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UNIVERSITY'S RELATIONSHIP WITH PEARSON REMAINS CLOUDY



Undisclosed contracts, unreasonable timelines and logistical woes plague class planning

Diane Newberry
Dakota Student

In November 2017, Strategic Plan Goal Three Project Manager Jeffrey Holm said the fall 2018 semester was the “go-live watch date” for the University of North Dakota’s digital push. Four months later, the university has signed a contract with Pearson Online Learning Services and two UND graduate programs will be furnished and marketed by Pearson in the fall semester. “Jeff Holm brought it to our attention and they made a really strong sales pitch,” Ronald Marsh, chair of the computer science program, said. “Seemed at the time it was something worth looking into.” Earlier this year, when the computer science program moved from the school of aerospace to the engineering school, they agreed to put their courses and degrees online through an already existing platform, the Distance Engineering Degree Program (DEDP). “I don’t think we need to use Pearson,” Marsh said. “The DEPD program here is already very successful.” However, presumably because the program was just beginning

the online transition, the university saw an opportunity to develop an entirely new cyber security masters program, backed by market research from Pearson. In a combined effort with the electrical engineering program, computer science has been working with Pearson to create an online masters program in cyber security. The company isn’t meant to be involved in creating curriculum, but will work with instructors to create graphics, slides and the general digital infrastructure for online courses. Marsh said the faculty in his program were cautiously optimistic about working with Pearson, but as the company became more inflexible, there was less enthusiasm. “At first it seemed like a pretty good idea but the more Pearson started kind of forcing their – and I do mean that ‘force’ too, that’s a word you can use – force their scheduling plan on us, a lot of the faculty started saying ‘I’m not interested,’” Marsh said. Unlike the types of online courses the university is already offering, which are 16 weeks and often taught alongside in-person classes, Pearson first demanded eight-week courses and has since cut it back to seven weeks. This tight timeline concerns

Marsh and other faculty in the program for two reasons. It’s a shockingly short span of time for learning complicated concepts and skills, especially for distance students who likely have full-time careers. Secondly, there are the logistics of class development and hiring staff to teach these new classes. According to Marsh, the computer science program currently has three classes for the upcoming semester with no instructor, one of which is a part of the Pearson program. “Unfortunately, I think it’s going to fall to hiring adjuncts to do this,” Marsh said. “And the concern there is that sometimes you’re lucky and you get someone who’s really good. We have one now who’s really good. We’ve had, in the past, people who weren’t great.” There is also the question of university transparency. Despite widespread rumors and requests for the specifics of the university’s dealings with Pearson, faculty across campus were not able to see the contracts between the company and the university. “To be honest I think a lot of us in the department were expecting more information up front,” said Marsh, who hasn’t

seen the contract himself. One of the concerns that faculty have with the specifics of the Pearson contract is the possibility that Pearson could retain the rights to parts of the curriculum they develop. According to section 2.7.2 of the contract between Pearson and UND, “Pearson shall also retain all right, title and interest, including all intellectual property rights therein, in and to any work product or any other work of authorship or invention conceived of, developed or created by Pearson under the terms of this Agreement or applicable e-Learning Program.” Pearson has been clear that they will not be writing curriculum, but because their employees will be developing visual products that help explain learning materials and assignments, the possibility might exist that Pearson could retain the usage rights to products that have been heavily influenced or authored by UND faculty. Pearson will be overseeing two truncated semester programs in the fall: the cyber security masters and a masters in accounting for the business school. For now, it remains unclear how UND will go about transitioning online classes to the

Pearson system, or even if they intend to transition most or all of their online content. Pamela Kalbfleisch, a communications professor who has taught online classes for UND in the past, said that Jeffrey Holm had also approached the communications department about utilizing Pearson for their online contract, but it seemed to her that her colleagues were not interested. “It was our choice,” Kalbfleisch said. “At the time it didn’t seem that people wanted to do it.” Kalbfleisch feels that at this time, it appears to still be each program’s choice whether or not they want to be involved with Pearson. “Generally in academic decisions, faculty are the driving decision makers,” she said. Whether or not the two Pearson programs will be completed in time for the fall semester – and whether or not there will be qualified instructors to teach them – remains to be seen. “There’s a lot of missing pieces,” Marsh said. “If we’re going to undertake this, we don’t want it to fail.”

