

Northwestern University
Minutes of the Faculty Senate
Guild Lounge and Videoconference
March 8, 2023

The Northwestern University Faculty Senate held its standing monthly meeting on March 8, 2023, in the Scott Hall's Guild Lounge and over Zoom videoconference. President-Elect Regan Thomson called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. A quorum was present.

The president-elect noted that the minutes from the February 8, 2023, meeting were approved electronically and entered into the record.

Before he began his report, the president-elect expressed hope for Senate President Ceci Rodgers' speedy recovery. Senate President Rodgers suffered a fractured wrist that required surgery this past week. Her surgery went well, but she was unable to chair the meeting.

The president-elect then began his report.

The president-elect said each quarter the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate holds a Summit with senior leadership to discuss issues of importance to the faculty and to brief leadership on the work of the Faculty Senate standing committees. On Feb. 21, the Executive Committee met with upper administration leaders President Mike Schill, Provost Kathleen Hagerty, Associate Provost Sumit Dhar and Vice Provost Jake Julia. Also in attendance were Joan Johnson, Director for Faculty, Vicky Getis, Director of Teaching and Learning Technologies at NUIT, and Jennifer Keys, Senior Director of the Searle Center. The president-elect noted that the standing committee chairs each gave a brief report on their committee's work thus far and their future goals. While such individual reporting out is not common for Summit meetings, the president-elect said it was deemed to be useful in acclimating the new University President to the various roles each committee plays within the Senate structure. Information also flowed the other way, he said, as President Schill offered his continued plans to visit each of the schools. The president-elect added that the Senate looks forward to President Schill's official inauguration on June 2nd.

Prior to the Summit meeting, Senate President Ceci Rodgers had requested that the Executive Committee receive a briefing on what the University is doing with regards to the impact of generative AI technology such as ChatGPT. The president-elect said the Office of the Provost formed a new [Generative AI Advisory Committee](#) charged with monitoring developments in generative artificial intelligence applications as they relate to academic policy and practices. That committee is chaired by Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education Miriam Sherin, who was unfortunately unable to attend the Summit meeting. Instead, Joan Johnson, Vicky Getis and Jennifer Keys, all members of the Generative AI Advisory Committee, each reported on various aspects of their current and planned work. The president-elect also said that updates have already been made to the Provost Academic Integrity Policy, which now explicitly addresses the use of AI technology. He added that the Searle Center created a useful guide as a starting point for exploring the pedagogical possibilities of generative AI and avoiding pitfalls. There have also been various webinars focused on aspects of generative AI, one of which was faculty-wide seminar sponsored by the Provost's Office earlier that day. Nonetheless, the president-elect said he suspects generative AI will continue to be of interest to the Senate.

The president-elect said Associate Vice President for Student Outreach & Dean of Undergraduate Enrollment Christopher Watson is retiring. A search has begun to find his replacement. He said Senate President Ceci Rodgers is a member of the search committee. The search firm Wittkiefner has been tasked with helping to build a candidate pool. The president-elect said they welcome input on the qualities faculty think are most important in the Dean of Undergraduate Enrollment who oversees the Office of Undergraduate Admission, including admission and application operations, financial aid, and enrollment analytics. Senator may email them at Northwesternenrollment@wittkiefner.com.

The president-elect said Senate leadership met with Associate Provost Sumit Dhar and received an update on the status of several surveys that are in development. The first of those is a Salary Equity Study being developed by the Office of the Provost. Also, the president-elect said that as part of the Northwestern University Recruitment to Transform Under-Representation and achieve Equity (NURTURE) Program, which is supported by an NIH award, there will be a STEM directed survey focused on topics of diversity and equity, which is planned to run in the spring. Collectively, he said these large survey efforts impact the timing of the planned comprehensive Faculty Perspectives

Survey advocated for by the Faculty Senate. He promised the Senate will continue to work with the Provost's Office to ensure the Full Faculty survey is developed and released in a timely manner, while keeping in mind the various factors that may lead to a slight delay.

