



**Northeastern University**  
*Office of the Faculty Senate*

**TO: Faculty Senate**  
**FROM: George Alverson, Secretary, Faculty Senate**  
**SUBJECT: Minutes, 22 April 2015**

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Present: (Professors) Alverson, Bickmore, Cokely, Craig, Crittenden, Daynard, Devlin, Hajjar, Hanson, King, Kruger, Lerner, Leslie, Makriyannis, Nelson, McGushin, Piret, Rabrenovic, Rappaport, Strasser, Young

(Administrators) Ambrose, Aubry, Brodley, Courtney, Director, Fulmer, Gibson, Loeffelholz, Poiger, Ronkin

Absent: Professors Caligiuri, Carrier, Charles, De Ritis, Fitzgerald, Gouldstone, Metghalchi, Suciu

The Senate convened at 11:46 AM.

- I. The minutes of 8 April 2015 were approved.
- II. Professor Daynard reported that the Senate Agenda Committee had met twice since the last Senate meeting and once with the senior leadership team.

Next week there are two Senate meetings:

- The *organizational meeting* of the **2015-2016** Senate will meet at **10:00 AM** to elect their Senate Agenda Committee. Those senators who will remain on the Senate through next year should please arrive promptly at 10:00 AM.
- The *last meeting* of the **2014-2015** Senate will convene at 11:00 AM. While the room is scheduled through 4:00 PM, it is unlikely that the meeting will fill the entire time. There is, however, a full agenda so please arrive promptly at 11:00 AM. As always, lunch will be available.

Professor Daynard also reported that the Senate Committee for Full-time, Non-tenure-track Faculty has submitted their report which will be on the 29 April agenda for acceptance. This includes results of a focus group as well as a survey.

Recommendations within the report are thoughtful but there is not enough time for serious consideration. Therefore there will be no vote on proposed action items. Next year's Senate Agenda Committee and Senate will be charged with addressing the proposals.

- III. Questions and discussion

Professor Kruger noted that he had contacted Professor Daynard some time ago concerning the HERI survey of faculty perceptions which was undertaken last summer. There are many participants across the country and the report covers a wide number of areas that are of interest to faculty. He expressed the importance of communicating results which could be a springboard to promote improvement. In addition, ethical codes

for collection of data encourage sharing. Professor Kruger wondered when the results would be shared.

Professor Daynard responded that he had been informed by Vice Provost Loeffelholz that the University had not yet received the data for comparison with other universities. Vice Provost Loeffelholz confirmed that the University had still not received comparative data. Professor Daynard then noted that he was not aware of any past practice of sharing the survey but that SAC would consider.

- IV. Provost Director provided the fiscal year 2016 budget overview which encompasses four areas: the current economic climate; University priorities; financial goals; and the fiscal year 2016 operating budget.

Senior Vice President for Finance and Treasurer Nedell reported that the current economic climate is good in the broad sense. College affordability continues to be a key issue for students and families. Inflation is low at 0.8% for calendar year 2014. The Northeastern endowment fund is at a high of \$729 million as of June 30 and endowment spending is at 4%. Funding is committed to the long range vision which includes construction of the Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering Complex and capital investments.

Provost Director listed the fiscal year 2016 University priorities as follows: continuing high value and enhanced academics; aligning financial resources with the University mission; investing in infrastructure; maintaining tuition competitiveness within the peer group; a commitment to financial aid; and advancement of academic and student life priorities.

Academic priorities include the continued increase in total tenured and tenure-track faculty positions and in new programs. The latter takes in continuing growth of graduate professional and on-line degree and certificate programs and the strengthening of Ph.D. programs in all colleges.

Priorities for academic facilities include various planned administrative moves off campus; the upgrading of 60+ classrooms; and the build-out of the Burlington Innovation Campus.

Student life and support priorities encompass maintaining a competitive tuition rate, enhancing financial aid and emphasizing personalization and customization. In particular, the University seeks to meet 100% of demonstrated financial need for all freshmen who receive financial aid and to continue to decrease graduating student debt.

