

Minutes of the University Council Meeting

December 9, 2015

Rebecca Weaver-Hightower, Chair of the University Senate, called the Fall 2015 meeting of the University Council to order at 3:00 p.m. in the Lecture Bowl at the Memorial Union.

She thanked everyone and also thanked them for allowing her to speak today. She stated that she wanted to address something that had been on her mind lately, which was the idea of collaboration. The following is a summary of Ms. Weaver-Hightower's address to the University Council:

A group of 12 colleagues and I have been working on creating a revised University Constitution and documents for a faculty senate, which in fact was originally scheduled to be voted on today. As you have heard, the University Senate, largely because of concerns about collaborative governance, did not pass the documents.

As I think about the debate on the revised constitution, I have this image in my mind. The image that we are all on a ship that I will call the USS UND. On board are different groups of workers, each with a unique and important job to perform in order to keep the ship afloat.

Those that guide the ship are officers (administrators). They rely on their instruments and charts to read the stars but also their years of experience working elsewhere on the ship. In addition are a skilled group of sailors (faculty) who do the work of keeping the ship moving forward. Their job is to raise, lower and adjust the sails according to their reading of the wind, following the instructions of the officers and sometimes assisting them with reading the stars and directing the rudder. These sailors collaborate with a skilled crew (staff). They repair the sails and equipment, keep the records, make sure everyone is paid—all the activities necessary to keeping the ship smoothly sailing.

Now here's where my metaphor breaks down a bit. On the ship are also a group of apprentices (students), learning the skills of the sailors, crew, and officers, who tutor them in the nautical. These apprentices would be our students, but in reality, these apprentices outnumber the sailors and crew 12 to 1, which would not be the case on a real sailing vessel.

The USS UND is in the middle of the North Seas. The survival of everyone on the ship depends on everyone doing their job, doing it well, and most importantly working with each other. The crew can't *run* the ship without the officers and sailors. The officers can't *guide* the ship without the crew and sailors running it. And the sailors, can't keep the ship sailing without the officers and crew. And the apprentices are vital, too, because they provide the future generation of sailors/officers/crew members. Some say

the ship's larger purpose is to train the apprentices. And of course, though they don't provide all of it, their treasure funds a large portion of the mission.

Communication among everyone is important. The officers can't pilot the ship without communicating directions for how to adjust the sails to the sailors. The sailors can't manage the sails without working with the crew on the ship's upkeep and daily maintenance. And everyone must communicate with the apprentices in order to properly guide them in their training. On the USS UND, we have spent much time and energy in the last six months, working on lines of communication, which are vital to the running of our ship.

But just as important as communication is trust. My position on the ship this year has been unique. As University Senate Chair, I am a long-time, loyal faculty sailor who this year has been working closely with the crew, apprentices, and officers—the staff, students, and administrators. I have had the task of explaining to sailors and the rest of the ship what I have seen on my occasional forays to the bridge. Much of this work has been enjoyable, as I have seen the complexities of the ship in a new way from this position, moving among the different mariners, and I have gotten to work alongside some truly outstanding seafarers.

But as I have been working with everyone on the USS UND, I have also been disturbed to occasionally see a lack of trust. Some lack of trust one would expect, just knowing the varieties of human nature, and also recognizing that the waters we have been sailing on have been turbulent in recent years. And we are in what some might call a national climate of mistrust. All of this makes me fear for the foundering of our ship.

I have heard from staff that faculty don't respect them and faculty complaining that they don't have the resources to do their work and administrators worried that a lack of respect for their vision could lead to mutiny. This is concerning as we all are onboard this ship in the middle of higher education's ocean, where our very lives depend on trusting colleagues to do their jobs so that we can do ours. If any group fails, the ship sinks. And many ships have. Will we join them in the Davy Jone's Locker of failed institutions?

I worry that we think that a new Captain is going to solve our problem with trust. I think the notion is misguided because this situation was not our current Captain's creation. This return to trust needs to be a conscious decision made by each one of us: officers, sailors, crew and apprentices. When we find ourselves at odds, we must remember that it comes from the other person's genuine desire to do the best for the University, even if we think the idea is mistaken. And I also ask that we make a conscious decision to be *trustworthy* in our actions, to trust our colleagues enough to be able to be honest with them about our work and the status of our ship. We are all on this ship together.

(And here I am speaking on behalf of Staff Senate and Student Government, too.)
What we task you with today is choosing *which* ship we are going to be. Are we going to be the Titanic, a ship headed towards destruction because of a tragic lack of

communication between its officers, sailors, and crew? Or are we going to be the Pequod, Melville's ship from *Moby Dick*, where an officer obsessively led his ship to destruction in search of a great white whale (which I might say would be the University losing sight of its educational and knowledge building mission)? Or are we going to be the Bounty, where trust so disintegrated, that undisciplined sailors and crew joined together to overthrow the officers, though that action eventually led to disaster? Perhaps it is too much to hope that we will become the Love Boat, but let us instead suggest that we aim to be the Beagle, the ship Charles Darwin so famously took on his groundbreaking voyage of discovery, that we choose to cooperate on an expedition of hope, research, and knowledge building.

