, and managers, participate in regular training to support food safety, customer service, teamwork, ongoing improvement, and the development of specific skills needed to perform their jobs well.

Examples of specialized training include:

- Student staff who manage volunteer and cocurricular service experiences for student organizations, residence halls, fraternity and sorority life, athletics and individual students are trained in customer service, public speaking, database management, student outreach, reflection, civic engagement, leadership development and communicating with nonprofits.
- NDSU's professional advisors have experience and training in student support services. They meet regularly for mutual support and professional development.
- NDSU Libraries offers a wide range of tutorials that cover topics from basic concepts to developing advanced research strategies.
- The Career and Advising Center provides [advising resources](#) for faculty and staff.

Staff Senate has a Staff Development & Program standing committee that sponsors professional development events for all staff. A recent event is the Academic Programs Fair that features certificate and degree programs of interest to current employees.

Staff providing student services are active in professional organizations, and some staff are officers of professional organizations relevant to their offices, including NASPA (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators), ACPA (American College Personnel Association), NACADA (National Academic Advising Association), ACHA (American College Health Association), AACRAO (American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers), and ACUHO-I (Association of College and University Housing Officers-International). These employees attend and present at conferences, serve as board members and officers, and participate in trainings.

Sources

- 3.C._Faculty In Residence
- 3.C._Peer_Teaching_PC

- 3.C._Mentoring Sessions
- 3.C._Faculty & Staff Advising Resources – Career and Advising Center
- 3.C._NDSU Policy_352_Promotion, Tenure and Evaluation
- 3.C._NDSU Policy_332_Assessment of Teaching
- 3.C._SBHE Policy_605.1_Academic Appointments
- 3.C._Highest Degree OIRA Snapshot
- 3.C._NDSU Policy_309_Minimum Qualifications for Instructional Faculty

3.D. Support for Student Learning and Resources for Teaching

The institution provides student support services that address the needs of its student populations, as well as the teaching resources and infrastructure necessary for student success.

Argument

NDSU provides comprehensive student services to support a broad range of student populations. Student services integrate academic and cocurricular experiences and are based on assessments of student needs.

NDSU identifies itself as a student-focused, land-grant, research university (see 1.A) and its student services support this identity. As a student-focused, land-grant, research university, NDSU contributes to students' educational experiences in alignment with its 3 key messages.

Student Focused

Cocurricular programs have collaborated to identify learning outcomes (see 3.B) that are the foundation for developing student-focused cocurricular programming. Examples of such programming include:

- Student Organizations and Clubs: Students can participate in more than 250 student organizations and clubs. These organizations cover academic, cultural, honorary, social, recreational, and religious interests. Students can find organizations, discover events, and record their activities and membership through the [myNDSU website](#).
- Leadership Development: The Office of Student Engagement promotes leadership, involvement, and success. Through partnerships, programs and activities, students receive training and skill development to prepare them for the real world. The Summer Leadership Institute is designed for new, incoming students (both first-year and transfer), while the Leadership on the Go program offers students of all skill levels and backgrounds a tailored program that is based on leadership and developmental theories.
- Residence Life offers a variety of positions for student staff to develop their leadership skills, have positive influences on others, and also pay for their college education. Residence Life employ a formal curriculum to support students' academic success, build community, and foster wellness and healthy choices. Learning Communities also are available (see below).
- The Wallman Wellness Center is a modern facility that includes access to a licensed dietitian, a wellness education coordinator, and numerous fitness and wellness programs and events.
- Campus employment opportunities enrich students' educational experiences. NDSU Dining, for example, has an ongoing training program that rewards students with a pay increase after each semester worked, and also offers Student Supervisor and Student

Manager positions for those who display responsibility and leadership skills.

Academic Support

The Dean of Students Office supports all students through programs and services aimed at broadening access and fostering student success. These programs and services include:

- Academic Collegiate Enhancement (ACE) Tutoring is a free academic support program available to all enrolled undergraduate students to provide help with homework, tips on studying for an exam. or strategies for taking notes. Students can schedule a tutoring appointment through Bison Advise (NDSU's student success platform), drop into the tutoring center during evening hours, or use an online tutoring service through Brainfuse. In addition, ACE provides quiet study areas, which are also located in other areas of campus, including the Sanford Health Athletic Complex space for student athletes and library study spaces.
- The Rising Scholars Mentoring Program provides 1:1 peer mentoring for all undergraduate students. Peer mentors are specifically trained to connect students to resources on campus and build study skills. Conditionally admitted students and students that are not currently in good academic standing are strongly encouraged to participate.
- Athletic Academics provides additional academic support for student-athletes through academic progress monitoring, promotion of academic and life skills development, and individual support.
- New Student Orientation provides new first-year and transfer students with foundational information to ensure a successful transition to NDSU. Student leaders serve as facilitators and mentors. Prior to attending orientation, new students complete *You Belong Here*, which is a seven-module series that focuses on making connections and engaging in community, getting informed about course enrollment and academics, gaining information about paying for college, and learning how to develop and maintain well-being as a college student.
- TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) provides services to support undergraduate students who are first-generation, have documented disabilities, or are income eligible. SSS provides one-on-one tutoring, academic and self-improvement workshops, supplemental math and writing instructors, and career and graduate school planning. SSS serves approximately 350 students each year.
- TRIO Upward Bound supports college access and preparation by providing eligible students in ninth through twelfth grades with tutoring, academic skills development, academic advising, career exploration, college visits, and college application support.
- Veterans Educational Training is a free program funded by the state of North Dakota to prepare veterans for a college degree. Classes and programs are designed to ease the transition into higher education and are available both on campus and online.
- Welcome Week helps new and returning students adjust to the new academic year and serves as an extended orientation to the university. It includes a full slate of programming over the first week of the fall semester.

The Career and Advising Center (CAC) provides multiple resources and programs for students. The career-focused unit of the CAC educates and provides career resources to students and alumni and encourages partnerships to connect students with employers. Career specialists are available for resume and cover letter critiques, interview/job search

preparation, mock interviews. and graduate school preparation. The Career Closet program allows currently enrolled students to borrow professional attire for interviews and career events. The advising unit of the CAC provides support on academic-related issues, such as university and degree requirements and policies, campus academic resources, adding or changing a major or minor, connecting with the student's academic advisor, and undeclared student advising.

The Center for Writers provides writing support for all undergraduate and graduate students. Offerings include workshops, one-on-one consultations, and other opportunities, with additional assistance available for non-native English speakers and distance students.

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships assists students with estimating cost of attendance, identifying and accessing financial aid programs, and locating financial literacy information and emergency resources. Students can access scholarship information and apply for scholarships through the One Stop website.

The Office of International Student Support and Study Abroad provides on-campus activities with an international focus such as International Education Week, which celebrates the benefits of international education and exchange.

Wellness Support

The Dean of Students website provides a comprehensive list of NDSU and community resources available to students with concerns about meeting basic needs, including food, housing, and childcare. There are also two licensed social workers that provide case management for students managing mental health, academic, relationship, food insecurity, and other stressful crises.

Student Health Service provides health care and education, medical laboratory, pharmacy, and radiology services. Students with mental health concerns often work with multiple offices, including Student Health Service, the Counseling Center, and the Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources.

The Counseling Center provides confidential mental health services to support the well-being and academic success of students. Services include individual, couples, group, and walk-in counseling appointments. The center is staffed by licensed psychologists, licensed professional counselors, and counselors-in-training. Staff collaborate regularly with both medical professionals, including a mental health nurse practitioner at Student Health Service and with case managers in the Dean of Students Office. This integrated care model ensures comprehensive support for students through coordinated mental health and wellness services and resources. All counseling services are provided at no cost to currently enrolled NDSU students, and there are no limits on the number of sessions a student may receive. While the center does not routinely offer formal diagnostic services, it does provide assessment for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) for a minimal fee. This auxiliary service includes a structured evaluation process involving clinical interviews and standardized assessments. In addition to direct clinical services, the Counseling Center actively engages with the campus community through outreach initiatives, psychoeducational programming, and workshops designed to promote mental health awareness, resilience, and personal development.

The Wallman Wellness Center offers wellness education, fitness/recreation programs, intramural sports, and convenient and affordable on-site childcare for students.

The Code of Student Conduct fosters the development of personal accountability and commitment to community. The code is derived from three core values that support an educationally purposeful environment: 1) respect for the NDSU community, 2) respect for the protection and rights of others, and 3) respect for students in the conduct resolution process.

NDSU Dining offers services and facilities for students with documented food allergies and dietary needs.

The Green Bandana Project creates a visual support system around campus for anyone struggling with anxiety or depression. Students who have a green bandana attached to their backpacks have attended a Green Bandana training and have pledged to be a safe person to approach with mental health-related issues, and they know where campus resources are that can help.

Support for All Students

NDSU is dedicated to creating a campus environment that supports community and belonging. Services for a range of student populations include, but are not limited to:

- The Center for Community and Belonging (CCB) helps to create a safe, welcoming, and inclusive campus, connecting with the Office of Admission, current students, faculty, and staff and the Alumni Center for recruitment, retention and outreach of multicultural students.
 - The Bison Bridge Program assists first-generation or high financial need first-year students in adjusting to college life. This program helps students build community, develop a sense of belonging, gain confidence in their transition to college, and connect to campus with an increase knowledge of resources to maximize their college experience. Previously, 96% of participants reported that they made connections with other students, felt a sense of belonging in the program, felt more confident about their transition to NDSU, and learned about at least one resource they plan to visit during their first semester.
 - CCB also offers a variety of programs, events, trainings, student organizations, faculty and staff organizations, and resources. Events include an annual indigenous smudging ceremony at the beginning of the academic year, regular informal conversations with case managers.
 - The Land Grant Access Award (formerly Cultural Diversity Tuition Waiver) is available to domestic students from historically underrepresented populations.
- American Indian Resources: NDSU is committed to supporting indigenous students and furthering partnerships with regional tribal peoples and tribal colleges.
 - Nurturing American Tribal Undergraduate Research and Education (NATURE) coordinates a two-week summer camp to introduce tribal college students to STEM disciplines and career opportunities. Tribal college faculty and reservation high school teachers simultaneously collaborate with NDSU STEM faculty on developing lesson plans.
 - The Office of Admission hosts an Indigenous Student Visit Day for individuals interested in attending NDSU.