Diane Newberry is the news editor for Dakota Student. She can be reached at diane.newberry@und.edu

WHAT JUST HAPPENED!?!

A graduating news writer looks back on the year's major stories



Nick Nelson / Dakota Student

Past stories including the possibility of Mark Kennedy leaving UND led to major headlines this past year.

Jacob Notermann Dakota Student

Last Sunday, a group of students from UND Students for Sustainability paired up with local fifth graders to pick up trash around the Coulee. The Coulee is regularly criticized for collecting high amounts of garbage. It's important to go to where everything is collecting, pick it up, and throw it out.

Otherwise, it starts to pile up and the situation becomes impossible to clean. With that being said, let's look back at the major headlines from the past year, decide what is and isn't garbage, and work forward to make it all better.

Chase Johnson

On the night of March 1, then-UND Student Body Treasurer Chase Johnson was

arrested on embezzlement charges. According to public records, he was charged on a Class B felony, which puts the amount taken from his fraternity between \$10,000 and \$50,000. Johnson, the former treasurer of Phi Lambda Theta, allegedly used money from the fraternity's funds to buy name-brand clothes and accessories. His next hearing is scheduled for early June.

Kennedy Leaving?

In early February, UND President Mark Kennedy announced he was applying to become the President for the University of Central Florida. For the next month, Kennedy spent a lot of time in Florida, working his way up to being named a finalist for the position. Despite receiving some praise from UCF Board Members, he would ultimately receive zero votes for the job. Since then, Kennedy has been repeatedly questioned about how low morale on campus might be associated with his quest for a new job.

April Fools

On Easter Sunday, April 1, the Dakota Student posted a story online saying that a U.S. District Court judge ruled that the Sioux logo could be re-trademarked by UND and thus available to be used by the school. This story was shared over 250 times on Facebook and read by thousands. When it was ultimately discovered that this was an April Fools' prank, other local news platforms ran stories and editorial responses covering the public's response to the prank.

UND Hockey's Historic Season

For the first time since 2002, the UND Men's Hockey team didn't earn an appearance in the NCAA Tournament, finishing the season 17-13-10 and placing fourth in the NCHC.

Election Madness

Erik Hanson, Student Body Vice President, was elected to become next year's student body president. Election Day started with a ballot glitch, followed by a shutdown of the election for about three hours. By the time ballots were back online, many students had already left campus for the day, leaving many campaigners wondering how things would play out. Ultimately, Hanson won with a slight 25-vote margin; a less-than 1 percent margin for victory.

Instructor shortage

As the UND aviation pro-

gram prepares for the next academic year, they find themselves in a recruiting race with professional airline companies. Many students have found themselves on an accelerated track to professional work with fewer instructor hours being required by airline companies. Caused by a desperate need for pilots, this accelerated track had left UND with a worrisome deficit of student-instructors available to teach new students.

DNC / RNC Convention

During the week of Spring Break and in the following weeks, the Democratic and Republican state conventions held their rallies at the Alerus Center. These events featured both national and local big-party names, as well as nominated Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) and challenger Rep. Kevin Cramer (R-ND) for one of the hottest Senate races in the country.

Pearson Deal

Back in November, it was discovered that UND was working with Pearson Education to create more online classes for the university. These classes would be created by UND faculty, but the classes would only last up to eight weeks. Faculty were concerned that the education will be lesser due to this accelerated semester. Just a few weeks ago, it was announced that UND and Pearson had signed the contract.

Greek Village

As part of UND's Master Plan released in January, the university announced it will be rezoning a section of the High Performance Center parking lot for residential development. UND won't be building houses themselves; rather, they will be selling and or renting plots of land to Greek communities for new houses to be built. There are a number of houses already pursuing plots.

