STAFF SENATE MEETING
Tuesday, September 8, 2026
Union 332

Agenda

I. Call to Order at 2:03PM

II. Roll Call

III. VOTE to Approve Previous Meeting's Minutes (8/11/26)

IV. Guest Speakers
   a. Dr. Albert Bimper, Interim Provost
      a. Excited to step into role.
      b. A lot of new things this year, and initiatives carrying over from last years; working with Provost office to address issues and challenges along the way
      c. We are in a base year for formula funding. Looking at how to get students into courses and optimize 8-week 1 and 2 courses and make it meaningful for students. Addressing capacity and course sequencing – understanding some courses may be online and there may be opportunity for course re-development. Word will come from colleges to people in this work
      d. Governor recently directed THECB to think about framework for 3-year degrees – interesting opportunity but will have challenges; what will this mean for us? What are our goals in achieving a 90-credit degree? What principles for programs do we want? Potentially considering a reduced core coursework for this. All currently being thought through and talked about in conversations. Will be seeking guidance and feedback along the way.
      e. College realignments: all of our colleges are thinking through this process and given guidance to Deans to help approach these efforts; timelines on certain purposed structures to keep on track. Operations team is also involved thinking about the system behind this work as well. It is a bit too early for us to think through the advisor allocations at this point but as the work continues and suggestions/proposals are made, those discussions will take place. Input from advising council will be considered in any decisions as well.
      f. SMART Scheduling: ~42,000 students had schedules in place before orientation; on first class day, we had a little more than 5400/5500 FTIC that had enrolled in 12 or more credits; average enrollment was 13.5 credit-hours; initiative was designed to make sure our FTIC students started off with a good schedule for their first semester. Advisors raised concerns about missed AP scores or transfer work that was missed that made this difficult – they have heard this feedback and has not gone unnoticed. Time saving that was anticipated seems to have not been realized due to troubleshooting in the moment. Concerns and feedback were all considered as they move forward to move forward with SMART Scheduling in Spring and next Summer as

well. There will be focus groups so feedback can be given directly so they can be addressed moving forward. Survey opportunities also to come on this.

g. Grade replacement policy: This was an effort that tried to address conflicting language between our catalog and day-to-day practice. Committee explored this and put together benchmarking, explored other institutions, etc. before coming up with new or changed policy. New protocol was approved Fall 2025, so students were given through Summer 2026 to complete coursework under prior assumptions. Best grade policy is in place for all students and UNT coursework. They are did honor transfer credit according to former policy when benefited the student – noted as historical transfer.
h. Question: What is the genesis for the 3-year degree in your opinion? Answered: trying to help students in what can be a challenging economy to make sure they are completing degree in efficient manner. Need to be thoughtful about what programs this would apply to and what the differences would man between a 3 and 4-year degree. Thinks it only needs to be about speed and deficiency in particular industries. Would not apply to all areas that require a longer path to achieve those credentials.
i. Question: Are we speaking with employers about degrees needed or preferred when considering what programs have a 3-year path? Answer: Yes, will be getting feedback from industry partners. Right now, THECB is developing a framework which will then be used by UNT to develop plans. Right now, it is just being thought of and brainstorming.

b. Wendy Comfort, Associate Director, Recreational Sports
    a. New things this semester: all group fitness classes included in membership fee ($22/m)
    b. Outdoor programs: climbing wall, trips off-campus, in-house clinics about topics like how to tie a knot, how to build a campfire, etc.
    c. Gear rental: can rent equipment from rec center for things like hiking, canoeing, camping, kayaking, etc. at a reduced rate; can rent as short as a day or as long as a weekend – does not require membership but does have to be affiliated with UNT
    d. Aquatics: currently renovating leisure pool space to add two floors of fitness space; lap pool still available at the moment for use during open hours; offer private swim lessons for adults and children (no longer offering younger kids right now since using the lap pool)
    e. Renovtion page on website shows updates on ongoing renovations. 1st floor fitness space will have turf are with a slam wall; will have lifting platforms with bumper plates. 2nd floor will be the cardio deck and functional training space (bootcamp-style or training) that will double as private exercise space when not in space
    f. Priority to get more equipment – this renovation will allow for more space and opportunity to buy more equipment to accommodate demand
    g. 5-day free trial if interested in a membership – no strings attached trial; just check in with ID or with digital ID app on the phone; can use payroll deduction for membership or credit/debit card. No contract period. Student and Fac/Staff can

sponsor up to 3 individuals – only have to come together the first time then can come on their own after that once the membership is created; 15 or younger would not be charged membership but must be accompanied by adult and not allowed in weight room or fitness equipment spaces

h. Open Mon-Thursday 6AM to 12AM, Friday close a little earlier, Saturdays 8AM-7PM and Sundays 12PM-12AM during long semesters
i. Frisco has small fitness center – membership will work for that space as well; more reduced hour in Frisco due to different building hours and reduced traffic
j. Rec Staff go around campus and offer stretch breaks, short fitness class, etc. for meetings or retreats for departments – reach out if interested. This is also an option for student orgs
k. Question: Potential for marketing on TVs/screens in Rec Center? Answer: has not considered this yet but will bring forward as an opportunity. Currently do offer marketing opportunities in Rec Center with visual displays. Contact Ben Hennisian or Wendy Comfort for questions on this.

