

## Alumni E-Newsletter, September 19, 2024



### In Conversation with Dr. Randie Sessler, Dean of Student Academic Success

We recently sat down with one of our beloved colleagues, Dr. Randie Sessler, who is well known throughout the NDNU community for his wit, his warmth, and his willingness to lend a hand. We hope you are as inspired as we are by his story and vision for student learning success.

**Tell us a little bit about your background – where you came from and your educational journey.**

I'm originally from Rancho Cucamonga in Southern California, but I have lived all over the country and in England as well. I completed my undergraduate at UC Irvine, and then a master's at Cambridge on a Prince's Trust scholarship and then another master's and Ph.D. at New York University. Most of my academic focus has been in English and American Literature. Not bad for someone who was told early on that his chances for success were limited due to learning differences!



From an early age, I struggled with dyslexia, a learning disorder that involves difficulty reading, as well as dyspraxia, which affects physical coordination and movement. In fact, I repeated first grade, having been told by my teacher that I was unable to read nor write. The second time, I was placed in an after-school peer tutoring program where I worked one-on-one with fifth graders on spelling and all sorts of things. I didn't understand it at the time, but it was my first experience with dialogic learning, which helped me learn how to apply different strategies to master concepts. *This approach of making learning inclusive, accessible, and varied informs the basis for my work with students in the Academic Success Center.*

[Read more](#) >>>

### More about the Academic Success Center (ASC)

The Academic Success Center (ASC) at NDNU provides online and in-person services and resources to help students achieve academic and professional success. All ASC services are included with tuition and can be accessed after graduation.

Student services include the following:

- Student's guide to navigating NDNU
- Online and in-person tutoring support
- Feedback on writing assignments
- Research guidance
- Credential exams preparation
- Career assistance
- Library support

Additionally, students receive a free license to the Lucid Education Suite as part of their tuition. Lucid is a very cool tool that allows students to brainstorm, take notes and whiteboard in a digital space; collaborate with groups in real-time, communicate thinking; easily create diagrams, graphic organizers and other visuals, and leverage pre-built, customizable templates, assignments, and quizzes.



### Student Feedback: What do students have to say about the ASC?



**Lisa Hicks-Dumanske**, a recent graduate of the MPA program, found the ASC to be especially meaningful as she navigated returning to school after 40 years. "Things have changed a great deal since I graduated with my bachelor's degree in the 80s, technology especially. The ASC's support and staff availability were such a benefit. I could have met with them every day if I needed to! Over the last two years, the ASC has evolved significantly and has been seamlessly integrated into academics."



**Emily Chen**, a second-year student in the School of Psychology, finds the ASC to be integral to her success in her graduate studies. Self-described as someone with learning differences, Emily says, "Initially, I was nervous, anxious, and vulnerable to share my writing, but the tutors have been so open and reassuring. The ASC made me feel well taken care of, supported, and motivated to do my work. I highly recommend other students to access their resources. There's no way to fail if you ask for help."

**Join us for an Alumni Happy Hour on November 7th!**



The NDNU Alumni Association is pleased to invite you to join us for a happy hour gathering. Come have a drink and appetizers on us. All students, faculty and alumni are welcome to participate. We hope to see you there!

**When:** November 7 from 5pm-7pm

**Where:** Divino Ristorante | 968 Ralston Ave, Belmont, CA 94002

RSVP [here](#) to reserve your spot.

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## Enrollment on an Upward Trajectory



We're excited to share that we've seen a 30% increase in overall year-over-year (YOY) enrollment among our three schools in Education, Psychology and Business. This marks four semesters of steady growth for NDNU. "In addition to the uptick in student enrollment, we're also pleased to report a YOY rise of 35% in overall credit hours," says Tanya Tran, Dean of Enrollment Management, "We're working hard to continue this upward trend." Kudos to our Marketing and Admissions Teams for getting the word out about our premier educational institution!

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## Celebrate Back-to-School with an Annual Fund Gift

Remember the first day of classes? The smell of new books, the anticipation of meeting new classmates, and the buzz of a new year?

Be part of something great this year by making a gift to the **NDNU Annual Fund**. Your tax-deductible contribution will fuel life-changing student experiences and first-class instruction. Contributions to the Annual Fund support scholarships, programs, and other critical operational needs.

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