



Northeastern University

Office of the Faculty Senate

TO: Faculty Senate
FROM: Secretary, Faculty Senate
SUBJECT: Minutes, 3 March, 2021

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

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

Absent: (Professors) Dennerlein, Poe, Wood
(Administrators) Gallagher

CALL TO ORDER: 11:45 a.m.

The February 27, 2021 minutes were approved.

I. SAC REPORT

Prof. Erdogmus reported that SAC continues to plan the agendas for the remaining 3 meetings. Currently we expect the following:

- March 17: SVP David Luzzi, APC, ITPC, 3 strategic planning subcommittees.
- April 7: FDC, FTNTTFC, EAPC, 3 strategic planning subcommittees.
- April 17: RPOC, FAC, LPOC, Adhoc Committee on Climate Justice Action Planning (progress).

SAC is preparing for senate elections at all colleges offering live-meeting and all-online options.

- Live-vote college meeting dates are being finalized.
- Online-vote process will be through March with multiple days for nominations and voting.

SAC met with Provost Madigan & Sr. Vice Provost Deb Franko and discussed preparations for the upcoming Board of Trustees meeting where SAC will represent the faculty. Other topics included:

- Vaccination process
- Merit raises
- Summer and fall remote work plans
- 5-year support mechanisms for PhD students
- How to maximally benefit from the NUFlex infrastructure and experience in the future

Curriculum Updates include Global Student Mobility, Graduate Certificate, CPS – deactivated due to low enrollment. Data Science and Environmental Science, BS, Khoury and Computer Science and Environmental Science, BS, Khoury are replaced by Computer Science and Environmental and Sustainability Sciences.

II. PROVOST REPORT

Provost Madigan said there is a lot going on. Right now is a prime time for recruiting faculty. It is a good year to be hiring. Thank you for all who are engaged in this effort. The Provost highlighted the strategic planning exercise that is ongoing. Last strategic plan Northeastern 2025 is still fresh and relevant in many ways but it was written 5 years ago. A lot of people involved in crafting of the new plan. Provost Madigan directed faculty to the related website: <https://strategicplan.northeastern.edu>.

There are 6 working groups that are focused on various parts of the plans. There are senators on each of the groups. They have held town halls will be holding more town halls.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Prof. Erdogmus said he had a concern around strategic planning process. He said yesterday they had received a questionnaire about engaging with communities around us. He said he had a hard time responding to it because the context was not clear to him. There was a small preamble and the questions were really short. Want to make sure the questionnaires are prepared to prompt input from people like me who might not be aware of issues in the area.

Provost Madigan said he will take that feedback back to the groups to make sure they are carefully framing questions and explaining what they are doing.

Provost Madigan said in regards to vaccinations, they started doing vaccinations and then the state decided differently and sent all vaccines to other larger sites. Universities are not in the vaccination business at the moment.

- Prof. Gonyea asked if there is any plan from the University to respond to the Boston Herald article on Feb. 24th about vaccine distribution at Northeastern that was fraught with errors.

Provost Madigan said there was awareness of the article but he was not sure what Sr. Vice President Mike Armini's shop is planning to do. (Later in the meeting, the Provost posted a response to the Herald from Sr. Vice President Armini.)

- In response to a question from Prof. Erdogmus as to whether there was a sense of which vaccine is best,

Provost Madigan repeated the advice of Dr. Fauci, Chief Medical Advisor to President Biden -- take the first vaccine you can get. It is not at all clear that there is significant difference between them. They are all safe and effective.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Prof. Board read the following and Prof. Michael Arnold Mages seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED That the University establish the Master of Science in Population Health in the Bouvé College of Health Sciences as approved by the Graduate Council, 10 February 2021 (15-0-0).

Prof. Board recognized Prof. Beth Molnar, Dir. Of PhD in Population Health. She said they were asked by the PhD Network to create an exit Masters degree in case there was someone who wasn't able to complete the PhD program.

She said this will not be advertised or a program that anyone would directly apply to. Prof. Board added that this is similar to other programs that the Network requested that are exit only.

- Prof. Mages asked if there were any costs to the University to maintaining these exit only degrees. Provost Madigan said he didn't think there were any costs to the University as far as he knew.

The vote was taken. The resolution to establish the Master of Science in Population Health in the Bouvé College of Health Sciences PASSED: 23-0-0.

B. Presentation by Sundar Kumarasamy, Vice President for Enrollment Management: Enrollment Management Update Fall 2021.

Vice President Kumarasamy noted the strong undergraduate enrollment that is a testament to academic innovation and extraordinary efforts of the faculty and the colleges at every level that showcased how we are serving our student body.

He noted the unique circumstances for this class in that many students due to pandemic concerns did not have opportunities to visit colleges resulting in a very different recruitment cycle for the students and the University.

Other topics discussed by VP Kumarasamy included: increase in the number of applications, increased interest in combined majors, growth in minorities applying, strong interest in co-op and experiential learning, strong interest in early decision.

Vice President Kumarasamy said we are well positioned for another successful year. Overall, the outlook ahead seems to be very positive for us.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Prof. Laboy said that it was encouraging to hear that test optional seems to have led to some gains in diversity. Did the university use the testing as a criteria for scholarships?

Vice President Kumarasamy said we treated fairly the students that didn't submit their tests and didn't penalize them when deciding scholarships.

- Prof. Laboy asked is there a plan to continue to be test optional?

Vice President Kumarasamy said the University is going one year at a time. Now that we have seen many benefits, need to see student performance. We have extended this option for a second year.

- Prof. Wertheim asked for a comment on N.U.in.

V.P. Kumarasamy said that N.U.in continues to be an important global mobility option for our students. Last fall, in the middle of a pandemic, we had 80 students who went to Ireland.

We hope to continue to grow our N.U.in program but limit our sites. We will optimize our options to London, Ireland, and Greece and many will have an option for Boston as well.

- Prof. Su asked if there was an update about the status of student visas.

Vice President Kumarasamy said it is an evolving story that is country specific. India has opened up somewhat. With China, there has been no change to date. Disparities between India and China. China is more stagnant.

C. Presentation by Jeff Konya, Athletics Director:

Athletics 2020-21: Forging Ahead During a Pandemic. (The presentation can be found on the Faculty Senate website)

Director Konya thanked Prof. Fred Wiseman, the faculty athletic representative who will be retiring. Director Konya said Prof. Wiseman has been a great in his role and very supportive of the student athletes. Director Konya also thanked Associate Athletic Director, Scott MacDonald, for his assistance with the presentation.

Director Konya provided an athletic snapshot of 2021 season. Some highlights include the following.

The presentation demonstrated various ways that student athletes have been engaged in social issues including voting initiatives and online activities that allowed them to connect with their fellow athletes.

The Huskies continue to rank well above the national averages in graduation rate and academic progress rate. Seven percent of the student athlete population had a 4.0 GPA.

Northeastern qualified for NCAA Academic Excellence Pool.

Northeastern became the first Division 1 institution to add esports as a varsity program in the New England area. The interest in esports has been huge and has grown during quarantining due to the virus.

The World University Games are being held in Switzerland in December, 2021. Both Northeastern's men's and women's hockey teams will represent the USA in Switzerland at this event. (The games will be telecast on NBC platforms).

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Prof. Wertheim asked if there was any future for squash as a sport.

Director Konya said they are always looking at programmatic reviews. This would be a subject for University leadership in concert with us to see what would make sense. Never say never. We can look at those sports down the line.

Director Konya expressed thanks to all the professors for their help with everything through the year.

The meeting adjourned at 12:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,
Michael Gonyeau, Senate Secretary