



Northeastern University Faculty Senate

TO: The Faculty Senate
FROM: Secretary of the Faculty Senate
SUBJECT: Minutes, 16 October 2024

Present: Professors Adams, Alexis, Bhutta, Bloom, Carr, Chiou, Diani, DiBattista, Eckelman, Godoy-Carter, Herron, Hill, Hodeghatta, Homan, Ivanova, Kahn, Kevoe Feldman, Lahr, Landsmark, Mellette, Molnar, Rappaport, Rawson, Rejtar, Sivak, Spencer, Stefanik, Strange, Tjiptowidjojo, Toledano Laredo, Un, Viola, Walker J., Walker L., West.

Administrators: Madigan, De Cremer, Dyal-Chand, Isaacs, Gallagher, Jackson.

Absent: (Administrators) Tsai.

(Professors) Di Credico, Dicristina, Hamandi, Ingemi, Lowrey, Lykourino, Parameswaran, Shrivastava, Triest

CALL TO ORDER: 11:45 a.m.

I. **SAC REPORT:** The SAC report has been posted to the Senate website

Professor Heidi Kevoe-Feldman noted that since the last senate meeting, SAC met twice as a committee and once with the Provost's Office. She noted that since this is a busy time of year, the Elected Senators meeting for Wed., Oct. 9th will be cancelled, to give senators a bit of a reprieve. The Senate meeting for Wed., Oct. 30th will also be cancelled.

SAC is willing to work with standing and ad hoc committees to see how SAC can support their goals. SAC met recently with the Financial Affairs Committee (FAC) and discussed strategies for pay increases as well as the equity adjustment process.

Professor Kris Manjapa, CSSH, asked to speak for 10 minutes about academic freedom. SAC received a letter from a group of faculty regarding academic freedom, wherein they requested that the Faculty Senate review a proposed resolution to the Faculty Handbook. Professor Kris Manjapa read this resolution aloud. SAC has already forwarded this request to the Faculty Handbook Committee for their consideration.

Following up on a topic from the 9/25 senate meeting, bathroom locks in Mugar Hall and Dodge Hall, Professor Kevoe-Feldman noted that this initiative arose in response to faculty concerns brought to the Northeastern Police Department (NUPD).

The NUPD implemented a multilayered approach to resolving the noted safety concerns, including the installation of Husky ID reader locks on the restroom doors. Since the implementation of these measures, NUPD has not received any further reports, however some unintended inconveniences

exist. For example, visiting scholars and researchers who don't have a Husky ID experience difficulty accessing the bathrooms. To address this, the NUPD recommends that departments hosting visitors should arrange for necessary access, while ensuring that staff do not share their Husky IDs.

A second concern from the 9/25 senate meeting: power cords and computers have been removed from many of the global network classrooms. The Provost followed up on this. He indicated that these actions came from Facilities.

- For fixed seating classrooms, outlets are added as they perform classroom upgrades, and classroom upgrades are an ongoing process at the university. Dodge Hall was recently completed. Shillman Hall will be completed this summer.
- For flexible classrooms, outlets are only added on the perimeter. Outlets in the floor limit flexibility of the space and they are difficult to maintain.
- Portable charging options will be available in most classroom buildings in the lobbies so that students can access them if necessary.
- Facilities will not install power cords or extension cords for charging in the classrooms because they create tripping hazards.
- In many classrooms, computers were not working. By removing them and making adjustments, Facilities indicates that they've cut down on the problematic classrooms.
- This information was communicated to faculty prior to the start of the fall semester.
- Faculty senators will need to work to ensure that streamlined communications are getting to faculty in their colleges

Professor Kevoe-Feldman has received a number of emails about standing committees that SAC did not staff this year. SAC is reviewing the past reports, recommendations, and resolutions of these to make sure past work is being implemented and she is working on future charges.

SAC is working on developing a proposal with the Provost for a Town Hall meeting in January regarding the Global Network.

Charges for the HR Benefit Task Force are under review. The key objective for this group is tuition exchange.

II. PROVOST'S REPORT.

Dean Elizabeth Hudson, CAMD, is stepping down at the end of this year. Under her leadership, CAMD has been completely transformed and is in great shape for the future. Provost Maddigan thanked Dean Hudson for her efforts and wished her the best.

Professor Javed Aslam has been appointed as the Chief of Artificial Intelligence at the University. Artificial Intelligence is going to have a transformative effect in higher education at Northeastern and at every other university.

