

Northwestern University  
Minutes of the Faculty Senate  
James L. Allen Center - Evanston, Wieboldt Hall 421 - Chicago  
March 1, 2017

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The regular monthly meeting of the Northwestern University Faculty Senate was held on March 1, 2017, at the James L. Allen Center Atrium in Evanston with videoconferencing to the Chicago campus in Wieboldt Hall 421. A number of Senators participated remotely. President Laurie Zoloth called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. A quorum was present. The February 2017 regular meeting minutes were approved.

The President gave a report and informed the Senate that the guest speaker for the meeting, Johns Hopkins University Professor Benjamin Ginsberg, had been unable to travel to Evanston.

The Senate then heard reports from the chairs of standing committees. The Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee reported a resolution recommending the establishment of a University Ombuds Office, which after debate was adopted as given in *Appendix A*.

After this, the Governance Committee reported the following two resolutions to amend the bylaws of the Faculty Senate for first reading:

**Resolution #1: Housekeeping Amendments**

*Resolved*, That the Bylaws of the Faculty Senate be amended as follows:

*Article I: Functions:*

Section 7: Strike out the existing Section 7 and insert “The Faculty Committee on Cause provides an initial evaluation of appeals by faculty members in cases where the administration has imposed a minor sanction or is pursuing suspension or termination for Cause. Each fall, the Faculty Senate’s Executive Committee will nominate seven Faculty Senate members to serve on the Committee on Cause. Two of the nominees must be non-tenure eligible faculty members. The President of the Faculty Senate will send the names of the seven nominees to the Faculty Senate’s membership. The Faculty Senate will then consider those names and, by majority vote, approve the seven members of the Committee on Cause or propose other candidates to serve on the Committee on Cause.”

*Article II:*

Section 3: Strike out “supervised by the Faculty Senate in conjunction with” and insert “by”. After “the appropriate academic departments,” insert “and schools”.

*Article IV:*

Section 5: Insert at the end, “To expedite the posting of minutes on the Faculty Senate website, the minutes of any meeting of the Faculty Senate can be approved through an online vote with at least one-third of all Senators voting ‘yes’ and with no dissenting votes.”

## **Resolution #2: Substantive Amendments**

*Resolved,* That the Bylaws of the Faculty Senate be amended as follows:

*Article IV:*

Section 2: Insert at the end, “The agenda (order of business) will include names of non-Senators who are permitted to address the Senate. Other non-Senators wishing to address the Senate must receive the approval of a majority of Senators present in order to do so.”

Section 3: Strike out “order of business” and insert “agenda (order of business)”. After “in consultation with the Executive Committee,” insert “The Faculty Senate, by a majority vote of members present, may amend the agenda (order of business).”

The resolutions reported by the Governance Committee will be placed on the agenda of the regular April Faculty Senate meeting for second reading and a vote.

The Senate then received the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Freedom.

The meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

Joshua L. Mayer  
Administrative Coordinator

**Resolution to Recommend the Establishment of a University Ombuds Office at Northwestern University**

WHEREAS, Ombuds programs provide neutral, independent, informal and confidential assistance in conflict resolution, problem-solving, upward feedback, and confidential trend-tracking to universities, private industry, and government, and Ombuds programs act as an informal and independent mechanism to facilitate confidential inquiry and provide additional expert advice on working to achieve fair solutions to a wide range of issues of concerns, and

WHEREAS, Ombuds programs have operated at US institutions of higher learning since the 1960s and, recognizing the benefits to their University communities, over 300 universities across the country have established Ombuds programs,

WHEREAS an Ombuds carries out its duties independently of the various university bodies and acts autonomously and objectively,

WHEREAS, an Ombuds program gathers data on trends to help identify possible systemic issues requiring attention for university leaders,

BE IT RESOLVED, that Northwestern University Faculty Senate recommends to the President of Northwestern University that the Northwestern University Ombuds Office for students, staff, faculty and administrators be established.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Northwestern University Ombuds Office will be led a full-time Ombuds supported by an administrative staff, and will report directly to the President and will provide an annual, public report to the President and the Faculty Senate.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Northwestern University Ombuds will be a full-time professions Ombuds who will perform the functions and duties listed below:

**Northwestern University Ombuds Position Description**

The Office of the Northwestern University Ombuds is dedicated to improving the quality of university services delivered to students, faculty and staff by providing individual case assistance, as well as making recommendations to improve the administration of Northwestern University. The Northwestern University Ombuds is a designated impartial, neutral, and confidential third party independent of Northwestern University who assists students, faculty, staff and administrators. The Ombuds directs all aspects and functions of the University Ombuds Office: formulating, managing, and monitoring the overall goals, programs, budget, and direction of the Ombuds Office; developing and maintaining confidential notes and statistical data for purposes of identifying trends in complaints and concerns; identifying problem areas in university policies and practices; recommending revision and development of policies; and providing an annual report to the President and the Faculty Senate.

## **Description of Duties:**

Responds to the issues, concerns, or problems of others and can also proceed on his/her own initiative to investigate issues, concerns or problems.

Recommends ways to fix systemic problems that students, staff and faculty face when they interact with Northwestern University.

Advises senior administrators and departments responsible for policies and procedures that affect the welfare of the campus community. Makes appropriate recommendations to modify practices in order to reduce or eliminate recurring problems. Works collaboratively with other offices and personnel.

Consults with campus departments and academic units to understand and resolve complex problems through informal discussion; develops cooperative strategies to prevent future problems.

As appropriate, acts as liaison between individuals or groups both within the campus administration and between individuals or groups by serving as a consultant, facilitator, and informal mediator.

Stays informed about best practices for professional Ombuds offices, through engagement with professional Ombuds organizations or peers in private universities.

Develops and maintains an appropriate professional leadership role, consistent with Northwestern University's position in higher education and academe.

Not later than June 30 of each calendar year, the Ombuds shall report to the President of Northwestern University and the Faculty Senate on the objectives of the Office of the Ombuds for the fiscal year beginning in such calendar year. Any such report shall contain full and substantive analysis, in addition to statistical information, and -

(A) Shall identify the recommendation the Office of the Ombuds has made on improving services and responsiveness of Northwestern University

(B) Shall contain a summary of the most pervasive and serious problems encountered by students, staff and faculty, including a description of the nature of such problems;

(C) Shall contain an inventory of the items described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) for which action has been taken and the result of such action;

(D) Shall contain an inventory of the items described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) for which action remains to be completed and the period during which each item has remained on such inventory;

(E) Shall contain recommendations for such administrative action as may be appropriate to resolve problems encountered by students, staff and faculty

(F) Shall include such other information as the Ombuds may deem advisable.

### Draft budget for NU Ombuds Office

Director	\$ 57,000.00
Program Assistant (level 2)	\$ 38,000.00
Office computers, printer & supplies	\$ 9,000.00
**Total annual estimated direct expense	\$ 104,000.00

\*\*Not included in the estimate are benefits and employer overhead expenses for the salaried positions.

Ombuds Director salary estimate from

<http://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Ombudsman/Salary>

Program Assistant salary estimates from Weinberg College:

PA1: \$30,800 - \$39,000: Provides standard & routine clerical & administrative support which may include word processing, data entry, ordering supplies, opening & sorting mail, copying, filing, faxing, answering phones, greeting visitors, providing information, &/or scheduling meetings.

PA2: \$33,200 - \$42,000: Provides a variety of clerical & administrative support which may include drafting & typing letters, reports, charts, graphs, etc. using word processing, spreadsheet, database, &/or presentation software; basic bookkeeping; screening calls & visitors; preparing agendas & making arrangements including travel, etc. for meetings & special events; &/or managing supervisor's &/or dept calendar.

Office computers, printer & supplies estimated from a small Weinberg College department with an office staff of 3 people. Costs include copier lease (\$4K/year), office supplies, printer & computer accessories, and purchase of 3 computers, each on a 4-year cycle.