



Northeastern University

Office of the Faculty Senate

TO: Faculty Senate
FROM: Secretary, Faculty Senate
SUBJECT: Minutes, 7 April, 2021

Present: (Professors) Bart, Board, Bormann, Caracoglia, Carr, Cisewski, Dau, Dennerlein, Desnoyers, Gonyeau, Gundavaram, Hayward, Herlihy, Laboy, Mages, McNabb, Mountain, Musselman, Smith, Spencer, Stephens, Su, Vollmer, Wertheim, Wood, Zulick

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

Absent: (Professors) Beighley, Chai, Ergun, Poe, Stowell
(Administrators)

CALL TO ORDER: 11:45 a.m.

The March 17, 2021 minutes were approved.

I. SAC REPORT

Prof. Erdogmus reported that SAC has been planning the agendas for the remaining meetings.

- Worked with committees in finalizing reports for presentation at the senate.
- Communicate with elected senators to exchange information, get ideas, guidance on issues of importance.
- April 21: RPOC, ITPC, FAC, LPOC, Adhoc Committee on Climate Justice Action Planning (progress) Senate elections at all colleges have been completed.
- Senators for AY2021-22: Please participate in the election of the next SAC on April 21 at 10am.
- Last meeting of the current Senate is on April 21 at 11am. This meeting may have a longer duration.

SAC met twice with Provost Madigan & Sr. Vice Provost Deb Franko to discuss topics including:

- Shared governance challenges at Northeastern
- Parking & public transportation
- Vacation day carry-over extension
- NUflex Faculty Survey results
- Engaging the senate in assessing NU Path (Maureen O'Shea & Tom Sheahan) => UUC

There were no curriculum updates.

II. PROVOST REPORT

Provost Madigan had a meeting conflict at the start of the Senate meeting and was unable to give a report due to the lack time.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

There were no questions.

III. STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATES**OPERATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY**

Marcus Robinson, Associate Vice President of Engagement & Experience, Information Technology Services; Alysa Gerlach, Vice President for Finance and Assistant Treasurer

Vice President Gerlach said the group was tasked with coming up with what they think the University needs to plan for in 5 years to create an agile and best of class operations and technology platform to allow the university to reach its aspirational goals.

They looked at the supporting infrastructure as to how we run our organization. This comes back to the intersection of the components of people, process and technology and what success looks like going forward.

Prof. Robinson said the group had a couple of Town halls and interviewed a number of people and discovered 4 major themes. These included high velocity transformation at scale which is the idea that incremental localized change and modernization is insufficient to meet the needs of the institution.

The second theme was a unified, simplified service experience that meets our globalized footprint.

The other themes included personalization and access and digital dexterity. We live in a technology enabled world and need to make sure all our community members have the training to leverage the technology that is key to working in a global environment.

UNIVERSITY CLUSTERS: MISSION, MAKEUP, AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Ron Sandler, Prof. & Chair, Philosophy; Director of the Ethics Institute, College of Social Sciences and Humanities; Marilyn Minus, Prof. & Chair Mechanical & Industrial Engineering, College of Engineering

Prof. Sandler said the group renamed their committee University PODS (Purposeful On-Demand Solutions) Strategic Plan Overview. They were charged to develop a university-wide system for creating dynamic, collaborative communities focused on advancing complex intellectual domains and addressing pressing social, environmental, scientific, health and technological challenges in collaboration with community, government and industry partners.

PODS will be more nimble, less siloed, more connective and less permanent than current Departments, Institutes and Centers. They will be problem/issue-focused, be deeply interdisciplinary, and their success will be measured in terms of impact.

CURRICULAR AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT: DELIVERY OF LEARNING AND DISCOVERY EXPERIENCES

Deanna Raineri, Vice President, Experiential, Digital & Global Education & Senior Vice Chancellor
Online Experiential Learning; Hazel Sive, Dean College of Science

Dean Sive said that rather than think about life-long learning, the committee came up with the notion of the continuum of learners that ranges from high school to various members of society.

The committee had 2 major recommendations. The first is a common framework of empowered learning across the continuum of learners. In this, they envision shared learning goals and mechanisms with a differing emphasis for each group.

