

Sisseton Wahpeton College

Regular Meeting

Classrooms 1 & 2

Board of Trustees Minutes

3/18/2025

Meeting called to order at 5:10 PM.

Roll Call:

Big Coulee	Marijo Keeble	Present
Buffalo Lake	Heather Larsen	Present (late)
Enemy Swim (online)	Janell Williams	Present
Lake Traverse	Jessica Redthunder	Present (late)
Long Hollow	Vincent Owen	Present
Old Agency	Rhonda Kampeska	Present
Heipa	Marie Renville	Present
Tribal Council Ex. Officio	Francis Crawford	Present (late)
Student Council	Emily Johnson	Absent

Others Present: President Dr. Erica C. Holmes, Vice President of Student and Academic Affairs Julie Buckman, Business Instructor Josh Flute, English Instructor Heather Flute, Elder Nola Parks, SWC Student Waniyetu Wynde, SWC Student Karley Heminger, Student Success Navigator Samantha Crandall, Registrar Selena Stone Arrow, Dean of Education Kelsey Stadtler, SWO Community Member Frann Quinn, Tribal Elder Deb Richote, Tribal Elder Loraine Roussa, Tribal Elder Elnora Labelle, SWO Community Member Robert Taylor Jr, Dean of Business Samuel Bonsu, Facilities Manager David Redthunder, Financial Aid Director Sylvan Flute, Senior Business Specialists Melanie Seaboy, SWC Student Gracelyn Renville, 2025 SWC Student of the Year Kenyon Budack Jr, IRP Statistician Richard Lee, Enemy Swim Elder Vivian Gill, SWO Community Member Marsha Renville, Tribal Elder Etta Jo Marks, Dakota Studies Program Linguist Alex Jaker, SWC VP of Student Senate Brennan Robertson, Business Office Specialist Merlin “Jay” Renville, SWC Recorder Terrell “TJ” Shellman.

-If you attended and your name is not documented, your name was not legible on the sign-in sheet.

Chairwoman Williams called the meeting to order at 5:10 PM. Roll call was taken and a quorum was established.

Approved by Board of Trustees in meeting. 2/19/25

Motion 1:

Motion made by Heipa to perform reading of the mission statement before public comment, second by Old Agency, question by Long Hollow. Motion voted passed.

Motion 2:

Motion made by Heipa to accept Rhonda Kampeska as Vice Chair of the SWC Board of Trustees, second by Lake Traverse, question by Long Hollow. Motion voted passed.

Motion 3:

Motion made by Heipa to approve the agenda, second by Old Agency, question by Long Hollow. Motion voted passed.

Reading of the mission statement.

Chairwoman Williams opened the floor for public comment.

Chairwoman Williams informs the public that the SWC Board of Trustees operates in the best interest of the college, and that public comments are not to include names of students, faculty, or staff at SWC.

Trustee Owen suggests openness and honesty, referring to no executive is required but to speak freely now as long as there are no names included just policies and procedures addressed.

Motion 4:

Motion made by Long Hollow to keep the floor open to address concerns and complaints, second by Heipa, question by Enemy Swim. Motion voted passed.

Public comments were replaced with an open forum where members of the community expressed their concerns about 32 resignations or terminations, finances and expenditures, due process of hiring, firing, and changing of job descriptions, positions being erased, grievances process, employee tuition waivers, and the radio station's removal from SWC property.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

2025 AIHEC Student Conference, Rapid City, SD

- SWC was a co-host to this year's AIHEC Student Conference.
- There were 14 students from SWC in attendance, along with 7 staff & faculty members who stepped in as coaches, mentors, and helping hands.
- Kenyon Budack Jr. was recognized as SWC's "Student of the Year!"
- Kaci Neilan was recognized as SWC's Coca Cola Scholar.
- SWC Women's Archery won 3rd place.
- Jacobie Knight won 2nd place in individual archery.
- Gracelyn Renville won 3rd place in the 5k run.

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ACADEMIC DEANS

- Samuel Bonsu has been named the Dean of Business.
- Kelsey Stadtler has been named the Dean of Education.
- Heather Flute has been named the Dean of Indigenous Health.
- Josh Flute has been named the Dean of CTE. (Career and Technical Education)

ACADEMIC PROGRAM DATA TRENDS

- There was a headcount of majors in the fall & spring.
- A count for the number of majors by FTE (total credits/12).
- Also there was a count of the Net Revenue by Majors in Programs.
- The calculations are listed in this month's board book.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING TCU FUNDING

- There was a request for a Tribal Council Resolution to be put in place due to cutbacks and reduction in the workforce or federal hiring freezes.
- SWO Tribal Council Chairman J. Garrett Renville, and Tribal Secretary Curtis Bissonette signed off on **TRIBAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. SWO-25-021**.
- This focus of the resolution is to "Support Tribal Colleges and Exempt Haskell Indian Nations University and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute From Any Reduction in Workforce or Federal Hiring Freeze.