- The annual tri-college Woodlands and High Plains Pow-wow brings together American Indian people from the region to celebrate their culture and share it with the campus and local community.
- LGBTQ+ programs strengthen and sustain an inclusive campus community for LGBTQ+ students, faculty, and staff by supporting the LGBTQ+ community at NDSU, providing education and information, and maintaining partnerships with similar programs in the Fargo/Moorhead community.
 - Safe Zone offers training and resources about sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, creates a visible network of allies, and provides information about resources within the community (see 1.C).
 - LGBTQ+ and Ally Roommate Matching allows students to request being matched with a roommate who identifies as LGBTQ or an ally.
 - The Including U speaker series highlights diverse perspectives and the importance of inclusive excellence. Including U is a conversation series open to the NDSU community that focuses on a diverse range of experiences and identities in higher education. Each session hosts experts from the local community and NDSU to present on a particular topic and invite dialogue. Examples of session topics include indigenous perspectives, veteran perspectives, and black lives on campus.
 - NDSU provides gender-neutral bathrooms and locker rooms on campus (see 1.C).

Integrating Academic and Cocurricular Experiences

The Department of Residence Life (RL) offers a variety of programs that integrate living and learning environments. In collaboration with academic units, RL established learning communities on designated residence hall floors for specific academic programs. Learning communities are groups of students who live together and connect through similar goals, interests, or academic majors. The communities feature structured study groups and events with other students and faculty from the programs. Examples include the Engineering Leadership Learning Community, Health and Human Sciences Learning Community, and the Global Learning Community.

NDSU places students into appropriate courses based on their academic needs. Based on qualifying exam scores, in accordance with SBHE Policy 413 and NDUS Procedure 413.1, students are placed into mathematics and English courses that are both challenging and for which they are adequately prepared based on ACT/SAT scores or placement tests used by NDSU.

The Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources assists students with disabilities as well as faculty and staff working with students with disabilities.

Access to Course Materials

- The NDSU Bookstore provides course materials in many formats, including hard copies, digital textbooks, open educational resources, and through adaptive learning platforms, and offers students a range of payment options.
- The Center for Accessibility and Disability Resource Center provides texts in alternate formats in collaboration with the bookstore and utilizes technology options available to

students.

- Additional computers with assistive technology are available to students in campus computer labs.
- NDSU Libraries have copies of many textbooks available for check out and supports faculty and students in the creation and use of open educational resources.

Academic Advising

NDSU is committed to an integrated advising experience as an essential element of student support to assist students in reaching their full potential. The successful development of students will be an intentional outcome of a partnership between advisor and advisee that provides accurate, supportive, and quality information.

Upon admission to NDSU, each undergraduate student is assigned a professional academic advisor who serves as their primary point of contact for navigating the university. Advisors meet individually with students to assist with first-semester course enrollment and to develop a personalized degree plan. Throughout a student's academic journey, advisors monitor progress and campus engagement, proactively reaching out to those who show signs of disengagement. Students are encouraged to connect with their advisor at any time throughout the semester. Students may also engage with the Career and Advising Center for additional advising support.

Advising models vary by college at NDSU; however, both professional and faculty advisors are used in each college. All students have professional advisors for their first two years. Students majoring in academic programs within the College of Business or the departments of English and Criminal Justice maintain a professional advisor throughout their entire undergraduate careers. Students in architecture and landscape architecture also maintain professional advisors through the graduate level of these programs. Students majoring in other academic programs will transition to a faculty advisor for the duration of their undergraduate careers.

NDSU uses a student success platform through Civitas, referred to as Bison Advise, to support effective advising. In Bison Advise, advisors are able to identify students in need of intervention, quickly assess their academic history to identify areas of concern, and store advising meeting notes. Students are able to schedule appointments with advisors and student services through the platform. Overall implementation of the platform is led by a cross-functional team with representatives from the Career and Advising Center, Office of Registration and Records, Office of Institutional Research and Analysis, and the Office of the Provost.

Infrastructure to Support Student Learning

NDSU provides the necessary resources and infrastructure to support student learning and effective teaching, including information technology resources, laboratories, performing arts facilities, and clinical sites.

Information Technology

- The Division of Information Technology (IT) provides services and resources, including classroom technologies, learning management systems, telecommunications systems,

card-key building access and campus cyberinfrastructure.

- The Instructional Design Center plays a critical role in providing instructional design services and training for students and instructors.
 - Classroom Technology provides equipment that is permanently installed in instrumented classrooms.
 - IT supports 161 instrumented classrooms, which includes 34 computer labs across campus.
- Various software such as Blackboard (learning management system), clickers, lecture capture software, statistical software, and discipline-relevant software are provided and managed by IT.

Laboratories

NDSU has over 400 research laboratories that support student learning and research efforts across campus. The A. Glen Hill Center includes 23 modern teaching labs that are used by instructors in entry-level and gateway science courses. In addition, the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station has extensive greenhouses on campus, including a high-level biosafety lab. (See 4.C for recent space updates.)

Performing Arts

NDSU has dedicated studios for students in art, architecture, and interior design, and over 40 performance or studio spaces in music and theatre. The Division of Performing Arts, including the Challey School of Music and Department of Theatre Arts, has four performance facilities ranging from a 200-seat recital hall to 1,000-seat concert hall. All spaces are equipped to accommodate physical and auditory disabilities.

Clinical Sites

- Students in allied sciences complete a 12- to 24-month clinical internship in one of the department's nationally accredited, affiliated hospital-based programs located in North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, or Colorado.
- Students in pharmacy practice and nursing can obtain clinical experience at a variety of sites in North Dakota and Minnesota.
- Pharmacy students complete part of their clinical experience in the model concept pharmacy located on campus.
- In the Commodity Trading Lab, students analyze commodity markets and learn to engage in risk management and trading using current trading technology.
- Veterinary technology students use their knowledge in the Veterinary Wellness Clinic to work with animals from local animal adoption agencies.
- The NDSU Equine Center, situated on 14 acres of land within the North Dakota Horse Park, serves the NDSU Equine Science Program. It contains an indoor arena, spectator seating, and stall accommodations for more than 300 horses.
- The Community Counseling Clinic trains advanced graduate-level counseling students through practicums and serves NDSU, North Dakota State College of Science, and the local community by providing low-cost counseling services.

Research and Information Resources

NDSU provides support and guidance for students on using research and information resources through the NDSU Libraries and the Office of Research and Creative Activity.

Libraries

- NDSU Libraries house over one million items, including books, ebooks, periodical subscriptions, maps, government documents, audio-visual materials, microforms, and archival materials. The Libraries also subscribe to numerous electronic databases and serials that provide access to thousands of scholarly journals across all disciplines. In addition to the Main Library, branch libraries include the Business Library Commons, Klai Juba Wald Architectural Studies Library, and the NDSU Nursing at Sanford Health Library in Bismarck. Special Collections include the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection and the NDSU Archives.
- The Libraries provide a variety of services to students, faculty, and staff. The Main Library offers group and individual study rooms, a Multimedia Studio, the Digital Fabrication Lab, the Data Visualization Lab, and virtual reality labs. The Libraries also support Interlibrary Loan service, open educational resources and course reserves, and provide equipment for check out to support student learning such as headphones, graphing calculators, and markers for white boards. The “Ask a Librarian” service connects library patrons to librarians via online chat; librarians are also available for in-person and virtual consultations. The Main Library also houses the Center for Writers, the Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources, and the Math Emporium.
 - The Digital Fabrication Lab (DFL) is a student-centered and easily accessible workspace. The DFL provides access to tools, training, and the support needed to design and produce prototypes and projects for personal, academic and professional purposes.
 - The Data Visualization Lab (DVL) is a student and researcher-focused space that provides resources and support for finding, analyzing, visualizing, and managing research data. The DVL allows users to develop important research skills of understanding how to manage, share, and preserve research data.
- The Libraries actively develop online tutorials in response to faculty and student requests. Subject librarians also develop research guides that provide resources for research in the disciplines.

Research and Creative Activity

The Office of Research and Creative Activity provides resources for undergraduate and graduate students. Resources for graduate students focus on research integrity and compliance, funding, writing, and professional development. Resources for undergraduates focus on identifying opportunities to engage in and disseminate research at NDSU, such as Student Research Days, as well as training opportunities.

Sources

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- 3.D._Pathway Program
- 3.D._English and Mathematics Placement _ North Dakota State University
- 3.D._Explore - myNDSU_ North Dakota State University

- [3.D._NDSU to host Woodlands and High Plains Powwow](#)
- [3.D._NATURE University Summer Camp galvanizes student STEM interest](#)
- [3.D._2025 Welcome Week Detailed Schedule](#)

3.E. Assessment of Student Learning

The institution improves the quality of educational programs based on its assessment of student learning.

Argument

Student Learning Outcomes

NDSU's commitment to improving the quality of its programs begins with identifying learning outcomes for three key areas of the student experience: general education, academic programs, and cocurricular programs. See 3.B for an overview of current state of the general education learning outcomes (GELOs) and cocurricular learning outcomes (COLOs). GELOs are made available to students in the University Catalog. The COLOs are shared with students by cocurricular program leaders. Academic units identify program learning outcomes (PLOs) for their programs. These units can enter PLOs into NDSU's curricular management tool (CourseLeaf) and create a curriculum matrix that identifies which PLOs are taught in which courses required for a particular program (see example for the B.S. in Food Science). Currently, these PLOs are not published in the University Catalog.

Policy Guidance

NDSU Policy 332 (Assessment of Teaching) states that one of the guiding principles for the purpose of assessment of teaching effectiveness is "to emphasize the improvement of teaching and learning."

