



TO: Senate Agenda Committee (SAC)
FROM: Global Education Committee (GEC)
DATE: 03-24-26
SUBJECT: Final report for Faculty Senate

GEC Members: Nicholas Brown; Michelle Carr (SAC Liaison); Vaso Lykourinou; Dean Morier; Deborah Soule (Chair); Nizar Zaarour.

The Global Education Committee (GEC) held 14 meetings during the academic year. The committee carried out the specific charges assigned by SAC. Below is a summary of how each charge was addressed, along with the corresponding recommendations and/or resolutions:

Charge 1: In collaboration with the provost and chancellor's office examine funding options to develop and execute a Northeastern Network resource dashboard, proposed in the 2024-2025 Global Education Committee report, that outlines research and creative activities across colleges, members across NEU's global network can learn about the other colleges, academic programs, research opportunities, etc. Is it feasible? Find and work with a vendor (currently unknown: could be a student group, IT, or external) to develop a tangible website to showcase the websites full potential.

Charge 2: In collaboration with the provost and global network office to develop opportunities to support (funding, etc.) connections between faculty working and teaching across NEU's network campus, as proposed in the 2024-2025 Global Education Committee report. Activities include opportunities for collaborative research and experiential learning, co-teaching opportunities, hiring, faculty development, and university-wide networking.

Current status/rationale: Charge 1 and 2 are closely related.

Northeastern University's multiple campuses do not yet fully address the President's vision of providing enhanced mobility for undergraduates, industry-aligned learning opportunities, and faculty opportunities to globalize teaching and research. Visibility into the unique resources and areas of expertise of individual campuses is fragmented across multiple different university websites.

Discovery of opportunities for faculty collaboration on teaching and research are hampered by lack of cross-campus visibility of expertise and interests. Implementation of collaborative

activities are hindered by variation in faculty policies and leadership funding commitments across colleges and campuses.

Committee Process:

- Review FY24-25 GEC dashboard proposal
- Consideration of perspectives, goals, and interests of different stakeholders to global education outcomes (faculty; students; college leadership; university leadership)
- Exploration of possibilities of a conversational interface (Chatbot) vs a pre-programmed Dashboard to more flexibly meet the needs of different stakeholders with minimal data maintenance demand
- Development of a demo [NU Global Collaboration Chatbot](#) to explore technical and functional feasibility
- Proposal presentation to Executive Vice Provost, Tom Sheahan; positive feedback received
- Proposal presentation to the Board of Trustees, by GEC Liaison Michelle Carr; strong support for the effort received.
- Submission of proposal for Global Network Resource Platform to Executive Vice Provost & Global Leadership (see Appendix 1).

A message of support from Executive Vice Provost, Tom Sheahan:

The Office of the Provost has actively participated in the committee's work on Charge 1 & 2, and continues to support the exploration and development of mechanisms for a Global University System (GUS) resource exchange.

This statement of support is informed directly by ongoing engagement between the Executive Vice Provost (Tom Sheahan) and the Committee, as well as by feedback received from campus deans across GUS. Those conversations have made clear that there is both a genuine need and a meaningful appetite across the network for a centralized, accessible resource through which faculty, staff, and administrators can learn about research and creative activities, academic programs, and institutional strengths across the global network.

We are encouraged by the Committee's initiative in identifying this gap and proposing a concrete mechanism to address it. The vision of a resource dashboard — one that enables members across the GUS to discover faculty interests, research opportunities, and programmatic offerings across the network — is well aligned with Northeastern's broader commitment to leveraging its unique global network as an academic and research asset. Importantly, this charge is not being pursued in isolation. It is being explicitly addressed as part of the Academic Planning Workstream titled "*Global University System: Platform for Learning, Research & Innovation.*"

The goals articulated in Charge 1 & 2 — particularly the creation of a means for faculty and staff to connect across the network around shared scholarly interests, programs, and research — are anticipated to be featured in the implementation of this portion of the academic plan. This alignment between the Committee's work and the institution's broader academic planning efforts positions Charge 1 for meaningful, durable impact. The Office of the Provost looks forward to continuing to support the Committee's work on this charge, including the ongoing assessment of

optimal mechanisms to inform the university community about network-wide activities and resources, and encourage collaboration.

