Northeastern University
Faculty Senate

TO: Faculty Senate.
SUBJECT: 10_7_2026 Senate Minutes.

Present: Professors Alexis, Auguste, Bhutta, Boehm, Bormann, Cesario, Chiou, Desnoyers, DiBattista, Dummit, Eckelman, Farkas, Gatterbauer, Hand, Hill, Hinerman, Hodeghatta, Homan, Jackson, Kahn, Kelley, Lamin, Lessard, Lorette, Magowan, Maheswaran, McCoy Dunkley, McGivney, Musselman, Muzny, Passas, Rejtar, Ruberti, Shrivastava, Sivak, Sobral-Campos, Spencer, Walker J., Walker L., Young-Hong, Zheng.

Administrators: Sheahan, Alshawabkeh, Amidon, Jackson, Knapp, Sceppa, Thurman.

Absent: (Professors): Ingemi, Orr-Skirvin, Zellner.

Absent: (Administrators):

Call To Order: 11:45 a.m.

I. The minutes for the September 23, 2026 Senate meeting were approved.

II. **SAC REPORT** (The SAC report has been posted to the Senate website.)

Senate Chair Dee Spencer, DMSB, introduced the student representative to the Senate, Gabriella Muehle, a junior majoring in finance and marketing,

- SAC has met once as a committee since the last Senate meeting; SAC will meet with the Provost tomorrow, Thurs., Oct. 8th.
- After reviewing the results of the survey to elected senators on how Senate meetings should be conducted., SAC determined there should be one in-person meeting per semester. SAC will look at scheduling a spring in-person meeting.
- The Administrator Evaluation Oversight Com.'s (AEOC) evaluations of 4 deans and 13 administrators are underway. (The list of the administrators can be found in the SAC Report.). Prof. Spencer encouraged the senators please reach out to their fellow colleagues and encourage them to participate.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION.
There were no questions.

III. **PROVOST REPORT**.
Interim Provost Tom Sheahan gave the following updates:

- The search committees for the Dean of the College of Engineering (chaired by Dean Beth Mynatt, Khoury) and the Dean of D'Amore-McKim School of Business (chaired by Dean James Hackney, SOL) have completed initial screening and submitted recommendations for on-campus interviews. Campus visits are expected to begin in late October or early November. Candidate names will be released shortly before each visit, consistent with past practice.
- Beginning this month, principal investigators with pending research-related agreements in the E-CLAWS system will receive a personalized email summarizing the status and ownership of each contract. This is part of a joint effort with the General Counsel and the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance to improve research support.
- A meeting on October 5 at the Burlington campus on collaboration and capacity in space research drew more than 70 faculty. Joseph Journette (Electrical and Computer Engineering) leads the effort and is available to interested faculty.
- Faculty must complete RESPECT EDU (Title IX and Clery Act) training by November 2.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Prof. DiBattista (COS), Pof. McGivney (CAMD), Prof. Musselman (CSSH), Prof. Kelley, and Prof. Hinerman, (BCHS) raised concerns that IT has removed computers from classrooms and installed wireless display equipment without notice, affecting courses that depend on classroom computers or real-time display of video games and 3D models. Faculty asked for clearer advance communication about each room's equipment, for faculty consultation on classroom technology and renovations, and for departmental resources where classroom computers are no longer provided.

  Provost Sheahan said he would raise these matters with ITS. He said he was aware at some point, just peripherally, that there would not be as much support with computers in the in the classrooms themselves and that it was meant to be sort of a plug and play arrangement going forward. He said he didn't have enough information to speak knowledgeably on where that stands. He added that a better job has to be done about communicating to faculty. He noted that Carolyn Bargoot will be involved in classroom redesign going forward.

- Prof. Louise Walker (CSSH) wanted to follow up on the issue of budget cuts in the neighborhood of 70% in her department last year that have led to low morale. And Prof. Louise Walker and Prof. Shrivastava (SAC/COE) also stated that their research and overhead return accounts were reduced by roughly 75–85% in effect and that restrictions remain in place this year. Prof. Walker (CSSH) asked if in the near future, for clarity, could they have an explanation about what happened to lead to such drastic cuts and why and how we can move forward.

  The Provost stated that no college's budget was cut by 75% last year. He said he heard that in the Senate last year and it simply wasn't true. There were constraints put on expenditures from overhead return accounts but the funds were not removed. He said certainly exercised a lot of budget discipline last year to try to make sure that it could continue to make investments in other areas. The Provost also confirmed a 2% merit raise and the planned hiring of 20 to 25 tenure-track lines.

  The Provost said he wanted to distinguish the constraints around what could be spent out of research funds with what would be determined a budget cut.

The Provost added he is working with the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance, Brett Sweet to provide relief. The Senior Vice President is expected to address the Senate on university finances on December 9th.

- Prof. Boehm (CAMD) reported that students were charged lab or studio fees without notification; Prof. Bhutta (SAC/Khoury) added that fees now appear as a single combined amount on the tuition bill.

