



Northeastern University

Office of the Faculty Senate

TO: Faculty Senate
FROM: Secretary, Faculty Senate
SUBJECT: Minutes, 20 January, 2021

Present: (Professors) Bart, Beighley, Board, Bormann, Caracoglia, Carr, Chai, Cisewski, Dau, Dennerlein, Desnoyers, Erdogmus, Ergun, Gonyeau, Hayward, Herlihy, Laboy, Mages, McNabb, Mountain, Mukerjee, Musselman, Poe, Smith, Spencer, Stephens, Stowell, Vollmer, Wertheim, Wood, Zulick

Administrators: Madigan, Gallagher, Isaacs, Poiger, Ronkin, Sive, Wadia-Fascetti

Absent: (Professors) Gundavaram, Su

(Administrators)

CALL TO ORDER: 11:45 a.m.

The December 2, 2020 minutes were approved.

I. SAC REPORT

Prof. Erdogmus reported that since the last Senate meeting, SAC met 3 times for usual business and worked offline with senators and committee members on business including administrator evaluations.

SAC worked with Khoury Faculty to elect and appoint members for the Khoury Dean Search Committee.

SAC met with Provost Madigan & Sr. Vice Provost Deb Franko twice, as well as once with the President's Cabinet. Major topics of discussion included:

- SAC help in forming the strategic planning committees and senate/faculty participation in the process.
- Impact of COVID on finances, operations, and the university community, as well as plans on vaccinations.
- Possible inclusion of a Statement on Free Expression in the Faculty Handbook.

Curriculum updates:

- Name change of CAMD minor from Professional Presentation to Improvisation and Storytelling
- COS inactivated BS in Environmental Science; replaced by BS in Environmental and Sustainability Sciences (EES)
- COS inactivated BS in Environmental Science and Landscape Architecture; replaced by EES

In the light of the growing climate crisis and its impact in society, SAC plans to form an Ad-hoc Committee on Climate Justice Action Planning.

II. PROVOST REPORT

Provost Madigan noted that the search for Carla Brodley's successor as Dean of Khoury College of Computer Sciences is under way. Prof. Renee Miller will chair the search committee.

Mary Loeffelholz has stepped down as Dean of CPS. Provost Madigan thanked her wholeheartedly for everything she did in that role over the last almost 5 years. Provost Madigan is thankful that she will continue to lead a task force that will think about the future of the Graduate School of Education.

Mary Ludden, Vice Chancellor of Strategic Planning and will serve as Interim Dean. A search to replace Dean Loeffelholz will be launched later in the semester.

Regarding Covid, the positivity rates in Boston and MA are higher now than the fall. Our own testing at NU showed that our positivity rate jumped dramatically on Dec. 20th.

In the late fall our positivity rate was in the 2 to 3/10 of one percent each day. After Dec. 20, that positivity rate tripled overnight and stayed high until 4 or 5 days ago.

The nature of the population we were testing had changed to a much smaller number of people who chose to test presumably because they had concerns. Within the last 4 or 5 days, the positivity rate has dropped down to where it was in the fall.

A major concern in the fall was unused spots in classrooms in tandem with mental health concerns about students not leaving their rooms. Faculty were asked to encourage students to come to class. The Provost is aware there is a balance between wanting students to avail of the classroom spots but also don't want to put off campus students at risk by using public transportation.

Students are free to take their classes remotely if they feel more comfortable doing that.

Northeastern is now vaccinating people according to state guidelines for Phase 1 which is primarily healthcare workers.

The Provost recalled that last year when merit increases were suspended, it was determined that this would be re-examined mid-year. There are active discussions right now and the Provost hopes to have news on that front within a week to 10 days.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Prof. Stephens asked when the Inclusion and Division committee would present their report to the Senate.

Prof. Erdogmus responded that SAC is now working on scheduling committee presentations and reports for the spring term.

- Provost Madigan agreed with Prof. Gonyeau's comment of acknowledgement to Bouve College for their help with rolling out vaccinations.
- Prof. Erdogmus recalled that in a previous senate meeting, faculty conveyed some concerns about the new post doc guidelines and asked the Provost for an update.

Provost Madigan said that there are situations where faculty hire post docs and then those post docs receive external fellowships for which they are compensated. The question is how do we treat that compensation?

Looking at peers, found people do a variety of things. We decided to treat those external fellowships as supplementary income. We wouldn't lower the Northeastern portion of their compensation. One reason for this was in regards to Benefits. There are also issues to do with minimum salaries. There has been vigorous discussion on the topic. We are not going to change policy mid-semester, but going forward we will listen carefully to what everyone is saying and revisit the policy if necessary.

- Prof. Wertheim asked if there were any indicators from the fall that suggest that the concerns around student mental health are greater or less than usual.

Provost Madigan said they do have survey data that he would be happy to report on but doesn't have that at his fingertips. He will follow up with Prof. Wertheim.

- Prof. Stephens asked if Northeastern is vaccinating just the NU community?

Provost Madigan said at this time it his understanding was that Northeastern is only licensed to vaccinate the Northeastern community.