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A creative solution to America's gun violence

Bilal Suleiman
Dakota Student

The gun control debate was complicated enough. Then the Las Vegas shooting happened, followed by too many school shootings, and now the citizens of the United States are demanding action. Some call for arming teachers or hiring more police officers and security guards, as if that would stop a psychopath. Others call for stricter regulations on guns, as if that would stop someone who is determined to get their hands on a gun. Many have realized these proposed solutions are the equivalent of putting a Band-Aid on an open wound and instead started call-

ing America's gun violence epidemic a "mental health issue." While I do agree with the sentiment that it is a mental health issue, that still leaves us at square one with no solutions. Now we know the problem, but the issue of mental health is such a unique problem that it's laughable to expect the politicians to get this one right when they can barely keep the government running. That's why I'm proposing a creative solution that would not only help to improve our overall mental health, it'd make us all nicer to each other as well. Everyone should be required to work at a restaurant at least once. Working at a restaurant can teach real life

lessons in a way that sticks, unlike school which often goes in one ear and out the other. It could be a part of school curriculum to work at a restaurant for a summer in order to graduate. It could be like mandatory military service, only at McDonald's instead. Before you ready your counter arguments on why this is a nonsensical idea, hear me out. Working at a restaurant is a brutal teacher of life. Hunger brings out the worst in people, and there's nothing quite like dealing with a hungry, angry person. All rational sense goes out the door and they proceed to verbally assault the employee as if they are personally responsible

for messing up their food. It's not fun standing there, being forced to take it while you apologize profusely for something you didn't do. Once you've been in this situation, however, you learn to have some patience and empathy. Being able to control your emotions is a necessary life skill and nothing teaches you to bite your tongue better than working in food service. It makes you a nicer person to others in general because you realize that the extra effort it takes to be rude just isn't worth the energy. Working at a restaurant makes you a more humble person because you spend all day catering to people's demands. Being

bossed around doesn't feel good, but being bossed around for low pay feels even worse. It's everyone's goal to be the boss and order others around, not the opposite. A summer of long hours and low pay would help tame the inflated egos and sense of entitlement among some of us. It's this entitlement that causes people's rudeness to come out when one little thing doesn't go exactly their way. Can you imagine if someone with an ego like Donald Trump was put in a position like that? It would instantly humble and exemplify how insignificant you and your worries are in the grand scheme of life and the universe. This would be tough

to regulate and probably not very realistic. But so are the ideas being thrown around Capitol Hill, such as requiring students to wear clear backpacks to school. Instead of providing students and faculty the assurance of the safety of their environment, they added more fuel to the already fiery debate of gun control. The lessons in humility and empathy that results from working in food service would make more of an impact than anything that the lawmakers on Capitol Hill have come up with since these senseless tragedies.

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The best time of the year

Jill Morton
Dakota Student

Most people think that Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year, probably because of the song "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year." But let's be real, right now is a pretty great time of the year, too. It's definitely a close second to Christmas time at the very least. It has finally been warming up in the past few weeks. You can now go outside and enjoy the weather as opposed to running straight to your car or inside to get away from the piercingly cold wind. People are able to enjoy the beautiful outdoors now that the wind doesn't hurt their faces. There are many reasons I love the springtime, but here a just a few of the biggest reasons that it is a lovely time of year.

First of all, I think the weather right now is the best temperature. It's not too hot to burn your skin off but not so cold as to prohibit you from relaxing in the sunshine. When it's around fifty or sixty degrees, that's prime because you can still play games and grill out outdoors but it's still too cold to go swimming. For that reason, you don't have to have that beach body ready quite yet. You can still pig out for a couple more weeks before it gets to be in the 80's. Another reason that it's such a good time, especially for broke college students, is because it's cheaper than other times

of the year. When it's sixty degrees out, you can finally turn off the heat that hikes up your electricity bill for five months out of the year. And at the same time, the scorching summer heat hasn't kicked in quite yet so you don't have to waste your money by using the air conditioner either. You have to love being able to save money on heating and AC, which I have learned is one of the biggest bills to break your bank. The last and biggest thing I love about this season is that the end is near. We can finally see that summer light at the end of the tunnel. We only have two more weeks of school, three more days of real classes and then finals week. Which I agree is the worst two weeks of school, but after that we're home free for three whole months. We just have to make it through a few more days of suffering through studying for hours a day.