Other priorities in this area include full funding of the Carter field partnership with the City of Boston to provide more fields for the high demand for club sports, a refresh of the Curry Student Center, and funding of a Public Safety Emergency Response Center. Another 600-bed residence hall is in the very early stages of development as well.

Graduate student priorities include increased support for TAs and RAs, expanded support for graduate students and increased career services support.

Vice President Nedell listed the Universities financial goals as follows: to fund academic priorities and student life and support and to further diversify revenues to build upon

NU's strong financial position. Financial improvement drivers are revenue diversification, regional campus expansion and fundraising. Financial strength results from reinvestments from operations, endowment growth, fundraising, debt management and operating efficiency.

Professor Crittenden asked where the endowment stood prior to the crash and Vice President Nedell responded that it was at slightly over \$700 million. The question was then asked, how we do compared with peers on endowment return? We compare ourselves to 500M-1B\$ institutions and do somewhat better. LY was 16% but this year it is flat. The target is 7–8% (4% real spending after inflation).

#### 2016 operating budget

Undergraduate sticker price will increase to slightly under 60K\$: tuition up 4.9%, room and board up 3%; most graduate tuition up 3 to 5%.

Financial aid has increased at nearly double the rate of tuition and fees over the past five years. Total unfunded undergraduate aid increased from \$139 million to \$238.9 million in that time period. Our overall loan levels are declining—currently about \$2K less than our peer group.

The 2016 expense budget is consistent with the last several years, and includes

- An overall faculty compensation pool of 3% (2% merit and 1% merit).
- A staff compensation pool of 2.5% (with bonus opportunity).
- Funding of academic programs
- Funding of student life improvements

Budgeted income from all sources for 2016 is \$1,103 million. Budgeted total gross tuition and fees are 70% of the overall revenue budget which means that Northeastern is still dependent on tuition. Any net surpluses are reinvested at either the college or central levels.

Salaries, wages and benefits represent 41/12% of the expense budget. Other percentages include professional services—8%, sponsored research—7%, utilities—3%.

Professor Kruger, noting that the University remains heavily tuition dependent, more so than other research heavy institutions, asked where NU is going in the future. Vice President Nedell said that small changes to overall tuition dependency are planned and that diversification within is moving in the right direction.

Professor Kruger asked if there was data for the net tuition increase in terms of cost to families at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The Vice President replied that the University no longer calculates those figures. Graduate tuition is calculated by program which requires that deans collaborate with enrollment management. As there is little discounting at the graduate level, the 3-4% increase level is the net impact. The 'net tuition' term can be misleading as it depends upon individualized packaging. Professor Kruger asked whether a mean could be provided. The Vice President responded that increases in financial aid will help support that and need-based financial aid will rise at same rate as tuition. There is no net percentage but there are many factors that impact the average families.

Professor Rappaport noted that the faculty raise pool includes monies for promotions which serve to reduce the overall distributable amounts. The Provost agreed and pointed out that this has been a long-standing practice.

Professor Kruger said that “across-the-board” is the criteria for admissions and this will have different budget implications for different colleges. Dean Fulmer responded that final numbers are not yet available and there are many alternatives.

V. Professor Hanson moved the following and it was seconded.

**BE IT RESOLVED that the University establish the Bachelor of Science in Cell and Molecular Biology in the College of Science as approved by the UUCS on 25 March 2015 (11-0-0).**

Professor Tilly, Chair of the Department of Biology, was recognized and explained that this new major within the Department will take advantage of the population of faculty with strengths in this area and provide a primary driver for co-ops. The Department is undertaking discussions with the Dean proposing new faculty hires. The major will increase student experiences and flexibility. Dean Gibson added that biology has experienced tremendous growth in new foci over the years. At the undergraduate level, the word ‘biology’ is no longer exciting. The addition will be a recruiting tool as well.

VOTE to establish the Bachelor of Science in Cell and Molecular Biology: PASSED, 30-0-0.

The Senate adjourned at 12:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

George Alverson, Secretary  
Faculty Senate