

STAFF SENATE MEETING**11/11/2025****In Person, Union 382****Agenda**

- I. Call to Order -2:02pm**
- II. Roll Call – Quorum met**
- III. VOTE to Approve Previous Meeting’s Minutes (10/14/2025) – Approved!**
- IV. Guest Speakers**
 - A. President Keller & Megan Wheeler, President's Office Liaison
 - Acknowledged productive discussion with Executive Committee. Different approach to strategic planning by taking design research approach to engage different stakeholders in order to provide understandable, approachable plan for UNT. Launched 1st capital campaign in over 10 years, goal to raise \$100 million to help open new fundraising opportunities for UNT. The "Look North" and "Better Look North" visions are catching on, ads running on ESPN. Don't want UNT to "be a secret" anymore, very excited by the energy we have received after reveal of the plan.
 - 2 things to address with SS:
 - 1. Wanted to emphasize relationships with faculty and students surrounding student success. In doing this, believes it is a fair criticism that is came off as not appreciating staff. He did not intend this and in fact stated he is grateful for the contribution of staff and apologized for this misunderstanding. PK stated he could have handled that better and will be more attentive to this in the future. Would like everyone to lean in and know that everyone—staff, faculty—are educators.
 - 2. Individual funding for professional development: Customer service initiative. Shows commitment to staff senate to our staff and UNT as a whole. Plan mapped out is more ambitious than first suggested, was announced at State of the U. Will double original \$10k discussed last spring to \$20k for professional development for staff. Deeply appreciates Executive Committee for bringing this request to his attention.
 - Questions from senators:
 - Shelley: How did "Look North" come to be? And customer service will need branding to engage students, parents, staff, etc.
 - (1) PK agrees this is an important point and great suggestion. Loves the idea of branding around this initiative. "Look North" was originally part of the capital campaign and anthem. However, there were parts of the anthem that "didn't land" for them, but decided after testing with alumni and campus audiences that it was relatable to them and chose to use it for athletics, advancement, and university strategic plan, along with "grit to greatness" because this is who we are as a university. Would like to

- find something that picks up the energy of "Better Look North" to help market customer service initiative.
- Phillip: What is the capital campaign? How is this being invested in campus, especially with reduction in staff. Will some of these funds be allocated to places where funds are strapped?
 - (1) Typical donations per year \$25-\$30mil. Last year, raised \$55mil with focus on research. Some of these funds are estates, willed, etc. and don't immediately come to university. Capital campaign helps increase visibility of university, and funds will be largely used for student success. Any gift given around student success counts as donation toward capital campaign (ex: student housing support, advising support). Goal to close out \$100mil in 24 months. This will allow us to reach out to more alumni, stakeholders ,etc with goal of continually increasing donations to university, but will take work to get to that donor base.
- Phillip: Multiple mentions of academic and career advising. What is the vision for this?
 - (1) Traditionally has been a separation between academic and career advising. PK would like to remove that barrier. While discussing classes for degree, can also discuss career aspirations. Would like to do this in a more systemic way, less informal. (Ex: if student is philosophy major, tailor to their interests, some may want to lawyers, some may want to be professors, etc. Help lean into job opportunities within the student's major, advise differently based on student's future preferences/career choice).
- Online: What is on top of your list for updating UNT Denton with new/improved facilities?
 - (1) Top of list: received additional HEF from state. Health and safety issues must be addressed first. 2nd, infrastructure needs to be addressed (ex: power, chilled water, etc). 3rd, deferred maintenance must be caught up. Some buildings need to be taken down, some need significant renovations to allow better use.
 - (2) Alex: What buildings to be taken down?
 - (a) CoM has 4 of the worst buildings (annex, Bain, 2 practice buildings) However can't just knock down buildings without having place for current occupants. Want to replace with better spaces.
 - (b) Alex: College Inn land still empty – plans? – PK stated we are working on master plan for UNT; will know more in about 6 months about long term plans once master plan complete. Acknowledges better parking is needed. Need better conference and executive education space. Also would like to explore hotel for Hospitality program. These are discussion being had in master planning process.
- Senator: Encourage leadership to remember that current advising loads are quite large. Likes the idea of comprehensive advising, but would like plan to be realistic.

- (1) PK acknowledges that we need to be sensitive with these issues. Experience for students is inconsistent. There is too much required to discuss with advisors at this time. Should be ready to start using "smart scheduling" for students Fall 2026 to auto fill schedule for students to take burden off advisors. Would like to become more automated. AI chat bot is being used by students to help students with college issues. Would like to use technology to clear routine things off advisors desks to allow them to have the time to give comprehensive advising to students that need it
- o Rachel: Doing the work of 3 people now burned out. This is a hard period. Is currently an advisor and doesn't feel like she is receiving support. Excited about use of tools, but advising is very nuanced, thinks using tech will be very different than the vision. Says she is sometimes the last to know when anything happens as far as changes.
 - (1) PK thanked her for her work, acknowledges that many advisors have burned out and it has been hard to re-hire those positions, causes spiral. When discussing moving toward more automation, this is not "pie in the sky", timeline is months, not years. Acknowledges this needs to be done in conjunction with advisors because they know their students/work better than anyone. Need them to understand the true points of friction and the items that can best be cleared/helped with. Commits to advisors that this will be a joint process as changes are made.
 - (2) Rachel stated Admissions should be included in the advising changes, especially when working with potential new students that need to know what is truly offered at UNT program-wise.
 - (3) PK also thinks that we force students to make choice of major too quickly. Some changes being made in individual colleges can be broadened and used university wide (ex: College of Science)
 - o Comment online adding: advisors called to do so much for students in addition to normal job duties; also called to be resource communicators, etc. Need to be mindful that this is also needed in the job. PK agrees that this needs to be considered when making automation plan,.
 - o Senator: Has gained pride in UNT since working here, has students who still reach out to him. Commented that sometimes simple inquiries turn into deeper conversations and some develop into deeper relationships. Discussed importance of acknowledging staff and how important it is to staff to receive acknowledgement. Also provided numbers regarding undergrad office and why he left (understaffing and pay). 8 people had left within a year. Now up to 13 due to above listed factors as well as job dissatisfaction. People who loved the job and loved the students left.
 - (1) PK thanked senator for contributions and hard work as an educator. Also acknowledged that advisors need more help, tools, support, training, and space to do their best work. Committed to making changes and improvements. We need to do better job of

