

North Dakota University System Staff Senate Meeting March 12, 2010 Meeting Minutes

The North Dakota University System Staff Senate met on November 12, 2009 via IVN.

Schools present: Bismarck State College (BSC) represented by Rita Nodland and Jackie Hagel; Dickinson State University (DSU) represented by Christie Chernich, Heidi Larson and Kelly Steffes Lake Region State College (LRSC) represented by Joycelyn Hagen, Anne Rasmusson and Lois Bachmeier; Mayville State University (MaSU) represented by Gail Schumann; Minot State University (MiSU) represented by Nathan Anderson and Linda Benson; North Dakota State College of Science (NDSCS) represented by Aaron Berg; North Dakota State University (NDSU) represented by Janine Trowbridge, Jeri Vaudrin and Laura Dallman; the University of North Dakota (UND) represented by Janice Hoffarth, Karyn Hippen and Loren Liepold; Valley City State University (VCSU) represented by Janet Drake and Williston State College (WSC) represented by Ron Radle.

Schools Absent: Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB).

Human Resource Council representatives: Diane Nelson, UND, and Broc Lietz, NDSU.

NDUS Staff Senate President Janice Hoffarth called the meeting to order at 2 p.m.

Campus updates:

BSC—Staff Senate collaborated with Faculty Senate and Student Government to raise over \$2,800 (shaving heads) for pediatric cancer research.

DSU—No update.

LRSC—No update.

MaSU—not much new, but they raised Dollars for Scholars.

MiSU—Staff Senate awarded four scholarships for staff and dependents of staff members. Staff Senate's Orientation Committee continues to meet with the goal of putting an orientation manual online. They are preparing for Staff Senate elections this spring.

NDSU—250 attended a Valentine's Ball sponsored by Staff Senate with proceeds going towards scholarships. \$1,006 was raised last year. This year's amount has not been calculated yet. Sales from the Staff Senate cookbook were donated to Fargo's Emergency Food Pantry in the amount of \$1,626.60. Their Staff Senate is also preparing for elections.

NDSCS—Not much new, but they are orientating new staff. They are also surveying staff about pay inequality and a no-smoking or tobacco-free campus.

UND—Staff Senate hosted an Emerald and Ice Gala, which more than 200 people attended. They raised \$2,500 for scholarships and approved 23 scholarships for staff dependents. There were 81 applications. This spring, Staff Senate is modifying its election process. Vice president candidates are nominated a month before elections, and the candidates speak before Staff Senate about their platforms. Six senators have been nominated. Staff Senate is getting ready for Spring Fling. UND thanked NDSU: their Emerald and Ice Gala was modeled after NDSU's Valentine's Day Ball.

WSC—Preparing for elections. The Lady Tetons Basketball Team is going to the national tournament.

Approval of minutes—The November 19, 2009 NDUSSS minutes were approved, with NDSU and BSC abstaining, with the change of “Condolences offered to DSU” instead of “Prayers were offered to the DSU.” The motion for approval was from UND with a second by DSU.

Human Resource Council representatives:

Diane—The Human Resource Council met Feb 16-17 at UND. HRC will post its minutes on the NDUS Web site, TIAA-CREFF was there and offered information on retirement.

Broc—NDPERS will have shortfall.

Broc advised that we all, now that we are aware of the problem, stay abreast of developments. HRC had a good discussion about NDUSSS. Unanimous support from HRC; NDUSSS is mirroring other government groups in wanting support and understanding. One item was discussed—resolutions and agenda item about SBHE seat, HRC wants to advise caution as NDUSSS goes down that path. “Walk before you can run,” NDUSSS should establish a good structure and have good plans in place and remember NDUSSS is a representative body of the NDUS staff, know what you want and understand the scope. He related “It’s about time,” this group has needed this representative body.

Old Business:

Janice received a directive from the Chancellor’s Office. At the March 15 Chancellor’s Cabinet meeting, they will discuss what they want us to do next, all provosts voted to support. The Chancellor’s Office will advise Janice what the next steps will be. Janice’s presentation before the State Board of Higher Education at LRSC was well received. Representative Bob Skarphol, from Tioga, asked Janice to represent NDUS staff in front of the Higher Education Committee, a Roundtable interim higher education committee, in Bismarck on March 31. Broc said that the committee talks about issues, looks at all things that happened in the legislature last year and looks at progress; they track and prepare for next session. It is a strategy session.

New Business:

NDPERS changes—Sparb Collins, NDPERS executive director, presented at NDSU. There is concern that the fund will eventually run out of money because of downturn in market; it is not 100 percent funded. There are three options that NDPERS is presenting; employer pays all, staff pays all, or a compromise. All to be presented at next legislature. This issue will affect all staff because there is always political compromise somewhere. If a campus would like to learn more, contact Collins for a presentation on the topic.