Policy 352 (Promotion, Tenure and Evaluation) establishes teaching as one criterion of faculty evaluation, which includes the continuous improvement of courses or instructional programs.

Faculty and academic unit leaders participate in the assessment of student learning. Academic units use data about student learning to modify course content, identify appropriate course sequencing, and adjust program requirements. See examples below.

- During the 2023-2024 academic year, the Department of Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering justified changes to the B.S. in Manufacturing Engineering: "As part of the continuous improvement effort for our two programs we survey and interview our constituents periodically. The one area where we have been asked to expand our curriculum has been in the area of programming with Python from our students and employers of our students. CSCI 227 is a nice addition to our selection of Computer Science courses which introduces the programming concepts, with focus on flow control, basic data structures, and functions using Python."
- During the 2024-2025 academic year, the Department of Animal Sciences justified changes to the B.S. in Animal Science: "These changes are based on new program learning outcomes and assessment plan to ensure students are introduced at

appropriate stages. It needs to be noted that program goals have not changed substantially, rather we have made more measurable program learning outcomes and found that we needed changes to the curriculum to ensure these were being met. This includes introduction to concepts at earlier stages of their program (e.g., ANSC 115, ANSC 130, ANSC 220, ANSC 223). We also approached this based on course enrollments and teaching FTE to improve sustainability of offering required courses."

Student Learning Assessment

In response to previous concerns about the ongoing assessment of student learning, the NDSU president and provost committed support for a team to participate in a cohort of the Higher Learning Commission's Assessment Academy, which occurred from Fall 2020 to Fall 2024. The Office of the Provost committed the four-year financial support for Academy participation and associated activities. This was a significant effort since participation took place across multiple budget cycles that coincided with annual budget reductions.

The Academy work coincided with the initial release of NDSU's strategic plan for 2021-2026 (see 4.C). The current strategic plan includes a sub-goal to "[i]ncrease educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning outcomes across the University." Participation in the Academy supported NDSU's work toward achieving that sub-goal.

The original Academy team included the Provost, the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, an academic advisor/graduate student, faculty chairs for the University Assessment and General Education committees, and the Directors of Assessment, Office of Teaching and Learning, and Office of Institutional Research and Analysis. Initially, the Academy team identified two desired outcomes, and both focused on developing sustainable systems.

1. NDSU will redesign the campus-wide assessment system to be more systematic and focused on learning improvement.
2. NDSU will develop a system of support for assessment processes that focuses on helping units achieve their learning goals.

The system of support included plans for professional development for units and personnel on all aspects of meaningful assessment with the goal of assisting units to:

1. Develop appropriate learning outcomes and performance indicators for their specific program areas.
2. Map learning outcomes to learning experiences.
3. Determine suitable assessment methods and measures for determining student achievement of program learning outcomes.
4. Collect and evaluate samples of student work or evidence that are aligned with specific learning outcomes.
5. Analyze and interpret student achievement of learning outcomes.
6. Interrogate potential learning gaps across student populations.
7. Communicate findings and determine action steps for improvement.

By the end of the Academy in October 2024, the theme of the team project became "Disrupting Assessment and Assessment Disrupted." The original intent for participating in

the Academy was to disrupt the culture of compliance associated with assessment at NDSU and to replace that culture with one focused on learning improvement. NDSU is still working toward that intention and has made progress (see below), yet the institution has experienced a number of disruptions that have slowed progress. These disruptions have significantly influenced the achievement of the desired outcomes. An early disruption was the pandemic, which also coincided with a series of annual budget cuts. Campus climate was low during the initial years of the Academy work. Many individuals reported feeling overwhelmed and overburdened, particularly as faculty and staff left the institution and were not replaced. During this time, the Academy team observed a lack of willingness to commit time for assessment-related tasks.

Three years ago, a new president was appointed, followed by a new provost. Changes to senior leadership are disruptive. However, both individuals were supportive of the work of the Academy team, even though neither were responsible for the original commitment to the Academy. Two years ago, several academic colleges were restructured, and the overall number of academic colleges was reduced from seven to five. The restructuring impacted faculty representation on university committees associated with the Academy team's efforts (University Assessment Committee, General Education Committee), which meant that the team needed to provide just-in-time professional development as new committee members came on board to carry on the existing work.

Even with disruptions and the ongoing work of the Academic team, academic programs monitored student learning as seen in assessment reports for the B.S. in Biological Sciences, B.A./B.S. in English, and the PharmD program.

Early in the Academy project, the work of the Cocurricular Learning and Assessment Committee, which previously provided guidance on assessment-related work to cocurricular units, was paused so that cocurricular units could engage in the "curricular approach" championed by the American College Personnel Association to create a common set of cocurricular learning outcomes (COLOs). These units included the Career and Advising Center, Residence Life, Student Engagement (formerly, Student Activities), Student Success Programs, and Health Promotions. Representatives from each of these cocurricular units met on a regular basis over an extended period throughout 2021 to develop COLOs (see 3.B) and to create a common rubric for each COLO. Each cocurricular unit then mapped the COLOs to the student learning activities and events in their respective areas. After mapping was completed, units began identifying assessment activities that could be deployed during events, activities, and programming to determine whether the COLOs are achieved.

The Academy team, in conjunction with the University Assessment Committee and General Education Committee, began developing a home-grown assessment system in the first year of Academy participation then later learned that NDSU had access to an existing online tool (SPOL), that includes an assessment module, through the North Dakota University System (NDUS). The team pivoted in late 2021 to set up SPOL so that academic programs, cocurricular units, and the general education program could collect assessment information about the degree to which students are achieving learning outcomes and could document how changes are being implemented to improve future student learning.

The Academy team spent two years collaborating with the University Assessment Committee, General Education Committee, and cocurricular units to revise institutional

assessment processes, to set up the SPOL assessment module, and to provide professional development to units on the improved approach to assessment at NDSU. However, the team encountered significant disruptions, as described above, which decreased engagement.

Even with the disruptions, progress was made to build out an assessment system within SPOL for each unit, including general education, cocurricular programs, and academic programs. Learning outcomes were entered into SPOL (that is, PLOs for academic programs, the GELOs for the general education program, and the COLOs for cocurricular units). For academic programs, courses associated with specific PLOs were added, and the relationship between the level of learning expected within the course and each PLO was identified (i.e., introductory, reinforced, mastery). This step generated a program assessment map that shows the relationship between courses and outcomes (similar to a curriculum map). Cocurricular units did not have program assessment maps since courses are not associated with COLOs.

Within SPOL, each learning outcome can have multiple assessment measures (e.g., assignments, tests, projects, portfolios, interviews, surveys) associated with it, and each measure needs criteria for success (e.g., checklist, rubric). These measures and criteria represent the assessment activities that are embedded within the courses that makeup an academic program or within the events, activities, and programming provided by cocurricular units.

After outcomes, measures, and criteria were entered into SPOL, academic programs and cocurricular units could then enter assessment results as findings that are associated with a particular outcome-measure-criteria combination. Findings represent the degree to which students achieved the learning outcome using the associated measure and criteria. Findings can be entered throughout the academic year depending on a unit's assessment timeline and cycle, which can vary across academic programs and cocurricular units. Findings are aggregated at multiple levels (i.e., outcomes, measures) since a single learning outcome can have multiple measures. Findings aggregated at the outcome level are helpful for determining the degree to which students have achieved the expected learning identified in the outcome.

Previously, academic programs and cocurricular units submitted an annual assessment report that was perceived as too time-consuming, burdensome, unproductive, and too focused on compliance. As a result of participating in the Academy and using SPOL to manage the institution's assessment activities, units could now submit an annual review of their assessment activities that focused on improvement. Units were expected to review their assessment findings generated over the previous year and determine whether learning outcomes had been achieved.

A template was built in SPOL so that units could provide an overview of proposed changes that could be implemented to improve future learning related to the PLO(S) that was/were assessed during the previous year. The intent of the overview was to describe specific plans for how assessment findings were used or will be used to improve future learning through curricular, pedagogical, or programmatic changes. A second component of the annual assessment review in SPOL included an overview of any results from curricular, pedagogical, or programmatic changes that were previously implemented to improve student learning. The overview should include which learning outcome is associated with the

change, why the change was implemented, and how student learning was impacted as a result of the change, and if further changes are planned.

While working on setting up SPOL, NDSU learned that NDUS was discontinuing the SPOL contract and that NDSU would no longer have access to SPOL in the future. In response, NDSU identified a cost-effective project management tool (Smartsheet) with similar capabilities and began transitioning to this tool, though this transition delayed progress toward achieving the Academy team's desired outcomes.

Cocurricular programs was the first area that was transitioned to Smartsheet since they already had a common set of COLOs and had developed a common rubric. Cocurricular programs began entering learning results into an online form during the 2024-2025 academic year. These learning results are submitted by cocurricular units whenever they host a learning opportunity associated with one of the COLOs. Units first determine whether students have achieved a COLO at a particular rubric level based on the approach to assessment that was used during the learning opportunity. Once student learning has been evaluated, units can enter learning results, which are then stored in Smartsheet. Currently, a cocurricular working group focused on assessment is in the process of reviewing learning results collected during the 2024-2025 academic year. This working group will identify opportunities for improvement within the current process.

A similar process is in progress for the general education program, though this process was delayed while the General Education Committee was revising the GELOs during the 2024-2025 academic year (see 3.B). With the revised GELOs in place, a similar reporting system as the one for COLOs can be created such that instructors of GE courses can enter information about student learning results for each associated GELO for their courses at the end of the semester. That is, an instructor assesses student learning within their GE course to determine the extent to which students in that course have achieved a particular GELO. The instructor then submits these learning results into an online form. All learning results are stored within Smartsheet. These aggregate results can be reviewed by the GEC to identify areas for improvement within the GE program. For example, if the overall percentage of students who achieved a particular GELO is lower than a specified threshold, such as 70%, then the GEC could work with instructors of courses associated with that GELO to identify ways to improve learning of that GELO in those courses.

