



Northeastern University

Office of the Faculty Senate

TO: Faculty Senate
FROM: Secretary, Faculty Senate
SUBJECT: Minutes, 15 September, 2021

Present: (Professors): Avalon, Board, Caracoglia, Carr, Chiou, Cisewski, Dau, Ergun, Fernandez, Gonyeau, Gundavaram, Herlihy, Hertz, Landsmark, Laredo, Nieves, Mages, McSherry, Molnar, Murkerjee, Musselman, Rappaport, Smith, Strange, Ron Wiley, Wood, Zaarour, Zulick

(Administrators: Madigan, Abowd, Cohen, Gallagher, Reid, Ronkin, Sceppa

Absent: (Professors): Dennerlein, Spencer, Vollmer
(Administrators)

CALL TO ORDER: 11:45 a.m.

I. SAC REPORT

Prof. Gonyeau noted that SAC had been working over the summer meeting 9 times since April. SAC has worked to finalize committee charges and staffed ad hoc and standing committees. (All charges can be found on the Senate's website.) Over 187 faculty members responded to SAC's annual call for volunteers.

Other SAC activities have included:

- Staffing many on-going search committees.
- A Senate presentation for new faculty orientation.
- An elected senator meeting to orient senators for the academic year.
- Attending President Aoun's retreat in August.
- Meeting with Provost Madigan and Sr. Vice Provost Franko 6 times. Discussions included updates on operational plans for Fall 2021 semester, communication strategies, follow-up on past resolutions, and all things Covid-19.

Prof. Gonyeau also reviewed some changes to the Senate meeting format.

- The chat function will be disabled.
 - Senators/administrators should use the raise hand function to speak and for voting.
- It is hoped this helps resolve some technical issues the Senate experienced last year.

II. PROVOST'S REPORT

Provost Madigan welcomed everyone back to campus. He noted the campus is alive with activity! He pointed out there was a wonderful exhibit about encouraging student to study in London outside of Snell Library and a live band performing as well. He said this was all amazing to see this since last year was his first year, and while the university was functioning it wasn't like this.

The Provost noted the University is in a very different situation from last year. With a fully vaccinated community, we are at low risk of infection and getting sick. There will be positive cases but are seeing low numbers. These are closely monitored but have zero hospitalizations and that's the metric to focus on. We are taking precautions. There is a team of people watching the evolving data. Everything is contingent on the public health situation.

He also touched briefly on the academic plan. Everyone received an email from President Aoun with a draft of the academic plan. It is still under active discussion. The Provost encouraged everyone to read the plan, engage in the process and to send an questions or comments to him, Sr. Vice Provost Deb Franko or Dean Dan Cohen. He also pointed faculty to the strategic plan website: <https://strategicplan.Northeastern.edu>.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS:

There were no questions or discussions regarding either report.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Prof. Gonyeau read the following and Prof. Carr seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED That the updated Bylaws of the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UUCC), as approved by the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee in April 2021, replace the current Bylaws.

Vice Provost Bruce Ronkin said the UUCC is a committee of the faculty senate and exists because faculty oversee curriculum at Northeastern. Many decades ago, the Senate created the UUCC to be its "arm" to review and approve curriculum proposals that come from the colleges before implementation. It is charged with 3 areas:

1. New and revised undergraduate programs of majors and combined majors.
2. New and revised undergraduate courses that come out of the college.
3. Reviews requests by the colleges to put courses into NUPath.

The bylaws explain the mission, the membership and operations and processes of UUCC.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS:

Prof. Michael Arnold Mages said that last year there was an instance when the Senate was looking at a new program. The naming of the program was similar to another existing program. The senate recognized this but it was too late to deal with it. Is there any opportunity earlier in the process a wider range of folks to see this information before it comes to the senate?

Vice Provost Ronkin said the structure of UUCC is designed to account for that but something probably went wrong last year. Section 1.2 addresses this. The UUCC encourages colleges to reach out to each other to discuss before coming to UUCC so that concerns about overlap can be addressed.

