

November 11, 2014 Assembly Meeting Highlights

Announcement of inquiry by Senate Education Committee into initiatives to enhance low-income student retention. Announcement of Senate Budget Committee examination of the costs and priorities of low-income student recruitment. Discussion of financial and ethical issues: President Morton Schapiro discussed NU's efforts to reduce financial barriers, including changes to the aide formula. The university has instituted a "zero-sum game" for Pell eligible students from underrepresented minority groups and launched a scholarship program to provide significant financial aid to incoming freshmen who graduate from Evanston and Chicago public or private high schools. The preferential aide packages, which will now be made available more broadly, offer no loan, no summer earnings expectation, and untaxed work-study packages. Although the university has gone from single digit Pell eligible students to the mid-teens, the goal is to quickly hit 20% by reaching out more aggressively, making sure the packages are competitive, and adhering to the need-blind admissions policy. The overarching goal is to equalize opportunity regardless of family income or socioeconomic status.

Provost Daniel Linzer encouraged faculty who wish to get involved to join programs, such as the Posse Foundation, that would connect them with groups of students and would give them opportunities to play mentoring roles. Associate Provost Lindsay Chase-Lansdale announced plans for a symposium centered on exploring Northwestern's efforts to recruit and promote the success of low-income students.

Do students take (and professors teach) too many courses? Can technology facilitate off-campus teaching and learning?: Many administrators, faculty, and students feel that the current course load requirement is too high. President Schapiro is in full support of lowering it, but stressed that without buy-in of the Faculty, this change cannot be made. There is the added challenge that each of the seven schools has different requirements, often driven by accreditation qualifications. Ezra Getzler remarked that courses would need to be allowed lower enrollments without being cancelled. The Senate Education Committee will look into this matter.

Salary: the conflict between retention bonuses and reward for merit. Should there be a reorientation toward the latter: Chair Eisenman stated his view that additional support should be given for both retention and merit rewards, however the latter ought to be given priority. Provost Linzer stated that incremental dollars are tightly allocated, which makes it difficult to shift funds to create a larger salary pool. The Senate Budget Committee will look into this matter further.

A new faculty club? Provost Linzer has offered immediate use of the Great Room at Seabury. What about in new, Campus Center? Brief discussion: In addition to the Great Room at Seabury, Provost Linzer listed several other possible Evanston locations for a Faculty Club, including the Cohen Faculty Commons in Tech, and the Allen Center; and in Chicago, the expanded Atrium on the ground floor of Lurie. To best determine the appropriate space, he asked the faculty to think about how a faculty club will be used. ***If faculty want a faculty club***, they should send comments to faculty-senate@northwestern.edu.

Announcement of planned annual publication of non-tenure faculty eligible (NTE) salary data: The annual publication of non-tenure faculty eligible (NTE) salary data is scheduled to take place in February 2015.

Sports policy: What do we want sports at NU to look like in five years/ten years? Who decides: There are three key issues related to sports at the forefront of universities around the country, including sports injuries, professionalization, and academics. According to President Schapiro and members of CAR, Northwestern has proven to be among the most responsible in these areas when compared to peer institutions. Professor John Elson disputed parts of this record and asked for more information about injuries and that a sample student injury-waiver form be made available.

Announcement of Senate Research Committee inquiry into in vivo sourcing of antibodies and review of NU's commitment to mandated 3Rs protocols: Faculty Senate Chair Eisenman explained that NU scientists currently obtain research antibodies from two laboratories recently cited for gross violations of the US Animal Welfare Act, and is thus in violation of NU's purchasing rules. Further, he announced that the committee will review NU's observance of mandated 3Rs protocols: Refinement, Replacement, and Reduction of the use of laboratory animals.

Title IX and campus safety developments. Time frame for creation of faculty-led panel that determines sanctions. Brief discussion: Associate Provost Lindsay Chase-Lansdale reported that as the Faculty Handbook currently stands it is out of date in regard to Title IX, which is constantly changing with lots of information coming out of the White House, the Office of Civil Rights, and the US Department of Education. She is working with Stephanie Graham, Deputy General Counsel, Joan Slavin, Title IX Coordinator, Wesley Roth Burghardt, Chair of the Senate Faculty Handbook committee, and the full Faculty Senate on the revised wording. There will also be new guidelines regarding sanctions of faculty that, rather than being proposed by the Dean, will be determined by a joint administration and faculty committee.

Announcement of Senate Rights and Responsibilities Committee review of online privacy issues: The Senate Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee will review the current online privacy policy to examine ambiguities in wording concerning confidentiality. Sean Reynolds, Vice President and Chief Information Officer, explained that current policies talk about no expectations of privacy of communication. The goal of that policy, he stated, is to ensure the integrity of the network. However faculty emails are private, unless NU gets court orders or Police subpoenas or if there appears to be a violation of university policy. Chair Eisenman said that he saw the last as a major loophole that needed to be closed and that only a valid court order or subpoena could justify the examination of private communication or browsing history. Sean Reynolds has agreed to look at the wording of the current policy and work with the Senate Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee on this matter.

Announcement of Senate press for implementation of a campus smoking ban, approved by resolution, 2013: In 2013 the Faculty Senate passed a smoking ban and since that time the state of Illinois has passed a law forbidding smoking on any of its public campuses. As a result of the recent law, Babette Sanders, Past Chair of the Faculty Senate, is pursuing the matter in communication with students and staff.

Status of Task Force on Climate Change/Sustainability Council: Under the leadership of Rob Whittier, Director of the Office of Sustainability, the taskforce on Climate Change along with the Sustainability Council are moving the effort forward. Chair Eisenman criticized the slow pace.