At the same time, this process is also in development for academic programs, though the development process is taking longer since each program has a unique set of PLOs. Online forms for reporting learning results by program need to be individually created rather than a common form. This work is on-going.

During its May 2025 meeting, Faculty Senate voted to discontinue two standing committees, the University Assessment Committee and Program Review Committee, to establish a new Program Effectiveness Committee (PEC) with the following responsibilities:

1. Promote a culture of learning improvement within the institution.
2. Oversee the development and implementation of program-level learning assurance plans.
3. Ensure alignment of student learning in academic programs with institutional mission and strategic goals.
4. Review student learning data and make recommendations for program improvements.

5. Monitor the implementation of program improvements.
6. Prepare reports on program effectiveness for internal and external stakeholders.
7. Ensure accountability for program quality and student learning.

The rationale for this change is to ensure a commitment to learning improvement moving forward. Membership for the PEC is currently being identified.

Sources

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- 3.A._PLO Report in Excel
- 3.G._Co-curricular Learning Results
- 3.E._Outcomes Rubric 25-26
- 3.E._Cocurricular Student Learning Results - Smartsheet
- 3.E._BIO SCI Program Assessment Report - 2022
- 3.E._PharmD Program Evaluation Report 2021-2022
- 3.E._English Program Assessment Report AY 2023-2024
- 3.E._B.S. Food Science
- 3.C._NDSU Policy_332_Assessment of Teaching
- 3.C._NDSU Policy_352_Promotion, Tenure and Evaluation
- 1520 20241222 Quality Initiative - Panel Analysis Report

3.F. Program Review

The institution improves its curriculum based on periodic program review.

Argument

Prior to the 2024-2025 academic year, the NDSU program review process was informed by State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) Policy 403.1.2 and managed by NDSU's Program Review Committee (PRC), a standing committee of Faculty Senate. The PRC was responsible for:

1. Developing criteria and procedures for review,
2. Providing reporting guidelines,
3. Providing training for academic programs undergoing review,
4. Performing reviews, and
5. Making recommendations regarding follow-up actions.

The program review self-study template provided by the PRC required that program leaders respond to previous program review recommendations, provide an overview of the program(s) under review, identify instructional personnel, describe program assessment and evaluation, and identify challenges and successes (see example self-study for the materials and nanotechnology graduate programs). A subcommittee of the PRC reviewed each program's self-study then generated a report that summarizes the materials reviewed by the subcommittee and presented an evaluation of the challenges and successes of the program along with recommendations for the future. This subcommittee report was shared with the entire PRC, and members voted to approve the report. The PRC report and program self-study were submitted to the appropriate college dean, who would consult with the program leader, and then summarized the review and identified action steps in a memo to the provost. See also the self-study, PRC report, and dean's memo for programs in sociology and anthropology. At the end of each academic year, the PRC chair provided a year-end report to the provost to document overall progress (see reports for the 2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024 academic years).

SBHE Policy 403.1.2 was deleted during the October 2023 SBHE meeting, though NDSU continued to operate its existing process through the 2023-2024 academic year. During the 2024-2025 academic year, the PRC stalled the review process in light of the removal of the SBHE policy and the new language adopted in HLC's revised criteria for accreditation (specifically, core components 3.E and 3.F). The PRC held two meetings with the University Assessment Committee to propose a new combined Program Effectiveness Committee (see 3.E), which will replace both the PRC and UAC.

Policies Governing Credit Evaluation

In accordance with SBHE and NDSU policy, the Office of Registration and Records evaluates all credits (including experiential and prior learning) with a final comprehensive evaluation before graduation. Academic units decide unclear cases, particularly in terms of

transfer course equivalencies.

The foundation of credit evaluation is SBHE Policy 441. This policy establishes definitions and requirements for degree credit, non-degree credit, developmental coursework, and non-credit instructional activity. SBHE defines a degree credit as “the equivalent of fifteen hours of traditional classroom instruction per semester hour of credit” based in “instructional activities provided by the institution which result in the award of college credit that can be applied toward a college degree.”

NDSU uses SBHE Policy 460 to establish policies on credit award and transfer to guide the work of the Office of Registration and Records. NDSU's policies are described in the University Catalog. NDSU follows SBHE by defining one semester credit as the equivalent of one lecture period (50 minutes) per week for 15 weeks plus a final examination period in addition to a minimum of two hours of out-of-class work per week. In the case of laboratory courses, one credit is a minimum of two 50-minute periods per week for 15 weeks. Field experiences require a minimum of 40 hours of experience for each credit.

Credit by Examination

NDSU also awards degree credit through standardized examinations (such as Advanced Placement or the College Level Examination Program), challenge examinations (institutionally-developed examinations that enable a student to earn course credit), evaluated non-college coursework (such as formal instructional programs in the military identified on a Joint Services Transcript), prior learning assessment, and articulated credit (degree credit activities that have been evaluated and deemed equivalent to specific courses at the institution).

NDUS Procedure 460.4 for credit-by-exam sets minimum requirements for successful completion of credit-by-exam programs. Institutions in the NDUS are required to use the Credit by Exam Chart to determine the minimum credit-granting score, number of semester credits to be awarded, and the course or type of course to be awarded.

Students also may receive credit by challenging a course. Students who wish to challenge a course must complete the Petition for a Course Challenge Form; obtain approval from their adviser, instructor of the course, and chair of the department offering the course; pay the course challenge fee; and successfully pass the challenge.

Experiential Learning Credit

NDSU awards credit for experiential learning through the internship program. Students may receive up to three credits for working 300+ hours per semester in the internship program. Students must meet with a professional in the Career and Advising Center and complete the necessary requirements, including a mid-term self-evaluation, an end-of-the-semester self-evaluation, and an employer evaluation of the experience.

Non-degree credit is defined as any institutional instructional activities that result in college credit but typically cannot be applied toward a degree. Non-degree credit includes professional development activities and audited courses (degree courses for non-degree credit). With the exception of audited courses (which are recorded with the official course number), all NDSU non-degree credit must be recorded on the official transcript with the

course number of 2000.

SBHE policies, NDUS procedures, and NDSU processes assure effective evaluation of transfer credits by creating consistency within the state (General Education Requirement Transfer Agreement, GERTA) as students transfer from institution to institution, but also by providing guidance for transfers from other states and countries. More finely grained course evaluation processes ensure that less clear transfer credit decisions are carefully made.

Policies on Transfer Credits

The SBHE delegates much of the responsibility for determining transfer credit to the system's institutions. SBHE Policy 412 requires institutions to review coursework completed at institutions or organizations that are accredited by an association recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or U.S. Department of Education and make available a written description of policies and procedures for transcript evaluation, including identification of an individual or a department that students may contact for transfer information or evaluation. NDUS Procedure 460.5 identifies specific requirements for statewide and system-wide articulation agreements, procedures for institutional articulation agreements, and SBHE policy for developing articulation agreements with secondary institutions.

Annually, NDUS prepares a Guide to Transfer within the North Dakota University System and Other Associated North Dakota Institutions of Higher Education. The purpose of the guide is to "improve student access to college degrees and avoid course duplication or loss of credit when students transfer within North Dakota." While not transfer policies per se, the "Guide to Transfer" describes the general education courses that can be transferred to or from the NDUS institutions and six other institutions in the state.

NDSU's Office of Admission maintains a webpage for prospective transfer students that identifies admission guidelines and summarizes the process of how transfer credits are evaluated. The University Catalog provides guidelines on the transfer of credit from U.S. institutions and international institutions.

The course evaluation process is used when courses have not been previously evaluated or when there is not an articulation or transfer agreement in place. The Office of Registration and Records completes these evaluations after a student has been admitted to the university.

Prospective students can use an online tool, Transferology, to determine how previously earned credits will transfer to NDSU.

NDSU and North Dakota State College of Science (NDSCS) maintain a reverse transfer agreement that identifies a process for students who transfer from NDSCS to NDSU to apply credits from both institutions toward an associate degree. The reverse transfer is especially helpful for students who planned to, but will not be able for some reason, earn a bachelor's degree.

NDSU also participates in the Metro College Alliance. This agreement allows a properly enrolled student at any of the participating area institutions a way to exchange courses easily among the institutions.

Sources

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- 3.F._SBHE Policy_404.2_Guidelines for Establishing Collaborative Courses and Programs
- 3.F._NDUS Procedures_Articulation Agreements or Memorandum of Understanding-Agreement
- 3.F._SBHE Policy_441_Degree Credit, Non-Degree Credit and Non-Credit Instructional Activity
- 3.F._transcript-key
- 3.F._CBE-Chart-2025
- 3.F._NDUS Procedure_460_Transfer and Test Credit Agreements
- 3.F._SBHE Policy_460.4_Credity By Exam
- 3.F._Petition For Course Challenge
- 3.F._Transfer of Credits
- 3.F._gerta-guide-2025
- 3.F._NDSU Self Study Template 2022
- 3.F._ProgramReview_Selfstudy_MaterialsNanotechnology_2013-2019
- 3.F._NDSU_APRC_FinalReport_MaterialsNanotechnology_2021_APPROVED
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- 3.F._APRC_YearEndReport_2324AYs
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- 3.F._APRC_YearEndReport_2122AY

3.G. Student Success Outcomes

The institution's student success outcomes demonstrate continuous improvement, taking into account the student populations it serves and benchmarks that reference peer institutions.

Argument

NDSU collects and analyzes information on student success outcomes, including retention, completion, and post-graduation career outcomes. Institutional retention and graduation rates are calculated by the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis (OIRA) following IPEDS methods. Student data dashboards focused on student applications and enrollment, retention, graduation, and the student body profile are publicly available on the [OIRA website](#). OIRA also publishes internal dashboards provided on a secure platform (Power BI) that are available to all NDSU employees. These dashboards allow a high degree of data filtering and can be used to investigate key indicators of student performance, including student enrollment, retention, completions, course outcomes, credit hour production, and other metrics. For example, the [internal Undergraduate Retention dashboard](#) includes a page focused on gap trends for retention between different populations of students, including by race/ethnicity group, first-generation student status, Pell eligibility, and other student cohorts.