This could mean a way to replace NUpath for undergraduates with a different framework. Something devised with guidelines rather than directives and put in place at the level of each unit.

The second major point is that there is flexibility incorporated into learning pathways including Phd training and the geographic location of learning. The notion of a Northeastern degree from anywhere.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Prof. Erdogmus asked the Operations and Technology group what kind of ideas the committee had for improving personnel motivation, loyalty and engagement.

Vice President Gerlach said this came up around being clearer about roles and responsibilities and providing a clear pathway to success.

- Prof. Dennerlein asked if the Operations and Technology group if they could talk about who was on the committee and a little about process.

Vice President Gerlach said that at a high level they had multiple voices. They had a core group that had members from across the academic units. They also went to people outside of Northeastern to ask about various issues.

- Prof. Mukerjee said to the Operations and Technology group that there were two things that he thought most faculty would benefit from. An easy to edit web page and some improvements to NUflex. He noted that in the fall, cameras couldn't pick up what he was writing on the board.
- Prof. Caracoglia asked this committee to think about the possible different technological needs for different campuses.
- Prof. Caracoglia asked the PODS committee if they had thought about how PODS would fit within the standard concept of faculty lines.

Prof. Sandler said in regards to faculty lines, one of the main pieces of any implementation plan for a POD would be thinking about where do those lines go. This would to be done in collaboration with permanent units.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Prof. Board read the following and Prof. Spencer seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED That the Senate accept the report of the 2020/2021 Faculty Development Committee.

The report was accepted: 21-0-0.

Prof. Tova Sanders, FDC co-chair, reviewed highlights of the report including the committee charges, the results of the FDC faculty survey and the committee's recommendations. The report can be found on the Faculty Senate website.

- B. Prof. Erdogmus read the following and Prof. McNabb seconded.

BE IT RESOLVED That the Senate accept the report of the 2020/2021 Enrollment and Admissions Policy Committee.

The report was accepted: 25-0-0.

Prof. Painter, the chair of the committee, reviewed the Enrollment and Admissions Policy Committee report that can be found on the Faculty Senate website.

- C. Prof. Bart read the following and Prof. Erdogmus seconded.

WHEREAS advisor caseloads across the University far outstrip national averages in higher education, and whereas the workload is unsustainable due to overwhelming range of responsibilities including advising large number of students, teaching courses, managing peer-mentor programs, and increasingly getting forced to triage mental health concerns, and whereas advisors are looking to more developmental, proactive advising to students,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate recommend that the Office of the Provost allow for the immediate hiring of new advisors in Advising units with a goal that the average workload for Advisors at the University does not exceed 250 students to meet with NACADA recommendations.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Prof. Mages asked if we are overloading our academic advisors to this degree have you collected data on the impact on the student experience from student experience.

Prof. Painter said no they didn't. The way the charge was cast was to look at academic advising staff and how they were dealing with things. He said it would be interesting to find out how the

students were reacting to all this though the committee thought they were getting the student story through academic advisors.

- Prof. Dennerlein asked if the resolution is targeting the appropriate jurisdiction of who has oversight over advising.

Provost Madigan said that it is mostly in Chancellor's Office but he can communicate with the Chancellor. The Provost said it was not a problem how the resolution is worded.

- Prof. Spencer said she was shocked when she read the report. She reached out to advisors at DMSB and her students. They confirmed what this report indicates. The students sometimes have to work 3-4 weeks for an appointment with an advisor.

Noting there are such disparities across colleges, Prof. Spencer asked who makes the call in the colleges as to how many advisors are hired. And she asked who has the power to end this hiring freeze for advisors. And can it be done realistically ASAP.

Provost Madigan said the hiring freeze is a university level decision. The BOT is aware of it. The Provost said it can't go on forever. In terms of the decisions about the number of advisors for a college that is a Dean level decision.

The vote was taken. The resolution recommend that the Office of the Provost allow for the immediate hiring of new advisors in Advising units PASSED: 27-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 1:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Michael Gonyeau, Senate Secretary