



Northeastern University

Office of the Faculty Senate

Professors: Avalon, Board, Bourns, Caracoglia, Carr, Chiou, Cisewski, Dau, Dennerlein, Ergun, Fernandez, Gundavaram, Herlihy, Hertz, Landsmark, Mages, McSherry, Molnar, Mukerjee, Musselman, Nieves, Rappaport, Smith, Spencer, Strange, Toledano Laredo, Willey, Wood, Zaarour, Zimmerman, Zulick

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

Absent: (Professors) Gonyeau
(Administrators)

CALL TO ORDER: 11:45 a.m.

I. The minutes for the 10.6.21 Senate meeting were approved.

II. SAC REPORT

There was no SAC report due to a scheduling conflict for Prof. Gonyeau.

III. PROVOST REPORT

In light of the Provost/Chancellor presentation, there was no Provost report.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

There were no questions.

IV. PRESENTATION:

BY PROVOST DAVID MADIGAN and CHANCELLOR KEN HENDERSON.

University Update. (The link to the presentation is posted to the Senate website.)

Provost Madigan began with an update on the new academic plan that the Board adopted a few weeks ago. The pillars of Northeastern 2025 include:

- To build an integrated global university system.
- Empowering learning anytime, from anywhere.
- Accelerate discover through networked partnerships.

The corresponding pillars of the new academic plan – Experienced Unleashed include:

- Learning beyond the disciplines.
 - Laser focused on high-impact research.
 - Fully global, with mobility for all.
 - Scaled and empowered through technology + diverse and inclusive in every context.
- The Provost noted that diversity and inclusion infiltrates every aspect of the plan and every activity at the university.

- On the learning front the plan is about being experiential from the start and enabling personalized journeys for students. On the research front it is all about context focussed on the problems of the world bringing to bear the disciplines of university. The final piece is this idea of a global research university with complete mobility for all. Provost Madigan noted a significant piece of this has to do with working with our communities in the areas where we are operating and engaging with them rather than sitting back in an ivory tower imagining what our communities need and want.
- Chancellor Henderson reviewed the strategic priorities of the academic plan. Personalization of plan. These include:
 - Innovate and expand the global university system.
 - Provide an exceptional and differentiated customer experience.
 - Execute personalized lifelong learning.

In regards to customer experience, this focuses not only on learners but on peers and organizations that Northeastern works with. In order for Northeastern to compete, Northeastern has to be a fantastic organization to work with.

- The Provost and Chancellor gave an update on new appointments, current searches and administrators who are undergoing 3 or 5 year reviews.
- Regarding Covid testing, the Chancellor said that screen testing continues across all campuses. Looks like the direction of the pandemic is going well and the University will be looking closely at the testing going forward into the spring.
- On the diversity and equity front, Provost Madigan said the murder of George Floyd last year and ensuing events was a major watershed moment for our country and our university. There is an enormous amount of activity on this topic. The arrival of Karl Reid as Sr. Vice Provost and Chief Inclusion Officer is a gamechanger for the university.
- Chancellor Henderson noted the growth of N.U.in that now has more that 2000 students and acknowledged the huge amount of work by faculty, staff and the whole university on this program.
- He also noted the continuation of Global ConnEXions. This was a fully online program put in place last year for students who couldn't travel. This is a first dip into fully online undergraduate education and we are learning a lot. He thanked everyone who is participating in this.
- On curriculum developments and innovations, Provost Madigan noted that there is a lot of important work going in with combined majors which are extremely popular. A lot of work to make sure those students in combined majors don't fall through the cracks.

- He said NUpath is constantly evolving. Maureen O'Shea, Dir. Of Institutional Assessment and Evaluation, has been holding meetings with the Associate Deans. The focus now is on additional NUpath attributes.
- On the Graduate level one highlight is MSE is a reconceptualization of a Master's program staying within the four walls of what an accreditor says is a master's degree but making it much more experiential. It is designed in such a way that a student can generally stay in their job while earning the MA degree.
- Chancellor Henderson noted that over the summer they combined a series of different offices including Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, Financial Services and the Registrar and physically put them in one place in Richards Hall. The vision is that it should be much simpler for student to navigate their experience.
- In reviewing Undergraduate metrics, the Chancellor noted that the University had a significant increase in freshman in entry this year. The quality of the class is exceptionally strong. The University made significant movement in increasing underrepresented minorities.
- In an overview of the Global campus, Chancellor Henderson said that since the beginning of the global network 10 years ago, we have had 6000 learners in the network. Last year we had 3,000 members in the network. The network is starting to mature as an organization. He thinks with Mills, there will be a lot of opportunity. Arlington has been added as a site though it is not yet open. It will be a combination of research and learning from day one.
- On the space enhancement front, Provost Madigan noted that EXP is on track for summer 2023. The university had a major push to free up space on campus for students that they can book. Full renovations were completed in 21 classrooms with 13 new classrooms added.
- Provost Madigan said in regards to the faculty profile, the university hired 70 tenured or tenure track faculty and were successful in dramatically increasing the diversity of the T/TT cohort.
- There is corresponding growth in NTTF ranks. This is a balance that we need to watch in the coming years.

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION:

- Prof. Herlihy asked the Provost to talk about the ratio between FTNTT and TTT. Is there going to be an effort to maintain an equal ratio? What is the plan long-term?