The vote was taken. The resolution PASSED: 27-0-0.

IV. PRESENTATION: BY KARL REID, SR. VICE PROVOST & CHIEF INCLUSION OFFICER.

"A Blueprint for Inclusion: An Update on the DEI Action Plan and the Anti-Racism Training Program."

Sr. Vice Provost Reid said he appreciated the opportunity to address the Faculty Senate. He said one of the first things he did at the university was to take an inventory and documented over 300 diversity initiatives across the university and global network. This presentation primarily reviewed the rollout of the anticipated antiracism training.

These efforts started with President Aoun's June 2020 diversity, equity and inclusivity multidimensional action plan with 9 major commitments.

He noted that diversity is not inclusion. It is not enough to have diversity among faculty, staff and students. It is important to ensure they all can thrive.

The Racial and Cultural Literacy Training has been customized for faculty, staff, and students and everyone will be involved across all NU campuses. The university has partnered with Academic Impressions, an organization specializing in professional development resources for higher education faculty and staff.

There are 4 custom modules each about 30 minutes long. Everyone will be asked to complete the first 3 modules over the course of a month and a half. And then everyone will be expected to finish the 4th module by March 31st.

The pre-launch rollout started the week of 8/30. The Officers were receiving a preview of the training the week of 9/13. The week of 10/4 the plan will be rolled out to the resource groups. The managers and supervisors including any of the Deans or Associate Deans will be the week of 10/11. And then the training will be rolled out to the entire university community the week of 11/1.

The presentation can be found on the Faculty Senate website.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS:

There were no questions or discussion.

V. PRESENTATION: BY CONNIE YOWELL, SR. VICE CHANCELLOR EDUCATION INNOVATION.

Student Success Initiative (SSI)

Sr. Vice Chancellor Yowell noted that Assoc. Vice Chancellor of Design and Operations Megan Madel is leading the Student Support Initiative. Chancellor Yowell reminded the Senate that the Education Innovation group focuses on the implementation, development and improvement of experiential learning. They do this through ten areas: Career Design, Employer Engagement, Under Graduate Research, Peer Tutoring, Honors, CATLR, Pre-med and Pre-health, Community and Civic Engagement, Service Learning and GEO. The group also supports the implementation of new ideas and the continuous improvement of existing programs around experiential learning.

The impetus for the Student Support Initiative came from many places. There was an important report from the SGA last spring around advising and support. The Faculty Senate did a deep dive on this report as well. Vice Chancellor Yowell said with Ben Hescott's assistance, she oversaw the Experiential and Life-Long Learning Strategic Planning Group that led a number of focus groups and town halls.

Out of this work, came a real request for a desire to support students at the point of need in a

much more coordinated way and to meet students where they are. The hope was to relieve pressure on students and advisors.

They held focus groups with over 100 key stakeholders, put the plan together and began implementation this fall. The Initiative is meant to be a coordination hub and referral infrastructure for students to get the support they need.

Assoc. Vice Chancellor Madel added that they have hired many different staff members including over 315 Student Success Guides. All first-year students are paired with a Student Success Guide. Currently a little over 43% of all first-year students are utilizing the app.

Sr. Vice Chancellor Yowell and Assoc. Vice Chancellor Madel asked faculty that when students come with non-academic questions, to remind them they have this support and connect with their Student Success Guide. The group is also happy to come to large first-year classes and show students how to use the metro hub.

The presentation can be found on the Faculty Senate website.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS:

Dean Abowd asked is this only for undergraduates? Is there a plan for grad?

Sr. Vice Chancellor Yowell said that in this pilot year it is only for freshman. Next year it will be extended to the rest of the students.

Prof. Michael Arnold Mages asked if the Student Success Guides were compensated?

Assoc. Vice Chancellor Madel said they are compensated and are considered student employees. Over 600 students applied for the positions.

Prof. Arnold Mages also asked if there was a particular focus on students of color or first generation students?