In the spring, large numbers of faculty and staff were involved in developing an AI strategy for the university, focusing on the impact of AI on learning, research and the operations of the university. Ten (10) different work streams were developed. The Chief of Artificial Intelligence will oversee these work streams and ensure that we are keeping pace with the AI wave. Provost Madigan suggested that Professor Aslam address the Senate at a future meeting.

Mental Health Awareness week is Oct. 14-18th and there are many related activities across campus.

On October 25th, there will be a Life Sciences Day focused on Life Sciences research. Active researchers in the Life Sciences will present short talks, with a view towards community building and bridge building across the university.

There is now a Classroom Dashboard that faculty may find useful. It indicates what specific technology is in a classroom, the seating capacity, seating arrangement, and 360-degree photographs of the classroom.

It is the 30th anniversary of the Dialogues of Civilization. This is an enormous success and an important addition to the undergraduate learning experience.

Planning Real Estate & Facilities have released a Climate Justice Action Plan which addresses our institutional goals around sustainability and climate justice on all our campuses.

Sr. Vice Provost Deb Franko added that there is a virtual Mental Health Matters event on Tues., Oct. 29th at 10 a.m. ET for faculty and staff: **Mental Health Matters: Shape Your Daily Work to Benefit Your Mental Health**: Facilitated by Dr. Alice Boyes, Clinical Psychologist, Researcher, and Author.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Professor Godoy Carter was concerned that faculty were not notified that the bathrooms would be locked.

Professor Kevoe-Feldman said she would follow up with Facilities and/or NUPD to see if they had sent an email and if so, to whom it was sent.

- Professor Chiou asked for an update regarding the New York campus. He also asked the Provost's Office to think about the impact of stress on faculty.

Provost Madigan said the announced merger with Marymount hasn't taken place yet. There are regulatory and legal processes that will take time. The merger will probably take place early next year. The merger will need to undergo a federal Department of Education review.

When the merger takes place the continuing students at Marymount will seamlessly continue in NU programs.

Regarding faculty stress, Sr. Vice Provost Franko noted the Mental Health Matters event on Tues., Oct. 29th. There is also a book group run by Vice Provost Rashmi Dyal-Chand which addresses mental health. There is also a mental health advisory group of about 25 faculty and staff who advise us on programming. In February, a psychologist from Stanford will present a talk about belonging.

- Professor Tjiptowidjojo said that parents sued a Massachusetts school regarding student discipline for using AI. Is there anything faculty should do to avoid the risk of a lawsuit?

Provost Madigan said NU is developing an AI policy that will address those kinds of issues. The work Professor Aslam is now overseeing has more to do with how we harness the technology to accelerate our research and improve the learning experience for our students and improve the operations of the university.

Sr. Vice Provost Franko just sent to all department chairs and Associate Deans for faculty information that came from the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution regarding the academic integrity policy, how to file incidents, and some suggested syllabus language.

- Professor Ivanova indicated that graduate students are not eligible to participate in Dialogues of Civilization. Can we offer these opportunities to graduate students as well?

Provost Madigan said that's a very good question. The program is available to alumni.

Vice Provost for Graduate Education Waleed Meleis indicated that the Dialogues as originally conceived focused on undergraduates, but there has been some pilot work to try to roll out Dialogues for graduate students. Khoury is developing and running one this year. He said he would be happy to connect with Professor Ivanova.

III. PRESENTATION: KRIS K. MANJAPRA, PHD, STEARNS TRUSTEE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AND GLOBAL STUDIES, DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY | DEPARTMENT OF CULTURES, SOCIETIES AND GLOBAL STUDIES, AFRICANA AND GLOBAL ASIAN STUDIES

FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AT NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

Professor Manjapra said that a group of faculty are concerned about academic freedom, freedom of speech, faculty safety, and democracy in higher education.

On October 5th, faculty learned (via an article in the Huntington News) about a policy change published as **Policy and Demonstrations** on the Northeastern University website. It contains this directive:

“Any faculty who wishes to hold a demonstration on university property or in connection with University events must submit an application for the demonstration with the appropriate University office and receive written approval in advance of the demonstration.”

Professor Manjapra said he believed faculty were not involved in the development of this policy. He indicated that the following language threatens to hamper the core competencies of our faculty (research, teaching, care for students, and contribution to democratic discourse in society):

“Faculty and staff members who wish to organize and participate in demonstrations on Northeastern's campuses must seek approval from the Office of the Provost.”

Furthermore, the language on Freedom of Speech in our Handbook is weak, and it is out of date and does not align with the standards of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), which protects for extramural speech, controversial speech, and peaceful protest by faculty.

