

Northwestern University

Minutes of the University Faculty Assembly Meeting of May 13, 2013

The University Faculty Assembly held its 2nd and final meeting of the 2012-13 academic year on May 13 in Pancoe Auditorium on the Evanston campus, with a video conferencing connection to Wieboldt Hall 421 on the Chicago Campus. The meeting was called to order at 4:40 PM by Faculty Senate Chair Babette Sanders. Approximately 115 Senators were in attendance.

1. **Welcome and Announcements:** Faculty Senate Chair Babette Sanders welcomed everyone and made the opening remarks. She announced several opportunities for faculty to serve on various committees including, NU Cares, the Norris Center Advisory Committee, the Illinois Board of Higher Education Faculty Advisory Committee, Program Review Council, and the Faculty Senate, as vice chair. Anyone interested in serving should contact the Faculty Senate directly at faculty-senate@northwestern.edu.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the December 3, 2012 meeting were approved and will be posted to the Faculty Senate website.
3. **On-line learning: What is the current status of the 2U agreement? What role can/should the faculty play in determining future plans for on-line learning?:** Provost Daniel Linzer explained that Northwestern University is working with 2U to determine if there is value in offering a set of undergraduate, for credit, tuition charged, on-line courses. NU has agreed to use 2013-14 as a pilot year and is in the process of producing one course, in Integrated Marketing Communications, that will be offered in the Fall. In regards to intellectual property, all courses created by NU belong to NU. If the pilot year is successful, NU will continue the program. If it is not successful, NU would be obligated to teach courses produced in the 2nd year, but at the end of that timeframe would withdraw from the program and not produce any new courses. Faculty members, schools, and departments play an integral role in the success and direction of the program through course development, determining whether to allow students to take these courses, and deciding if these courses count toward any majors, minors, or certificates. The effectiveness of the program will be measured through achievement of certain learning outcomes being developed and faculty feedback. The program and level of success will be reviewed by the university wide faculty committee on distance education that has faculty representation from most of the schools, the undergraduate council, and the individual schools in which these courses are offered. One major goal of

offering on-line education is to broaden the current intellectual community by offering courses that NU would not normally offer, and by bringing together international students, who otherwise may be able to afford to attend NU courses in person.

4. **At the recent conversations with the president, President Schapiro spoke eloquently about Northwestern as a research institution and as a teaching and learning place. That presentation produced the following questions:**

- a. **How should learning outcomes be assessed?:** Assessment data is essential for maintaining high academic standards and also required for the accreditation process administered by the regional accreditation agencies. President Morton Schapiro stressed that learning outcomes need to be assessed with great care since this is an extremely challenging, but important undertaking. He explained that assessment tools such as the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) are available, but emphasized that learning outcomes should be assessed mainly by individual faculty members, with minimal monitoring by the administration.
 - b. **What are standards for teaching excellence and how is accountability managed for those standards?:** President Morton Schapiro talked about the importance of setting and keeping the standards of teaching and accountability at the departmental level. It would be difficult for the administration to impose a set of university wide standards for teaching excellence when departments have different cultures and are better positioned to look more closely at the contributions of faculty to determine if the goals are being met.
 - c. **What is the impact on post tenure review?:** President Morton Schapiro encouraged departments to take responsibility for the post tenure review, as many already do, since learning is a more discipline specific exercise.
5. **What is driving the costs of higher education?:** The perception that NU spending is on the rise and students are paying for it is false. Although tuition has risen, President Morton Schapiro explained that approximately 60 percent of students do not actually pay the full tuition. Students receive subsidies resulting in little or no debt at graduation, with the average student getting more than half off the bill, which includes room and board.
6. **What is the university doing to reduce tuition increases after tuition went up twice the rate of inflation for students next year?:** President Morton Schapiro explained that the sticker price increase

of 4.0 percent for next year is the smallest in many years and NU will continue to be responsive to the economic situation of our families.

7. **Questions from the Audience:** Babette Sanders opened the floor for discussion, giving everyone an opportunity to ask questions and to bring up additional items. The following questions were asked:

- a. **In looking at 2U, a for-profit institution, and intellectual property, who owns the on-line courses and is there a remuneration package for the person who develops a highly successful course?** Provost Daniel Linzer explained that the universities own all content, and therefore the intellectual property also. As long as the course is a Northwestern course and the faculty member who developed the course is at NU, that faculty member can use that material freely for whatever other purposes, except for a competition with Semester Online. If the faculty member moves to another institution, all of the ideas that person developed are theirs to take with them, but the actual work product would remain the intellectual property of NU. Faculty who will participate in the 2U program will be paid upfront for their work. If someone develops a course they get paid upfront and if someone is the course leader or a section leader they are paid a stipend. There is no additional royalty stream based on the intellectual property. For Coursera, however, the intellectual property royalty model will be used since there is no upfront payment.
- b. **Has NU thought about the consequences of certain kinds of on-line courses or kinds of prepackaged on-line courses (in the form of edX, but MOOCS in general, 2U in general rather than just casting aside edX) and the effect that they have on institutions further down the economical food chain in academic circles? What does NU think about the effects of our participation in these programs on other institutions that are less fortunate than NU? When looking at families earning between 60k and 220k, who may potentially be most squeezed by the collapse of institutions that cater to those economic groups, how do we think about their participation in education in the future in relation to this whole on-line explosion?** Provost Daniel Linzer explained that institutions that are heavily tuition dependent on their budget may need to evaluate, and possibly rethink, the curricular and extra-curricular experience that makes their institution a good investment for the student. On-line learning will affect institutions both positively and negatively, but with approximately 4600 other Higher Education institutions in existence, NU will continue to focus on its own success. President Morton Schapiro does worry about the negative impact on other colleges and universities and he doesn't want to be at the helm of, or be a faculty member at, an

institution that is going to put in peril disruptive technologies for other institutions. He added that there is, however, an inevitability that the world is changing and institutions must adapt.

8. **What are the relationships between the schools of Northwestern University and institutions in Doha, Qatar?:** President Morton Schapiro talked about NUQ, one of the twelve schools at Northwestern University, having quality programs that are proving to be very successful. NU has a great collaborative partnership with Al Jazeera and is providing excellent training for interns, producers, and directors. Provost Linzer added that NU has now graduated two classes of students, who are pursuing careers in Journalism and Communication, predominantly in the Middle East. NU is equipping graduates to impact the dialogue in the Middle East by breaking communication and media barriers. Journalism and Communication were looked at as unattractive careers, or students felt pressured to pursue engineering and medical school at Education City, but this has changed and now applications are soaring and the quality of students is quite remarkable. Current students are achieving incredible things. In May of 2012 four female graduates formed their own film production company in Doha. In November NU co-sponsored the Doha Tribeca Film Festival and the lead film and main attraction of the opening night was the film produced by the four alumni on hip hop artists in the Arab Spring.
9. **Adjournment:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Snyder, Faculty Senate Administrative Coordinator