Sr. Vice Chancellor Yowell said they had a very diverse group. They also believe that it is those students for whom college is a new and unfamiliar experience that need this resource most.

Dean Sceppa asked if they could speak to relationship of Student Support Initiative, the student guides and academic advisors?

Assoc. Vice Chancellor Madel said that they have worked across all the colleges and various departments to have the different groups build a knowledge base for them. We asked what questions do first-year students ask and how would you prefer that we triage that. Also, all the colleges have representation at their stakeholders sessions and design sessions.

Sr. Vice Provost Reid said kudos to the group. He asked how do you measure success in the pilot phase and for expansion to other students?

Assoc. Vice Chancellor Madel said they are still working through actual metrics but among the outcomes they are looking to achieve is appropriate usage of support and broadened usage of supports. Are students who don't usually ask for support now asking for help? The other piece is the notion of follow through. Also are we establishing a sense of community within the first-year cohort.

VI. PRESENTATION:

**DEBRA L. FRANKO, PH.D., SENIOR VICE PROVOST FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, PROFESSOR,
DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY.**

CHRISTINE CIVILETTO, PH.D., INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UHCS.

**MEGAN O'HARA, LICSW, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF PREVENTION & EDUCATION AT
NORTHEASTERN, O.P.E.N.**

“Supporting Student Mental Health: A joint initiative between the Office of the Provost and the Office of Student Affairs”

Sr. Vice Provost Franko noted that the last 18 months have been one of the most difficult times our university community has faced. She said they have heard from faculty through town halls and surveys about the increase in student mental health concerns. Faculty also said that often they were not sure how to respond.

They also heard from students survey that the pandemic has led to increases in student mental health needs.

Over the summer they put together “Faculty Guide: Supporting Student Mental Health” for faculty when working with a struggling student.

Director Civiletto went through the guide and how to navigate it. (The guide can be found at: <https://provost.northeastern.edu/resources/faculty/> and on the Faculty Senate website.)

The guide includes sample scenarios, sample scripts and available campus resources. The most important takeaway from the guide is that there are campus partners available for consultation and to respond to students.

Regarding available resources, UHCS is open 6 days/week and has dedicated mental health walk-in hours. Faculty can call and speak with a mental health clinician if they need help with a student.

Immediate support is available 24/7 for all full-time degree seeking students through Find@Northeastern. Offers free counseling and access to a mindfulness app. Students have access to unlimited therapy sessions in their community. No insurance or co-pay is necessary.

The Office of Prevention and Education at Northeastern (OPEN) offers services for specific topics such as drugs, sexual violence, sexual health, and other wellness-related topics.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS:

Dean Sceppa said this is a great resource. She said she was looking forward to partnering with them in these efforts as Bouvé faculty has experts in this area. Is the Faculty Guide applicable to academic staff who interact with students on a regular basis? Can we make it more inclusive to staff as well?

Director Civiletto said that yes they are in the process of working to adapt this version to be broadly used for staff. And working on another version for RA's.

Dean Sceppa said while the services and resources are available for undergraduate and graduate students, we hear regularly hear from graduate students that services are hard to find as they are

not a traditional student and may not be here during the day, may not live on campus, etc.

Director Civileto said yes UHCS is available for all students who are enrolled in the student health plan and have paid the student health fee. There are some student that fall into other categories who are still looking for support. They are in the process of updating the website for students to find resources no matter where they are. Students can always call UCHS to provide recommendations.

Prof. Hertz said he teaches a lot of first year students and heard much about their issues last year. He said he read the Guide and thinks it is very well written and helpful. How is the Guide getting distributed?

Sr. Vice Provost Franko pointed out the Faculty Guide can be found on the Provost's website. Senate Agenda Committee chair, Prof. Gonyeau added that today's Senate meeting is being recorded and will be shared.

Prof. Herlihy asked where are the therapists from? Can students ask for a different one if not a good fit.

Director Civileto said they work with a group that has a network of therapists who have all been vetted across the nation and across the globe.

The meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Prof. Rhonda Board
Senate Secretary