GEC Recommendations:

*Transition the traditional "dashboard" concept into a **Global Collaboration Chatbot**. This initiative fulfills the mandate to map research, programs, and creative activities across the network while directly addressing key concerns identified in stakeholder discussions: faculty workload, data maintenance burden, ease of use, and demonstrable "Return on Global Campus."*

Charge 3: In collaboration with the Handbook Committee and Chancellor's Office, work with the Global Education Office to merge the current Faculty-Led Programs Handbook (FLPH) for Dialogue of Civilizations (DoCs), as a module on the official Northeastern Faculty Handbook on the Provosts website. Make the Faculty Led Programs Handbook accessible to all faculty at all times.

Current Status/Rationale: The Faculty-Led Programs Handbook (FLPH) for Dialogue of Civilizations was not readily accessible for faculty to explore or review prior to committing to offer a Dialogue of Civilizations experience. In addition, because planning for DOCs starts a year in advance, and some parts of the FLPH change annually in response to macro-economic and political situations, multiple versions of the FLPH are typically in use:

- faculty actively running a current global learning experience are bound by the preceding year's version of the FLPH;
- faculty planning a global learning experience need access to the current year's version of the FLPH.

Committee Process:

- Review of Faculty-Led Programs Handbook (FLPH)
- Discussion of FLPH development and maintenance with GEO, Senior Director, Study Abroad, Katherine Macfarlane
- Development of [Faculty Programs Compliance Assistant \(Bot\)](#) for systematic analysis of FLPH content
- Systematic comparison of FLPH content with FH content
- Feedback from Faculty Handbook Committee (FHC)
- Coordination with Debra Franko, Snr Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, and Global Experience Office (GEO) to make the FLPH readily available to faculty on the Provost website and the GEO website.

Collaboration with Faculty Handbook Committee (FHC)

- a) On 11/24/2026, GEC requested review of proposed language on Faculty-Led Programs (FLP) for consideration as elements or a standalone module of the FH.

- b) A FHC member representative attended a GEC meeting on December 12, 2025 for further discussion of the proposal.
- c) FHC advised that the GEC proposal was too granular and more of a policy/procedure issue, noting concern about adding elements to the FH that hadn't explicitly been requested by faculty. The FHC encouraged clarification of:
 - a. Whether faculty-led-programs faculty are adequately represented in the FH, or whether exceptions are needed (to wording in FH)?
 - b. Whether any language in FLP handbook violate the FH in any way (considering that FH is the overarching faculty governing bylaws/policy handbook, from which any policies/procedures affecting/including faculty etc. should flow)?
- d) The GEC systematically explored these questions, concluding the following:
 - a. FLP faculty are not explicitly represented in FH, but this is a policy gap, not a violation.
 - b. The FLPH and FH are consistent regarding faculty status and governance; appointments and eligibility; and compensation. There could be tensions regarding workload & intensity expectations; authority to terminate FLP appointments; and excessive conduct expectations.

GEC Recommendation: The current and active Faculty-Led Programs Handbook(s) is now clearly published on the GEO website. <https://geo.northeastern.edu/leading-global-programs/> The Faculty-Led Programs Handbook should also be made available on the Provost's website. [Link.](#)

Respectfully submitted,
GEC Committee

Appendix 1: Global Network Resource Proposal

Executive Summary: From Dashboard to Dialogue

In response to the 2024-2025 Global Education Committee discussions, we propose transitioning the traditional "dashboard" concept into a **Global Collaboration Chatbot**. This initiative fulfills the mandate to map research, programs, and creative activities across the network while directly addressing key concerns identified in stakeholder discussions: faculty workload, data maintenance burden, ease of use, and demonstrable "Return on Global Campus."

The Vision: A dynamic network where a student in Boston, a researcher in Seattle, and a Dean in London are only one question away from a new collaboration—moving from static lists to living dialogue.

The Proposal: Global Collaboration Chatbot

Rather than building a traditional dashboard requiring manual navigation and data entry, we propose an **AI-powered conversational platform** that intelligently connects faculty, students, research centers, and industry partners across our global network.