These are some of the main reasons I love spring and think it's one of the best times of the year. So don't stress too much. Freedom from endless tests and constant stress is coming. Go outside and study instead of staying trapped in the library all day. Enjoy the warm weather even if it isn't for fun quite yet. But in two weeks after finals go out and appreciate the beautiful weather that the great state of North Dakota offers us.

Jill Morton is a columnist for Dakota Student. She can be reached at jill.morton@und.edu



Springtime a UND is the perfect season to enjoy all the campus has to offer.

Dakota Student File Photo

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Opera comes alive at the Masonic Temple

Photos by Trevor Alveshire / Dakota Student

Members of the UND opera rehearse a scene for Friday night's performance of Dido and Aeneas.

Devon Abler
Dakota Student

Grand Forks was graced with the presence of the biannual operatic performance by the UND Vocal Department on Friday. In collaboration with the UND Chamber Orchestra and the Masonic Temple, this was a pleasant addition to Friday night festivities. The opera, 'Dido and Aeneas,' was written by English composer Henry Purcell. This is rather uncommon as a majority of operas were written by Italian or German composers and were sung in their respective languages. 'Dido and Aeneas' is unusual because it is an opera sung in English. Operatic works are known for being long and elaborate; Dido and Aeneas is a short, three movement work that lasts approximately an hour. Two years ago, the music department performed 'Cendrillon,' which was a lavish affair that dazzled the community with a spectacular show. This operatic performance, while it was excellent, was lacking in comparison. Building an excellent opera begins with the cast. Undergraduate students performed the opera after an intense rehearsal period. Students from different majors within the music department came together to collaborate with one another. Individuals studying music education and vocal performance be-

came professionals during this night of music. "The opera was a 4 month project," Michael Thompson, singing the role of Aeneas said. "We started early music rehearsals in January, staging in February, began singing with the orchestra at the end of March and put the show on at the end of April. Although group rehearsal started in January, most of the cast started looking at the music before the semester started." The cast did a fabulous job transporting the audience members back in time to Renaissance Greece. Using costumes created by local individuals and backdrops that depicted what was occurring in the music, it wasn't difficult to imagine the salty air or looming storm. 'Dido and Aeneas' is the story of a young woman named Dido, played by Bethany Look, who is heartbroken over the death of her husband. She feels that she will never be able to love again until the heroic Aeneas comes ashore her country. As they grow closer together and romance is kindled, an evil sorceress plots against their happiness. The sorceress gathers her spirits in the forest and they devise a plan to separate the two lovers. While the lovers are picnicing in the forest, the sorceress' storm begins to form. This causes the group to gather along with Aeneas and his men to set sail back to their homeland.

The decision to sail back across the sea was a sudden decision made by Aeneas. His sailors round up any sailors that they can find in port. While they are loading the ships, Aeneas returns to Dido's court to say farewell. Feeling emotionally used by Aeneas, Dido shuns his farewell and throws him out of court only to realize that she is destined to die from a broken heart, then dies after giving her last wishes to her courtiers. Every student filled each scene with convincing passion. Emotions were felt and the audience members erupted in applause after the end of each movement. The music department received a standing ovation at the end of the performance and "Bravo, Bravissimo!" could be heard from the balcony. Collaborating with an orchestra is no easy feat, especially when each singer is performing without microphones. Finding a delicate balance between not-too-loud and not-too-quiet is difficult, however the orchestra worked with the opera members with a fluidity that only professional musicians could achieve. "It has been a dream of mine to conduct this work and now it is a dream come true," Alejandro Drago, the director of the orchestra program, said. It was clear that the musicians were passionate and dedicated to making music together. Not only was this a learning experience

for the cast members, it is also a time to make musical memories that will last a lifetime. "My favorite part of being in the opera is being with the cast and directors every day," Thompson said. "Many great memories were made in the process of rehearsing. It's all helped by the fact that I am surrounded by people who, just like me care about our success, and love what they do. There is no feeling like holding hands on the final bow of a show with all of the people that helped make it happen."

