Administrative Affairs Council Minutes
September 9, 2008
Conference Call – 8:30 a.m.

Participants
Dave Clark and Tamara Barber – BSC
Alvin Binstock and Mark Lowe – DSU
Corry Kenner – LRSC
Steve Bensen – MaSU
Ron Dorn – MiSU
Jim Borkowski – MiSU-BC
Mike Renk, Dave Meyer, and Keith Johnson – NDSCS
Broc Lietz – NDSU
Bob Gallager – UND
Ann Thoreson – VCSU
Laura Glatt, Pat Seaworth, Cathy McDonald, Darci Trenda, Mick Pytlik, Teri Thorsen, Karin Stinar, and Deanna Dailey – NDUS

Discuss possible 2009 legislation to be recommended by the Administrative Affairs Council
Ms. Glatt reviewed three legislative drafts with the Council. After discussion regarding timeline issues, it was agreed that the proposed amendment to Section 15-10-12.1 of the North Dakota Century Code (NDCC) relating to the authority of the state board of higher education to authorize campus improvements financed by donations, gifts, grants and bequests, should be revised to read “except for the three months preceding the convening of a regular session…” instead of “except for the six months preceding the convening of a regular session…” The Council also supported the change increasing the dollar limit from $385,000 to $750,000.

The proposed amendment to section 48-01.2-25 of the NDCC, relating to authorization of the state board of higher education to change or expand a public improvement, would provide the board with the ability to approve the additional expenditure of available federal, grant, gift or other private funds, not exceeding twenty per cent of the expenditure authorized by the legislative assembly. There was some discussion regarding the actual meaning of the terms “area” and “scope.” Following discussion, Mr. Seaworth suggested it be revised to read “However, if a state board of higher education institution improvement is not significantly changed or expanded, the state board of higher education may authorize the additional expenditure of available federal, grant, gift, or other funds, not exceeding twenty per cent of the expenditure authorized by the legislative assembly.” In response to a question, Mr. Seaworth clarified that in the case of a significant decrease in size or cost of a project, campuses will still need legislative approval for the change.

Ms. Glatt said she had been exploring alternatives to permit reimbursement of actual lodging cost when no in-state motel rooms are available at the state rate, which is currently $55 per night. When asked whether the group felt this is worth pursuing further, the overall reaction was that it should be considered. State auditor John Grettum indicated that because it would be impossible
for them to validate the lack of availability, the proposed change would essentially be “unauditable.”

After some discussion regarding the type of documentation required in order to qualify for the additional reimbursement, it was agreed that we not try and define the standard of proof, but instead leave that decision up to each campus. It was agreed that the NDUS should continue to pursue this concept through legislation.

P-Cards for Travel
Mr. Renk said that NDSCS began using purchasing cards (p-cards) for individual transactions about one year ago; however, he stated that they are not able to use them to pay for lodging expenses and asked whether the policy regarding lodging could be revised. Ms. Barber referenced the note at the bottom of page 9 of the meeting materials, which is an excerpt from OMB’s Purchasing Card Manual. It states “Agency management may request from OMB, a waiver to remove the restriction on the purchase of the preceding items.” Among the items listed is “employee travel (lodging/meals).” Mr. Seaworth said the NDUS is not subject to OMB fiscal policies and can make the change without OMB approval. Ms. Glatt added some campuses have reported that there are substantial rebates from their p-cards vendors, and for that reason, she suggested those campuses that don’t currently use them reconsider the use of p-cards. Ms. Glatt said that OMB is currently in an RFP process for a vendor.

Report from subcommittee on collaborative student process
Mr. Lowe and Ms. Barber said the subcommittee on collaborative student process made a few minor wording changes to NDUS Policy 805.3.1, Distance Learning Courses. The NDUS Procedure 805.3.1 Collaborative Student Tuition was revised to incorporate the collaborative student draft procedures that were created by a working group of the campuses. In addition, Ms. Barber said the revenue sharing portion from the original procedure was removed to create a new separate procedure, “Distance Learning Courses Distribution of Revenue.” It was the consensus of the Administrative Affairs Council to recommend the proposed changes.

Resolution of audit recommendation on coaches travel, including proposed HR policy 31 change
Ms. Trenda reviewed the proposed Human Resource Policy 31.1 which relates to travel expenses for coaches and other authorized employees. She said the controller’s group has reviewed and recommends the proposed policy change, which provides for team travel reimbursement as opposed to individual reimbursement. She also said that a new account code has been created for team travel and that campuses are also looking at their documentation requirements. Mr. Lowe suggested the language be revised to include other groups, in addition to athletic teams, who travel together. Ms. Glatt said she will discuss this recommendation with Mr. Seaworth.

Potential changes and/or fixes to Commitment Accounting
Recently, a memo from Ms. Thorsen dated September 5, 2008, was distributed to the Administrative Affairs Council for review and discussion. Mr. Pytlik asked the council for some assurance from their respective campuses that they will consider moving toward a more common solution to the backlog of end-user issues surrounding the integration points between the HRMS and the Financials systems. Mr. Pytlik added that if the HRMS team is asked to create separate
solutions for the various campuses, this will create a significant burden and in some cases, they won’t be able to fix the issue at all.

Ms. Thorsen said the HRMS team has sent out an RFP for assistance in resolving this portion of the NDUS implementation of PeopleSoft, as they are getting into the “guts” of the system. The HRMS team will require a great deal of research and expertise regarding the issues that are outlined in her September 5, 2008, memorandum. She said each item would be worked out on a case-by-case with input from the campuses. Mr. Pytlik said size and make-up of campus representatives in each group will depend on the complexity of the issue.

In response to a question about the cost and source of funding for the consultant Mr. Pytlik responded that they will be able to arrange funding through carryover, etc., so that current projects won’t be affected. Again, he stressed the point that consistency amongst the campuses would be cost-effective for the entire project. No opposition was expressed by any of the members of the Administrative Affairs Council to HRMS’ request.

**Other**

Mr. Borkowski said that on September 8, 2008, MiSU-BC ran a test consisting of five employees who attempted to sign into the Notifind system. Of those five, only two were able to sign in. The other three received a message indicating that the system does not recognize their employee identification. Mr. Lowe said there were also some issues at DSU. These problems have been reported to the project manager.

Ms. Glatt recently sent a message to the Administrative Affairs Council members indicating that the October 14 meeting will need to be rescheduled. She provided several dates and asked each of them to respond with their availability. As soon as everyone has replied, the rescheduled meeting details will be provided.

Meeting adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

**Future Meeting Dates**

- October 14, 2008 *(to be rescheduled)*
- November 13, 2008
- December 9, 2008