Provost Madigan said there are no official policies. He said he feels comfortable where it is right now. He said right now it is about 50/50. He said the right number depends on the mix of activities. He said there are a lot of NTTF at the campuses outside of Boston. As they grow, we will need more NTTF at those locations but as the research enterprise grows outside of Boston, we should maintain more balance.

- Prof. Poe said she thought it was important to have both TTT and NTTF at the satellite campuses if we are to be truly one Northeastern. It will be important for us if we are to do research and collaboration across sites. It could spur a lot more opportunity for getting grants and experiential opportunities.

Regarding experiential PhD's, she also asked is the goal ultimately that every student or a percentage of students do an experiential PhD. What is the long-term vision here? It would help departments and colleges plan.

Provost Madigan said that the potential for growth in experiential PhD's is huge. Northeastern is ahead of the crowd in doing this. A different issue is that within our existing PhD programs, we need to become more experiential in those plans.

Sara Wadia Fascetti added that understanding the needs of our research needs of our partners and the problems that they are looking to solve is a critical ingredient in making the recipe. Every activity is uniquely different. It is not cookie cutter.

Provost Madigan said we are a global research university first and foremost. That is where the magic is – the interplay between research and learning. That said, the locations do not need to be carbon copies of Boston. Every location has a distinct flavor.

- Prof. Wertheim said there seems to be a critical shortage of classroom space. He said he heard about a proposal for 2 courses sharing one classroom going remote half the time.

Provost Madigan said we are at about 90% capacity at the Boston campus right now. Going forward, there is a limit as to how many students we can have on campus. We will add more classrooms over time. He said he didn't think we're at crisis level yet.

V. PRESENTATION:

MICHELE GRAZULIS, VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER.

SUSAN UHL-MILLER, ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT TALENT MANAGEMENT.

LISA BRODERICK, DIRECTOR OF BENEFITS.

Presentation on Benefits and Open Enrollment. (Posted to the Senate website.)

Vice President Michele Grazulis said that everyone should have received their Open Enrollment materials by now. The Open Enrollment period is **October 18 and extends through October 29.**

Assoc. Vice Pres. Susan Uhl Miller noted that there are 3 key changes that impact benefit eligible employees only.

The University is introducing: new coverage tiers, changes to the medical plan, and changes to the sick leave policy.

They are adding 2 additional employee tiers: employee + spouse or domestic partner and employee + child or children. Because of this change, some employees will see their premiums increase. Other premiums will decrease. After this year of transition any change to premiums will be consistent across tiers.

If employees do nothing during open enrollment, they will be defaulted to the tier based on the dependents being covered today.

In regards to the medical plan, they are introducing a new national provider network. The decision to expand plans in this way was informed by employee feedback and recognizes the growth across the country. No referral will be needed. A new medical ID card will be issued.

A new sick time policy will go into effect Jan. 1, 2022.

The change means that starting in 2022 all benefits eligible faculty and staff will receive 12 sick days per year, to a maximum accrual of 30 days. Plus 3 personal days each year.

If needed, a Paid Leave Program beyond the 12 sick days must be applied for and may or may not be approved.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Dean Abowd noted that at other places they allow individual employees to donate some of their sick time to a general bank that others might use in times of a crisis. Does Northeastern do that?

Vice President Grazulis said that they have been asked to look into this previously and that they are going to do some due diligence there. She added there have been tax related issues in doing that where organizations have come under fire from various state and federal tax institutions because the employee receiving or utilizing the sick time has to be taxed at the same rate as the employee who donated the time. She added they are going to look into it and see if it is feasible.

- Prof. Ergun shared concerns that have been heard from NTTF over the last few days. She thanked V.P. Grazulis for agreeing to meet separately with NTTF in the near future. This change to sick leave was a shock coming at the heels of a pandemic. There are a lot of concerns around what will happen in the future particularly for those living in households with compromised individuals.

Another concern is that while everyone appreciates the paid leave policy, there is anxiety around having to apply during a time of crisis. What if it is rejected?

A third concern is that now that there are only 12 days available, it will increase the number of people who will show up sick at work.

V. P. Grazulis said she forgot to mention in the presentation that in hindsight they should have introduced the paid leave policy and sick leave policy at the same time. She said they dovetail each other. She said that people who have chronic conditions, the paid leave program will cover chronic intermittent conditions. We realize we have additional education to do on this matter.

She also said one message she has taken to heart is don't surprise us in the future. She said they have streamlined a lot to make the paid leave system less cumbersome. She said that rarely are applications for paid leave denied but she can't say it never happens.

- Prof. Wertheim said that over the years the senate has urged the university to look into a number of things: Regarding retirement plan opt in vs. opt out, the two year vesting window, adding Vanguard as a default. Has any thought been given to these issues?

V. P. Grazulis said they are working on many of these issues right now.

Prof. Dennerlein noted the important issue of the work life balance and asked how HR was guiding supervisor behaviors in terms of the rollout.

V.P. Grazulis said this goes beyond the tactical and goes to how are we skilling up our leaders.

Prof. Musselman said she has heard concerns that the number of sick days is going down just when we are asking faculty and staff to spend more time on campus. There wasn't a lot of notice about this change. Faculty/staff used to be able to compare benefits with a spouse. Open Enrollment is considerably earlier this year to last. What happens after seeing your spouse's options and a person wants to make an adjustment?

V.P. Grazulis encouraged anyone in that situation to reach out HR.

The meeting adjourned 1:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Prof. Rhonda Board
Senate Secretary