CONSENT AGENDA:

College Reports:

STUDENT SENATE HAD NOTHING TO REPORT.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- There is a new and more effective room layout for board meetings that allows everyone in the room to hear and see the BOT during meetings.
- There is exciting and useful information to come in the 2025 HLC Conference that will be held in Chicago.
- There will be an extra day specifically for meetings and discussions with BOT Members and Presidents at the 2025 HLC Conference.
- There was an appreciation and farewell luncheon held for Vince Owen. A long-time employee with the college who helped out in any way possible and served the students with dignity and respect. He will be missed.

- Tammy Decoteau was honored for women's history month and for her contribution to the community and the Dakota Language on 3/5/25 at 12:00 pm in the student union. "Preserving the past, Preparing for the future."
- Dakota Studies Family Night is to be held on 3/19/25 in classroom 9, 5:00-9:00 pm presented by Harvey DuMarce. The topic of discussion "Blood Quantum: Identity, Culture, Sovereignty, and the future."
- The SWC Mustangs are hosting a basketball academy each Monday 5:30-7:00 pm for boys, and Wednesday 5:30-7:00 pm for girls. Beginning 2/24, and lasting until 4/2/25.
- National Soup Day was celebrated on 3/3/25. There was free soup for students, faculty, staff, and any members of the community who came out to support.
- National Oreo Day was celebrated 3/5/25 outside of the student union. Students stopped by and grabbed Oreos and indulged in fried Oreos by TJ Shellman.

VICE PRESIDENT OF ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS' REPORT

- 260 students pre-drop, 241 students post-drop for fall. Of the 241 students we have, 142 are full time, 99 are part time. 173 students are SWO members, 31 other tribes, 4 lineal descent and 29 are mom-tribal.
- There are 23 students from Big Coulee, 18 from Buffalo Lake, 23 from Enemy Swim, 28 from Lake Traverse, 23 from Long Hollow, 36 from Old Agency, 18 from Veblen/Heipa, and 4 are unknown.
- The graduation committee has been meeting. Graduation will be held on campus on May 17, 2025. We anticipate about 40-50 graduates.
- We are working on Workforce Development. The program consists of 12 credits. It is for students who want to learn basic life skills.
- We are working on the Casino Management to be approved by the Curriculum Committee.
- We are having a human trafficking seminar via zoom on March 21st at 9:00- 11:00 am.
- Accreditation reaffirmation committees have been formed, each committee will work on the new criteria.
- The reorganization of the college into academic schools with a Dean leading each school is underway.
- Interviews were held for the Academic Deans of each school. The anticipated start date for the Deans is March 17, 2025.

VICE PRESIDENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES' REPORT

- 5 Students were assisted with payment plans.
- Student Senate and AIHEC accounts have been updated.
- Drew down available funds from grants.
- Set up training for annual year financial close-out.
- Preparing to provide account codes to all departments for use with purchasing.

Approved by Board of Trustees in meeting. 2/19/25

- Working on a new credit card request process.

ACTION ITEMS:

Motion 5:

Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion made by Heipa to approve the consent agenda, second by Buffalo Lake, question by Lake Traverse. Motion voted passed. 7/0

Motion 6:

Approve Minutes: February 14, 2025

Motion made by Lake Traverse to approve 2/14 minutes with revisions, second by Long Hollow, question by Buffalo Lake. Motion voted passed. 7/0

Motion 7:

Approve Minutes: February 19, 2025

Motion made by Lake Traverse to approve 2/19 minutes with revisions, second by Long Hollow, question by Buffalo Lake. Motion voted passed. 7/0

Motion 8:

Approve Bank Signee Vice Chair

Motion made by Lake Traverse to approve the bank signee Vice Chair Rhonda Kampeska, second by Long Hollow, question by Buffalo Lake. Motion voted passed. 7/0

DISTRICT CONCERNS:

Big Coulee District:

- Gerald German Jr. made a motion to not renew the SWC President's contract in their most recent meeting.

MOTION 9:

Made by big coulee to not renew SWC President Erica Holmes' contract (per district demand), second by long hollow (per district demand), no question. Motion died.

Buffalo Lake District:

- None

Enemy Swim District:

- None

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Old Agency District:

→ None

Lake Traverse District:

→ None

Long Hollow District:

- Policies & Procedures.
- L.H. Board stands with termination of the SWC President.
- Why have grievances committee if the decision is ultimately up to the president.
- Grievance policy should be revised.
- Questions if due process is being considered and applied.

Heipa District:

→ None

MOTION 10:

Motion made by Long Hollow to have an outside investigator look into, policies, procedures, hiring, firing, and resignations pertaining to Dr. Holmes. No second. Motion died.

MOTION 11:

Motion made by Lake Traverse to adjourn meeting, second by Long Hollow, question by Big Coulee.

Meeting adjourned at 9:22 pm.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

TERRELL J. SHELLMAN