



# Northeastern University

## Office of the Faculty Senate

**TO: FACULTY SENATE**  
**FROM: Secretary, Faculty Senate**  
**SUBJECT: Minutes, December 1, 2021**

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

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

Absent: (Professors) Nieves  
(Administrators) Reid

**CALL TO ORDER:** 11:48 a.m.

I. The minutes for the 11.17.21 Senate meeting were approved.

### II. SAC REPORT:

- Prof. Gonyeau reported that since Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> SAC has met 2 times.
- All search committees are underway. Thanks to all faculty who volunteered.
- The Faculty Senate office sent a reminder regarding a survey that has been sent to all faculty with questions from the Faculty Senate Standing Committees. The survey is trying to garner feedback to help committees meet their charges. There have been 450 responses so far. Elected senators should remind faculty about the survey.
- SAC is working with Provost Madigan and Sr. Vice Provost Franko on following up on past senate resolutions. SAC will be communicating updates regarding these resolutions at senate meetings.
- SAC had received some questions from faculty regarding the "NU 500" hiring plan marketing piece. This piece was meant as a bit of a splash. There is no different strategy for this initiative than others in the past.

Provost Madigan concurred saying this was purely a marketing piece that shows Northeastern hires a lot of people and will probably hire more than 500 over the next 5 years. The academic plan is the plan. That is what the University is executing against.

- Regarding questions about changes to health insurance costs, SAC learned the rates are related to claims experience. If faculty continue to have question, SAC will continue to reach out to the Human Resources Dept.
- SAC also met with Provost Madigan Sr. Vice Provost Franko and Chancellor Henderson. SAC will continue with these semi-regular meetings that include the chancellor. This is helpful to have SAC address some items that fall outside the Provost's Office but are still relevant to the Faculty Senate. SAC will continue to follow up as needed.

### III. PROVOST REPORT:

- Provost Madigan reported that the University will continue with testing into the spring. The University considered "unobserved" testing – the use of home kits – but for complex reasons decided they

wouldn't do that.

- Regarding masking, the Provost said as long as Boston continues with a mask mandate, the University will as well.
- The Provost followed up in regards to NTTF hiring. During 20-21, approximately 106 NTT hires, mostly teaching or clinical faculty with a few research faculty.
- In 21-22, those numbers are bigger. The University has hired and expects to hire approximately 142.5-144.5 faculty members. Some of this hiring is going on right now. The Provost said he can make these numbers available.

#### **QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:**

- Prof. Herlihy asked in regards to terminal degree requirement for NTT, is there a possibility for a more nuanced approach for some specialties/departments – particularly in the arts. He added that this cuts off a pool of candidates in his field.

The Provost Madigan said this is not a hard and fast requirement. Sr. Vice Provost Franko Deb added that they were at 89% FTNTT, 98% T/TT side. She said they do hire non terminal degree but accreditors look at this and it impacts rankings.

- Prof. Musselman said that she had a request from some faculty members in relation to COVID and boosters. She said that given the difficulty in getting booster appointments, there is a strong wish that the university make boosters available on campus.

Provost Madigan said there was nothing to prevent us from doing it and have done so in the past. He said they contracted with a vendor to provide them. In fall, there was not the demand they expected and so it stopped. The Provost said they would revisit this issue.

#### **IV. NEW BUSINESS:**

##### **A. ACADEMIC PROPOSAL: GRADUATE COUNCIL BYLAWS.**

Vice Provost Ronkin read the following and then introduced Tom Sheahan, Sr. Vice Provost Curriculum & Programs.

BE IT RESOLVED That the updated Graduate Council Bylaws replace the current Graduate Council Bylaws (dated 12.2.20), as edited and recommended by the Graduate Associate Deans and Network.

Vice Provost Sheahan noted that this has become an annual process. He pointed out a few major themes of the edits this year.

- Explicitly defined advanced standing and transfer credit and that it should be awarded on entry
- Included the NECHE limit on credit for prior learning, for experiential and non-collegiate sponsored learning
- Provided considerable updates on the professional doctorates to be more in line with PhD
- Under the PhD guidelines – included more language around annual reviews to define sufficient progress
- Colleges can determine if faculty outside T/TT can be the advisor or chair of a dissertation committee
- Better definitions for candidacy time limits and completion of the PhD degrees

- Overall usual clean up of confusing language

**QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:**

Initially there were no initial questions and discussion.

The VOTE to approve the updated Graduate Council Bylaws to replace the current Graduate Council Bylaws (dated 12.2.20) PASSED: 28-1-0.

Following the vote, Prof. Dennerlein asked why, in light of no discussion there was a no vote. Prof. Gundavaram noted he raised his hand accidentally.

Prof. Smith said the language around the dissertation committee for professional degrees on page 19 does not seem clear.

Vice Provost Sheahan said there seemed to be a typo. The language should read “the dissertation committee shall have 3 members, 2 of which should be from Northeastern University”. He will make that change in both the professional doctorate and PhD sections.

Corrected VOTE: PASSED: 29-0-0.

**B. REPORT OF THE FACULTY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (FRANCES MCSHERRY)**

Prof. Mcsherry introduced the report of the Faculty Development Committee and her fellow committee members, Prof. Hayward and Detwiler.

**(The FDC report is posted to the Faculty Senate website.)**

The committee report reviewed:

- The context for a remote work policy
- Teaching policy recommendations
- Research/scholarship policy recommendations
- Service policy recommendations
- Conclusions on remote work policy emphasizing all decisions should have faculty input at all levels

**QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:**

- Prof. Dennerlein said there were great recommendations for best practices. He asked what was the process that the committee used to come up with these?