honoring advisors, knows you can only do such a massive work load for so long. This needs to be addressed, including compensation. Merit pools required for FY27 budget. Need to be more efficient with costs and generate more revenue by retaining more students, etc. If investments can be made in student success, this leads to more revenue. Investments must be made, revenue must be generated in order to put that back into advising, etc.

B. Blair Wilson, Human Resources

- FY25 performance evals closed 10/31 – great job! Numbers high this year, appreciates efforts. Still has last minute evals that need to be submitted. Please contact Blair or your business partner if you need help
- FY26 performance plans also due 10/31 – numbers not as good. Still have time, but please do ASAP. Old goals and competencies can be pulled over
- Annual Acknowledgement launched last month. New personal info added. Can always go back and do over time, add info. Can still go back after 11/30 to add things if needed.
 - Senator: What is purpose of adding prior work history?
 - (1) Main reason is for compensation studies, IDRs, etc. Will help to keep from having to go back and pull resumes. Make it faster for HR to do comparisons quickly. Plans for career pathing in the future as well.
 - Senator: is this something that can be incorporated into job search website? Can factors be filtered?
 - (1) Blair will ask to see if this is possible.
 - Senator: Issue with adding degree from outside of US. Makes it difficult to see that she has this education
 - (1) Blair will take this to HR team to discuss
 - Christian: Can't find exact degree to add
 - (1) Blair will share this with team
 - Senator: Will info need to be entered every year?
 - (1) Blair: once info entered, its entered
 - Online: How many years back do we need to document?
 - (1) Blair: no cut off, but recommends at least 10 years

V. Constituency Concerns

A. Call for New Constituent Concerns

- Senator: Wants to clarify that (degrees from outside/out of state university)
- Senator: Overdue learning received by supervisor 2 days before training was due, did not know they had been signed up for this training. Can email be adjusted?
- Rachel:
- Senator: Post it activity question: rather than be pointed policy, wanted to change to working during bad weather policy.
 - Alex explained that this is system policy so we can't really change it. Unsure if way to advocate system to change policy?

- Blair stated decision was made at chancellors office and will need to be directed to them. She will find the best person at that level to direct those concerns to.
- Shelly: staff senate should have road map to who to speak to in system with concerns that affect UNT employees.
- Constituent (Bridge LMS admin): explained that both managers and learners are supposed to get emails on Wednesdays. Learner notifications should go out Tuesdays. Bridge only sends notifications of trainings due within 7 days, so sometimes notifications aren't received in timely manner.
- Rachel: feels mandatory trainings come during busiest times of year. Can request be made to changes these times
 - Anthony (LMS Team) – Not up to LMS team, but by those who are in charge of trainings. LMS team encourages trainers to stick to academic calendar, but their voices aren't always heard.

VI. Officer Reports

- A. Chair Report – Alex Ames (he/him/his)
- B. Chair-Elect Report – Jenna Schuster - none
- C. Secretary Report – Christina Rucker -none
- D. Treasurer Report – Nikki Sparks -none
- E. Communications Report – Absent
- F. Parliamentarian Report – Christian Bridge -none
- G. Assessment Coordinator Report – Tsubasa Tajima -none
- H. Past-Chair Report – Brittany Landau (she/her/hers) -customer service initiative is not a training; intention is infusion of customer service better into our culture as university to ALL who come to university. Make this front line of everything we do as a university. Will figure out how to better infuse customer service into campus culture. Never meaning to say that we have bad customer service because this isn't true. Not a training, but is a culture shift. No target date for launch date yet. Waiting on funding source. Hopefully January announcement, has Foundation meeting in December.

VII. Standing Committee Chair Reports

- A. Communications and Public Relations – Donovan Ford - OUT
- B. Membership and Assessment – Nicole Habern
 - Call for new Communications Coordinator
 - None to report
- C. Staff Success – Cheyenne Moore / Laderica Paul
 - Cheyenne: Thank you to everyone who came to staff resource fest. 10 table participants, positive onsite feedback.

VIII. University Committee Updates

- A. Call for University Committee Updates
 - Students can vote 11/17-11/20 to increase athletic fee
 - 11/14: 8:15-11:45 15 minute appointments
 - Mean Green fund voting on proposals, will be able to update funded proposals very soon

- Union BoD: will be putting in all new filtered water stations. New art display area.

IX. Old Business

- A. Post-it Activity Spreadsheet
- Spreadsheet on Teams
 - Discussed why some things answered in certain ways (policy, etc.), wanted to be sure everything was answered, but still up for discussion later.

X. New Business

A. Nicole: can there be a holiday/floating holiday for birthdays?

- Holidays set by state mandate, but can find creative way to use floating holiday (ex: wellbeing leave, star performer)
- Rachel: Can a "fun" day be created to give something fun, unifying for departments/units?
 - Can be put into motion per Alex

XI. Announcements

- A. None made

XII. Adjournment / Dismissal to Standing Committees

- A. Adjorned: 3:32pm