c. Sue Aichele, Human Resources
    a. Annual salary increase process: this is being discussed and compensation remains a priority in administration discussions. Cannot disclose anything yet but these conversations are happening. Salary decisions are tied to budget processes – once finalized, we can share this out. No timeline as of yet.
    b. Open enrollment and benefit cost increase discussion: Decisions for premium pricing/increases are decided by the state (ERS), it is not through UNT. Benefits can change without notice and is dependent on approved state budget. Healthcare costs can fluctuate through annual adjustments as trends, expenses, and funding changes. State contributed to subsidize a significant portion of the cost.
    c. PPO option? UNT does monitor markets and peer institutions. Benefit team provides feedback to inform discussions on these conversations, but it is the state that determines benefit plans offered. If PPOs were introduced, this would be a state-wide decision via ERS. Some institutions, like A&M, offer private option but their funding is different than UNT's.
    d. Food insecurities among employees: this topic is something leadership takes seriously and has been brought to their attention. They have explored emergency funds in the past, but compliance needs to be considered when introducing new programs. It can raise concerns using public funds when creating programs and considering who is eligible, who is going to run them, etc. One resource to use is EAP for resources. There are 6 food local resources in Denton as well. Suggested Staff Senate to potentially create opportunities to support local organizations (food drives, etc.).
    e. There will be clear communication coming out as a reminder for the inclement weather policy as we approach the season
        i. Asked for training to be on Bridge for supervisors to help with the interpretation of the policy.

f. Bereavement policy updates – in policy committee but no updates yet
    i. Concerns: taking too long to get an answer because other policies keep pushing it back
    ii. Concern asked for report or some kind of timeline to show the progress this policy has taken – Sue has said she will provide this for staff

d. Jeanette Garriga, President's Office Liaison

V. Constituency Concerns

a. Call for New Constituent Concerns
    a. Question: any updates or trainings on use of electric scooters on campus
        i. Nikki: electric scooter policy is housed in transportation office – only rules around this are scooters not allowed in buildings and not allowed to be operated on sidewalks on campus. Policies are not created in department and working on the best way to implement this new policy. Report any violations of this to DOS if inside a building, or if there is an abandoned scooter, can report to transportation to have those impounded and student will have to retrieve it from them directly. Request for signage can be passed along to facility.
        ii. Request to pass information or request training to be included in new student orientation.
        iii. Request to possibly bring UNT Police to speak on how the policy is enforced and regulated on campus
    b. Concern: Flock cameras around campus – who put these up? Whose decision was this? Asked for clarity on policies of surveillance cameras on or around campus. Concern of student's rights infringement.

VI. Officer Reports

a. Chair Report – Jenna Schuster
    a. Customer Service Initiative Rollout Recap and Next Steps
        i. Rollout workshop happened today; planning to work with HR to issue collective statement on this initiative; workshops coming up for up to 500 staff members revolving around initiative and what Customer Service means at UNT
b. Chair-Elect Report – Nikki Sparks
c. Secretary Report – Cheyenne Moore
d. Treasurer Report – Jeffery Kam (absent)
e. Communications Report – Shelley Schaffer
    a. Like Staff Senate on socials!
f. Parliamentarian Report – Philip Aguinaga
    a. Please Notify exec of any Admin Changes. – needs updates to make sure there are relevant updates made to rosters and senator distribution

g. Assessment Coordinator Report – Hannah Kronenberger
    a. Participation Report Update
        i. Sharing report in Staff Senate channel; excused absences is at 22% and unexcused is 0%
h. Past-Chair Report – Alex Ames

VII. Standing Committee Chair Reports

a. Communications and Public Relations – Walker Smart / Heather Treadway
    a. No update
b. Membership and Assessment – Jazmyne Dixson
c. Staff Success – Anita Johnson / Ethan Gillis
    a. Escape Room is open next 3 weeks (Tues-Thurs); some slots still left!

VIII. University Committee Updates

a. Call for University Committee Updates
    i. Mean Green Fund meeting tomorrow; direct questions to Shelley – more updates to come
    ii. Web Steering Committee first meeting is in September

IX. VOTE on Professional Development Fund Requests

a. Applicant 1-10
    - Motion to approve: yes, Anita
    - Second, yes, Zach
    - No oppositions
    - Motion PASSED

X. Old Business

XI. New Business

XII. Announcements

a. First EV chargers for Frisco officially live; hoping to bring these to campus by the end of this year in Lot 59; coming to Discovery Park and by Athletics complex as well

XIII. Adjournment / Dismissal to Standing Committees at 3:30PM