Most musical concerts and recitals occur on campus at the Josephine Campbell Recital Hall, the Chester Fritz Auditorium, or at the Empire Theater. This opera production was in an unfamiliar space located downtown. "I think the biggest difference for me this year was the involvement and the venue," Thompson said. "Every rehearsal was an adventure in improvement and required constant work and focus. The venue this year was the Masonic Temple in Grand Forks and it

was such a pleasure performing in that space. The acoustics, the hand painted backdrops and the beauty of the hall added to the performance." While this opera was lacking compared to past productions, it was a well put together performance that still brought the professionalism and expertise the community has come to expect from the UND music department.

Devon Abler is the A&C editor for Dakota Student. She can be reached at devon.abler@und.edu

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Devon Abler
Dakota Student

UND hosted the annual Big Event on Saturday, April 28th. Students attending UND came together for a community service event that served the Greater Grand Forks community. Some places volunteers served were churches, non-profits, homes of the elderly and many more.

"This is a great way for us students to give back to the community and help the citizens of Grand Forks," UND student Jordan Myren said. "College Life, the group that I was apart of, went to someone's house and cleaned up their yard by raking leaves and mowing the lawn for them."

The Big Event is organized by a committee that works hard at finding volunteer opportunities, sponsors and recruit volunteers for the event. Keep your eyes out next year for another fun service opportunity!

Devon Abler is the A&C editor for Dakota Student. She can be reached at devon.abler@und.edu

Photos by Nick Nelson





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Club lacrosse team frustrated by treatment

Nick Erickson
 Dakota Student

UND's club sports seasons are coming to a close, but the men's lacrosse club ended their season a bit earlier than they hoped with a cancellation of their only home game of the season due to field conditions and the inability to move the venue from their practice fields near BioLife Plasma Center. "It's quite frustrating when you're given a slated spot in the schedule to play at home for once and yet, you still don't get to," lacrosse club president Zach Petron said. "We traveled all spring long to Wisconsin, Iowa and the Twin Cities area, but nobody comes to us because we're so far out of their way." On a higher note, UND went on to have a pretty successful season. Having recruited a lot of new faces, UND had a high retention rate of the players that came out at

the beginning of the fall. They continued to play throughout the entire season in the spring despite the facilities shortage during the winter. In years past, UND has struggled to keep players interest throughout the entire year. UND lacrosse was confined to the multi-activity court in the campus Wellness Center for two hours each Sunday afternoon this year. After making attempts to reach out to those who can sign off on allowing and scheduling teams for the High Performance Center practice facility, UND lacrosse went unheard. They also made attempts to reach out to UND's neigboring city, East Grand Forks, in attempt to move the venue for their one home game to their high school football field. The call was sent to voicemail and was never responded to. "It's frustrating when you're trying to develop a good relationship

with the community and you just aren't given the chance," Petron said. "Our

"We would reach out to faculty on campus in order to use any kind of facil-

rector to make an impact in their world, allowing them sufficient facility time to

UND played rather well in their post season play having defeated University of Wisconsin OshKosh 7-2, but got eliminated by UW Madison's top team. "We're getting better every year," Petron said. "We're playing against tough teams with schools that have more than four times our student body size, yet we're still competing with them. If we had more time for practice during the winter, I guarantee that we could smack some of these bigger schools with the talent that we have. If we get the backing from our own university, we could really see this program shine. We would have more recruits in the fall, retain most of them in the winter and have a more formidable and competitive team in the spring."

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"Other teams we play are given spectacular access to their universities' facilities. But here we are, confined to a field with gopher holes, that's also completely underwater during the spring season."

Zach Petron, Lacrosse club president

attempts to find a practice facility, or even an adequate game field for three hours on a Saturday afternoon in the spring are frivolous and nobody will even hear us out." Retaining the new players throughout the long winter months without being able to show them the excitement of the traveling season is another problem for UND's lacrosse team.

ity besides the club sports fields so we can establish a standard of class and authority in the league we play in," Petron said. "We have first class facilities, but since we're simply just students that aren't being paid to play, we get pushed aside and forgotten." With the change in athletic director at UND, the club lacrosse team is hopeful for the new athletic di-

be a competitive team. "We just hope he's gracious enough to give us a chance to prove that we're a worthwhile club team at this university," Petron said. "Other teams we play are given spectacular access to their universities' facilities. But here we are, confined to a field with gopher holes, that's also completely underwater during the spring season."



