



Northeastern University

Office of the Faculty Senate

TO: FACULTY SENATE
FROM: Secretary, Faculty Senate
SUBJECT: Minutes, March 23, 2022

Present: Professors: Avalon, Beighley, Board, Caracoglia, Carr, Chiou, Cisewski, Dau, Ergun, Gonyeau, Herlihy, Hertz, Landsmark, Marano, McSherry, Molnar, Musselman, Nieves, Rappaport, Smith, Spencer, Strange, Toledano Laredo, Vollmer, Willey, Zulick

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

Absent: (Professors) Arnold Mages, Bourns, Dennerlein, Gundavaram, Mukerjee, Wood, Zimmerman
(Administrators) Gallagher

CALL TO ORDER: 11:50 a.m.

I. The minutes for the 3.2.22 Senate meeting were approved.

II. SAC REPORT:

- Prof. Gonyeau noted that since the last Senate meeting, SAC has met twice.
- It developed and distributed the Senate newsletter.
- SAC held an Elected Senator meeting on 3.9.22. Topics included COVID matters including testing logistics and masks, senate elections and the war in Ukraine.
- SAC continues scheduling senate meeting agendas and reviewing committee reports.
- SAC works to constitute search committees including the Physical Therapy and Movement Rehabilitation Sciences Chair and Bioengineering Chair.
- SAC also continues to facilitate the senate elections for AY '22-'23.
- SAC met with Provost Madigan and Sr. Vice Provost Franko and discussed communication strategies and the upcoming SAC discussion with the BOT AASE committee on 3.24.22. (The SAC report can be found on the Faculty Senate website.)

III. PROVOST REPORT:

- Provost Madigan said they are seeing an incredible level of talent around faculty hiring. They have around 20 or so acceptances to date.
- There is a lot of activity on the Mills front with the primary focus on the teachouts for the approximately remaining 400 students who have not yet mapped to existing NU programs. Other Mills activity is around IT, HR, Finance and Facility related work.
- There are two dean searches underway -- CPS and DMSB. CPS has concluded but no announcement yet. DMSB is at an earlier stage with campus visits/interviews now.
- COVID testing will most likely not be done after the spring semester ends. It seems the university will not be doing testing next academic year.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Prof. Gonyeau asked would there be the ability for testing in a smaller capacity.

Provost Madigan said no. He doesn't see us carrying on in some limited fashion.

- Prof. Toledano Laredo noted the situation in Ukraine with many academics exiting the country and a smaller amount of faculty leaving Russia. A somewhat similar situation happened before at the end of the cold war and it allowed the U.S. to get good academics. Is Northeastern thinking of an initiative around this? Welcoming visiting or opportunity hires?

Provost Madigan agrees there will be an exodus of talent leaving those countries and we will be looking out for this. If anyone has specific names in mind, they should send them to Provost Madigan. Also, NU has some students from both countries and is reaching out to them.

- Prof. Poe asked if students want a test can they can go to University Health clinic or can they get an in-home test?

Provost Madigan said that it is conceivable and he will take this back to the team to discuss.

- Prof. Poe asked if in regards to Ukraine there was a sense of timeline about more discussions about this? What else we will do?

Provost Madigan said there was no answer to that. Most efforts are going on with the 50ish students impacted. In regard to the talent topic, the University will wait and see how this unfolds. The Provost will continue to look into this.

Prof. Chiou noted he attended a webinar about the Russia/Ukraine issue and stated many people in both countries are negatively impacted by this war.

- Prof. Rolland said there is a scholar-at-risk organization. She noted the visa situation is bad in the U.S. anyways, but academic institutions get fast-tracked and we have a role to play here.

Provost Madigan said that Northeastern is working with them.

IV. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. Prof. Gonyeau read the following:

BE IT RESOLVED That the University establish the Master of Science in Cell and Gene Therapies, MS in the College of Science as approved by the Graduate Council Committee on 23 February 2022 (17-0-0).

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

There were no questions.

The VOTE to establish the Master of Science in Cell and Gene Therapies, MS in the College of Science PASSED: 27-0-0.

- B. Prof. Ergun read the following:

BE IT RESOLVED That the University establish the Master of Science in Pharmaceutical Engineering, MS in the College of Engineering as approved by the Graduate Council Committee on 23 February 2022 (17-0-0).

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

There were no questions.

The VOTE to establish the Master of Science in Pharmaceutical Engineering, MS in the College of Engineering PASSED: 27-0-0.

C. Prof. Ergun read the following:

BE IT RESOLVED That the University establish the Master of Science in Product Development, MS in the College of Engineering as approved by the Graduate Council Committee on 23 February 2022 (17-0-0).

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

There were no questions.

The VOTE to establish the Master of Science in Product Development, MS in the College of Engineering PASSED: 25-0-0.

D. Prof. Ergun read the following:

BE IT RESOLVED That the University establish the Master of Science in Wireless and Network Engineering, MS in the College of Engineering as approved by the Graduate Council Committee on 23 February 2022 (17-0-0).

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

The VOTE to establish the Master of Science in Wireless and Network Engineering, MS in the College of Engineering PASSED: 24-0-0.

V. **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTION PLANNING**

PROFESSOR STEPHENS
PROFESSOR GANGULY
PROFESSOR GLOWACKI
PROFESSOR KANOUSE
PROFESSOR ROLLAND

(The Climate Justice Action Planning report can be found on the Senate website. The following are some highlights from the presentation.)

The committee members reviewed the committee's charges and shared recommendations.

The committee noted that there is increasing recognition that it is not enough to address climate change without addressing systemic differentials in power. This requires transformational systems level change integrating multiple types of knowledge which a research University like Northeastern is uniquely positioned to do.

