

North Dakota University System

Pathways to Student Success

A mission driven system focused on student success.



Prepared by NDUS System Office

2012

NDUS Pathways to Student Success

In response to the expressed intent of the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education's Legislative leadership to have a more efficient and transparent system of public higher education, Chancellor Hamid Shirvani has proposed a **mission driven university system whose eleven institutions work in concert to make students' educational goals their highest priority**. In order to achieve this objective, the Office of the Chancellor has prepared the attached draft proposal for review and consideration by the university's academic community. The proposal involves the implementation of several initiatives which fall under categories designated as **Access, Quality, Affordability, Learning, and Accountability**.

Under **Access**, in an effort to improve overall success, the proposal seeks to clearly differentiate the three types of institutions that constitute the North Dakota University System of five community colleges (BSC, DCB, LRSC, NDSCS & WSC), four regional universities (DSU, MaSU, MiSU & VCSU) and two research universities (NDSU & UND). To achieve this, the proposal establishes a **set of admission standards** that reflect the distinctive missions of the institutions. The proposal also recommends a **criteria based admission index** comprised of indicators such as high school grade point average, the number of courses completed in the core subject areas, and the ACT composite score. When implemented, high school students can track their success via the Internet and thereby monitor their progress toward admission into their intended institution. In this manner, student readiness will be linked with the appropriate institutional mission and resources. Other strategies noted below are intended to facilitate and support the mission driven academic structure outlined here.

Under **Quality**, the proposal recommends the creation of a **North Dakota High School to College Success Report** to provide parents, educators, and policymakers with feedback on how K-12 students perform at the postsecondary level. The objective of the report is to ensure alignment between secondary and postsecondary standards and expectations.

Under **Affordability**, the proposal responds to the current and future workforce needs of the state by proposing the expansion of the present financial aid program to include **more need-based aid as well as support for the adult learner population**, many of whom have a considerable portion of their degree program already completed but, for various reasons, left school. Taking into consideration estimates that upwards of 70% of future job openings in the state will require some level of postsecondary education, it is incumbent upon the state's public higher education system to increase college success among all groups, while remaining affordable.

Under **Learning**, the proposal recognizes that students oftentimes come unprepared for the level and intensity of coursework expected at the NDUS institutions. While the mission driven admission standards will go far to ensure student readiness through more careful alignment of the student with institutional mission and resources, there is also recognition that some students will nonetheless require some degree of remedial/developmental coursework to ensure their success. The proposal recommends that **all remedial/developmental courses be the responsibility of the community colleges**, including any and all courses delivered at the four-year regional

and research institutions. To the extent that the community colleges assume responsibility for these courses, the four-year regional and research universities should then redirect their remedial/developmental course costs to strengthening their student academic support services as a means of improving student retention and graduation rates.

Also under **Learning**, the proposal recommends **that all dual credit courses be the shared responsibility by community colleges and the four year regional universities on the basis strengthened criteria that will** ensure uniformity of standards for the selection of instructors, academic criteria, course content, learning outcomes, assessment, and pricing.

Under **Accountability**, the proposal recommends **system-wide uniformity for the ratio of in-state and out-of-state tuition charged to students, and uniformity of tuition model across institutions and delivery types**. In addition, it recommends that **undergraduate tuition-waiver practices be standardized** limiting institutions to total reductions not exceed 5% of the undergraduate tuition income for the previous fiscal year. A separate strategy and budget plan will be established to attract top quality graduate research and teaching assistants.

As for **non-mandatory fees** (primarily, but not limited to course fees), the proposal **recommends total transparency in this area so that students, parents, and public officials know the true cost of education**. In addition, the proposal recommends the development of a per credit hour tuition model differentiated by select programs and institutional mission, providing a uniform charging model across all delivery types. **Long-term rates will be further differentiated based on graduated admission policies between the institutions**. Campuses will have discretion over the use of funds to support programmatic goals.

