

North Dakota State Board of Higher Education

Academic and Student Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes

The State Board of Higher Education Academic and Student Affairs Committee met on March 17, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. CT., via Teams.

SBHE Academic and Student Affairs Committee members

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| ☒ Mr. Curtis Biller, Chair | ☒ Mr. Max Eriksrud |
| ☒ Mr. Kevin Black | ☒ Dr. Lisa Montplaisir, faculty advisor |
| ☒ Mr. DJ Campbell | |

Institution Presidents/Representatives

BSC: Interim President Leingang, Ms. Alicia Uhde, Dr. Kaylyn Bondy, **DCB:** Ms. Misty Lindgren, **DSU:** President Molander, Dr. Holly Gruhlke, Ms. Kayla Noah, **LRSC:** President Simone, Mr. Casey Zehrer, **MaSU:** Dr. Brian Huschle, Ms. Rhonda Nelson, **MISU:** Dr. Laurie Geller, **NDSCS:** President Flanigan, **NDSU:** Dr. Shari Veil, Dr. Laura Oster-Aaland, **UND:** Ms. Cassie Gerhardt, Dr. Eric Link, **VCSU:** Mr. Mark Nelson, **WSC:** President Hirning, Dr. Zahi Atallah, Ms. Megan Kasner.

System Office/CTS/Guests

NDUS: Commissioner Sanford, Ms. Bethany Kadrmas, Ms. Christina Pieske, Ms. Katie Fitzsimmons, Ms. Claire Gunwall, Mr. Chris Pieske, Mr. Cory Wigdahl, DC Lisa Johnson, Ms. Mindy Sturn, Dr. Jennifer Weber, Ms. Sharon Schwartzbauer, DC David Krebsbach, Ms. Edynn Glatt, Mr. Dustin Walcker, Dr. Billie Jo Lorus, DC Meredith Larson, Ms. Jamie Wilke, Mr. Eric Jensen, **CTS:** Mr. Corey Quirk.

Call to Order

Black moved, Eriksrud seconded to amend the agenda to include items 2, 4, 5, and 10 in a consent agenda.
Motion passed, 5-0.

1. **Agenda**

Kommer moved, Eriksrud seconded to approve the agenda as amended.
Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

~~2. Meeting Minutes~~

Consent Agenda

2. Meeting Minutes
 4. Policy 404.1 [Distance Education Program Approval](#)
 5. Policy 420 [Accreditation](#)
 10. Policy 616 [Career and Technical Program Instructor Certification Standards](#)
- See action under Call to Order.

Committee Business

3. New Academic Program Requests

a. [North Dakota State University](#)

- i. [B.S. in Artificial Intelligence](#)
- ii. [GR Certificate in Nuclear Engineering](#)
- iii. [UG Certificate in Microbiology and Biotechnology Techniques](#)
- iv. [GR Certificate in Microbiology and Biotechnology Techniques](#)

Dr. Veil described the new bachelor's in artificial intelligence, graduate certificate in engineering, and two certificates in microbiology and biotechnology, highlighting their alignment with industry trends and opportunities for expansion.

Black moved, Campbell seconded to approve NDSU's request for the new academic programs.

Motion passed, 5-0.

SBHE Policy

~~4. Policy 404.1 [Distance Education Program Approval](#)~~

~~5. Policy 420 [Accreditation](#)~~

6. Policy 421 [Academic Program Requests](#)

DC Johnson noted that Policy 421 includes additional details with the recent SBHE approval and guidelines associated for reduced-credit bachelor's degrees.

Kommer moved, Black seconded to approve the academic program requests, as presented.

Motion passed, 5-0.

7. Policy 502 [Student Fraud](#)

DC Johnson explained the expanded scope of Policy 502 to address fraud at admissions and application stages, with Kommer suggesting the inclusion of timeliness requirements for university responses.

Eriksrud moved, Black seconded to approve the expanded scope of Policy 502, with the assurance that further revisions regarding timeliness would be presented at the board meeting in March.

Motion passed, 5-0.

8. Policy 609 [Communications Proficiency](#)

DC Johnson explained Policy 609 had been pared down by Mr. Pieske to include only what is required by the Century Code.

Kommer moved, Eriksrud seconded to approve the edits to Policy 609.

Motion passed, 5-0.

9. Policy 611.1 [Employee Responsibility and Activities: Medical Service Plan-UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences](#)

DC Larson and Mr. Pieske explained that Policy 611.1 had been approved by the BFC earlier in the day. This policy is being retained at the request of UND SMHS.

Eriksrud moved, Black seconded to approve the Policy 611.1, as presented.

Motion passed, 5-0.

~~10. Policy 616 [Career and Technical Program Instructor Certification Standards](#) —DC Lisa Johnson—~~

Reports/Updates/Discussions

11. Rural Healthcare Transformation Fund

Campbell raised the need for an analysis of healthcare-related programs across NDUS institutions to identify gaps and support workforce needs.

12. Dual Credit/Rigor and Quality

DC Johnson presented a comprehensive report on dual credit and early entry programs, including rigor, quality, faculty credentials, and student outcomes.

13. Low Enrollment Programs: [DRAFT](#)

DC Johnson presented a model for examining low enrollment programs modeled after similar analysis implemented by the Texas Coordinating Board. She described the Texas model for identifying low producing programs, using five-year windows of completion data at specific thresholds or expectations for undergraduate and graduate level completions. Johnson indicated that North Dakota legislators have conducted similar analyses using publicly available completion data.

14. ND OER Statewide Conference

a. [April 9th, 2026, 9-4:30pm CDT](#)

Ms. Gunwall announced the upcoming statewide Open Education Resources (OER) conference.

Adjourn

Committee Chair Biller adjourned the meeting at 2:23 p.m., CT.