

# North Dakota State Staff Senate Meeting Agenda

September 8, 2025 @ 2:30pm CT via MS Teams



*The NDUS Staff Senate serves to represent staff employees from the eleven academic institutions and employees throughout the university system. The Senate identifies staff interests and issues; acts as a forum for the discussion of staff-related matters; and facilitates communication on behalf of the campus staff members with the NDUS Chancellor and the State Board of Higher Education.*

- 1) Called to Order at 2:31 pm by President Mike O'Toole.
- 2) Roll Call
  - a) BSC – Jessie Bessert
  - b) CTSO – Marla Hagemeister, Joshua DeNio
  - c) DCB – Jennifer Cote, Misty Lindgren, Mike O'Toole
  - d) DSU – Laura Fetting, Ashley Tillman
  - e) LRSC –
  - f) MaSU – Shannon Hofer
  - g) MiSU –
  - h) NDSCS – Amy Carson, Maggie Jordahl
  - i) NDSU – Corey Landowski, Jenn Young
  - j) UND – Anna Kinney, Mariah Pingleton, Brandon Wallace
  - k) VCSU – Erin Edinger, Jacob Olson
  - l) WSC – Carol Campbell
  - m) HRC Rep (Mindy Oconnor) – Not present
  - n) SBHE Rep (Anna Kinney) – Present
  - o) Mike O'Toole asked about LRSC attendance. Jenn Young (Secretary) said they have not attended since the May meeting. Mike O'Toole said he would reach out to them to see who should be attending.
- 3) Approval of Agenda
  - a) Motion by Misty Lindgren (DCB), seconded by Anna Kinney (UND), motion carried.
- 4) Approval of [August Meeting Minutes](#)
  - a) Motion by Jessie Bessert (BSC), seconded by Shannon Hofer (MaSU), motion carried.
- 5) Reports
  - a) Campus Updates – Submit to website
    - i) BSC – President spoke at last Senate meeting. They've asked for more communication from administration and they are getting that. The President shared about the strategic planning and legislative issues. Elected committee chairs and came up with new ideas how to greet new employees from the Senate (meet in person and give them a welcome gift). Separation of faculty and staff at events – President is on board with providing funding to help incorporate faculty into staff events as well.
    - ii) DCB –Fundraiser going right now (Get Axed). Have signs that put in the yard, pay money to get them removed, can pay money to have them placed in someone else's yard. Evergreen Gala –

Sept. 27<sup>th</sup> – biggest Foundation fundraiser, dress up, play games, silent/live auction. Did staff trainings over the summer instead of doing them all during an inservice week.

- iii) DSU – Staff Senate working on partnered with Sodexo for dining to get free lunch cards to take new employees for lunch during their first week of work. Sodexo provided the cards free of cost to Staff Senate.
  - iv) NDSU – Had the Interim VP of RCA appointed (Dr. Heidi Grunwald who was serving as the Assistant VP). Also turning over the Director of Facilities Management – Brent DeKrey will be taking over on Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> after Mike Ellingson’s retirement. The State of the University is tomorrow (9/9). Historically, been during Homecoming week but decided to try something new this year. Had a successful Welcome Week. Homecoming is week of Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>. Staff Senators will be volunteering at events but the only event that we will be participating as Staff Senate in is the parade on the 26<sup>th</sup> and we’ll have a float. We have our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Academic Programs Fair coming up on Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>.
  - v) VCSU – In parade mode – in charge of campus float. Several events coming up at the high school and college level, homecoming and a few other things. Working on getting committee assignments settled across campus. Jacob Olson (vice president of Staff Senate) has started attending Faculty Senate meetings and waiting on Faculty Senate to appoint a representative to attend Staff Senate meetings. Have a welcome/info card for new employees and a VCSU shirt. Professional development committee has a training on emotional intelligence coming up next month and is working with their employee assistance program. Filming crew from the college tour campus this week and will have an episode on Amazon Prime. <https://www.thecolleetour.com/>
  - vi) UND – Will do a float at Homecoming Parade. Getting ready for state employee recognition luncheons. Had State of University address as well, with staff at the university center and student government giving the introduction. Having a “seminar series” for new employees.
  - vii) WSC – As part of inservice this year, planned a bus tour of campus utilizing a newer athletics bus to transport employees between buildings. Had a recommendation to do it multiple times a year so that the faculty could be involved as well. Spoke with President about overlapping staff and faculty inservice during the same week. Some of the stuff (i.e. Presidential address will have to stay) but some of the trainings could be spread out. Will be moving staff inservice to two weeks before start of semester.
- b) SBHE Staff Advisor Report (Anna Kinney)
- i) Met mid-August for retreat. Typically retreat happens in May but was postponed this year.
  - ii) Retreat this year was structured to do some “soul searching” utilizing external facilitators.
    - (1) What are we? What is a state board? What are the values that we want to make sure are central to the work we do? What role do we play? How do we define the metrics and measurements that we use to determine our successes?
  - iii) Reconfiguration at NDUS office. Meredith Larson is in the COO position.
  - iv) Making sure that the State Board isn’t just making campuses do things. Especially from the staff perspective, it sometimes feels like the State Board institutes something and campuses have to make changes. How do we get campuses feeling like they’re more involved in decision making?