What It Does

For Faculty:

- Natural language queries: "Who at our London or Vancouver campus is working on sustainable materials?"
- **Automatic profile generation from existing sources** (grants, publications, websites) - faculty simply review and approve (following the College of Engineering grant summarization model)
- Warm introductions to potential collaborators with scheduling assistance and MOU templates
- AI-generated teaching modules, case studies, and intelligent textbooks aligned to course outcomes
- Proactive notifications of new grants, center calls, and relevant collaborators

For Students:

- Skills-based matching to faculty projects, research centers, and industry opportunities across all campuses
- **Portfolio visibility platform** to raise professional profiles globally
- Location-aware opportunities (co-ops, research, practicums) across the network

- Team formation workflows for experiential projects

For Your College:

- Dean dashboards showing cross-college collaboration patterns, pipeline health, and grant readiness
- Analytics on which programs/centers generate highest impact collaborations
- Visibility into industry partnership opportunities aligned with your strategic priorities
- Cross-college heatmaps and diversity of collaboration metrics

For Industry Partners:

- Structured portal to post project briefs and find faculty-student teams
- Semester-aligned timelines and scoped deliverables
- NDA handling, IP templates, and academic calendar integration

Key Solutions to GEC-Identified Challenges

1. Eliminating Faculty Burdens: The "No-Work Profile"

The GEC correctly identified faculty resistance to "extra work" and "data maintenance" as critical barriers to adoption.

Our Approach: Instead of requiring faculty to manually fill out profiles, the AI **scans existing official content** (university websites, grant documents, public profiles). Following the **College of Engineering model**, the AI generates summaries and **reverts to faculty for approval**, allowing them to correct or refine their record with minimal effort.

Result: Faculty maintain control and accuracy without the burden of data entry or ongoing maintenance.

2. Conversational Discovery vs. Complex Navigation

The GEC discussion emphasized the need for "ease of use" and modern interfaces that faculty would actually adopt.

Our Approach: Rather than a static, complex dashboard requiring training to navigate, the **Chat Interface** allows users to simply ask questions in natural language.

Human-AI Synergy: The AI handles the "ideation and scanning" across vast amounts of university data, while the human user provides the "judgment and perception of excellence" in evaluating matches and opportunities.

3. Addressing Campus Collaboration Visibility

The GEC noted successful initiatives like the Oakland-Silicon Valley partnership that should be visible across the network.

Our Approach: The chatbot identifies active initiatives and makes them discoverable to the entire network, encouraging replication and cross-campus learning. Faculty and administrators can ask: "What experiential learning partnerships are active at our West Coast campuses?" and immediately see models to adapt.

4. Student Portfolio Platform

GEC discussions emphasized that students are "interested in raising profiles" and need similar opportunities to showcase their work.

Our Approach: Students gain a platform to profile their experiential projects, research contributions, and skills, making their work discoverable to faculty and global partners. This raises their professional visibility while creating a talent pool visible to the entire network.

Advantages Over Traditional Dashboard

Traditional Dashboard

Manual data entry and maintenance

Static categories to browse

Reactive (you search for what exists)

10-month development timeline

Training required for navigation

Equal access (first-come basis)

Requires dedicated content team for updates

Global Collaboration Chatbot

Automated scanning of existing sources; faculty review and approve

Intelligent matching based on context and relationships

Proactive (suggests opportunities you didn't know about)

90-day pilot with early wins at Week 6

Natural conversation - minimal training needed

Equity-aware algorithms ensure fair distribution

Automated maintenance from "ground truth" university files

Strategic Alignment: "Return on Global Campus"

This platform directly supports President Aoun's vision while delivering tangible ROI:

- **Enhanced undergraduate mobility:** Students discover global opportunities matched to their skills and interests
- **Industry-aligned learning:** Structured pathways connect academic work to industry projects
- **Faculty globalization:** Frictionless discovery of teaching and research partners worldwide

The ROI Question: By making our distributed assets discoverable and actionable, we transform geographic spread into competitive advantage. Faculty in Boston can leverage expertise in London; students in Oakland can access research centers in Vancouver; industry partners gain access to our full global capabilities. The investment in global campuses becomes visible, measurable, and actionable.

