

North Dakota State Board of Higher Education

March 22, 2023, Research and Governance Committee Meeting Minutes

The State Board of Higher Education Research and Governance Committee met on Wednesday, March 22nd, at 3:15 p.m. CT, via Teams.

Committee Co-Chair Ryan called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. CT.

SBHE Committee members participating:

Dr. Casey Ryan, Co-chair
Ms. Danita Bye, Co-chair
Dr. John Warford
Dr. Lisa Montplaisir, SBHE Faculty Advisor

NDUS staff participating:

Chancellor Hagerott, NDUS
Mr. Jerry Rostad, NDUS
Mr. Darin King, NDUS
Mr. Chris Pieske, NDUS
Ms. Claire Gunwall, NDUS
Ms. Dina Cashman, NDUS
Ms. Meredith Larson, AG Office

Others Participating:

President Jensen, Mr. John Carroll, BSC
Dean Carmen Simone, DCB
President Easton, DSU
President Darling, LRSC
President Flanagan, NDSCS
Dr. Colleen Fitzgerald, Dr. Kristen Fellows, NDSU
President Armacost, Dr. John Mihelich, Dr. Robert Newman, UND
President Hirning, WSC
President LaFave, VCSU
President Shirley, MiSU
Dr. Delore Zimmerman, VPP
Dr. David DeMuth, Regional Representative

1. **Agenda**

And

2. **Meeting Minutes**

Bye moved, Warford seconded, to approve the agenda and February 15, 2023, meeting minutes.

Bye, Warford, and Ryan voted yes. Motion carried.

3. **EPSCOR Update**

Dr. Collen Fitzgerald reported that the staffing transition is complete and two additional hires have taken place to appropriately staff and manage the award. The grant requires a high intensity of administrative work, the grant requires a lot of reporting and getting acclimated to the portal system that is used by NSF. Dr. Fitzgerald stated that the annual report required by NSF is being finalized and is due April 1st and the final stages for searches for a permanent Director and the Tribal Partnerships Director are underway and announcements will be made no later than the end of April. She explained that the grant is approaching the four-year mark (starting on July 1st) at which time they conduct a site visit, tentatively set for August or September. A logistics site visit committee has been formed and we will continue to work on the details. She also noted that there are five-year awards that they need to prepare for submission. The committee confirmed that all NDUS institutions have an opportunity to be involved, along with the tribal colleges. She stated that engagement from NDUS technically focused colleges will also be beneficial.

4. **Update on CHIPS Act**

Chancellor Hagerott, Dr. Mihelich, and Dr. Fitzgerald provided an update on the CHIPS Act. The committee discussed several components, and the Vice Presidents of Research and Chancellor Hagerott will continue to keep the committee up to date on progress moving forward:

- The groundwork and next steps going forward with the five-state alliance
- Meetings with the Governor's staff and Commerce have taken place, but need more support and statewide collaboration with other entities, such as Department of Transportation
- Partnering with Montana for rural/low population hub designation
- Tentative timeframe to complete RFP is April/May
- National Science Foundation focus - creating jobs, building a digital economy, creating new technologies/chips and manufacturing
- Complexity of working on multiple proposals and research opportunities
- Priorities for research in North Dakota
 - Creating opportunities in education, workforce, research technology, and tech transfer
 - Focus on ND research opportunities and partnerships
 - Continue growth in established strengths for ND research, such as Agriculture

5. **Discuss Research Working Groups/Legislation, HB 1379**

President Armacost provided an overview on the presentation/testimony that he gave, along with Presidents Cook and Shirley. Dr. Demuth gave a brief on the upcoming March 24th research day. He provided the committee with some content of what the day will entail.

Governance Items:

Mr. Chris Pieske proposed the following tool and timeline to be utilized for the SBHE Self-assessment; he noted that the proposal is based on previous years assessments:

6. **SBHE Self-Assessment Tool and Timeline**

- a. [Tool](#)
- b. [Timeline](#)

Warford moved to approve the SBHE self-assessment tool and timeline. Co-chair Ryan temporarily lost connection.

Warford and Bye voted yes. Motion carried.

7. **SBHE Policy 100.6**

Mr. Jerry Rostad reviewed proposed amendments to [Policy 100.6](#).

Warford moved to recommend approval of 1st reading for Policy 100.6. Co-chair Ryan temporarily lost connection.

Warford and Bye voted yes. Motion carried.

Co-chair Ryan reconnected at 4:15 p.m. CT.

8. Report on STARFISH in relation to SBHE Self-Evaluation Initiative - Retention of Students

Mr. Darin King provided background/historical information and an overview of the STARFISH software. It is an operational tool that campuses can use for student success and retention. The software provides a mechanism for communication/sharing of information between the students, faculty, and staff. It was an initiative with two components tied to an ongoing appropriation that was received; the components are student success and a collective data platform for the NDUS system. A couple years later allotments (budget cuts) occurred, the decision was made to remove the predictive analytics platform component for cost savings, that decision was made due to the company moving from being non-profit owned to profit. Shortly after that change took place, discussions and some concerns were being had, then the allotments happened so that component was removed to address the concerns and for cost savings. Currently there are ten campuses that utilize it in some compacity; when the product was originally contracted, North Dakota State University and Dickinson were already on a platform that had a student success software, since then, DSU is now utilizing Starfish. NDSU is currently in the process of evaluating student success platforms and has an RFP out. Most recent discussions with a group of subject matter experts happened in 2021 and at that time the decision was to continue Starfish. Regular discussions are had with CTS coordinators, campuses, and Starfish representatives.

The committee members suggested that one or more of the campuses provide a demonstration at a future full Board retreat/meeting.

Reports/Discussion

9. Legislative Update

Due to time, a legislative update will be provided at the full Board meeting on March 30, 2023.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m. CT.

Approved April 19, 2023.