- v) Two big topics this year will be sub 120 bachelor's degrees and dual credit.
  - (1) Conversation at SB level regarding sub 120 bachelors programs. Bill didn't go through legislated session. Sometimes called accelerated degrees but there are accelerated degrees that require 120 hours. These are looking at those programs that might only require as few as 90 hours. A lot of conversations regarding this. Also, seems like campuses are split on it.
  - (2) Dual credit – who gets to offer dual credit? Conversation is being brought up again. ND Century Code allows for all campuses to offer dual credit. NDSU and UND have historically been banned from offering dual credit courses that any other campus MAY offer. There was an exception for UND aeronautic department. NDSU, Valley City, and NDSCS formed an agreement to allow NDSU to offer some dual credit courses.
- vi) Not a lot on post-tenure review as that really wrapped up at the previous meeting. Voted on a procedure for post-tenure review that every institution that does post-tenure review needs to institute within 3 years.
- vii) Legislative interim committees – continue to meet so SBHE is keeping an eye on those. Information is available on the legislative website.
  - (1) Higher Ed Institutions Committee – How is the NDUS system composed?  
<https://ndlegis.gov/assembly/69-2025/committees/interim/higher-education-institutions-committee>
  - (2) Higher Ed Funding Review Committee – looking at the funding equation that is used for our system <https://ndlegis.gov/assembly/69-2025/committees/interim/higher-education-funding-review-committee>
- viii) Chancellor search – some remarks made in the news about the search – Chair Black was cited as saying they might not do a search but rather appointing – CCF is opposed to appointing a Chancellor versus a search. Discussion about skipping search and moving Interim Chancellor Sanford into permanent position. <https://northdakotamonitor.com/2025/08/21/higher-education-board-chair-favors-keeping-interim-leader-of-north-dakota-colleges/>
- ix) Will meet September 23<sup>rd</sup> at Minot State University.
- x) If you have concerns about things you're seeing or from your fellow staff, let Anna know.
- xi) Question from Mike O'Toole about meeting regarding Dual Credit and sub 120 bachelors degrees last week – Anna said that was a subcommittee so she hasn't heard regarding that meeting.

c) HRC Update (Mindy Oconnor) – Mindy not present

## 6) Business Agenda

### a) Taskforce Chair Updates

- i) Legislative Taskforce / Bylaws (Anna Kinney)
  - (1) Have not met yet but have a good roster with good representation from all campuses.
- ii) Staff Recognition (Heather Halverson) – Heather not present
- iii) Professional Development (Greg Carlson) – Greg not present

iv) Staff Affairs (Carol Campbell)

(1) Has good representation but has not scheduled meeting yet. Plan to reach out this week to set up a meeting for next week.

v) Executive Committee (Mike O'Toole)

(1) Has not needed to meet.

b) Employee morale-open discussion, idea sharing.

i) Anna Kinney (UND) – Big theme at the state level is of shared resources. Can help with stability at smaller campuses (i.e. if someone in payroll leaves, the whole department is shifted to a new person). Goal is not to replace staff but increase stability. Had offer by SB Member Campbell to come talk to us about shared resources since he works for HR for Sanford Health System.

7) Open Discussion

8) Next meeting: October 13, 2:30-4:00 CT.

9) Adjourned at 3:22 pm.

**Additional Information:**

- NDSSS Website - <https://staffsenate.ndus.edu/>
- Campus Updates Submission - <https://staffsenate.ndus.edu/campus-update-submission-form/>