The most recently available [IPEDS data feedback report](#) indicates that NDSU's first-year retention for first-time, full-time students (77%) is lower than the comparison group's median (83%), and the 6-year graduation rate (64%) is slightly higher than the comparison group's median (62%).

In response to a dip in first-year retention for first-time, full-time students during the COVID-19 pandemic (typically, 79-80% prior to the pandemic with a dip to 75-76%), NDSU established a University Retention Committee during the 2021-2022 academic year to coordinate campus-wide retention activities. The primary result of this work was the creation of a centrally coordinated professional advising program for all first- and second-year students. Upon admission, each student is assigned a professional academic advisor who serves as their primary point of contact for navigating the university. Advisors meet individually with students to assist with first-semester course enrollment and to develop a personalized degree plan. Throughout the student's academic journey, advisors monitor progress and campus engagement, proactively reaching out to those who show signs of disengagement.

Faculty-submitted course alerts (see below) are received by advisors, who follow up with students to address the concerns. Advisors often facilitate hand-offs to campus resources, such as tutoring, counseling, and other support services, to ensure students have the tools they need to succeed. These efforts play a critical role in student retention.

Peer navigators, who are current undergraduate students, support the advising team by triaging academic alerts and [conducting large-scale outreach](#). Early in the semester,

navigators contact students who have not logged into required platforms, such as NDSU's learning management system (Blackboard), helping them gain access and get oriented. Peer navigators also reach out to high-priority students to encourage participation in programs like Rising Scholars (see 3.D) and send targeted messages to students enrolled in courses with historically high DFW (grades of D, F, or withdraw) rates to encourage and promote effective study habits.

Later in the semester, during the re-enrollment period for the following semester, navigators contact students who are eligible to register but have not yet done so. This outreach often identifies students with unresolved holds on their accounts, and navigators assist them in resolving these issues. All of these coordinated efforts contribute to the overall goal of retaining students and supporting their success at NDSU.

During the 2023-2024 academic year, NDSU transitioned its student success platform from EAB Navigate to Civitas with the intent of supporting campus retention efforts. In Spring 2024, NDSU began using course alerts, which can help struggling students get back on track and increase the likelihood that they successfully complete their courses, especially when alerts are submitted early and often. If instructors notice a student who is struggling or not engaging in their courses, they should first reach out to that student to offer support. If they do not hear back from the student, they can enter a course alert into Civitas (referred to as Bison Advise at NDSU). The course alert is then assigned to a professional advisor or student support staff member to do more directive outreach to the student to offer support. The goal is to meet with the student to discuss an action plan for getting back on track. The alert can then be resolved in Civitas, and the instructor who entered the alert can review the resolution.

The current President's Council on Retention (PCOR) is an outgrowth of the University Retention Committee, which elevated the importance of coordinated advising practices and retention activities, and provided thoughtful definitions, goals and recommendations during the 2021-2022 academic year. The role of PCOR is to deploy strategic tactics across the university to improve and support student retention (see end-of-year reports for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024). During the 2024-2025 academic year, PCOR focused its work on the student experience in the first two years with three key initiatives: building classroom community, coordinating first- and second-year student support, and developing more mentoring opportunities. One key outcome was the creation of a Departmental Discussion Guide for Retaining Students.

Post-graduation outcomes

NDSU monitors the success of its graduates through evaluation of post-graduation outcomes and surveys.

NDSU collects pass rate data on licensure exams in allied health sciences, architecture, counselor preparation, dietetics, engineering, nursing, pharmacy practice, education, and veterinary technology. Pass rates often exceed national averages. Results are publicly shared on the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis webpage. See reports from 2023 and 2024.

In addition to licensure pass rates, the School of Pharmacy tracks the percentage of Doctor of Pharmacy graduates with offers of employment or post-graduate residency and compares

the post-graduate residency match rate of graduates after one year with national rates.

NDSU's Career and Advising Center coordinates data collection for career outcomes of bachelors-earning graduates and coordinates with OIRA to analyze and publish an annual career outcomes report. Success rate, defined as the percentage of graduates who are employed or continuing their education, has increased slightly from 92% in 2021 to 95% in 2024 (see report highlights for 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024). In addition, median salary for graduates has increased from \$50,000 in 2021 to \$58,000 in 2024. These values are based on a steadily increasing survey response rate from 62% in 2021 to 91% in 2024.

Student success in strategic planning

The State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) 2021-2026 Strategic Plan includes a goal focused on student success (Goal 3: Prepare students for success). Progress toward all SBHE strategic plan goals is available publicly on its progress dashboard. Goal 3 includes the following outcomes and associated metrics:

1. Improved student achievement measure (SAM) outcome rates
2. Improved graduation rates of first-time, full-time graduation cohorts
3. Improved IPEDS retention rates
4. Improved total degrees and certificates awarded to Pell recipients

NDSU's rates for these outcomes have steadily increased over the past five years and are similar to the other research university within the North Dakota University System.

NDSU's current strategic plan (2021-2026) includes a goal focused on student success and achievement. President Cook has reinforced this goal by identifying enrollment, retention, and student success as one of his strategic priorities through the NDSU Transform initiative (see 4.C).

Sources

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- 3.G._2023PassRatesLicensureExams
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- 3.G._Fall 2025 Advisor Outreach Calendar
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- 3.G._UCC Recommendations May 2022
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- 3.G._NDSU_IPEDS_DFR_2024
- 3.G._NDSU 2024 Career Outcomes Report Highlights
- 3.G._Career Outcomes Report Snapshot

Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

Argument

NDSU is a public, land-grant institution that serves a broad range of student populations through numerous undergraduate and graduate degree programs and student support services. NDSU meets this criterion through a variety of mechanisms.

NDSU maintains program quality through a curricular review process that involves multiple levels of faculty review and approval, including college curriculum committee, the University Curriculum Committee, and the Faculty Senate. NDSU also maintains clear standards for student performance, including minimum GPA requirements for good academic standing for both undergraduate and graduate students.

NDSU has policies for hiring qualified faculty and staff and for their ongoing evaluation and professional development, which supports high-quality programs and services. Faculty are evaluated through student course experience surveys and peer reviews. NDSU provides professional development opportunities and resources, including the Office of Teaching & Learning and the Instructional Design Center, to help faculty improve their teaching skills and course design. Staff members also receive training and are active in professional organizations to ensure they are current in their fields.

NDSU provides a wide array of support services and resources to improve student success. These include:

- Academic Support: Services include free tutoring available through Academic Collegiate Enhancement Tutoring, mentoring programs like Rising Scholars, and specialized support for student-athletes, veterans, and students who are first-generation or have disabilities.
- Learning Resources: The Center for Writers offers writing assistance, and the Career and Advising Center provides support for academic advising, career exploration, and job readiness.
- Wellness and Cocurricular Support: NDSU provides comprehensive wellness services, including a health service and a counseling center staffed by licensed professionals. There are also over 250 student organizations, leadership development programs, and residence life initiatives designed to support students' academic and personal growth.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Sustainability: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

4.A Effective Administrative Structures

The institution's administrative structures are effective and facilitate collaborative processes such as shared governance; data-informed decision making; and engagement with internal and external constituencies as appropriate.

Argument

NDSU's administrative structures and processes connect institutional staff and faculty, its governing body, and constituents to facilitate collaboration and improve the institution.

Governing Body

SBHE Policy 100.6 outlines the authority of the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) to oversee NDSU's financial and academic policies and practices. SBHE members are appointed by the North Dakota governor. The SBHE appoints a chancellor, who is the chief executive officer of the North Dakota University System (NDUS). The chancellor's duties and responsibilities are defined in SBHE Policy 304.1 and other SBHE policies or directives. NDSU's president is a member of the chancellor's executive staff. The president's duties and responsibilities are described in SBHE Policy 305.1 and other SBHE policies, or SBHE or chancellor directives. The SBHE and its committees meet approximately monthly. SBHE meeting minutes and videos are made available to the public and demonstrate SBHE engagement with their duties.

SBHE members learn about NDSU through new member orientation and through interactions with the president and other members of NDSU leadership. The NDSU president attends all SBHE meetings and regularly presents at SBHE meetings. Other NDSU executives attend and/or present at SBHE meetings as appropriate. NDUS personnel interact with NDSU administrators, staff, and faculty through regular meetings of NDUS councils, including the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Administrative Affairs Councils, as outlined in SBHE Policy 302.4.

Institutional Leadership

The President's Cabinet, NDSU's senior leadership team, meets multiple times per semester and works directly with the president to ensure NDSU achieves its mission. The Cabinet

consists of key campus-wide leaders, the presidents of the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Student Government, and the president/CEO of the NDSU Foundation. Cabinet agendas are available to the public. See sample agendas from [January 2025](#) and [February 2025](#). Cabinet may request that NDSU personnel present information about timely topics.

[Leadership Assembly](#) was initiated in 2022 as a means to “provide a transparent and open communication environment for dissemination of information from the president and vice presidents.” Leadership Assembly meets approximately monthly during the academic year. Deans, department chairs, directors, and other department leaders from across campus are present and expected to communicate the contents of meetings to their respective units. [Summaries of Leadership Assembly meetings](#) are shared with all NDSU employees via email and are available to the public.

Shared Governance

Three senate bodies represent NDSU employees and students. Presidents from each senate attend meetings for all three bodies to provide updates from their respective senates. They also serve on the President's Cabinet.