Addressing Practical Concerns: Costs & Governance

Maintenance & Funding

By leveraging existing university data (the "ground truth" markdown files, grant records, course catalogs), the cost of data entry is eliminated. Maintenance becomes an automated process of "scanning and updating" rather than manual entry by faculty or dedicated content teams.

Sensitive Research Protection

The system honors **opt-in governance**. It only processes approved, policy-aligned data, ensuring that sensitive research remains protected and compliant with university standards. Faculty explicitly control what is shared through consent workflows.

Compliance & Security

- **FERPA alignment** for any student-linked data with minimal-necessary access
- **GDPR/UK-GDPR** compliance for London, Toronto, Vancouver campuses
- **IRB triggers** for research recruitment; export controls for sensitive technology
- **Role-based access** (Dean/Chair/Faculty/Student/Partner) with audit logs

The "Mandate" for Critical Mass

To reach the "critical mass" identified by the GEC as necessary for success, we propose a **Dean-led mandate to standardize information sharing**, supported by the powerful incentive of **increased global visibility** for every participating department, center, and faculty member.

Technical Architecture & Capabilities

Core Features

- **Conversational Retrieval:** Natural-language queries with citations back to authoritative sources
- **Knowledge Graph:** Dynamic mapping of people-topics-centers-courses-projects with explainable match reasoning
- **Syllabus Augmentation:** One-click insertion of AI modules, case studies, assessment templates, and ethical use statements
- **Project Kit Builder:** Converts partner briefs into scoped projects with milestones, grading rubrics, IP templates, and semester timelines

- **Opportunity Boards:** Filtered feeds by campus, college, center, modality (remote/on-site), and visa/clearance constraints
- **Warm Intro Workflows:** Calendaring, intro emails, MOU stubs; optional dean/chair approval steps

AI-in-Education Enablement (NEU-Built Tools)

- **Case-Study Generator:** Maps to course outcomes; sources current events with citations; creates discussion questions and grading rubrics
- **Intelligent Textbooks:** Conversational companions that align readings, lab prompts, and formative quizzes to program outcomes; export to LMS

Experiential Learning Matching Logic

Multi-objective scoring considers: skill fit, novelty, equity of access, cross-campus diversity, location preferences, security/IRB constraints, and availability. Suggests optimal teams (student mix), faculty mentors, centers, and partner briefs with clear next steps.

Implementation: 90-Day Pilot

Phase 1 (Weeks 1-2): Stakeholder Design Sessions

- Working sessions with Dean representatives to define success metrics
- Identify 2-3 pilot colleges and one non-Boston campus
- Select one industry vertical for partnership testing
- Establish governance protocols and data sharing agreements

Phase 2 (Weeks 3-6): Core Platform Development

- Build conversational interface and knowledge graph
- Integrate with grants database, course catalogs, faculty profiles
- Develop consent workflows and role-based access controls
- Implement security reviews and compliance measures

Phase 3 (Week 6): Early Faculty Access

- Launch collaboration discovery with faculty champions
- Generate initial AI profiles for review and approval
- Deploy warm intro workflows and collaboration suggestions
- Collect feedback for refinement

Phase 4 (Weeks 7-12): Expanded Pilot

- Add student matching and industry project features

- Deploy dean analytics dashboards
- Measure collaboration matches, grant velocity, co-op placements
- Conduct micro-trainings and build quick-start kits

Critical Questions for Dean Input

1. Strategic Vision and Priorities

Your Global Vision:

- What specific global collaborations would represent success for your college?
- Which of your programs/centers are best positioned for cross-campus partnerships?
- Are there particular geographies or campuses where you see highest potential?
- What would "Return on Global Campus" look like for your college specifically?

Success Metrics:

- How should we weight outcomes? (Grant collaborations vs. teaching innovation vs. student placements vs. industry partnerships)
- What would constitute meaningful ROI for your college's investment in this platform?
- What baseline data should we capture now to measure impact later?

