

## REPORT OF ACTIVITIES OF THE 2012-2013 FACULTY SENATE

Mary Jo Ondrechen, Secretary

The Secretary of the Faculty Senate is charged by the Faculty Handbook to make a report on the Senate's activities to the University faculty at the end of each academic year. Detailed minutes of each Faculty Senate meeting of the 2012-2013 academic year are available at: <http://www.facultysenate.neu.edu/meetings/20122013/>. The approved minutes of the Faculty Senate meetings found therein constitute the official record of the proceedings and resolutions of the Faculty Senate; this report is intended simply as a summary of some of the highlights of the work of the 2012-2013 Faculty Senate.

**Improved mentoring for tenured Associate Professors:** In a Committee of the Whole discussion on September 19, 2012, Senators expressed strong support for a better mentoring system to help tenured Associate Professors to achieve promotion to Full Professor. Elements of such a system include establishment of reasonable service loads, assignment of senior faculty mentors, and assistance in the development of strategic plans to achieve promotion to Full Professor.

**Faculty Giving Initiative:** A new Faculty Giving Initiative, which originated in discussions of the Senate Agenda Committee, was established. The faculty members of Northeastern University show our commitment to the University through our teaching, research, and scholarship, through our mentoring of students, through our service to our departments, colleges, and the university as a whole, and also through our financial support. This initiative is entirely faculty driven. A resolution on October 17, 2012 stated that "...it is the sense of the Senate that the Faculty Giving Initiative demonstrates and strengthens the commitment of the Northeastern faculty to the University and its ongoing pursuit of excellence"; this resolution passed with overwhelming support. The Faculty Giving Initiative has since been implemented.

**Amendment to the Administrator Evaluation Process:** After extensive negotiations between the Senate Agenda Committee, Professor Adams (Chair of the Administration Evaluation Oversight Committee of the Faculty Senate), and University Counsel, the process for faculty evaluation of administrators was amended by addition. The amendment establishes a procedure by which very specific types of comments deemed inappropriate may be redacted from the evaluation report during a specified time period. The procedure parallels that for faculty in TRACE evaluations. Professor Adams stated that, in 20 years of faculty evaluation of administrators, no legal issues have arisen; however the amendment ensures that there will be no such issues in the future. The amendment passed the Faculty Senate with overwhelming support on January 30, 2013 and was subsequently approved by the Provost. The amendment is significant because it ensures continued, mandated faculty participation in the evaluation of administrators.

**New titles for non-tenure-track full time faculty members:** On January 30, 2013, the Senate approved the titles Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, and Principal Lecturer for non-tenure-track, full time faculty members. These titles establish a path to advancement for full-time lecturers and

recognize the value of these individuals to the University. These new titles were subsequently approved by the Provost and by the Board of Trustees.

**Smoke-Free Campus:** On February 13, 2013, the Faculty Senate unanimously passed a resolution urging the administration to "... proceed expeditiously with programs, processes, and policies needed to make Northeastern University a smoke-free campus." Northeastern University is now a smoke-free campus.

**Amendment to the Faculty Handbook module on Academic Freedom:** The 2011-2012 *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Faculty Handbook recommended that the module on Academic Freedom be amended. The proposed new language strengthens the University's commitment to academic freedom. Also, the proposed language is very similar to that which was approved by the Faculty Senate in 2005 but was not approved by the Board of Trustees. The proposed amendment to the Academic Freedom module of the Faculty Handbook was passed by the Faculty Senate on April 10, 2013 and has subsequently been approved by the Provost and by the Board of Trustees.

**New Graduate Council By-Laws:** New By-Laws for the Graduate Council were proposed by the *Ad Hoc* Graduate Council By-Laws Committee. The proposed new By-Laws strengthen requirements for graduate programs and also provide better guidelines for faculty approval of new graduate programs. The proposed new Graduate Council By-Laws passed the Faculty Senate on April 10, 2013.

**Changes in the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution:** The Academic Policy Committee of the Faculty Senate recommended changes in the procedures and in the sanction structure of the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR). The Committee worked with students and with OSCCR staff members in the development of these recommended changes. These proposed changes passed with the strong support of the Faculty Senate on April 17, 2013.

**Creation of an online course proposal system:** The Academic Policy Committee recommended, and the Faculty Senate strongly supported, the creation of a University-wide online course proposal system in order to track new proposals, route them efficiently to the concerned units, and collect feedback. This resolution passed unanimously on April 17, 2013.

In addition, the Faculty Senate reviewed and approved 15 new or revised degree programs at the Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral levels. The Faculty Senate, together with members of the administration, also engaged in spirited discussions on the budget, admissions and enrollment, athletics, the freshman experience, the University Master Plan, the Academic Plan, the Long Range Plan, the hybrid budget model, possible university-wide enrichment initiatives, the White House College score card, the meaning of shared governance, and the future of the University.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Jo Ondrechen, Secretary of the 2012-2013 Faculty Senate