- [Faculty Senate](#) has one member elected for every 15 eligible faculty within each college. Senators serve 3-year terms. Faculty Senate meets monthly during the academic year and is responsible for the review and approval of policy regarding academic and faculty matters. Faculty Senate has 14 Faculty Senate-only committees and 5 joint committees that recommend changes in curriculum and policy for the Faculty Senate's approval (see [Faculty Senate Bylaws](#)). The Faculty Senate meeting schedule is shared publicly. Meeting agendas and minutes are available to members of campus. See sample meeting agenda from [August 2025](#) and minutes from [March 2025](#) and [May 2025](#). The provost and president or their representatives attend most Faculty Senate and Faculty Senate Executive Committee meetings.
- [Staff Senate](#) consists of 60 elected members from non-managerial staff groups (approximately 5 percent of these staff groups). Each member serves a two-year term. Staff Senate meets monthly during the academic year. [Staff Senate and its standing committees](#) advise university administration about issues related to needs and concerns of the staff. It also sponsors professional development and employee recognition activities for staff members. The Staff Senate meeting schedule and minutes are shared publicly (see sample of [meeting minutes](#)).
- Student Government represents students with student senators from each academic college in addition to elected officers and a judicial branch. It reviews, recommends, and participates in the formulation of university policies and practices related to delivery of student services, academic affairs, assignment of student fees, and institutional priorities (see sample of [meeting minutes](#)). Student Senate meets weekly during the academic year. The Student Fee Advisory Board within Student Government reviews and authorizes mandatory student fees requests.
- The Faculty Senate Executive Committee and Staff Senate Executive Committee are composed of their respective senate president, immediate past president, and president-elect, and a small number of representatives from their respective senates. These committees meet two weeks prior to full senate meetings to set senate meeting agendas.
- The [Senate Coordinating Council](#) facilitates the policy review process by the senates

(see sample of [agendas](#) and [meeting minutes](#)). Voting members include the presidents of Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Student Government along with one representative from each senate. Non-voting members include a representative from the office of the vice president for finance and administration and two representatives from the office of the provost.

Institution-Wide Committees

Faculty, students, and staff participate in Faculty Senate standing and joint standing committees engaged in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes. These committees include the Faculty Senate, the University Curriculum Committee (see 3.A and 3.B), General Education Committee (see 3.A and 3.B), University Assessment Committee (see 3.E and 3.F), Program Review Committee (see 3.F), and the Cocurricular Learning and Assessment Committee (see 3.E).

Institution-wide committees are charged by the President to identify areas for improvement and take or recommend actions to improve each of the following areas: retention; faculty research; campus well-being; budget and financial operations (concluded in 2023); and strategic planning (initiated in 2025-26). Each committee meets throughout the academic year to develop action plans and campus recommendations regarding key issues related to their areas of focus. Annual reports demonstrate the accomplishments of each committee. See samples from the [President's Council on Retention](#) and the [Faculty Research Council](#).

Additional institution-wide work teams focus on each of NDSU's five strategic priorities (see 4.C). Work teams meet throughout the academic year. Members include staff and faculty from areas of campus related to each topic. Teams submit annual reports that include plans with goals, timelines, and outputs, and metrics for measuring progress on goals. Annual reports are shared with the president and cabinet and are made available publicly. See samples from the [Enrollment Management](#) and [Equity in Employment](#) work teams.

Engagement with External Partners

Engagement with external partners is critical to fulfilling the land-grant mission of NDSU. External engagement focuses on three key areas:

- Engaging with industry partners to align NDSU programs and curriculum with serving the workforce needs of the state and region.
- Working across the state to serve North Dakota communities, particularly through NDSU Extension Service.
- Supporting student success through partnership with the NDSU Foundation.

President Cook established an [Industry and Workforce Ad Hoc Committee](#) in 2023 to provide input and propose solutions to inform NDSU's approach to serve North Dakota's future workforce challenges. Membership included trustees of the NDSU Foundation, NDSU personnel, and representatives from state agencies, legislators, and industry partners. The committee generated recommendations that is guiding current work at NDSU, including the development of an [industry relations team](#) to build, maintain, and expand industry partnerships.

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4.B Resource Base and Sustainability

The institution's financial and personnel resources effectively support its current operations. The institution's financial management balances short-term needs with long-term commitments and ensures its ongoing sustainability.

Argument

Fiscal, Budget, and Infrastructure Resources

NDSU's most recent budget for the two-year period of academic years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 (fiscal years 2026 and 2027, respectively) outlines the resources available and allocated to support the university's operations and information regarding plans for deferred maintenance and capital projects. As provided on schedule 2 for the budget periods, the FY2026 (July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026) annual budget is \$502,673,121, and FY2027 is \$522,923,716, indicating a 4% increase in FY2027. NDSU's budget is shared with the public.

For FY2026, the balanced operating budget is supported by funding provided by several revenue sources: state general funds (16%), gross tuition income (25%), grant and contracts (13%), auxiliaries (11%), non-auxiliary sales and service (4%), mandatory student fees (2%) and other revenue (29%). Budgeted operating expenses are comprised of salary, wages and benefits (47%); operating and equipment expenses (23%); other expenses, including cost of goods sold, scholarships, miscellaneous, etc. (28%); and debt service (1%).

NDSU's most recently available Annual Financial Report for fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023) provides summary information (unaudited) and financial highlights that capture the university's overall strong financial position. As noted on page 2 of the FY2023 report, the university notes a continued sound overall financial standing with total assets of \$895 million and total liabilities of \$284 million, and a net position of \$634 million. This represents an increase of \$64 million over the previous fiscal year. The FY2024 report will be available late September 2025.

NDSU's strong financial position is supported by a diverse mix of revenue, including strong support from the North Dakota Legislature, stable tuition revenue, and a strong research portfolio.

Support from the North Dakota Legislature

- Higher Education Funding Formula
 - A formula, codified in law (NDCC 15-18.2), is used by the North Dakota Legislature to appropriate resources for North Dakota University System (NDUS) institutions. The formula is based on completed credit hours and weighting credits in discipline clusters that recognize higher cost programs, ensuring base general funds for operations.

- New Horizon Initiative funding
 - The 69th Legislative Assembly provided \$16 million in funding to support NDSU's collaboration with industry to ensure successful pathways for workforce impact, grow North Dakota's competitive edge, and improve North Dakota's quality of life. To support the workforce demands of today, programs will be developed with a focus on engineering, agricultural technology, and health sciences (particularly, nursing, pharmacy, and allied sciences).
- ND Challenge Grant program
 - This program provides funding support from the legislature for a matching grant program by providing one state dollar for two donor dollars. The funds are used to support academic programs, including scholarships.
- University System Capital Building Fund
 - The legislature created this matching fund to assist NDUS institutions in addressing deferred maintenance. Funds are allocated on a biennial basis. Deferred maintenance is addressed through a 3-tier matching funds program. State funds are available in each tier with an institutional match. NDSU intends to fully maximize the amount available with matching funds in order to address resident hall and other maintenance projects. The combined amount of state funds and campus match funds available for 2025-2027 is \$25.4 million.
- Campus network base funding
 - The legislature provided \$2.5 million base funding for the Northern Tier Network Consortium, an ultra-high-speed regional cyberinfrastructure network supporting research and education, which can be used to advance high-performance computing for academic and research needs.

Tuition Revenue

NDSU's enrollment has stabilized after a period of decline. Most notably, the student headcount enrollment at census for both Fall 2023 and Fall 2024 was 11,952. As program and course offerings are delivered via different modalities, revenue assumptions and impacts are evaluated, and for planning purposes, revenue is conservatively estimated. The Budget Office conducts regular review and analysis to compare actual revenue with estimates, and in-year adjustments are made when necessary to spending budgets. Budget schedule 2 (see above) references the 2025-2027 tuition revenue estimates.

NDSU is a first-choice destination for North Dakota high school students pursuing higher education. NDSU also has the largest number of on-campus enrollments in the university system. Due to its location along the state border with Minnesota, NDSU continues to be a school of choice for many Minnesota students.

For the two-year period of 2025-2027, NDSU has been approved for a 6% tuition increase for each academic year. The increase is primarily intended to cover costs associated with salaries, wages and benefits.

NDSU's financial management outcomes are measured through:

- Financial review

- NDSU's FY2024 composite financial indicator was 5.19 (including component units) and 3.69 (excluding component units), which is an increase in comparison to the FY2023 indicators of 3.94 and 3.56, respectively.
 - Per State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) Policy 810.1, NDUS institutions must maintain an undesignated appropriated funds (i.e., general fund and tuition) reserve between five to seven percent of the previous fiscal year's actual general fund and net tuition revenue. NDSU's undesignated appropriated reserve was seven percent for fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024.
- Bond ratings
 - Moody's Investor Service affirmed NDSU's 'Aa3' stable issuer rating in a report dated February 10, 2025. According to Moody's: "The credit quality is supported by a very good regional brand and market position. NDSU is a top research institution within its five-state region and has \$488 million operating scope that includes expanding STEM programming and research." Moody's also reported: "NDSU maintains stable annual operating performance through a diverse mix of steady revenue streams and a disciplined financial management team with sound budgeting practices including responsibility centered management." In addition, Moody's stated: "NDSU has a history of good budget and capital management. Additionally, the university has low-direct debt leverage and good asset diversity at its affiliate foundation."
 - S&P Global Ratings affirmed NDSU's 'AA-' rating with a stable outlook in a report dated November 15, 2024. The report noted: "We assessed NDSU's enterprise risk profile as very strong, characterized by healthy matriculation rates, good geographic diversity, and the university's position as a flagship and land-grant institution in North Dakota. These strengths are somewhat offset, in our view, by improved but below median retention rates and small decreases in full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment over the last three years. We assessed the university's financial risk profile as very strong, characterized by solid financial resources, good state funding environment, and a low debt burden."

Research Portfolio

Maintaining an active research profile, NDSU continues to receive strong support from federal funding agencies with an overall increase of 19% and notable increases from the Department of Agriculture (19% increase), Department of Defense (76% increase), Department of Energy (37% increase), and National Science Foundation (21% increase).

NDSU is a core partner in the NSF Regional Innovation Engines program, announced in 2024, that secured first year funding of \$15 million and a potential of \$160 million in funding over 10 years. The ND Advanced Agriculture Technology Engine will fund programs that help solve food insecurity and expand economic opportunities.

Based on its research activity, NDSU is classified as a Research 1: Very High Research Spending and Doctorate Production. NDSU reported \$190 million in total research and development expenditures on the National Science Foundation Higher Education Research and Development Survey in FY2023, which supersedes previous amounts of \$164 million in FY2021 and \$174 million in FY2022.