Lastly, the president-elect said that during our previous Senate meeting, Senate President Rodgers made a plea for increased attendance in person during our Senate meetings. He said he was glad to report that the February meeting saw an increase to 28 people in person from 16 people in person for January. He thanked those who made the January and February meetings, and those in the room that night. He also acknowledged senators on zoom, thanking them for their continued engagement and commitment as they juggle the competing demands for their time.

The president-elect concluded his report.

With no further questions, the president-elect introduced Vice President & Associate Provost for Institutional Diversity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer Robin Means Coleman and Assistant Provost for Diversity and Inclusion Michelle Manno. Their presentation to the Senate can be found [here](#).

Chief Diversity Officer Coleman highlighted some of the large initiatives the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion (OIDI) has been working on, including coordinating DEI efforts across the enterprise through central administration; creating a mid-career advancement and leadership cultivation program called Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accountability (IDEA) Scholars; instruction and support through the IDEA Pedagogy program; accountability reporting across the enterprise; conveying the IDEA Leaders in the various DEI offices across the campus; and supporting affinity groups. Chief Diversity Officer Coleman shared that OIDI won the HEED award in 2021 and 2022, and hopes to win it again in 2023. She then outlined Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accountability (IDEA) in relation to the University's mission statement and focused in on Accountability, and how her office establishes benchmarks to evaluate and assess the impact of DEI efforts. She also acknowledged they cannot do their DEI work alone. Chief Diversity Officer Coleman made a call to action for all present to be their own Chief Diversity Officer in each one their spheres. She also shared demographic data, which is contained in several of the slides linked above.

Assistant Provost Manno focused her portion of the presentation on the work centered around queer and trans students, faculty, and staff at Northwestern. They began by sharing the differences in mental health data between heterosexual and LGBTQADP+ students, specifically a question in a COFHE survey asking how often students felt out of place on campus. The LGBTQADP+ students were more likely than cisgender students to report feeling out of place on campus. Assistant Provost Manno said OIDI prioritizes safety and wellbeing for trans and gender expansive people. The Women's Center, for example, offers several programs for trans and gender expansive people. Assistant Provost Manno then shared some system updates centered around gender inclusivity. Northwestern updated online systems so students, faculty, and staff are able to provide their preferred name and their pronouns. She noted that these features are optional. They said there are several project partners across Northwestern, which are listed in the slide deck. The second and third phase will work to disambiguate sex and gender and add gender identity fields in select systems.

Assistant Provost Manno acknowledged that the Senate was instrumental in pushing for greater access to all-gender bathrooms on campus. They then shared an update on the progress Northwestern has made on providing said access. The University does currently have an all-gender Bathrooms Committee. They said the committee meets quarterly and focuses on locations for bathrooms, discussing the feasibility of these projects, and updating the online campus map to include access to all-gender restrooms. The current funding model is central administration funds 50% and the requesting unit funds 50%. Assistant Provost Manno said the approximate cost for a new single-stall bathroom is \$150,000. They also encouraged alternative solutions, such as one solution at 1800 Sherman, where a single stall restroom was in a locked suite of another unit and that unit agreed to open access to all who wanted to use their restroom. Assistant Provost Manno said the aforementioned Bathrooms Committee completed a bathroom survey that found the following information: 108 all-gender restrooms on campus, 23% of restrooms surveyed are or may be an all-gender restroom, and 28 of 41 buildings contain at least one all-gender restroom. Northwestern has approved two additional all-gender restrooms at Ford and Annie May Swift; these projects are in process. There are also an additional 40+ all-gender restrooms identified in non-surveyed buildings such as administrative, athletics, and student housing facilities. Those will be assessed for signage transitions in the coming weeks.

Finally, Assistant Provost Manno said OIDI and the Women's Center will be hosting three workshops on gender inclusive language. More information on those workshops can be found [here](#).

Chief Diversity Officer Coleman closed out their presentation discussing the importance of considering neurodiversity, which is a movement to recognize neurological differences. We all are neurologically different, she said, and reminded faculty to bring flexibility to the classroom. She highlighted the Universal Design for Learning and urged faculty to address the diverse learning needs of their students. She also offered some illuminating recruitment practices, including being active in faculty searches, looking beyond "peers," and maintaining constant outreach.

