

Northwestern University
Minutes of the Faculty Senate Meeting
Pancoe Auditorium - Evanston, Wieboldt 421 - Chicago
March 6, 2013

Babette Sanders, Chair of the Faculty Senate, called the meeting to order at 5:10pm. There were 49 of 80 members in attendance, with 35 attendees in Evanston, 7 in Chicago, and 7 via streaming. The quorum of fifty-one percent was met initially, but nearing the conclusion of the meeting the number of Senators in attendance fell below the fifty-one percent mark. Also in attendance were the Faculty Senate past Chair and the Northwestern Emeriti Organization representative, both serving as honorary members of the Faculty Senate.

1. Welcome by Babette Sanders, chair

Babette Sanders welcomed everyone and introduced guest speaker William Osborn, Chairman of the Northwestern University Board of Trustees.

2. Discussion with William Osborn

Board of Trustees Chairman William Osborn openly discussed various topics with the Faculty Senate, such as the university Strategic Plan and connecting NU and the community. He addressed questions and concerns about key university initiatives including Athletics, On Line Learning, NU's investment philosophy, short term and longer term goals and challenges for the trustees, and university priorities. Senators were given an opportunity to ask additional questions.

3. Chair's Report

Babette Sanders reported that since sending out the Chair's report electronically, there were no new items to report.

4. Qatari Arrest: Motion and Senate Response

Helen Thompson, the originator of the Qatar arrest motion, reported that the life sentence for the Qatari poet has been reduced [to fifteen years], pending government appeal. The language of the current motion will be amended to reflect this recent development. To recap, at the February 6, 2013 Faculty Senate meeting Helen Thompson introduced the following motion:

Whereas the poet and University of Cairo student Mohammed ibn al-Dheeb al-Ajani was sentenced to life in prison (as reported by the BBC and The Guardian, Nov. 29, 2012) for a videotaped reading of a poem allegedly insulting the emir of Qatar Sheik Hamid bin Khalifa Al Thani;

Whereas Northwestern University supports the universal human right of persons to freedom of intellectual, political, and artistic expression;

Whereas Northwestern University and the United States of America support UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 10 (“Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him”) and Article 19 (“Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”);

Whereas Northwestern University maintains an intellectual and institutional presence in Qatar through Northwestern University in Qatar or NU-Q;

It is resolved that the Faculty Senate condemns the life imprisonment of Mohammed ibn al-Dheeb al-Ajani and supports freedom of intellectual and artistic expression for the people of Qatar.

Medill Representative Jonathan Marshall presented feedback he received from several faculty members in Qatar regarding the Qatari Arrest Motion and Senate response. He reported that they had many concerns about the resolution, including issues with the language being overbearing, and fear that passing it would be counterproductive. Faculty didn't think that passing the resolution would improve the situation and suggested that, if the Senate will start to pass resolutions on human rights, there are other countries that should also be considered.

The floor was open for discussion and Senators addressed the motion, the ramification of the motion, and comments made by the Qatar faculty. In the absence of a quorum, Senators could not vote on the motion or take further action on the matter, so the motion will be on the April Senate meeting agenda.

5. Divestment Resolution

Christiane Rey, Distinguished Senior Lecturer in French and Italian and Chair of the Faculty Senate Non-tenure committee, reported that she met with William McLean, Vice President and Chief Investment Officer, and a group of students who are responsible for drafting the Divestment Resolution. The purpose of the meeting was to solicit information about the investment process and, more specifically, to find out who the decision makers are. The investment committee, made up of twenty trustees, is the body that makes the final decision. This committee will meet in a few days to look at the ASG resolution, as well as the petition which was signed by over 1400 people including undergraduate and graduate students and faculty.

In the absence of a quorum, Senators could not vote on the motion or take further action on the matter so the motion will be on the April Senate meeting agenda. Senators who strongly support the Divestment Resolution were encouraged to sign the petition as individuals.

6. Social Inequalities and Diversities Requirement Presentation and Proposal

In preparation for a robust discussion at the April Senate meeting, Susan Lee, Chair of the Educational Affairs Committee, asked Senators to read the Social Inequalities and Diversities Requirement Proposal and to forward the document to their respective department for input. Senators were instructed to email the Academic Working Group of the Diversity Council or any of the Educational Affairs committee members with questions.

7. New Business

- In order to address the issue of the kinds of matters that the Senate will consider, Chair Babette Sanders brought forth a proposal to establish a small subgroup that will bring recommendations forward for next month's Faculty Senate meeting, as well as future meetings for this academic year. Senators discussed the proposal, expressing differing views on the matter.
- Two issues concerning the Medical School were presented for Faculty Senate consideration:
 - Clinical integration at the Medical School, where NMH is merging with MFF.
 - Elimination of Contributed Services (CS) Faculty appointments without input from the faculty. There are now approximately 1000 faculty members with CS appointments, who will lose their positions. Non-academic Health Systems Clinicians will replace CS Faculty.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.