Access ~ Admissions

1.1 Purpose

In order to meet SBHE and Legislative leadership expectations, we must work in concert to make achieving students' educational goals in the most timely and effective manner our highest priority. The choice of the right institution for students is critical to their success. To assist in that choice, create transparency, and to support the multiple missions within the NDUS, we are proposing new admissions standards. Admission standards are at the heart of the opportunity for student success and it is the foundation for this proposal.

1.2 Foundation

Our system consists of three distinctive types of institutions: community colleges, regional campuses and research universities.

- Link student readiness with institutional mission and resources to ensure student success.
- The three types of institutions need to have clearly defined and communicated admission standards that are appropriate to their respective mission.
- K-12 students and parents need transparency to increase the assurance of academic preparedness at the post-secondary level.

1.3 Criteria

- Admission score will be implemented along with an available online tool to allow students to calculate their readiness.
 - Index will consist of components in a mathematical formula generating an admission score that indicates automatic admission.
 - Components: ACT composite, High School GPA, High School percentile rank (where appropriate), and number of HS core courses completed, and ND Residency.
 - Admission scores shall be consistent within each of the three tiers.
 - Students who do not achieve automatic admission are encouraged to apply and will be individually reviewed by admission staff at each institution.
- Community Colleges remain open access for high school and GED graduates.
- All Regional and Research Universities will begin with the same academic subject/course admission expectations.
- Research Universities will also have a list of preferred courses (i.e. additional math and science courses, etc.) with a time line for implementation to eventually be required.

1.4 Schedule

Timeline for implementation for this admission model is Fall 2013. Graduated implementation of scores to be refined based on data analysis, campus, and K-12 feedback.

2. Quality

2.1 Purpose

In order to meet SBHE and Legislative leadership expectations, we must work in concert to make students' educational goals our highest priority. A critical element is to provide quality and timely feedback to K-12 for improvement in a P-20 environment. Currently, 38 states provide high schools with feedback on how their students perform at the postsecondary level. We will join those states by providing the North Dakota High School to College Readiness Report. While ACT does provide K-12 school districts with some feedback from ACT test results, it does not necessarily provide the complete picture of preparation for college readiness.

2.2 Foundation

Ensure alignment between secondary and postsecondary standards and expectations to increase student readiness.

2.3 Criteria

- The North Dakota High School to College Readiness Report
 - Includes data sets important to High Schools for feedback.
 - Example:
 - Success in entry level credit bearing courses.
 - First to second year overall college retention of students.
 - Information accessible to parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, and political leadership.

2.4 Schedule

First published online report available Fall 2013. Thereafter, continued development based on need and capability of the North Dakota State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS).

3. Affordability

3.1 Purpose

In order to meet SBHE and Legislative leadership expectations, we must work in concert to make students' educational goals our highest priority. There remains a tremendous need in our state for qualified and educated workers in all sectors of the state. Despite the overall economic prosperity of our state, many of our citizens who desire postsecondary education are unable to attend based on unmet financial need and adequate delivery models to support the non-traditional adult learner.

3.2 Foundation

The Center on Education and Workforce at Georgetown University indicates that within the next six years, 70% of North Dakota's 120,000 anticipated job openings will require some level of postsecondary education. Meeting this state need will require an aggressive effort to engage students at all levels, including the adult population.

- Financial Aid Initiative
 - Refine state-funded merit based aid to more effectively retain needed talent in the state.
 - Expand state and campus financial aid to include more need-based aid.
 - Adult learner project. (Non-Traditional-No-More - NTNM)
 - Create mechanism for credit for life and military experience.
 - Accelerate learning opportunities for adult learners by eliminating hurdles and straighten the path to graduation.
 - Seek out students who have credits with our institutions but no degree, and help them find the path to a degree.
 - Expand need-based financial aid programs to include part-time students.