Communication issues—Looking at how to communicate better; communication by email always presents inherent issues, but we will continue to work on improving communications, timeliness and clarity. Limited by funding issues for multiple face-to-face meetings.

DSU (Christie)—unsure about financial support.

UND (Janice and Loren)—there is a \$500 limit from UND. Janice offered the suggestion of two in-person meetings and two IVN meetings a year. Concerns about timeliness responding to issues when some people want to get input from their Staff Senates.

NDSU (Janine)—a compromise is needed to communicate better. She is concerned about great conversation then no action until an e-mail spurt and flurry of activity. Miscommunication results, timely minutes help retain what was discussed.

Open and transparent discussion is needed; NDUSSS must find its voice so staff are understood, ways to set guidelines developed.

NDSCS (Aaron)—There is a section on the NDUS Web site for Staff Senate. (It is under the link for Councils, <http://www.ndus.edu/councils/default.asp?ID=569>.)

Cindy working on NDUSSS Web site.

In June, NDUSSS should see if we can come up with funding for two in-face meetings.

MiSU (Nathan)—can we create a forum where threads can be established, a little messaging account, jump on Messenger, or other instant communication? Some other options, not to replace IVN or face-to-face meetings, to enhance communication.

WSC (Ron)—State IVN has Google docs, WSC has a Google docs room, used for internal and external communication, also Pronto.

Janice asked if any school would have problems meeting by Wimba or other comparable software.

NDSU—Wimba is possible, does not know about Pronto.

WSC (Ron) will look at Google docs and Pronto.

Janice asked that all schools look into funding possibilities for face-to-face meetings before the June meeting.

UND (Loren)—The Council of College Faculties uses Wimba with one face-to-face meeting,

WCS (Ron)—To use Wimba-video conferencing from your desktop, all you need is a microphone or headset.

MiSU (Nathan)—is it possible to integrate Wimba with IVN? Generally, at MiSU, food service employees and custodians would be without computer access.

NDCSC—all have computer access

NDSU—all people with the exception of food service employees and custodians.

WSC (Ron) said that three or four options can be integrated.

Janice asked that we check into, for the June meeting, if we have staff without computer equipment, if they can have access through IT.

DSU (Christie)—said that an issue is being missed. If staff share office space, such as a front-line person, it would be difficult to participate in a NDUSSS meeting from your computer. You would be competing with noise, other people, and clients.

WSC (Ron) said to use headset (\$10).

Janice asked that we all check into possible problems and solutions, such as reserving a room and a laptop. It will be discussed in June.

School updates:

Janine (**NDSU**) volunteered to put together a template for updates for each meeting.

Issue of representation—Clarification of if NDUSSS senators can vote on behalf of their Staff Senates or if they must go back to their respective Staff Senates.

Janice—NDUSSS senators are elected representatives of their Staff Senates and can act on their behalf.

MaSU (Gail)—sees herself as elected representative.

BSC (Rita)—wanted to make sure that her Staff Senate knows what is going on and have the ability to contact her Staff Senate. Used distribution list to get input, needed a few days.

Janice—Bringing big, urgent issues back to individual Staff Senates can tie NDUSSS's "hands."

NDSU (Janine)—do we need "X" number of days for consultation.

VCSU (Janet)—this year, she consulted a distribution list, and few responded back.

Janice said take no answer to mean that they agree. Some issues need to be voted on quickly.

UND (Loren)—It cannot always be predicted, but one to two days should be all that is needed for voting.

MaSU and **NDSCS** feel that they can be representatives without needing to go back to their Staff Senates. This seemed to be the consensus and that voting should take no more than two days.

Janice broached the possibility of she and Janine visiting NDUS campuses to promote NDUSSS. She is looking at a way of visiting campuses like DCB, which did not attend the last IVN meeting or this one.

VCSU (Janet)—small campuses have problems with lack of people resources; personnel at small schools wear "many hats." Then, there is the issue of release time.

MiSU (Linda)—And, there is the ever present problem of funding for travel.

VCSU (Janet)—For the campus visits to be effective, the visits would have to be made by a trio of members: someone from a two-year school, a four-year school and a research institution. She is unsure if visits would help, she will have to think about it.

NDSU (Janine)—people will notice when NDUSSS takes on issues, we have been establishing a constitution and bylaws, and when NDUSSS takes on staff issues, there will be support.

Janice asked what are the issues of two-year, four-year and research institutions. We will discuss this at the June meeting.

The June NDUSSS meeting will be at NDSU on June 16 at the Alumni Center, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. An agenda will be sent out in May. Janice will find out if SBHE members would want to meet with us (they are meeting at NDSU the next day, June 17).

MiSU moved to adjourn the meeting, UND seconded, and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 3:23 p.m.

Next meeting: Scheduled on June 16 at NDSU