

https://www.smdailyjournal.com/news/local/new-notre-dame-de-namur-university-president-dr-learnor-kahanov-explores-new-learning-financial-options/article_e19b3f20-99ae-481f-8cc9-c6ec98366f66.html

New Notre Dame de Namur University president Dr. Leamor Kahanov explores new learning, financial options

By Alyse DiNapoli, Daily Journal staff
Aug 31, 2026



For years, Notre Dame de Namur University has been ramping up its online learning offerings, a move that was accelerated during the pandemic and meant to accommodate students with full-time employment, families and other obligations.

Now, with a new president at the helm, it's rethinking not just its educational structure but its financial payment approach and other common obstacles for students in higher education.

Dr. Leamor Kahanov joined NDNU as its newest president last month, after leading and working in other universities, most recently Alvernia University in Pennsylvania. She held leadership roles in both public and private universities, including the State University of New York, Oneonta and San Jose State University.



Leamor Kahanov

"I absolutely love the ethos and the people here," Kahanov said. "We have a real opportunity to change higher ed. We are a 175-year-old startup. It's energizing."

Beth Martin, the former president, led the university before announcing her retirement last year.

With the rapidly changing learning environment — namely the growth of online learning options — the university is exploring even more unconventional learning and payment methods that help students navigate the complicated process.

"Students pay per credit, and we ask them to do the math and then we give discounts or scholarships, rather than creating a financial model that they understand, of 'what will it cost me monthly?'" she said. "Or is there a subscription model that we could use? We are trying to make sure that students have more options on how they engage with the institution."

Kahanov said the university is also evaluating ways to enhance class schedules.

“When modern learners go to school, they want to start soon. We’ve crafted eight- or 15-week semesters, but rolling starts may be something that is needed for our population of students,” she said.

The university has gone through a series of changes in the last few years. Around 2021, it began more aggressively shifting its educational offerings toward virtual learning and graduate students, with about 80% of its programs now online. All of the university’s roughly 500 students have, at minimum, a hybrid class schedule, with some opting for fully remote schedules and some choosing to include some in-person components.

After going through a dramatic drop in enrollment a few years back, Kahanov said it’s increased 30% in the last two years. The university is known for its graduate programs, especially in psychology, education and business.

The subsequent change in the student body also meant that that university wasn’t fully using its 97-acre property, which was ultimately purchased by the investment arm of the University of California. NDNU signed a lease agreement to remain on the campus for the next several years.

alyse@smdailyjournal.com

(650) 344-5200 ext. 102



Alyse DiNapoli, Daily Journal staff

Daily Journal staff