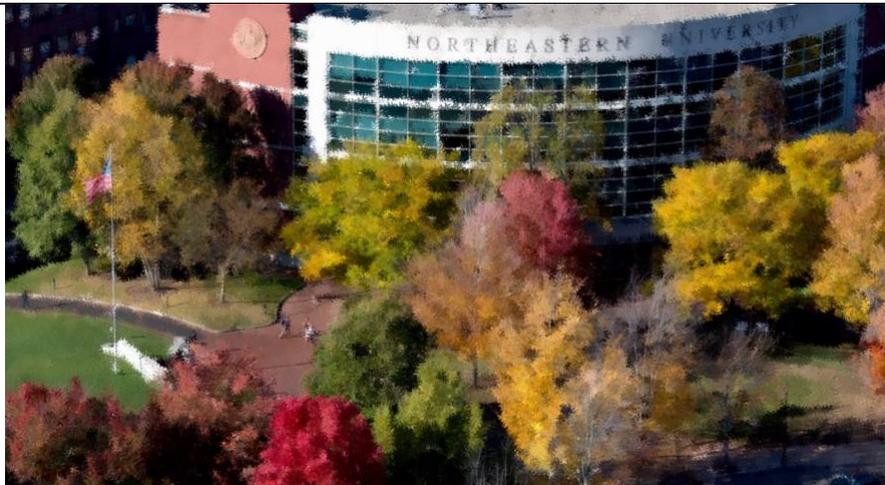


Northeastern University

Faculty Senate

SENATE NEWSLETTER VOLUME 1 ISSUE 6

The Faculty Senate acts as a coordinating body to provide communication between the Administration and general University faculty, and to initiate consideration on any matter of faculty concern. For more information, please visit the [senate website](#)



December 1, 2021 Faculty Senate Meeting Highlights

Upcoming Faculty Senate Meetings

SAC Report

SAC Chair Professor Michael Gonyeau reported that:

- All search committees are underway.
- The SAC will communicate the status of resolutions in Senate meetings.
- In response to a faculty member’s question Chair Gonyeau reported that the “NU 500” hiring plan represents a commitment to the University’s expectations of bringing on board a substantial number of new faculty to effectuate the University’s new Academic Plan.
- In response to questions about new health insurance costs of employee/spouse, employee/children, etc., HR reported that new health insurance rates for this year are based on claims experiences. The rates have gone up for some categories of employees, and down for others.
- Regular meetings with the Provost/Chancellor/Senior Vice Provost are now being held with the SAC for updates and expressions of concern about University policies.

Provost Madigan’s Report

- It is anticipated that the University will continue testing into the Spring and will maintain a mask mandate in Boston as long as the City continues such a mandate.
- During 2020-21 there were approximately 106 non-tenure-track hires, mostly of clinical teaching faculty with few research positions; it is anticipated that in 2021-22 there will be approximately 144 more such hires to accommodate student enrollments. These will be a part of the “NU 500” hiring plan.
- Faculty questioned whether a more nuanced approach can be taken to hiring non-tenure-track faculty in specialty areas, to open teaching possibilities to individuals without terminal degrees. Further research will be undertaken, as non-terminal degree hires affect accreditation.

Please join us for our virtual Teams meetings!

Spring 2022 semester meetings (11:45am -1:25 pm):

- January 19
- February 2
- February 16
- March 2
- March 23
- April 6
- April 20, 10 a.m.
- April 20, 11 a.m.

Jan. 19 senate meeting:

Agenda Forthcoming

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Approval of Updated Graduate Council Bylaws

- By a vote of 29-0-0, updated Graduate Council Bylaws were approved to replace the current Graduate Council Bylaws (dated 12.2.20; this is an annual update), the newly approved Bylaws providing for NCHE credit for prior learning, professional doctorates more in line with the Ph.D., colleges gaining the right to determine if faculty outside tenured and tenure-track designations can chair a dissertation committee, and improved definitions for candidacy time limits.

Faculty Development and Enrollment Policy Committee Reports and Responses

- The report of the **Faculty Development Committee** was presented by Prof. Frances McSherry, with assistance from Professors Lorna Hayward and Darin Detweiler. The Report was based on a Faculty Survey and covers *NUFlex* and other remote work policies. The Report recommends greater collaboration between faculty and administrators in developing policies concerning Northeastern's global and mobility aspirations, flexibility in handling research activities when working remotely, the need for support of cross-disciplinary mentoring, and COVID-centered tenure clock and leave considerations. The Report also addresses questions about how term scheduling changes may impact on faculty morale and well-being. Faculty service has increased as a result of the pandemic. There is a need for greater faculty input into, and communications transparency about, the introduction of remote work policies, particularly as to assessing merit, promotions, and dossiers. There is also a need for IT, staffing, and advising support for increasingly stressed faculty as they fulfill their teaching and research duties. It was recommended that printed hard copies of the on-line *Faculty Guide* should be made available.
- The **Enrollment and Admissions Policy Committee** report was presented by Profs. Elizabeth Zulick and Jennie van Amburgh. The Committee called for the Provost to develop a Strategic Communications Plan that would incorporate University thinking about new hires, orientation, and reminders. Faculty said they seek communications clarity on, and input into policy matters affecting them. A pilot *U-Achieve* academic planner is expected to be introduced to campuses in March 2022, to provide a common academic advising platform for the University.

COVID

- Faculty called for mandatory booster shots for all faculty, students, and staff. That request was granted in early December, with a mandate for faculty, staff, and student booster vaccinations by the start of the Spring semester on January 18th.
- Faculty well-being amidst COVID stress is a continuing discussion, as faculty have more family care obligations, and added responsibilities advising students who have returned to campus after COVID disruptions.

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Senate and University Outreach News

The Faculty Senate office has received responses to a faculty survey to

- help committees fulfill their charges. Over 450 responses have been received (thank you!), and these are being circulated to Faculty committees.
- The deadline for faculty to complete the University's initial diversity and inclusion training modules has been extended two weeks, to the end of this calendar year.

Student Affairs – Mental Health Supports

- Senior Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Madeleine Estabrook reported that even before the pandemic, the University focused on student mental health through increased walk-in support, follow-up appointments, and the provision of advising supports. These include ICare referrals, free access to *Headspace*, the development of a mental health advisory committee and a mental health awareness week, work with cultural centers, and mental health guides for faculty, staff, students, and parents/families. *Find@Northeastern* was introduced two years ago as a localized clinical referral system to increase mental health awareness and to support student mental health needs. Beginning with the provision of 10 free counseling sessions, the system now provides unlimited clinical counseling sessions for students. First responders to student calls for mental health assistance are now NU residential life counselors rather than Northeastern police. A student advisory group is being created, friends and networking groups are being developed to support students and to assist in building resilience. Further mental health information can be found at <https://www.northeastern.edu/uhrs/counseling-services/>. Faculty responded that they would like to see such comprehensive supports made available to meet faculty needs.

The Faculty Senate wishes all in the Northeastern Community, across all campuses, a safe, joyous, restful, healthy, and Happy Holiday!