Luckily, we already have an existing mechanism for such collaboration in the University Senate and its 23 standing committees, which already involve faculty, staff, students, and administrators working side by side to further the academic enterprise of this University. In addition to the mammoth task of re-envisioning the governance structure and creating revised Constitution and Faculty Senate documents, this semester the University Senate has performed an *amazing* amount of good work.

On our horizon we have even more tasks to accomplish. The ship continues to run its course, but it can run better. At its best, the University Senate provides the space for cooperation and trust building that this campus so desperately needs. Thank you.

Ms. Weaver Hightower introduced President Kelly.

President Kelly thanked everyone for coming and said since this was his last chance to address the University Council, he had mixed feelings. He and Marcia are very sad to leave UND, as they have shared many of the presidential responsibilities and have made many friends. He thanked Mrs. Kelly for serving in her role as UND's first lady.

He stated that this would not be the traditional State of the University Address, but a time to acknowledge and thank individuals and groups that have helped him to advance the University during his time here.

President Kelley stated he has been very fortunate to have worked with such a supportive group of leaders in the University's three senates. He thanked Rebecca Weaver-Hightower, Sharley Kurtz and Matt Kopp for their commitment.

He reported that the presidential transition process is underway with Governor Schafer assuming the role as Interim President on January 15, 2016. The search for a new president is in process and the committee intends to recommend candidates to the State Board of Higher Education later this spring.

President Kelley provided an update on the nickname and logo process. The new nickname, Fighting Hawks, has been implemented and the next step is the creation of a new logo and that process is underway.

The President stated that a lot of growth and change has happened during his tenure – growth in our mission of teaching and learning, continued emphasis on research, scholarships and creative works. There have also been significant changes in the campuses appearance with new buildings, renovation of classrooms and laboratories, and continued support of the public in their investment in UND.

President Kelley acknowledged and thanked the Vice Presidents that he has worked so closely with and who have served the University with dedication. He also took a few minutes to acknowledge some of the groups and individuals who continue to make this an outstanding University:

Faculty – whose exceptional commitment to a learning environment has assured student success.

Staff – never before in his 45+ year career in higher education has he been privileged to work with staff who take such pride in representing UND and to assisting students to achieve in their chose field.

Students – UND continues to bring national recognition and distinction to the University through their many achievements. For example: our mechanical engineering students who won the International UAS competition a few months ago; UND's aviation students who win national flying and safety competitions; students in arts and humanities who enhance the quality of our lives through the creation of innovative new music, theater, visual arts and written competitions; the Concert Choirs and Theatre students who earn national and regional acclaim; UND nursing students and students in other professional disciplines such as accountancy who earn top scores on their licensure and national certification exams; and our students who engage with the Greek community on campus and in the community.

The President also thanked the UND student athletes and the faculty and staff who work in athletics. UND has been fortunate to recruit students who succeed both in NCAA Division I competition and in the classroom.

He thanked DeAnna Carlson Zink and her team at the University and Alumni Association and Foundation who have made a significant impact on the University. The nearly \$325 million North Dakota Spirit campaign will benefit UND for decades to come.

President Kelley thanked Governor Jack Dalrymple and Lt. Gov. Drew Wrigley, along with the North Dakota Legislature for having provided funding that has benefited students, staff and faculty and allowed new academic programs, services and gifts from alumni and friends that have helped to build eight new buildings, additions and renovations during his tenure.

He thanked our federal delegations, Senator Hoeven, Senator Heitkamp and Representative Cramer, former Senators Dorgan and Conrad and Representative Pomeroy, who helped UND to secure a place in the highest national rankings as a comprehensive research university.

The President stated that UND cannot succeed without the support of the city of Grand Forks, the Chamber of Commerce, the GF Economic Development Association, the Downtown and Development Association, the GF School District and all of our district legislators.

In conclusion, he urged all of us at UND, to remember that UND is an institution upon which individuals rely to advance the quality of their lives through education. They attend UND for various reasons, all centered on learning at higher and higher levels, but with the dream of becoming more productive participants in the diverse human population that is the world. He encouraged all of us to be thoughtful participants in defining and addressing current issues of profound societal importance; to be sensitive to our inherent human diversity and to guide the role that the university must play in contributing to the quality of life that is brought to our society through understanding our internet diversity.

He stated that he and the first lady wanted to say, "Thank you for your efforts to make this exceptional University even more exceptional. We will miss our family here at UND, but we know the University will be in good hands and will thrive well into the future."

On behalf of all of his colleagues, Dana Harsell recognized President Kelly for his contributions over the years and presented him with a gift. All the past members of the SEC were invited to step forward and all members of the past Senates were asked to raise their hands. Mr. Harsell stated, "We all know the contributions that President Kelly had made to our shared governance. To acknowledge his service to Grand Forks community, we had this special piece crafted for the President. The University Senate is delighted to elevate you to be an honorary University Senate chairperson with all of the rights and privileges. We would like to present you with this gift to acknowledge your governance."

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Marci Mack, Secretary

University Council