



Northeastern University
Office of the Faculty Senate

TO: FACULTY SENATE
FROM: Robert Hanson, Secretary, Faculty Senate
SUBJECT: Minutes, 6 December 2017

Present: (Professors) Adams, Andrews, Barczak, Brooks, Dencker, Desnoyers, De Ritis, Frader, Hanson, Howard, Kaeli, Kanouse, Kelly, McGruer, McOwen, Monaghan, Patterson, Portz, Powers-Lee, Silbey, Sipahi, Stephens, Vicino

Administrators: Bean, Henderson, Hudson, Loeffelholz, Poiger, Wadia-Fascetti, Ziemer, He,

Absent: (Professors) Barberis, Kirda, Erdogmus, Nyaga, Fox, Hayward, Dennerlein,
(Administrators) Brodley, Parish,

I. **CALL TO ORDER.** Provost Bean convened the Senate at 11:45 AM

II. PRESENTATION BY THE PRESIDENT

President Aoun addressed the Senate on the state of the University and some of the challenges it faces. He first acknowledged the death of Gerry Herman, long-time faculty member of the University and participant in faculty governance. He identified the external (to the University) situation and specifically that the current US administration is generally not supportive of higher education. Three aspects were of note. First, House tax reform legislation under consideration would tax tuition that is remitted for graduate students and for dependent children of Northeastern employees, and the Senate version is not much better. NU is lobbying to change the tax reform legislation, if possible. Second, federal research funding from NIH, NSF, and DOE is unlikely to increase although DOD may do so. Moody's outlook on higher education is "negative," particularly for public institutions that will experience fast growth in expenses relative to revenue. Established research institutions will fare well, but mid-field institutions will struggle. "How do we fare?" Our undergraduate demand is strong, due to our global co-op, combined majors, undergraduate research, and entrepreneurship offerings. Our research efforts require a focus on multi-disciplinary, use-inspired, experiential programs. We are building an infrastructure that will support growth of those programs. We have to be first rate. Third, we need to support life-long learning with a portfolio of programs in online, hybrid, and experiential format.

Other issues on the horizon include the administrative ban on visas for students from certain countries. While NU did well last year relative to many institutions, the impact for this and coming years is less certain. We anticipate a declining enrollment from Asia and the Middle East, and will need to look at Latin America and Europe for recruiting activities. Going forward the name of the game is "Excellence." Our fund raising campaigns have been highly successful. We have to help ourselves more as we cannot be assured of Federal support as in the past.

Professor Kaeli asked whether we could expect a rebound in support in three years or is our current situation a trend. President Aoun responded that if you look at surveys, the conservative base is "negative" toward higher education. "Why?" Two reasons come to mind. First, some people feel left out economically and, as their numbers increase, there will be a greater "negative" sentiment. Second, research and technology were seen in the past as ways to win not only the "Cold War" but ways to improve the economy and society. This view is now changing, in that while research and technology continue to provide an "edge" in weaponry, the contributions to the economy and society in general are not part of the ongoing discussion. We need to articulate those aspects as part of our mission. So, the current situation is not a passing phase. It is likely that inequality and dislocation in employment will increase.

III. **MINUTES** of 15 November 2017 were approved as amended.

IV. SAC REPORT

III.1 Professor Powers-Lee reported that SAC has met three times since the last Senate meeting, with one meeting including the Provost.

III.2 The Faculty Handbook committee provided SAC with revised versions of seven modules that should be ready for Senate consideration in the near future.

V. THE PROVOST'S REPORT

Provost Bean reported that the BoT is meeting this Friday (December 8) to discuss the role of research. Part of the discussion will include approval for more research space on campus. The budget process is well underway with the contributions from Breann Fortier and Anthony Rini. Initial figures will be going to the deans on Thursday or Friday. This is two months ahead of last year's process.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

An academic proposal forwarded from the UUC developed by the College of Science was presented by Professor Patterson and seconded by Professor Hanson.

Be it resolved That the University establish the Bachelor of Science in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology in the College of Science as approved by the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee on 24 October 2017 (17-0-0).

Prof. Patterson recognized Prof Bowen who described the new program. It combines elements from the Marine and Environmental Science program with elements from the Cell and Molecular Biology program to address a current unmet need. Prof Hanson asked whether the new students would come from within the current biology/marine science pool or from new applicants. She responded that they would probably come from both. Prof Patterson added that this new program address the issue that some students in the marine biology (experiential 3 Seas program) did not want that component and the new program would fulfill that concern. There being no further questions, the motion was called and passed 28-0-0.

VII. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE.

A motion was made and seconded that the senate move to a committee of the whole to discuss the issue of faculty workload policies. After the discussion the committee returned to regular session.

VIII. Motion to adjourn at 12:51PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Hanson, Secretary
Faculty Senate