Tuition Incentive Budget Model

Beginning in FY2024, NDSU transitioned from a historical/incremental budget model across the university and began using an incentivized tuition revenue allocation budget model for the academic colleges. See 4.C for additional information about model development. The model is intended to empower college deans in decision making, allow for entrepreneurial activities, and provide accountability for college finances to senior leadership. The tuition incentive model is focused on the allocation of net tuition revenues to inform college budgets, based on student credit hours with two main drivers: college of instruction (where courses are taught) and college of record (where students are enrolled by program). A central holdback of tuition can be used to fund strategic investments, core infrastructure, and subsidize programs to support balanced budgeting.

- Net undergraduate tuition: 75% to colleges based on instructed credit hours (college of instruction) and 25% to colleges based on primary major/home college enrollment (college of record). Allocable tuition is net of institutional waivers and central holdback.
- Graduate tuition: 100% to colleges based on student's primary major/home college (college of record). Allocable tuition is net of central holdback.

Facilities and Physical Infrastructure

As provided in the 2022 NDSU Campus Master Plan, the main campus is located in Fargo, ND and includes 97 owned facilities/buildings and resides on 261 acres. NDSU also leases and operates 12 additional buildings in the Fargo area. Also located on the campus is the main Agricultural Research Experiment Station, with an additional seven research and extension centers located on 19,869 acres across the state of ND. Currently, a \$98 million capital project is under construction to modernize 10,000-20,000 square feet of existing space with new construction of 120,000 gross square feet. This project is funded through a combination of ND state bonds and donor contributions.

The Campus Master Plan aligns with the strategic plan; provides a six-year outlook for program- and enrollment-driven needs; identifies deferred maintenance priority repairs; and reflects life, safety, and security priority needs. NDSU's most recent master plan was updated in FY2022 and amended in 2024, noting the addition of North Dakota Legislature authorized capital projects that were approved during the legislative session. Also identified were outdated structures that will be razed due to the new buildings/structures that will be in place.

The Campus Master Plan can be amended as necessary and is updated every six years. The information is included in the North Dakota University System (NDUS) overall master plan for all campuses. The system-wide plan is referenced when requesting additional state-appropriated resources for new buildings and reviewing deferred maintenance projects.

Deferred maintenance projects are addressed through the legislative 3-tier matching funds program. State funds are available in each tier with an institutional match. As part of NDSU's reserve funds, amounts are specifically set aside for the match required in order to maximize the amount of funds available to target facility and deferred maintenance needs.

During the 2023-2025 biennium, NDSU accessed all matching funds and was able to address residence hall and other maintenance projects. NDSU fully utilized the state match funds of \$9.3 million and reserve funds of \$14.3 million to provide \$23.6 million for facility projects. For the 2025-2027 biennium, the legislature increased the match funding available

by 7% to \$10.1 million, and NDSU intends to match with reserve funds of \$15.3M million to fully maximize the combined amount available of \$25.4 million in order to continue to address residence hall and other maintenance projects.

Technological Infrastructure

NDSU Information Technology (IT) reports to the provost. Its primary funding is from allocated appropriated funding and student fee revenue. In addition, the 68th North Dakota Legislative Assembly (convened in 2023) provided \$2.5 million in ongoing base funding for the Northern Tier Network Consortium, an ultra-high-speed regional cyberinfrastructure network supporting research and education and to advance high performance computing for academic and research needs.

Technological infrastructure continues to evolve to meet the needs of the campus faculty, staff, and students. Currently, IT maintains a network core with an advanced enterprise-class architecture and technology that supports the business, educational, and advanced research activities of the university. In general, the network core is architected and provisioned using modern technology and sophisticated management practices to minimize complexity, while at the same time, providing high quality network services, broad access, and outreach for authenticated clients/users affiliated with the university and the university system.

The university's reliance on IT services will continue to grow and expand as network-capable, non-computing devices become fully integrated into all aspects of campus. As more mission critical systems, applications, and devices are deployed, IT will continue to advance leading edge technologies to ensure a reliable, scalable, and secure networking environment, providing a competitive advantage as a leading research institution.

Budget Process

NDSU's budget process is subject to biennial legislative authorization of appropriated funds, SBHE approval, and NDUS guidelines. Additionally, a comprehensive annual budget is prepared for the academic mission and for associated support programs.

NDSU's annual and biennial processes contain separately budgeted and appropriated funds for other related programs that are designated as separate state agencies. The separate program agencies are the North Dakota Forest Service, Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute, North Dakota Extension Services, North Dakota Agriculture and Experiment Stations, and Northern Crops Institute. Each agency is responsible for budget review and monitoring, including comparing actual revenue and expenditure activity.

Biennial Budget

- The SBHE sets operating budget request priorities in April of even-numbered years. The operating priorities approved for recurring base funding are included in the submission. The biennial operating base budget generally includes salary and non-salary expenditures, deferred maintenance, and extraordinary repairs. The SBHE also ranks and approves priority requests for the NDUS for consideration in the biennial budget proposal submission. Examples of requests for legislative funding include the Governor's Higher Education Funding Model, deferred maintenance, capital building funds, and Campus Security and Emergency Preparedness. The

SBHE prioritizes capital project requests in June of even-numbered years and includes them in the biennial budget request.

- After priorities are established and set by the SBHE, NDSU develops its detailed budget proposal in compliance with the requirements. NDSU's proposal is submitted to the North Dakota Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in July of even-numbered years. After OMB review, NDSU's budget request, as part of the NDUS package, is forwarded to the governor for review and executive recommendation to the legislature, usually in December of even numbered years.
- Beginning in January of odd numbered years, the legislature analyzes, discusses, revises, approves, and then sets the final appropriation in April or May for implementation. The approved budget request is set for the upcoming biennial period starting in July of odd years (e.g., July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2027).

Annual Budget

After the legislature has approved and set the biennial budget, the SBHE will approve annual budget guidelines, including criteria for room and board, salary and operating, and tuition and fee rates for the upcoming fiscal/academic year. The tuition and fee proposals by the institutions also may include student approval. Student fee proposals must be approved by student government. Once approved by the SBHE, the guidelines are distributed.

At NDSU, the president, with input from the cabinet, may establish additional guidelines, including salary administration guidelines. All units have responsibility for preparing and reviewing annual budgets, which must reflect all revenue and expense activity, based on the best information available at the time. The Budget Office reviews the submissions and compiles them to ensure accuracy and compliance with guidelines. A comprehensive all funds budget is prepared by the Budget Office, with schedules and projections. The Budget Office assembles necessary support documentation and performs a comparison of budgets submitted to available funding. NDSU's president approves the final balanced budget submitted to the NDUS chancellor, who reviews and approves on behalf of the SBHE.

Various levels within the organization (department, college, division or vice president, agency appropriation, and university) are responsible for budget review and monitoring on a regular basis, including comparisons of actual revenue and expenditure activity.

Each level of the organization is assigned responsibility for operating within the approved budget. The Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) financial system provides a real-time budget reporting environment for monitoring and tracking the budget expended and remaining. The system provides controls for disallowing expenses to post against budgets once they have been fully expended. Numerous reports are available within the financial system for monitoring budgets. Following the re-organization of the financial support structure (see 4.C), subject matter experts are available for units and can provide information and reports to facilitate the review and monitoring for various units across campus.

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4.C Planning for Quality Improvement

The institution engages in systematic strategic planning for quality improvement. It relies on data, integrating its insights from enrollment forecasts, financial capacity, student learning assessment, institutional operations and the external environment.

Argument

NDSU's Strategic Plan 2021-26 was finalized in 2020 with implementation planned to begin that year but postponed until 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Year 1 Implementation Plan was developed with goals and metrics to initiate work on this strategic plan. However, the pandemic created a disconnect between the goals (substantially developed prior to the pandemic) and the new reality of challenges and opportunities facing the institution.

NDSU Transform

With the transition to a new president in May 2022, the institutional goals of NDSU evolved into the development of the NDSU Transform initiative. This initiative focuses on the evolution of NDSU to meet stakeholder needs through mission-aligned work and strategic investment. NDSU Transform is built on five (5) strategic priorities grounded in evidence-based, data-informed recommendations from the President's Councils (see below) and the NDSU mission:

1. Enhancing enrollment, retention and student success;
2. Prioritizing NDSU's R-1 Carnegie classification status as a top research institution;
3. Investing in the well-being of the people across the NDSU community
4. Building a stronger culture of diversity, inclusion and respect; and
5. Embracing NDSU's critical role as a land-grant institution.

To date, the efforts aligned with NDSU Transform have focused on supporting student retention, growing faculty research and creative activity, focusing on student and employee well-being and inclusion, creating a strategic enrollment management plan, and improving institutional sustainability by improving institutional operations and efficiency.

Supporting Student Success

The President's Council for Retention (PCOR) uses institutional data to assess areas for improvement related to student success and ultimately student retention. This council develops goals, tactics, and timeframes for student success initiatives by evaluating and recommending improvements to or resources to improve advising, teaching, curricula, and co-curricular experiences. One key opportunity for improvement was to provide students with a high-quality, consistent advising experience in their first years at NDSU. The PCOR supported the creation of a centralized advising model housed in the Career and Advising Center. See 3.G for discussion of PCOR and the centralized advising model.

Faculty Research and Creative Activity

The Faculty Research Council consists of 10 faculty members, two from each of the five academic colleges. This council is charged with providing and recommending resources for faculty to succeed in research and creative activity. Their annual report demonstrates the impact of investments made in alignment with the council's prior recommendations, including research funding, support for professional development, investment in equipment, and support for graduate and undergraduate research. They also propose new goals and recommendations in response to changes in the federal research landscape.