Dakota Student File Photo

Softball sliding into the home stretch

John Gregg
 Dakota Student

Fighting Hawks softball struggled against Big Sky rival Sacramento State this weekend as the Hawks battled the Hornets. The Hawks finished one and two against the Hornets, winning UND's first ever game against Sacramento State. UND's play this weekend places them just one game back from qualifying for postseason play. The Hawks have three games remaining and sit third in the conference standing with a 22-24 record overall and an 8-7 record in conference.

It's been a strange season for the Hawks due

Complex, but moved to the Alerus Center for

"Our team was able to pull together on short

home games and keep these events in Grand Forks," Anna Rosburg, General Manager of the Alerus Center, said. "We value our partnership with UND Athletics and love the opportunity to work with them outside of football season." Luckily the team had success in the Alerus Center at their only home games this season, winning all three against Montana State. "We're thankful for our administration, event staff and the Alerus for making this unique opportunity available to us," Jordan Stevens, softball head coach, said. "We're excited to

play in the venue and it's going to just add to our game-day experience." The team had five other games scheduled in April for the Apollo Sports Complex that resulted in cancellation due to weather. This upcoming week, the team will travel to Brookings, South Dakota to battle South Dakota State. The Hawks will battle for a spot in the conference tournament, playing Idaho State at the Apollo Sports Complex this upcoming weekend.

John Gregg is a sports writer for Dakota Student. He can be reached at john.gregg@und.edu

"We're thankful for our administration, event staff and the Alerus for making this unique opportunity available to us."

Jordan Stevens, Softball head coach

to inclement weather. The team usually plays at the Apollo Sports

home games after the snowy spring weather plagued the city.

notice to make this event happen so that UND softball could play their



Dakota Student File Photos

Track and Field takes the Drake Relays

Madison Overby
Dakota Student

This week marked one of the final weeks in an abnormal season for the Fighting Hawks track and field team. With a tune up meet in Fargo next weekend and the conference meet less than two weeks away, the season is quickly winding down. For a select few, this past week was filled with travel to one of the biggest meets in the nation, the Drake Relays. Erica Eades had a standout performance in the Women's 800 meter run. She ran her best time in 2:12. Eades is happy, but not satisfied and used the weekend as a stepping stone. "I think the race went well," Eades said. "I have some things to fix in my race like getting out, running a faster first lap and trying not to get boxed in with 200 meters to go." Ian Collins and Matt Culhane just missed out on finals in the Men's Discus Throw on Saturday morning. They threw 48.87 meters and 48.70 meters, respectively.

The majority of the team travelled to Moorhead on Wednesday night for the Cobber Twilight meet at Concordia College and again on Saturday for the Ron Masanz Classic at Minnesota State University Moorhead. At the Cobber Twilight meet, UND freshmen Hannah Anderson, Amanda

Two pole vaulters, Nick Krella and Alex Torp, also went 1-2 in the men's pole vault at the Cobber Twilight. Janessa Mueleners was able to get in her first two steeplechase races of the 2018 season, the weather having cancelled the previous meets. She ran 12:20 seconds on Wednesday night to start things off.

wind dying down and the sun coming out. The times on the track reflected these conditions. Sydney Raboin, who has been training all season but had yet to compete because of class conflicts, was finally able to step out on the track. She did so with a bang, running a new personal record in the 5k in 18 min-

“I’m just excited to have another chance to compete and improve my time at conference.”

Erica Eades, UND distance runner

Robbins and Ellyssa Saturday proved to have slightly better conditions with the



with a time of 1:57. Ellyssa Peterson, a standout in Wednesday night's meet as well, won the 1500 meter run in a time of 4:48. The weather didn't only help the team on the track, but the field team had a standout day as well. UND swept the discus throw. Kauri Hochhalter and Amber Hansen went 1-2 on the women's side and Chris Evenson won the men's division. Nick Krella, who won the men's pole vault at the Cobber Twilight, also took the competition at the Ron Masanz Classic. He vaulted a personal best of 4.70 meters on Saturday which is equivalent to 15 feet and five inches.

Madison Overby is a sports writer for Dakota Student. She can be reached at madison.overby@und.edu



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