The president-elect then opened the floor for questions.

Senator Angela Lee asked how an all-gender multi stall bathroom differs from what most buildings currently have and what resources it will take to convert those bathrooms. She also added that it would be helpful to have display names on Canvas. Assistant Provost Manno said Canvas will be in phase one of the gender inclusive initiative. Regarding bathrooms, they said there are two types: single stall all-gender restrooms (required by law in Evanston that all single stalls be labeled all-gender) and all-gender multi stall, the latter of which Northwestern does not currently have on campus. State law currently prohibits multi stall restrooms from being converted to all-gender.

Senator Rebecca Zorach asked about the relationship between the work OIDI does and curricular content, in particular if there are points of intersection. Chief Diversity Officer Coleman said partnerships are very important to how OIDI operates. Much of their DEI pedagogy is modeled after the Searle Center's work on pedagogical inclusion. She said they are the best resource for in-class interventions and curricular support. She added that there is an [inclusive pedagogy guide](#) on Searle's website, which OIDI consulted on. Senator Zorach followed up and asked about faculty who teach material that is DEI-aligned. Chief Diversity Officer Coleman reiterated her point about the Searle Center and the guide. Assistant Provost Manno added that OIDI consults with faculty often and serve as a resource for the most up to date scholarship and best practices related to DEI.

Senator Luis Amaral said the expense for the bathroom is beside the point. He said we should do the right thing and not be distracted by cost when it comes to human rights. He then asked when we could predict when we might have a reasonable amount of diversity at Northwestern. He wondered

if the only way to reach higher levels of diversity is if the University grows and hires more faculty and brings in more students. Chief Diversity Officer Coleman said one of the things that makes DEI work hard is it is not simply about compositional diversity, but also about the ways in which it is as much about retention as it is recruitment—what is the experience once you get here?

Senator Jean-François Gaillard asked how faculty can be aware of bias during recruitment, especially when they may be an excellent researcher or teacher. Chief Diversity Officer Coleman said it is important to think about being thoughtful about climate and the ways in which entering relationships is important. She said OIDI skews towards opportunity rather than the punitive. They want to provide the tools to be more welcoming for all people.

Senator Kyle Henry asked if OIDI works with the deans at the school level on accountability. Chief Diversity Officer Coleman said yes. Senator Henry then followed up asking when that data might be shared. Chief Diversity Officer Coleman said your key partners are the DEI leaders in each of the major units. She said she will talk more with them about data sharing.

The president elect thanked Chief Diversity Officer Coleman and Assistant Provost Manno for speaking with the Senate.

He then introduced University Ombudsperson Sarah Klaper. Her presentation to the Senate can be found [here](#).

Ombudsperson Klaper gave a brief reminder on the role of the Ombuds Office. She said it is a conflict resource for faculty, staff, students, administrators, and families. She is impartial, confidential (unless there is a crime or an imminent threat), informal (can help with formal complaints), and independent. She said she helps by listening, providing information on policies and procedures, making referrals, facilitating difficult discussions and mediating.

Ombudsperson Sarah Klaper then shared some data: from August 2, 2021-June 16, 2022 there have been 361 total visits, 155 of which were faculty (90 tenure track, 13 tenure-eligible, and 52 NTE). Senator Amaral interrupted the presentation to ask why Ombudsperson Sarah Klaper did not have more help and thanked Ombudsperson Sarah Klaper for the work she is doing. Ombudsperson Sarah Klaper said the administrative support in the Provost's Office helped her function in the fall. She acknowledged the high number of cases in less than a year, not to mention the large amount of

outreach she and her program coordinator did during the same timeframe. Senator Amaral asked how many staff would be ideal. She said for the size of institution, she would like to have the program coordinator, her position, and two more associate ombuds.

Ombudsperson Klaper continued with her presentation. She noted some major concerns she's seen: communication, evaluative relationships, peer relationships, and team climate/morale. The culture is different post-shutdown during Covid, she said, and it's affected each of these categories. She then shared her [contact info](#), which is also available in the slide deck.