Prof. Hayward said they based a majority of decisions on the survey conducted by the prior FDC about experiences related to COVID. Faculty of all levels were invited to participate and were queried on comfort level on technology, NUflex, IT support, impact on workload in respect to teaching, service and scholarship. She added that since their committee is fairly diverse, they incorporated the perceptions of the faculty they represent.

Prof. Detwiler added that they also took into consideration the work that went into the transition to hybrid practices.

- Prof. Mages said, going forward if you are looking at the question of home college with shared

degree programs/shared work, that is of particular interest to CAMD faculty and would be glad to discuss this at a later point.

Prof. Hayward said they have invited faculty from other committees to join some of their meetings. She said Prof. Mages is welcome to come to the committee to present his concerns or he can email his concerns. (The committee meets Mondays, 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.)

- Prof. Caracoglia’s comment was about hybrid instruction and the possibility of a faculty member needing family leave for various reasons. Currently, according to FMLA, a person can get up to 12 weeks unpaid leave but this is a problem as this is not a full semester. This creates 2 problems, one for department to hire someone and two, that faculty may need an entire semester. Could NUflexibility be considered for these situations? Is there any hybrid solution for this?

Prof. Detwiler said in regards to this issue there are 3 distinct areas of concern. First, HR and legal policies for the instructor. Second, there is the course, the academic program, the students and the nature of the learning environment. Third, when we look at instructors and best teaching practices, and how the course is designed. Can it be transitioned easily to hybrid or remote? This is one of the driving forces as to why there needs to be flexibility in policies when making determinations of how to support faculty and students.

Prof. Caracoglia added he would like for faculty to have some protection if a faculty person needed more than 12 weeks, especially NTT faculty. A contract may not be renewed for example.

#### C. REPORT OF THE ENROLLMENT AND ADMISSIONS POLICY COMMITTEE

Prof. Zulick introduced the report of the Enrollment and Admissions Policy Committee and her fellow committee member Prof. Van Amburgh.

**(The EAPC report & presentation are posted to the Faculty Senate website.)**

At this time the committee reported on charges 3, 4 and 5.

**Charge 3:** Review University efforts to address the mental health needs of students, including WECare and UHC support, and other NU mental health resources.

**Charge 4:** Follow up on the establishment of clear and transparent procedures for advisors to refer students to WECare.

**Charge 5:** Follow up on recommendation that Provost’s Office report to the Faculty Senate on progress in procuring an updated online platform for individual student plans for students, advisor, and faculty mentors.

#### **QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:**

There were no additional questions or comments.

#### V. PRESENTATION:

##### **MADELEINE ESTABROOK, SR. VICE CHANCELLOR STUDENT AFFAIRS**

*Promoting Student Wellness through Mental Health Support*

**(The presentation is posted to the Faculty Senate website.)**

Vice Chancellor Estabrook’s presentation reviewed the various mental health services offered by UHCS

ranging from walk-in support, to follow-up appointments and Psychopharmacology.

The types of staff available to assist students include psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, and licensed mental health workers.

In rebuilding the clinical team, UHCS focused strongly on the diversity of team after hearing from students they wanted to see people who looked like them.

Support groups, that were developed during and because of the pandemic, became more prominent this semester.

Find@Northeastern is an immediate touchpoint for students seeking help and resources. Set up as “one place” for them to go and includes all FT students including UG, NUin, NU Bound, Graduate and Law.

Services from FIND 24/7 support line for all students on all campuses include:

- Telephone counseling
- Support, assessment, coordination with emergency protocols
- Non-emergent connection for next steps

Treatment options include

- Unlimited free counseling sessions – in person or telehealth
- Referrals to ICare program
- Free access to Headspace
- Referrals to specialty care (with student’s insurance)

Vice Chancellor Estabrook said they are seeing huge increases in the number of new and unique users coming to UHCS for services as well as Find and Headspace.

#### **QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:**

- Dean Sive thanked Vice Chancellor Estabrook for the outstanding work she and her team do. Dean Sive said she thought faculty would be enthusiastic to have something equivalent for the faculty and the faculty well-being. She said she is very aware that faculty are struggling. How can we look after our faculty and draw inspiration from the student space for a similar program for our faculty.
- Prof. Gonyeau said we can follow up on that from the Senate’s perspective as well.
- Prof. Young asked for those places/spaces not near campus, how do we initiate support for them?

Vice Chancellor Estabrook said to start with NUPD. But UHCS are developing decision trees that are not Boston-centric but will allow for others to get involved.

- Prof. Dennerlein said he was really struck by what Dean Sive said about faculty well being. He said the recommendations from the FDC report reflect on faculty well-being. He said he thinks we could think about that report as a starting point. They listed a lot of good best practices. As Senate and SAC consider that report, they could take that as a foundation for that initiative.
- Sr. Vice Provost Franko said that faculty widely use our EAP program that gets good reviews. We can let more faculty know about this program. Also, reminding people about our Ombuds. In the spring, she put on a 10-part series on coping with COVID. Those sessions were recorded. Sr. V.P. Franko will

send the link to Prof. Gonyeau so that the senate can distribute.

Prof. Gonyeau said the theme from SAC's perspective is communication. We have a lot resources, but we need to think about the most efficient way to communicate but also recommunicate. We need to figure out the best ways to remind people and get feedback about what changes or additions and subtractions could improve the support.

Sr. Vice Provost Franko said that they put together our faculty guide and sent that out to chairs and asked them to distribute to faculty. Also, 3 weeks ago, she met with the Active Minds group which is the student group that focuses on mental health. They had many good suggestions and Sr. V.P. Franko will see how to incorporate those suggestions into the next Faculty Guide.

The meeting adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Prof. Rhonda Board  
Senate Secretary