- Regarding merit raises, Prof. Stephens asked if the Provost was discussing the next cycle or the previous cycle where there were no raises. And how will news about this be communicated?

Provost Madigan said they will be looking at both. They may do a mid-year process for last year's merit and then, separately, the merit process for the coming year.

Regarding communication, Sr. Vice Provost Franko said they – we usually send out a notice to entire faculty, Deans, Associate Deans and chairs.

- Prof. Desnoyers asked is Northeastern requesting licensing for non-NU community?

Provost Madigan said he was not sure and would check on that.

- Prof. Amato asked if students, faculty and staff will eventually have an option to choose which vaccine they wish to be utilized.

Provost Madigan said this was a great question and he would take this to the vaccine working group.

- In response to a question from Prof. Erdogmus about mixing types of vaccines, Prof. Mukerjee responded that it is highly discouraged. This is not allowed by the guidelines.

III. NEW BUSINESS

Prof. Dennerlein read the following and Prof. Erdogmus seconded.

A. ACADEMIC PROPOSAL GRADUATE COUNCIL – PROGRAM IN BOUVÉ COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES (PROFESSOR DENNERLEIN)

BE IT RESOLVED That the University establish the Master of Science in Human Movement and Rehabilitation Sciences in the Bouvé College of Health Sciences as approved by the University Graduate Council 18 November 2020, 15-0-0.

Prof. Dennerlein said the initial motivation for proposing this MA program was to have an opt out degree for our PhD program. Essentially there are no new courses. The courses are already established in our department and new school. See this as a viable stand-alone MA program on own and plan on expanding it as well. It has a lot of opportunities for PlusOnes with several different programs across the University.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Prof. Wood asked how many students are currently enrolled in the existing PhD program?

Prof. Dennerlein said they are in their second year of the program with a total of 5 students. They just started looking at admissions for fall. Programs across the country often have 20-40 students and they are hoping to match that over time.

Prof. Dennerlein recognized Prof. Greenwood who added that it is a 1 year MA program really designed around skills and technology and rehabilitation -- motion capture, understanding clinical research. It meets both audiences of people who are graduates from other types of science programs who might be interested in these rehab type settings but also clinicians who might be interested in coming back to get further research and technology knowledge.

VOTE on the Master of Science in Human Movement and Rehabilitation Sciences PASSED: 30-0-0.

IV. UPDATE ON IMPROVEMENTS TO SCHEDULER AND OTHER COVID-RELATED TECHNOLOGY BY COLE CAMPLESE, V.P. FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

Dynamic Class Scheduling updates now include:

- Students can now select preferences for in-person or remote learning for each individual class session.
- As of 1.25.21 students will be able to reject an in-person assignment that does not work for them. Rejected seats will be back-filled on Sundays, offering in-person learning opportunities to other eligible students.
- Within next two weeks, students who set their Learning Location Status to “remote” will be blocked from submitting preferences and consistently assigned to remote class attendance.

Updates on Covid Test and Vaccine Scheduling include:

- Spring term: The COVID Test Scheduler will continue to provide the frictionless experience to accommodate regular testing across the university. Services surrounding the testing operation, such as Wellness team, will benefit from additional reporting.
- Soon the Northeastern community will be able to enjoy a familiar experience to schedule COVID vaccinations. The Vaccine Scheduler will provide flexibility for eligible populations, understand dosing requirements and cadences, as well as allow for the potential to modify testing cadence based on vaccination history, should guidance change over time.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Provost Madigan thanked V.P. Camplese and his group for all their amazing work.
- Prof. Stevens asked is there a reason why the email that says test results are available does not include the link to retrieve the results?

V.P. Camplese said that is a pre-canned email designed by the vendor. It can't be changed. That system manages some sensitive system across the board. It is policy in the HIPAA guidelines not to provide login results.

- Prof. Desnoyers asked if a test results link email could be re-sent every few weeks? (Or one with both NU and Broad links?)

V.P. Camplese said this was a good recommendation. He will work with the communication team within the continuity group to give everyone a refresher on where to go.

V. MADELEINE ESTABROOK, SR. VICE CHANCELLOR, STUDENT AFFAIRS

Sr. Vice Chancellor Madeleine Estabrook and Assistant Dean Emily Hardman shared highlights about activities, programs and services offered to students. Their complete presentation, "The Fall 2020 Student Experience: Wellness – Joy – Engagement" can be found on the Faculty Senate website.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Provost Madigan thanked both Vice Chancellor Estabrook and Assist. Dean Hardman for all the spectacular work they are doing for Northeastern's students.
- Prof. Herlihy asked how does one let a student know about the counseling sessions?

Vice Chancellor Estabrook said they will get back to the Senate with information cards.

- Dean Poiger asked for some additional information on the tightened Boston restrictions.

Vice Chancellor Estabrook said the hardest thing about the restrictions is the 10 person and 25 person restrictions and fact that the gyms aren't open. Gyms are open in Brookline but not in Boston.

The meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,
Michael Gonyeau, Senate Secretary