

**North Dakota University System**  
**Tuition Waivers and Student Stipends Performance Audit Update**  
**Legislative Audit and Fiscal Review Committee - January 14, 2016**

Category	Finding Number	Recommendation	Action Plan/Management's Response	Q42015 Update
Discount, Waiver and Stipend Terminology	1-1	We recommend the SBHE establish common terminology within the NDUS for waivers, discounts, and stipends. The SBHE should require institutions to review coding of waivers, discounts, and stipends.	Agree. The SBHE will establish common definitions for waivers, discounts, and stipends; however, it should be noted there may be more than one definition to recognize differences, where appropriate, but once defined they will be used consistently across the NDUS. This will be completed by December 31, 2015.	This is objective 5.5 within Phase 1 of the Data Inconsistency initiatives, and is currently underway. Anticipated completion is the end of Jan. 2016/early Feb. 2016.
Criteria for Waivers	1-2	We recommend the SBHE require institutions to establish standardized policies/procedures for institutional waivers. The institutional waiver policies/procedures should address eligibility requirements, application process, selection criteria, awarding process and monitoring procedures.	Agree. The SBHE will establish a template to assist campuses; where necessary, to document waiver provisions; further, the SBHE will study and identify common waiver criteria, where appropriate. The development and release of the template and study will be completed by December 31, 2015.	Some aspects of this will be addressed as part of the Data Inconsistency initiative, while other aspects will be addressed as part of the Tuition and Fees Cabinet Study chaired by Dr. John Richman, President, NDSCS.
Board Waiver Criteria Defined	1-3	We recommend the SBHE ensure all criteria are clearly defined for waivers established in Board policy.	Agree. The SBHE has an employee tuition waiver policy update currently under consideration and anticipates changes to be adopted by about June 30, 2015 which would create a consistent system-wide employee tuition waiver. Employees are considered and will continue to be considered employees of individual institutions, not employees of the System for payroll and other benefit purposes.	Fully implemented. SBHE approved policy revisions in June 2015, with effective date of 7/1/15.
Employee Spouse/Dependent and University System Office Employee Tuition Waivers	1-4	We recommend the SBHE establish a waiver policy for institution employee spouse/dependents and University Office personnel.	Partially Agree. Time is needed for the SBHE to study whether employee spouse/dependents and University Office personnel should be set system wide or set separately by each institution. This study will be completed by December 31, 2015.	Approved at cabinet 11/4/15, passed first reading at SBHE 12/10/15, scheduled for second reading at SBHE 2/3/16, effective date is 5/1/16 to allow campuses time to update forms and communicate new policy to employees, and be prepared for the summer 2016 semester.
Similar Waivers at Institutions	1-5	We recommend the SBHE establish policies for cultural diversity, international, graduate, and other common institutional waiver types.	Partially Agree. The SBHE will develop policies for cultural diversity, international, graduate and other common institutional waiver types, where appropriate, by December 31, 2015.	Some aspects of this will be addressed as part of the Data Inconsistency initiative, while other aspects will be addressed as part of the Tuition and Fees Cabinet Study chaired by Dr. John Richman, President, NDSCS.
Limits on Waivers	1-6	We recommend the SBHE establish limits on the waivers institutions can award.	Agree. The SBHE Strategic Plan, The NDUS Edge, calls for implementation of a new tuition model by no later than fall 2018. The model includes provisions impacting waivers, and also requires waiver limits be established. The implementation of this model is on-hold pending the outcome of the 2015 legislative session due to measures that would possibly shift tuition setting authority away from the SBHE to the Legislative Assembly or limit tuition changes.	Tuition, Fees, Waivers and a tuition model are being evaluated as part of the Tuition and Fees Cabinet Study as directed by the Chancellor. Dr. John Richman, President, NDSCS is the chair of this study.
Report Requirements and Expectations	1-7	We recommend the SBHE identify and define the relevant student information required and expected for reporting purposes.	Agree. This is already in place in several system wide reports published by the NDUS; however, we recognize improvements can continue to be made to provide usable information to our stakeholders and ensure accountability. To this end, the NDUS CIO will be charged with responsibility to work with the SBHE to define reporting requirements and work with appropriate campus functional areas to move unresolved issues to resolution on a timely basis.	As the Administrative Affairs workgroup makes its recommendations, evaluation will be done to determine other areas that may still require definition or clarification. Where these fit into existing Data Inconsistency objectives, they will be incorporated into that process. In cases where an area might not yet be part of the Data Inconsistency objectives, we will evaluate adding them to that process.
Student Data Consistency	1-8	We recommend the SBHE: a.) Provide authority to an individual to identify the necessary student data to be obtained. b.) Authorize the individual to establish standards related to consistent student data entry for the entire University System. c.) Require all institutions follow the established standards.	Agree. Current SBHE policy charges NDUS Core Technology Services (CTS) with responsibility for managing the Data Element Dictionary, which is a guide to create common fields, definitions, coding and, thus is intended to create consistent reporting from ConnectND. The NDUS CIO, working in coordination with the institutions, will be charged with moving student data issues, including common course numbering, to resolution in order to provide usable information to our stakeholders and ensure accountability. Non-compliance issues will be elevated to senior management for resolution, where appropriate.	We are continuing to evaluate consistency within the NDUS. The Data Inconsistency initiative addresses a specific set of these items. In cases where inconsistencies are identified and not yet be part of the Data Inconsistency objectives, we will evaluate adding them to that process.
Monitor Compliance	1-9	We recommend the SBHE adequately monitor institutions for compliance with policies, procedures, and standards.	Agree. It is anticipated a final compliance plan will be approved by the SBHE by about June 2015 to ensure effective monitoring and proper accountability. Full implementation of the compliance plan can be initiated, when the vacant compliance position is filled. Filling the position may be contingent upon the outcome of funding provided to the NDUS Office in the 15-17 biennium.	Four candidates were interviewed on 12/7/15, and one finalist will interview with the SBHE Audit Committee in January 2016.
Internships	1-10	We recommend the SBHE define internships for the entire University System and require a reporting method to readily identify internships at institutions.	Agree. The NDUS will establish definition(s) and reporting for internships by December 31, 2015 to provide usable information to our stakeholders and ensure accountability. However, there may be additional categories to recognize workplace experiences and differences in campus mission, programs, and students' served.	This is objective 9.3 within Phase 1 of the Data Inconsistency initiatives, and is currently underway. Anticipated completion is the end of Jan. 2016/early Feb. 2016.