Supporting Well-Being

The President's Council on Well-Being (PCW) supports the mission of the institution through a holistic approach to increasing and sustaining all aspects of well-being at NDSU. This council uses a data-informed approach to assess and develop priorities for improvement of student and employee well-being. Student health and well-being data is assessed and benchmarked through the American College Health Association's National College Health Assessment. The PCW leads a 3-year partnership with Gallup to assess employee engagement and well-being, which began in 2024. The NDSU Employee Engagement Initiative includes an annual employee survey with unit reports distributed to supervisors, who are tasked with developing and carrying out action plans to address areas of concerns within their units. Examples of action plans include those from the Office of Registration and Records and the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis. This initiative enables supervisors to support the various opportunities for improvement within their units.

Diversity, Inclusion, and Respect

The President's Council for Diversity, Inclusion, and Respect (PCDIR) supported the areas specified in the first pillar of the 2021-26 Strategic Plan. A key recommendation of this committee was the creation of the senior director for access and opportunity, which was created and hired in 2024 as a cabinet-level position. This position supervises the Center for Community and Belonging (formerly the Office of Multicultural Programs). They also support a broad variety of student success efforts for marginalized groups, including the Bison Bridge program that supports students who have high financial need and/or are first-generation, the LGBTQ+ student community, and the broad array of NDSU's 250+ student groups.

In 2024-25, upon review by both the PCDIR and the PCW, the PCDIR was merged with the PCW as a reflection of the high level of overlap between the concepts and goals of the committees. The chair of PCDIR was named co-chair of PCW in this merger.

Strategic Enrollment Management Planning

The senior director of enrollment management position was created in 2023, emphasizing the critical nature of this work by moving the oversight of enrollment management to a dedicated cabinet-level position. The senior director supervises the Office of Admission and Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships and leads the Strategic Enrollment Management Planning Committee, which finalized a 5-year Strategic Enrollment Management Plan in 2025. This plan incorporates internal and external data to develop priorities for supporting

institutional enrollment growth, student success, and financial sustainability.

Institutional Operations and Efficiency

Significant efforts were undertaken to improve institutional operations in the divisions of Academic Affairs and Finance and Administration from 2020 to 2023. In Academic Affairs, colleges were reorganized from eight to five, reducing cost and administrative burden on the institution, while maintaining programs and creating alignment of academic units. Additionally, the cost of offering NDSU's academic programs were evaluated through a partnership with Huron Consulting Group. The findings were shared broadly with academic leaders and used as one component of evaluating the academic portfolio.

The President's Steering Committee on Budget and Financial Operations Enhancements engaged with Huron Consulting Group in 2022-23 to enhance and improve business processes, promote consistent best practices, and identify efficiencies across campus, led by the Division of Finance and Administration. These efforts focused on creating a new tuition incentive budget allocation model (see 4.B) and conducting a financial operations assessment. Changes were implemented in the 2024 fiscal year. The steering committee for this work included stakeholders from across multiple divisions including broad representation from the divisions of Academic Affairs and Finance and Administration.

The Tuition Incentive Budget Model aligns the budgets of academic colleges with program and course enrollment in each college. This model increases the transparency of budget allocations to colleges and supports student success by allocating funding proportionately to enrollment. It replaces a historical budgeting process, in which allocations were based on prior-year allocation rather than student enrollment patterns. The budget development process included assessment and visioning, grounded in data and guiding principles, followed by development of a test model with exploration of a variety of scenarios. Stakeholder engagement across the institution, through multiple workgroups and townhall discussions, ensured broad input and refinement prior to implementation. See 4.B for more information about the Incentivized Budget Model.

The Budget Operations Assessment evaluated staffing and business processes directly related to financial operations. Data collection was conducted through focus groups and an activity assessment (i.e., survey of work activities) with employees whose positions were related to financial operations. The steering committee worked with the consulting firm to redesign the financial operations of NDSU, ultimately developing a centralized model of budgeting staff and accounting staff, to replace the use of several models of financial staff deployment. This work resulted in the development of two new unit types: the Accounting Service Center (ASC), which manages financial transactions for the institution, and Business Centers, which manage business operations and budgets for colleges and divisional units and collaborate with the ASC to streamline financial operations. From the final report: "The recommended operating model will increase staff specialization, aligning jobs with financial services or general administrative work in order to clarify roles and responsibilities, create opportunities for career advancement, and improve the effectiveness of financial business processes."

The 2022 Campus Master Plan and 2024 amendment align facilities planning with institutional mission, enrollment forecasts, and financial forecasts. Section 3 of the Campus Master Plan details infrastructure priority goals for a six-year outlook, including updates to

facilities for engineering, performing arts, agricultural labs, student housing, and athletics, among other priorities. To date, progress has been made on these goals through the funding and construction or renovation of the following spaces:

- Richard Offerdahl '65 Engineering Complex, new construction of engineering classroom and lab space, construction underway with anticipated completion date of Fall 2026 (\$98 million construction funded from \$59 million in state bonds and \$38 million of donor contributions)
- Challey Hall, renovation and expansion of performing arts space, substantially complete Fall 2025 (\$20 million authorized construction/renovation funded from donor contributions)
- Peltier Complex, new construction of agricultural sciences lab space and offices, completed Spring 2025 (\$85 million authorized construction funded from \$50 million in state bonds, \$20 million of state general funds, and \$15 million of donor contributions)
- Pavak Residence Hall, renovation of existing student residence hall, operational, substantially complete Summer 2025 (\$20.5 million authorized construction funded from tier matching funds, deferred maintenance funds and operations)
- Seim Residence Hall, renovation underway beginning Fall 2025 (\$29 million authorized construction funded from tier matching funds, deferred maintenance funds and operations)
- Nodak Insurance Football Performance Complex, new construction of training facility, completed Fall 2022 (\$50 million authorized construction funded by donor contributions)
- Indoor Softball Facility, new construction of training facility (\$2.6 million authorized construction funded by donor contributions)

The Office of Institutional Research and Analysis (OIRA) provides campus employees with access to dashboards that provide insights on a variety of topics including enrollment, student success outcomes, and student application history. See 3.G for discussion of these dashboards. Employees are encouraged to use institutional data in their decision-making processes and to request additional data or analyses as needed.

NDSU's future-planning positions the institution to continue fulfilling its mission to serve the people of the state and region. The New Horizon Initiative was presented to the North Dakota Legislature and to the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) during the 2025 North Dakota legislative session. This plan outlines NDSU's goals for growth and improvement from 2026-2035, furthering the evolution of the institution to meet the needs of future students, employers, and the state through strategic investment and resource deployment. The North Dakota legislature funded \$16M million of the \$35 million requested. These funds will support expansion of industry partnerships; advancements in engineering, agriculture, and manufacturing; and investments to modernize and meet workforce demands in nursing, pharmacy, and health science programs.

A new strategic planning cycle was initiated in August 2025 to develop the 2026-2030 NDSU Strategic Plan. The strategic planning charter outlines the key components of the planning cycle, including scope, timeline, metrics for success, and communication plan. A draft charter was presented to NDSU leaders in September 2025 with a goal of final approval by the president no later than the end of September.

Sources

- 4.C._2022 NDSU CMP Final to NDUS
- 4.C._DIR&Access Work Team Report 2025
- 4.C._New Horizon handout_020725
- 4.C._PCW Annual Report 2023-24
- 4.C._NDSU Transform
- 4.C._PCOR Annual Report 2023-24
- 4.C._Public Enrollment Dashboard
- 4.C._Strategic Plan 2021-2026 Implementation Yr1
- 4.C._Strategic Plan 2021-26
- 4.C._Undergraduate Retention Rate Dashboard
- 4.C._Budget Operations Final Report
- 4.C._Tuition Incentive Budget Model Final Report
- 4.C._2025-2030 NDSU SEM PLAN--FINAL
- 4.C._Course Outcomes Dashboard
- 4.C._NDSU Campus Master Plan 2024 Amendment
- 4.C._National College Health Assessment
- 4.C._Employee Engagement Initiative
- 4.C._Employee Engagement Summary of Action Plans
- 4.C._Employee Engagement Action Plan Sample 2
- 4.C._Employee Engagement Action Plan Sample 1
- 4.C._NDSU Strategic Planning Charter Sept2025
- 4.C._Huron Takeaways

Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Argument

NDSU's ability to fulfill its mission, improve educational quality, and prepare for future challenges is supported by its comprehensive structures, policies, and strategic planning.

NDSU's governance structure ensures broad input and transparency. The State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) provides system-level oversight, while institutional leadership, including the President's Cabinet, manages day-to-day operations. Shared governance is institutionalized through the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Student Government, and their presidents serve on the President's Cabinet, which provides direct input.

Institution-wide committees and work teams, such as the President's Council on Retention and the Faculty Research Council, focus on specific strategic priorities like student success, faculty research, and campus well-being, translating institutional goals into actionable plans.

NDSU's financial and physical resources are managed with a clear focus on the mission.

- **Fiscal Strength:** NDSU's financial stability is supported by a diverse mix of revenues, including strong legislative support through a formula-based funding model and initiatives like the North Dakota Challenge Grant program. This stability is recognized by credit rating agencies like Moody's and S&P Global Ratings, which have affirmed NDSU's strong ratings based on a strong financial position and disciplined management.
- **Budgeting for the Future:** NDSU's biennial budget process, which is integrated with the North Dakota Legislature, secures funding for operations, deferred maintenance, and capital projects. The new Tuition Incentive Budget Model, implemented in FY2024, incentivizes academic colleges to make strategic, data-informed decisions and ensures financial accountability.
- **Infrastructure Investment:** The Campus Master Plan aligns physical infrastructure improvements with long-term strategic goals, which ensures a modern and safe learning environment.

NDSU's strategic planning is dynamic and responsive to new opportunities and challenges. The NDSU Transform initiative focuses on five key priorities: enrollment, research, well-being, diversity, and the land-grant mission. This initiative is supported by dedicated councils and work teams that use evidence-based, data-informed recommendations to make improvements. For example, the President's Council for Retention (PCOR) supported the creation of a centralized professional advising model, while the President's Council on Well-Being (PCW) advocated for a partnership with Gallup to assess and improve employee engagement. These targeted initiatives enable NDSU to effectively execute its mission and adapt to future needs.

Sources

There are no sources.