Professor Manjapra read into the record a draft resolution that their faculty group submitted for review to the Senate Agenda Committee:

Whereas the university has an outdated freedom of speech policy that is not fully in line with the AAUP standards,

MAY IT BE RESOLVED that the Freedom of Speech module on the faculty in the Faculty Handbook be revised with this edit and the revision be sent immediately and directly to the Provost's Office for review and publication:

The module shall begin with this statement:

Northeastern University recognizes freedom of speech and freedom of expression as paramount commitments of the university and essential to the protection of democratic values in civil society. The right of freedom of speech and freedom of expression shall be balanced against the right of all members of our community, especially those from socially marginalized groups, to work, research and learn in environments that ensure inclusion and belonging.

As stressed by the AAUP freedom of speech for faculty at universities encompasses the freedom of extramural mural expression that includes cases of "controversial speech" and "peaceful protest," and this right shall not be imperiled. In exercising their right to free speech and free expression, faculty shall not be subjected to retaliation or intimidation in any form whatsoever by officers of the university, including by administrators and by police.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

Professor Kevoe-Feldman indicated that academic freedom is referenced in two places in the Faculty Handbook: in the Rights and Teaching, Research and Scholarship Module under Academic Freedom; and under the Appointments, Promotion and Tenure module, as well under Tenured Faculty.

Professor Matthew Smith, CSSH Philosophy Department, said that if faculty must seek approval, which is itself problematic, there would be a disposition towards an antagonistic relationship between the administration and faculty and staff exercising entirely appropriate forms of free speech, including protest.

Professor Smith said that during a protest that occurred in the spring of 2024, he and other faculty members stood on the sidelines watching the students - not participating in the protest - and attempted to de-escalate the situation with the administration.

According to Professor Smith, when the faculty went over to speak with Renata Nyul, the Vice President of Communications, Vice President Nyul said to Professor Smith: "Do you know who pays your salary?" Professor Smith interpreted this as a thinly veiled threat.

Professor Smith said he thought it was important not to rely entirely on the assumption that there will be norms of collegiality between the administration and faculty. Rather, there should be clearly stated regulations that affirm the right of faculty to participate in entirely appropriate forms of free speech, including protest, and other forms of gatherings.

Professor Margaret Hahn Dupont asked if there could be some clarity that could be given to the FAQs and the responses on academic freedom contained in the Northeastern Global News. She was referring to the question: “Where does the university stands on academic freedom for faculty?” She said these seem to be new provisions that were created without input from faculty.

- Professor Kevoe-Feldman asked Professor Dupon to send her the link to the FAQs so that SAC could discuss with the provost.

Professor Karl Klare said that policy 617 imposes what is known in First Amendment jurisprudence as a prior restraint on speech. If Northeastern were a public institution, the policy would be constitutionally suspect and illegal, absent the most unusual circumstances. Additionally, the policy sometimes substitutes Northeastern campuses for university property without explicitly assuring us that it is inapplicable on public sidewalks. The policy leaves reasonable faculty members uncertain about whether they may face arrest by an NUPD officer for attending a university-related demonstration on Forsyth Street that the Provost has not sanctioned.

Professor Klare said the policy strikes at the heart of academic freedom and might breach faculty contracts of employment. Requiring faculty to receive the Provost’s permission within his standardless discretion to engage in peaceful advocacy on campus is a deeply offensive threat to academic freedom and freedom of expression.

Professor Kevoe-Feldman thanked Professor Klare for his comments and everyone else for sharing their thoughts. She indicated that SAC had invited Professor Manjapra and other group members to meet with SAC to discuss the group’s goals, so that SAC could determine how to support these initiatives, but Professor Manjapra and others declined to meet with SAC.

Professor Kevoe-Feldman indicated that this topic needs further discussion and suggested continued dialogue with SAC and the Senate. She said that SAC could certainly arrange for discussion with more time. She also suggested involving the OGC.

III. PRESENTATION: KHUSHAL SAFI

**ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT GLOBAL SAFETY
(The presentation has been posted to the Faculty Senate website.)**

GLOBAL SAFETY PREDEPARTURE ORIENTATION

Vice President Safi gave a quick overview of the policies related to travel and some of the ways his group supports faculty and staff who are traveling.

He recommended anyone needing to get in touch with his unit to reach out to mytravelplans@northeastern.edu.

The website is: globalsafety.northeastern.edu.

The 24/7 International Assistance Hotline is: 1-857-214-5332.

Vice President Safi strongly recommended that anyone traveling enter the Hotline number into their phone. This number will connect faculty and staff to their benefits hotline. The hotline can connect faculty and staff with medical assistance or safety assistance while traveling abroad on university business.