3.3 Schedule

Adult Learner project

Compile and analyze student data; identify organize recruitment & financial aid requirements; and strategize methodology by Fall 2012. Implement best practices for the assessment of prior learning experience and begin initial pilot project at Community Colleges involving students who lack an associate degree by Fall 2013. Initiate pilot at all regional universities involving students who lack a baccalaureate degree by Fall 2014.

Financial aid initiative

Increase need-based financial aid funding in 13-15 budget contingent upon legislative support and review of current practices and identify opportunities to increase need-based aid at the state and campus level during fiscal year 2013. Expand state need-based program to include part-time students by fiscal year 2014. Seek out additional support for need-based aid by fiscal year 2015.

3. Affordability

4.1 Purpose

In order to meet SBHE and Legislative leadership expectations, we must work in concert to make students' educational goals our highest priority. We know from experience that students oftentimes come unprepared for the level of coursework they enroll in, jeopardizing their chance for degree completion.

4.2 Foundation

Develop a more efficient and mission-driven answer to student readiness.

- Assist with implementation of the Common Core State Standards in K-12.
- Ensure that remedial/developmental coursework is in alignment with entry-level college courses.
- Increase effectiveness of student academic support services to improve student retention.
- Align dual credit delivery around campus mission and create standards to ensure quality.

4.3 Criteria

- Remedial/Developmental Coursework – Transitional plan to ultimately limit all remedial/developmental coursework to the community colleges.
 - Community College:
 - Responsible for all remedial/developmental courses for the regional and research universities.
 - Offer courses on site at regional and research university campus.
 - Work with public high schools to align curriculum.
 - Establish standardized common course outcomes, assessment standards, and pricing strategies for all remedial/developmental courses.
 - First-time full-time students who are provisionally admitted to any campus should have priority access to developmental programs.
- Dual Credit
 - Community colleges and 4-year regional campuses will have the responsibility for the delivery of dual credit courses using a uniform set of criteria as enclosed.
 - There will be one standard set tuition rate for dual credit across the University system, approved by the chancellor. This rate applies to both onsite and online courses.
- Common Core State Standards
 - Continue to assist the Department of Public Instruction in curriculum alignment between high school courses and entry-level credit bearing college courses.
 - Work with select faculty work group to develop a pre-service and in-service professional development program on the common core state standards.
 - Work with teacher education programs to ensure future teachers are adequately prepared to meet the common core state standards.
 - Advise Department of Public Instruction in the selection of an appropriate new college and career readiness state assessment.

4.4 Schedule

Begin transition of remedial/developmental coursework to community colleges with graduated implementation; implement system wide standards for all dual credit courses system wide; and, begin ongoing assessment of student success in dual credit courses, blended courses, and AP courses by Fall 2013. Act on the results of assessment by Fall 2014.

Continued implementation of the common core state standards.

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5. Accountability

5.1 Purpose

In order to meet SBHE and Legislative leadership expectations, we must work in concert to make students' educational goals our highest priority. Strengthening our campuses must be balanced against fiscal policies that are in the best interest of all students. This plan recognizes the importance of balancing educational costs with the need to attract top quality students.

5.2 Foundation

We must provide students, parents, and public officials transparency with regard to the true cost of education.

5.3 Criteria

- Tuition Model
 - Move to a per-credit hour tuition model for all delivery methods. Tuition rates differentiated by program, where appropriate.
 - The per-credit hour model includes tuition, program, course and class fees, unless exceptions are approved by the Chancellor.
 - Further differentiate rates among tiers based on mission-based admission standards over time.
 - Campuses have discretion to use funds to support programmatic goals, with proper accountability.
- Non-Mandatory Fees
 - Consolidate non-mandatory fees with tuition, where appropriate.
 - Strengthen remaining fee policies regarding charge, use, approval, oversight and other related matters.
- Mandatory Fees
 - Categories of mandatory fees on student billing will be standardized, with more information available on campus web sites about amounts and uses.
 - Strengthen remaining fee policies regarding charge, use, approval, oversight and other related matters.
- Tuition Rates by Residency Status
 - Standard and uniform tuition rate criteria will be followed by all institutions with regard to in-state, out-of-state, contiguous states (including Canadian provinces), and international students.
 - All non-resident students from MN, MHEC, and WICHE states will be charged according to existing agreements, unless modified.
- Tuition Waivers
 - For undergraduate students:
 - Tuition rates noted above may be reduced with the total institutional reductions not to exceed 5% of undergraduate tuition charges of the previous academic year (including summer tuition revenue).
 - Native American students, US Veterans as outlined by statute, employee benefit tuition, and student athletes (as determined by the Chancellor in concordance with divisional rules) are considered outside the cap.