Climate change is seen as an existential threat to this generation of students. A recent global survey released in 2021 of 10,000 young people ages 16-25 demonstrated that they see this as the challenge of their time. The committee said that we can't prepare students to assume roles of leadership without preparing to safeguard the world. Northeastern needs to leverage its capacity to deal with

this.

The last climate action plan was a decade ago and Northeastern was a global sustainability leader at that time. After reviewing other Boston universities are doing, the committee learned Northeastern is no longer demonstrating leadership in these areas. Now is time to update a plan with racial justice and equity.

Committee members noted that the new Academic Plan only mentions climate justice once. An increased commitment to climate action justice will also help improve community relationships, especially in Roxbury and the city of Boston and is a good way to start relationships early on in new campuses.

The committee's key findings and recommendations include 4 themes:

- Articulating leadership
- Transparent assessment
- Leveraging synergies
- Inclusive community engagement

In regards to articulating leadership, most other universities have a clear presidential-level commitment to climate justice action. These campuses recognize that a social justice lense must be part of core mission moving forward.

The Sustainability and Climate Justice Hub should be empowered to work across the silos of research, teaching, operations, student life, community relations and administration. The Hub's Executive Director Leah Bamberger discussed their work to elevate Northeastern's ability to leverage the talent from students, faculty, and staff, and global partnerships to implement just solutions to address the climate crisis.

The committee recommends elevating climate justice action in the university's communication policy and chain of accountability. Leadership on climate justice should be aligned with the Academic Plan. The university should have ambitious goals for being a fossil-fuel free university and should incentivize the development of experiential coursework on climate justice.

The committee noted they had no resolution for today, but last year there were 3 resolutions passed; only one has been addressed. Suggests institutional leadership is needed to align with university strategies and priorities.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Prof. Dau agreed this is very important work. He liked leveraging synergies with teaching and research. Several faculty teach in this area including himself. Aligning the goals throughout the university with these courses would be great.

Prof. Rolland said one of the recommendations they have in the report is to engage in a mapping exercise so colleagues know about these courses. It is good to link all these collaborations.

Prof. Gonyeau said this could translate into new minors or micro credentials that would interest students.

- Prof. Toledano Laredo thanked the committee for this important work. He asked in regards to last year's divestment resolution, what concrete steps are being taken to separate NU from fossil fuels?

Provost Madigan said he will research this and report back.

- Prof. Ganguly said he teaches courses and his research is in this area. He has been hearing a lot from students asking for methods and actionable items they can do in this area.

Prof. Rolland said that now is a good time to liquidate fossil fuel types of assets since the prices are high and it is an industry with no future.

- Prof. Teledano Laredo asked if the Senate should have Provost Madigan present at a later meeting about where NU stands on the issue of divestment?

Prof. Gonyeau agreed and said the Senate Agenda Committee will work on this. He added continuing this conversation is in the best interest of all of us. The Senate Agenda Committee will follow up on some of the items mentioned today.

VI. PRESENTATION:

DIANE LEVIN, UNIVERSITY OMBUDS

Trends in Faculty and Staff Concerns: Spring 2022 Update from the Ombuds Office

(The presentation can be found on the Faculty Senate website.)

Diane Levin presented an update from the November presentation and noted there is not a lot of change. People are still struggling. She reminded everyone about the standards of her office and that the position allows for 24 hours/week position.

For data tracking, she uses non identified information only. This helps identify and address patterns and trends.

Overall case numbers:

- From 207 in FY 2018 to 410 in FY 2021. Cases are increasing every year. On track to meet or increase from last year.
- Number of concerns 355 to 754 FY 2018 and FY 2022. Especially increased during pandemic. More complex per case.
- Staff > faculty -- This FY to date: faculty 98, staff 492, other/anonymous 16, total = 754
- Has seen an explosion in Jan and Feb 2022; last seen like this at start of pandemic. Tells her a lot going on right now with covid practices and inflation, and the war. The top concerns:

Top concerns for faculty include the organizational climate; values and standards; hierarchical relationships (vertical supervisory ones). Faculty want to see leaders actively take responsibility to shape climate here and address morale. Faculty wonder how can we better measure leader effectiveness. Psychological safety another big issue. Want to see better alignment with NU's stated values versus practicing values. Those caring for others are very worried.

The top concerns for staff are the same 3 themes but weighted differently. Hierarchical relationships not their top concern right now but usually is. Concern about retention (and faculty are, too). Compensation concern that other area universities are poaching our employees with better packages. Want to feel appreciated and valued. Don't see themselves in the Academic Plan and want to have a purpose.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Prof. Board asked Diane Levin if any visitors were repeat visitors?

Diane said a visitor counts as one visitor no matter the number of times of visits. Out of 302 visitors, about 80 are repeats.

- Prof. Herlihy asked how does this knowledge effectuate any change besides acknowledgement? What is the path towards any type of progress?

Diane Levin said this goes to the heart of the work of her office. She said it is important that faculty know what she is doing. She said having an ombuds office says something about an organization's commitment to its workforce. The more people that come forward, the more she can amplify the message. The confidential nature and privacy of her work allows her to maneuver behind the scenes to get trust from people. She offers a safe bridge because many fear retaliation to affect more local change.

- Prof. Ergun told Diane that colleagues wonder what is the senior leadership's reaction to these reports?

Diane responded that she can't speak to that due to confidentiality. But she has worked hard to build relationships with those she shares this information with. She thinks there is value in them hearing what is brought to her.

- Prof. Rappaport said her good work is appreciated and asked how she does not get down.

Diane said it is important work. This is the best work I have ever done. It is wonderful and fulfilling work. It sustains me.

The meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Prof. Rhonda Board
Senate Secretary