2. Pilot Design

Participation:

- Is your college interested in being a pilot partner? If so, which departments/centers should be included?
- Can you identify 3-5 faculty champions who would be early adopters and provide feedback?
- Which industry vertical aligns best with your strategic priorities for the pilot?

Data Domains:

- Which data sources should be included in the pilot? (Grants, publications, course syllabi, faculty profiles, student portfolios, evaluation data where permitted)
- Are there any data domains that should be explicitly excluded or require special handling?
- What approval process is needed for AI-generated faculty profiles before they go live?

3. Faculty Engagement and Incentives

Adoption Strategy:

- Will you support a "mandate" for standardized information sharing as discussed by the GEC, or do you prefer a purely opt-in approach with incentives?
- What incentives would motivate your faculty to engage? (AI teaching tools? Research visibility? Reduced administrative burden? Recognition in promotion/tenure?)
- How can we address concerns about exposing sensitive research or competitive positioning?
- What communication strategy works best for your faculty culture?

4. Governance and Oversight**Decision Authority:**

- Should there be a Dean-level oversight committee to review platform performance and policy?
- How should conflicts be resolved (e.g., multiple colleges wanting exclusive access to a particular industry partner)?
- What approval processes are needed for industry partnerships or cross-campus student placements?
- Who should control sensitive decisions about data sharing and faculty profile visibility?

5. Resource Commitment**Funding:**

- Are you willing to contribute to development costs? (Estimated pilot: 3.5 FTE + infrastructure + security reviews)
- What budget model makes sense? (Central funding? Cost-sharing by participating colleges? Fee-for-service for industry partners?)
- Should we pursue external grants focused on educational technology and global collaboration?

Ongoing Support:

- Who from your college can serve as liaison for data integration and content quality oversight?
- Can you dedicate staff time for training sessions and faculty onboarding?
- How should long-term maintenance costs be allocated across colleges?

6. Student and Campus Perspectives

Student Engagement:

- Should students be included in the pilot? If so, how do we ensure equitable access across majors and experience levels?
- What safeguards are needed for student data privacy and portfolio ownership?
- How do we balance student profile visibility (for opportunities) with privacy concerns?

Campus Differentiation:

- How do we respect each campus's unique identity and priorities while promoting collaboration?
- Are there campus-specific initiatives (like Oakland-Silicon Valley partnership) that should be highlighted as models for others to replicate?
- Which non-Boston campus would be best suited for the pilot?

7. Risk Management**Concerns and Mitigations:**

- What concerns do you have about this approach? (Data security? Faculty resistance? Competitive dynamics? Cost overruns? Over-reliance on AI?)
- What would constitute failure, and how do we prevent it?
- What off-ramps should exist if the pilot doesn't demonstrate value?
- How do we ensure equity of access and avoid algorithmic bias in opportunity matching?

Resourcing (Pilot Phase)

- Product lead (0.5 FTE)
- Data engineer (1 FTE)
- ML engineer (1 FTE)
- Integrations engineer (0.5 FTE)
- UX/content designer (0.5 FTE)
- Governance/IRB advisor (as-needed)

Budget bands: Connectors, hosting, LLM/RAG infrastructure, security reviews, accessibility testing, training materials, faculty champion stipends.

Next Steps

We request your feedback on the questions above. We will then schedule individual working sessions with participating Deans to:

1. Define college-specific success criteria and global vision articulation
2. Identify faculty champions and initial data sources for pilot
3. Establish governance protocols and oversight committee
4. Finalize pilot scope, timeline, and funding model
5. Address concerns about faculty resistance and change management

Following these sessions, we will present a refined proposal to the Provost and Chancellor's office for final approval and funding allocation.

Why This Matters

Northeastern has invested significantly in building a global network. This platform ensures that investment translates into tangible collaboration, innovation, and competitive advantage. It makes our distributed expertise discoverable, our research more fundable, our teaching more innovative, and our students more globally competitive.

Most importantly: This approach respects faculty time while amplifying faculty impact. It eliminates the "extra work" barrier while providing immediate value through AI-powered teaching tools. It's exactly the balance needed for sustainable adoption and meaningful Return on Global Campus.
