

# Campus Named Spaces Review Committee – Lincoln Lounge to Dakota Lounge Recommendation, April 21, 2023

## Request:

The area in the CSU, which formerly housed the Abraham Lincoln statue prior to its move to the Memorial Library in the summer of 2022, is known as the Lincoln Lounge. While the name has been used since the late 1970s, we have no record that it went through an official naming process. Student Government and the CSU Board have passed resolutions asking the University to formally name the space Dakota Lounge. President Inch would like the committee to review this request.

In addition, President Inch would like the committee to review and offer recommendations on formally naming the space in Memorial Library now housing the Lincoln statue to the Lincoln Study: A Place for Dialogue.

## Recommendation to rename the Lincoln Lounge (CSU 108) to Wambdi Wapaha

### Summary:

The Campus Named Spaces Committee is recommending that the Lincoln Lounge (CSU 108) be renamed Wambdi Wapaha. Earlier this year, the Committee [recommended renaming the space “Dakota Lounge.”](#) The alternative name of Wambdi Wapaha was suggested by Dakota language faculty through the April Meet and Confer process. The Committee is changing its recommendation to support this Dakota language space name.

Naming the space in honor of the Dakota people using their language aligns with the current mission, vision, values and diversity and inclusion goals of Minnesota State University, Mankato and is a stronger way to honor the Dakota people than “Dakota Lounge”. It also supports the [Naming of Places or Landmarks on Campus Policy](#) priority of naming spaces with racial equity in mind.

This name change would impact some Centennial Student Union maps and electronic listings for the space (within the EMS and campus Planning & Construction).

### Proposal submitted by Professor Glenn Wasicuna:

The Dakota Language Instructor suggested the name WAMBDI WAPAHA which is the Dakota for "Eagle Staff." (wahm-BDEE WAH-pah-ha)

The eagle staff is the "flag" of the Dakota Nation and comes into the arena first at ceremonial gatherings and powwows. This symbol would join the many flags that already represent our international student body.

To have an "eagle staff" at the center of campus activity is an acknowledgement that this is a Dakota place. We might also considering having a vinyl made with an image of an eagle staff,

the name Wambdi Wapaha, and a brief description of its significance, that could be placed on the wall nearby.

They are happy to work with students on a project to create that "sign." And are available if we need any additional information.

**Research Review:**

Below is a chart that very briefly documents what was reviewed, reasons for recognition, and if the committee identified concerns. All compiled research material and meeting notes are available upon request.

Name of Building or Landmark	Individual(s) Researched	University Affiliation	Reason for Recognition	Concerns
Wambdi Wapaha	Term and its significance	Dakota students, alumni, faculty, staff, and emeriti	Service to university; MNSU Sesquicentennial land acknowledgement: "We also take this opportunity to recognize that we live, work, and learn in the homeland of the Dakota people, and whose language frames our name— Minnesota State University, Mankato."	None at this time.

**Committee Comments about the Recommendation**

- We believe it will be important to provide a pronunciation guide if this recommendation is implemented.
- We are seeking clarity on whether the phrase should have another word attached to it (i.e. room, space) or if it is intended to stand alone.
- Vice President Idman Ibrahim confirmed that the 90<sup>th</sup> Student Government affirmed the suggested name change.
- Mark Constantine and Vice President Ibrahim will take the revised name to the CSU Student Board meeting on Tuesday, May 2, 2023.

**Campus Named Spaces Committee – April 2023**

**Chair: Dr. Christopher Corley** – Dean of Library and Learning

**Dr. Timothy Berry** – Interim AVP for Faculty Affairs & Equity Initiatives

**Jen Besel** – Assistant Director of Communications, Office of the President

**Mark Constantine** – Director, CSU & Student Activities

**Megan Heutmaker** – Director of American Indian Affairs

**Nate Huettl** – Planning & Construction Director, Finance & Administration

**Idman Ibrahim** – Student Government Vice President

**Dr. Chad McCutchen** – Faculty, Assistant Professor, Department of History

**Daardi Mixon** – University Archivist, Professor

**Brian Zins** – Director of Alumni Relations, University Advancement