- For graduate students:
 - Develop a budget plan recognizing the importance of attracting top quality graduate research and teaching assistants utilizing national benchmark data.

5.4 Schedule

Per-credit tuition model, with blended non-mandatory fees

Complete initial data analysis, modeling and announcement by Fall 2013, with system wide implementation in Fall 2014.

Mandatory Fees

Student billing presentation and disclosure to be standardized by Fall 2013.

Tuition Rates by Residency Status

Complete data analysis, modeling, and announcement by Fall 2013, with system wide implementation in Fall 2014.

Undergraduate Tuition Waivers

Campuses begin to reduce tuition waivers in the Fall 2013, with waivers not to exceed 5% of previous year's undergraduate tuition charges by Fall 2014, with implementation phased as needed.

Graduate Student Waivers/ Stipends

Implement strategy and budget plan based on national benchmarks by Fall 2013.

August 20, 2012

Dear College or High School Administrator,

In the joint spirit of transparency and concern that a student's educational goals are a top priority of both of our organizations, the North Dakota University System (NDUS) and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) are releasing clear expectations regarding the delivery of dual credit courses in North Dakota.

Joint standards have been developed for dual credit courses (college courses that students take during their high school years that become dually eligible for high school credit). These standards were created with some basic concepts in mind. Dual credit courses are college courses. Dual credit courses must maintain the academic rigor and pace of the college class. Here forward, colleges/universities and high schools are expected to abide by the following standards.

All Institutions offering dual credit courses shall meet the following standards:

- Instructors teaching credit-bearing college-level courses for dual credit must meet the same academic credential requirements as faculty teaching on campus.
- Students must meet the same academic criteria as those enrolled in credit-bearing college courses, including taking appropriate placement testing.
- Course content and pacing must be the same as that required for credit-bearing college courses. Hence, a semester length credit-bearing course shall be taught for a semester at the high school.
- Learning outcomes must be the same for credit-bearing colleges courses and will be assessed using the same assessment tools as used in the same course taught at the college.
- Institutions shall provide high school instructors with an orientation in course curriculum, assessment methods, and administrative requirements before high school instructors are permitted to teach dual credit courses.
- Dual credit instructors must be given the opportunity to participate in all activities available to other adjunct faculty, including professional development, seminars, site visits, and internal communication, provided that such opportunities do not interfere with an instructor's regular teaching duties.
- Every dual credit course must be reviewed annually by college/university faculty through the appropriate department to ensure consistency with campus courses.
- Dual credit courses taught at the high school must be taught by a syllabus provided by the college, utilizing the college approved textbooks and materials.
- A college course must be at least 2 semester hours to be considered for dual credit.

The ND Department of Public Instruction and the ND University System would like to thank all of the North Dakota educators who work for the educational success of our students. It is our intent that these dual credit standards will provide greater clarity to both the High Schools and institutions for Higher Education in our state with regard to our state's dual credit programs.

If you have further questions regarding the standards, please contact Connie Mittleider, NDDPI (committleider@nd.gov or 701-328-2755) or Aimee Copas, NDUS (aimee.copas@ndus.edu or 701-328-4136) for further clarification.

Sincerely,



Dr. H.A. Shirvani
Chancellor
North Dakota University System



Dr. Wayne Sanstead
State Superintendent
ND Department of Public Instruction