Provost Sheahan stated that he understood the fees were to be re-examined over the summer and said he would look into this to determine the status. He added it was important for students and families to know when these extra charges appear on bills.

IV. **CURRICULUM ITEMS**:

Prof. Spencer acknowledged Prof. Cherese Childers-Mckee (CPS) who noted that CPS proposes the establishment of a Master of Education and Applied Education Research, a 33 semester-hour exit only degree for students enrolled in the Doctor of Education program to be available beginning in spring 2027.

The degree is designed for EdD students who, for extenuating reasons, are unable to complete all doctoral requirements. The MED would replace the current Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies, or CAGS. While the CAGS is academically rigorous, it can be perceived as a lesser credential in some professional contexts. A master's degree is more widely recognized by employers and more accurately reflects the depth of research training and specialized expertise.. Because this is an exit-only degree with no direct admission, it draws entirely on the existing EdD curriculum and requires no new courses, faculty, or administrative resources.

Prof. Spencer moved the resolution and read the following.

1. **ACADEMIC PROPOSAL: UNIVERSITY GRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE PROGRAM IN THE COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES.**

BE IT RESOLVED That the University establish the Master of Education in Applied Education Research, MEd (Online) in the College of Professional Studies as approved by the University Graduate Curriculum Committee 27 May, 2026 (15-0-0).

Prof. Alexis (CPS) seconded the resolution.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:

- Prof. DiBattista (COS) noted they do something similar in Psychology. Prof. Louise Walker (CSSH) asked how many times a year the degree might be awarded.

Prof. Cherese Childers-Mckee (CPS) said it would be two or three times a year.

The vote PASSED: 43 -1 -2.

Prof. Spencer acknowledged Assist. Dean Of Doctoral Programs Shannon Alpert. Assist. Dean Alpert said the College of Professional Studies proposes the establishment of the Master of Professional Studies and Applied Professional Studies, a 33 semester hour exit only degree for students enrolled in the Doctor of Professional Studies program to be available in spring of 2027.

The degree is designed for Doctor of Professional Studies students who, for extenuating circumstances, are unable to complete all program requirements.

Because this is an accidental degree with no direct admission, it draws entirely on the existing Doctor of Professional Studies curriculum and requires no new courses,
faculty, or administrative resources. This approach is consistent with other doctoral programs at Northeastern, including, the Ms. in Applied Nursing Research.

Prof. Spencer moved the resolution and read the following.

2. **ACADEMIC PROPOSAL: UNIVERSITY GRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE PROGRAM IN THE COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES.**

BE IT RESOLVED That the University establish the Master of Professional Studies in Applied Professional Studies, MPS, (Primarily Online) in the College of Professional Studies as approved by the University Graduate Curriculum Committee 27 May, 2026 (14-0-0).

Prof. Alexis (CPS) seconded the resolution.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION:
In response to questions, Waleed Meleis stated that exit-only programs are listed in the catalog with a notation that they are closed to direct admission. Assist. Dean Alpert confirmed that the program does not add new online courses or change the university's online footprint.

The vote PASSED: 42-0-2.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

The Chair asked whether there was any new business. The following matters were raised; no motions were made.

- Prof. Ruberti (COE) asked how the Senate would consider the shorter-duration PhD concept discussed at the previous meeting.

Provost Sheahan reported that he has formed a committee and is working with the Chancellor's Office, to develop options for shorter and more experiential PhD programs. Any proposals would be vetted with deans and associate deans for graduate education, and the Senate would weigh in on any proposal.

- Prof. McGivney (CAMD) citing faculty concerns prompted by recent reports about what happened at Cornell University asked that the Title IX office present to the Senate on its procedures and protections for survivors.

  Senate Chair Dee Spencer agreed to invite the office.

- Prof. Boehm (CAMD) asked that annual training address safety on an urban, open campus, including unwanted persons in classrooms and faculty being followed.

  The Provost and Margarita DiVall noted that NUPD offers trainings, including virtual sessions, available through the website. The Senate Chair agreed to invite NUPD to present and to communicate available trainings to all faculty.

- Prof. Jacques Alexis (CPS) inquired about our implementation of the One Faculty Model, specifically, whether we would integrate our Canadian faculty. Further, what is in Canadian law that prevents them from being coverd by our Faculty Handbook.

  Provost Sheahan answered that he would look into it.

- Prof. Jake Walker (COE) asked that the university reconsider its practice of canceling classes without virtual sessions or advising on snow days, given hardship for faculty with dependents.

  The Senate Chair and the Provost noted that the issue is on the agenda for the October 8 meeting between SAC and the Provost.

- Prof. Musselman (CSSH) reported that, because most colleges no longer balance elections by faculty type, non-tenure-track faculty are increasingly represented among senators and committee members while tenure-track faculty report feeling less represented. She asked senators to discuss with their colleges how to encourage balanced participation.

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Professor Cecelia Musselman, CSSH
Senate Secretary