

December 3, 2012 Assembly Meeting Highlights

Update to the Board: In an effort to continue promoting shared governance at NU, President Morton Schapiro has offered to release a recent report, which was prepared for the Board of Trustees for their November 9, 2012 meeting with the Senate, to the entire faculty body via the Senate representative of each department. This report is prepared for each meeting of the full board, which occur four times annually, to provide the Trustees with a high level update on NU's progress as an institution in key areas such as admissions, research activity, and University financials, and also to share major, exciting new initiatives and accomplishments such as new academic initiatives and faculty, student, and alumni awards. Faculty members who are interested in accessing the document should contact their Faculty Senate representative directly. The Senate membership list and contact information can be found at <http://www.northwestern.edu/faculty-senate/about/membership.html>.

Are we one university or many colleges?: Each school has a certain level of independence that will remain, but NU is moving towards centralization of the Northwestern University brand. The Strategic Plan plays an important role in the unification process by identifying the themes that cut across all the schools instead of identifying school by school what the individual strengths are. It looks at what it means to be Northwestern University and what are things that bring everyone together as an institution. The administration is offering incentives to schools that opt in to the plan.

Diversity requirement at Northwestern. What is the driving force?: It is up to the individual schools and its faculty to develop and implement curriculum. The administration is working with a number of committees, including the Diversity and Cultural Affairs Council, to look into areas of opportunities additional to the curriculum requirement. A theme that was present throughout the discussion was that NU needs to look beyond just a course or an academic activity and look to change the climate on campus to impact students, making it a safe place for them. The Educational Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate will continue to work with the administration and with other university committees to establish a plan for moving forward.

On-line learning? Where are we and where are we going?: Provost Dan Linzer reported that NU is moving forward with the development and implementation of on-line learning, but there are many issues that still need to be worked so at this time no final decisions have been made and nothing has been solidified. The administration established a committee, with representatives from every school, which continues to iron out all of the details and to help identify the positives negatives.

What is the role of individuals who are not on tenure lines within the university teaching structure?: President Morton Schapiro acknowledged that the role of individuals who are not on tenure lines within the university teaching structure is increasing. Equitable compensation remains an issue and a challenge for the university. The Non-tenure Standing Committee of the Faculty Senate will work with the administration on this matter.