He said they also work with the Global Operations Center, the GSOC which is now a 24-7 security center monitoring any kind of threats or risks to the university, especially those related to travelers all over the world.

When traveling with/for the university, travelers are required to register their travel. Faculty can register their travel plans on the Employee hub: enter "My Travel Plans."

Bookings scheduled via Concur agents or the Travel Collaborative are automatically put into the travel registry. If you are a faculty or staff member traveling for the university, you need to fill out the acknowledgement of risk from on our global safety website.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

Professor Viola asked if a faculty member is attending a conference or giving a talk, should they register?

Vice President Safi said that university travel means academic business or co-curricular travel that is part of a university program or project authorized by at the request of funded, coordinated or administered by Northeastern University.

University travel does not include an individual's commute from his or her residence to their primary work site. He said he would recommend registering your travel if you are giving a talk and representing Northeastern.

Professor Viola added he didn't think many faculty actually registered.

Vice President Safi said he thinks it is important that faculty who are traveling are aware of the policies and benefits, and it is in the best interests of the faculty to register. Even if faculty are only planning an overnight stay, they should register.

Professor West pushed back on the idea that nobody ever registers. He has tried to follow the rules. He likes that purchases through Concur get automatically registered. That saves a lot. The easier the process is the more faculty will use it.

Professor Kevoe-Feldman thanked Vice President Safi for his presentation, then acknowledged Professor Louise Walker.

Professor Walker asked if we could discuss academic freedom again at another meeting.

- Professor Kevoe-Feldman said that SAC had asked to meet with the academic freedom group to talk about what SAC could do. She agreed 10 minutes was not a lot of time, but that was the time that was requested. She suggested that after the senate voted on the curriculum programs on the agenda that needed to get to the Board of Trustees, there may be more time to continue the academic freedom discussion.

IV. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. ACADEMIC PROPOSAL: UNIVERSITY GRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE PROGRAM IN THE OFFICE OF THE PROVOST (PROFESSOR JACQUES ALEXIS)

Professor Alexis read following:

BE IT RESOLVED That the University establish the [Master of Professional Studies in Applied AI, MPS](#) in the Office of the Provost as approved by the University Graduate Curriculum Committee 2 October, 2024 (16-0-0).

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

Associate Dean Chris Bolick said this program and one other program were being housed in the Provost's Office for fall 2025 since CPS is undergoing a semester conversion project. CPS is converting from quarters to semesters over the next 20 months and once they convert to semesters in the fall of 2026 both of these programs will come back into the College for management.

The vote on the resolution PASSED: 39-0-0.

B. ACADEMIC PROPOSAL: UNIVERSITY GRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE PROGRAM IN THE OFFICE OF THE PROVOST (PROFESSOR JACQUES ALEXIS)

Professor Alexis read following:

BE IT RESOLVED That the University establish the [Master of Professional Studies in Applied AI--Connect, MPS](#) in the Office of the Provost as approved by the University Graduate Curriculum Committee 2 October, 2024 (15-0-0).

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Professor Strange asked what the difference was between this proposal and the last one?

Associate Dean Bolick said the Connect version provides students without prior experience in engineering, computer science or statistics an opportunity to take 3 introductory courses prior to going into the regular NPS and applied AI program.

- Professor Mellette asked Assoc. Dean Bolick to say something about the programs coming back to CPS. Will they require further Senate action?

Associate Dean Bolick said that housing these programs in the Provost's Office allows us to operate at the university level on a semester calendar, as opposed to starting the programs in a quarter calendar, so it would not require any additional voting or regulatory approvals. It would just be a systems and operational migration back to the college once we transfer over semesters in fall 2026.

- Professor West said there is an MA in Khoury College in AI, and probably other schools trying to incorporate AI at the graduate level in the University. He asked Associate Dean Bolick to discuss how these programs mesh, and how CPS coordinated with other colleges.

Associate Dean Bolick said that CPS worked with both The Provost's Office and the Innovation Planning and Development Team for the past 1 and 1/2 years to look at the broader Northeastern University AI strategy. This is one component of that broader portfolio.

Several months ago, the university launched the AI in Applications Graduate Certificate as an introductory level AI product offering. The CPS and MPS and applied AI degree is positioned to be in the middle.

The AI applications certificate is introductory, bringing a broader audience into the portfolio mix. Our applied AI is seeking to attract professional learners and to provide mid-level career opportunities. However, Khoury's MS in Artificial Intelligence is definitely the most technical and most research-focused of the AI product offerings to date.

That is an overview of the broader AI portfolio strategy that we're looking to offer within the university.

The vote on the resolution PASSED: 37-0-0.

C. ACADEMIC PROPOSAL: UNIVERSITY GRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE PROGRAM IN THE OFFICE OF THE PROVOST (PROFESSOR JACQUES ALEXIS)

Professor Alexis read following:

BE IT RESOLVED That the University establish the [Doctor of Professional Studies \(DPS\)](#) in the Office of the Provost as approved by the University Graduate Curriculum Committee 2 October, 2024 (13-0-0).

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

Professor Lahr asked: What was the intention/desired outcome for the DPS curriculum?

Associate Dean Bolick said one of the goals is to increase the professional doctorate offerings at Northeastern with this new degree type. Currently, CPS has an EDD and a DLP, there are four clinical doctorates at BCHS, and the SOL has a JD program.

The intent of this degree is to provide an opportunity to fill a unique niche in the market of defining innovative educational standards for professional based learners. Outcomes include preparing students for meaningful research and professional careers, and advancement of their professional disciplines and academic pursuits there. It is structured to provide a wide range of learners in the practitioner community, including working professionals from the public and private sectors.

Professor West observed that this program is done remotely, online, and can all be completed in two years. He suggested that it doesn't feel like a tremendous amount of work. He asked if the program is comparable to other DPS programs?

Associate Dean Bolick said their typical curriculum tract covers 3 years. Students can accelerate and complete a two-year model. The programs are offered online. This program follows the structure CPS has for the EDD and the Doctorate of Law and Policy. The program is research based. There is an extensive thesis course tract that involves 4 different sessions to work through the research process, in addition to the core content and the elective courses, focusing on data-driven decision making, writing law and policy, and other advanced quantitative and qualitative methods.

Professor Ivanova asked: When these proposals are being put together, what is the mechanism for seeing what other doctoral programs exist within the university, and how they compete, compare, or collaborate with one another?

Associate Dean Bolick said the purpose of this degree is to provide a common core and then a variety of concentrations. The current proposal is written focusing on two concentrations, one in Project Management and one in Organizational Leadership Studies. In partnership with the D'Amore-McKim School of Business, they are looking to develop the Organizational Leadership Studies concentration together for that shared university approach. If there is interest across the university from other colleges regarding future concentrations, CPS can partner with those other colleges as well to put forward new concentrations to support this broader DPS degree program.

Dean Sceppa, BCHS, indicated that they have collaborated closely with CPS about this program

because they have Doctorates in Pharmacy and Nursing Practice. She appreciated that new concentrations would be discussed with the colleges.

The vote on the resolution PASSED: 32-3-2.

D. ACADEMIC PROPOSAL: UNIVERSITY GRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE PROGRAM IN THE COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING (PROFESSOR MATTHEW ECKELMAN).

Professor Eckelman read the following:

BE IT RESOLVED That the University establish the [Master of Science in Sustainability Engineering Leadership, MS](#) as approved by the University Graduate Curriculum Committee 2 October, 2024 (13-0-0).

Professor Eckelman said that this is a degree program that was developed with University College Dublin, so this is meant to be a double degree program where Masters' students spend their first year here at Northeastern and then go to University College Dublin for their second year.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

There were no additional questions.

The vote on the resolution PASSED: 35-0-1.

Professor Kevoe-Feldman noted there were 3 minutes left in the Faculty Senate meeting. She acknowledged Professor Lahr.

Professor Lahr said to the faculty who came to talk with us about academic freedom: It would be helpful if we could understand what they are looking for from the Senate and from SAC. She said that SAC members are concerned about these issues also. She said she was not sure that the senate could actually implement change. She asked for some clarity on the steps that the group is looking for that would help us to help them: we are not trying to be adversaries; we are not trying to get in the way; we are not trying to put down this conversation. Help us understand what you'd like from us. Professor Lahr called on Professor Manjapra to respond.

Professor Manjapra said they were very appreciative for the time that had been given to them. He said that bathroom locks were given more time than the matter of freedom of expression. He said that if a future meeting could be planned soon so that faculty could have more opportunity to express their views freely, that would be quite useful.

Professor Louise Walker (CSSH Senator, History Department) said she was very worried about the university administration's actions in the spring (calling the police). She is also worried about the future, and about the demonstration policies. She said that the issue of freedom of expression is core to the university's mission and would like the Senate to give it more time.

Professor Kevoe-Feldman said that the meeting was out of time. She shared that the proposed resolution had been given to the Faculty Handbook Committee to review. She said that she will talk to SAC and schedule another meeting.

She concluded by thanking everyone for coming and for a very interesting senate meeting.

Respectfully submitted by,

Professor Denise Spencer

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

DRAFT