The president-elect then opened the floor for questions.

Senator Gaillard commented on how much time and energy was spent by the Senate advocating for the ombuds office, how encouraged he was to see it working, and that the Senate can advocate for more support if needed. Ombudsperson Klaper said she was very thankful for the Senate's advocacy and support.

Senator Barbara Newman asked how much of her work had to do with appeals, like grading or promotion decisions, for example. Ombudsperson Klaper said not much with students because there isn't a University-wide grade appeal process. For grad students, there were a few issues related to decisions. There were no tenure appeal visits, in part because of the work done in the ombuds office before those decisions arise. However, there were some concerns about faculty salaries.

Senator Henry asked if the ombuds office does mediation, conflict resolution, and/or de-escalation training. Ombudsperson Klaper said that Assistant Provost Manno are putting together a proposal for a center on mediation and conflict resolution. It is still in the planning phase, but it is being worked on. She said she has many workshops and lunches with departments on these topics as well.

The president-elect thanked Ombudsperson Klaper for joining the Senate.

The Senate then considered a resolution from the Educational Affairs Committee on increasing support for transfer students. Senator Jill Wilson, chair of the Educational Affairs Committee, then shared some rationale for the resolution. As far back as 2021, faculty began looking into efforts to ease pathways for community college students looking to transfer to Northwestern. In summer of 2022, faculty asked for a review of the courses from Oakton Community College that would be

equivalent at Northwestern (approximately 58-60 courses). In the fall of 2022, Professor Monica Prasad from Sociology forwarded a resolution to the committee through Senator Mark Witte. This resolution called for more community college transfers and better support and transparency on this issue. Senator Wilson said that currently credit articulations for Oakton have not been published. All transfer students face considerable uncertainty about how credits will apply to a NU degree. Because of this, advising transfer students from any university is time intensive, but critical to academic success and student well-being. Also, she said, increasing transfer admissions requires substantial resource investment, and the administration has expressed a strong preference for improving the experience of existing students before expanding access. Taking all this into account, Senator Wilson said the committee proposed tweaking the resolution to focus more on data collection of transfer students, to publicize course articulation, and to increase support for advising. With this in mind, a motion was made to approved the following resolution:

WHEREAS 5% of students at the 100 most selective colleges are community college transfer students¹, and available data suggests that Northwestern lags its peers in admitting students from this population;

WHEREAS the Community College population has a higher share of under-represented minorities and students from lower socioeconomic status than the current Northwestern student body;

WHEREAS increased enrollment of Community College students has support from faculty, the Associated Student Government, Deans' Offices, and the Provost;

WHEREAS Northwestern currently admits transfer students from many sorts of colleges, including Community Colleges, and these students are academically successful at Northwestern;

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<https://www.jkcf.org/research/persistence/#:~:text=Notably%2C%20at%20the%20100%20most,transferred%20from%20a%20community%20college.>

WHEREAS transfer students admitted to Northwestern face a high degree of uncertainty around articulation and application of previously completed college credits, as well as challenges in adapting to the culture, calendar, and climate at Northwestern;

WHEREAS current processes for articulation of transfer credits are inefficient and time-consuming for faculty and staff;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Northwestern collect data² about the admissions pipeline and student experience for all transfer students, with particular attention to transfer students from community colleges.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT by July of 2023 Northwestern make public and allow to be disseminated lists of courses that have already been approved by faculty for transfer credit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT by the start of the 2024-2025 academic year, Northwestern evaluate procedures for the articulation of transfer credit to improve efficiency and transparency for all transfer students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Northwestern create advising positions dedicated to the support of transfer students and increase staff positions to support credit articulation.

The motion was seconded and the president-elect then opened the floor for discussion.

Senator Getzler said he's noticed that more of the graduate student applicants in his department (Mathematics) did transfer from community colleges to schools like UCLA and Williams College. He asked where Northwestern fits in terms of transfers. He also asked if it is possible to reformulate the motion to exclude students coming from other countries, going to community college, and then joining a prestigious school for the final two years in order to save money. Senator Wilson said that none of the action items are wanting to create an advantage for one student over another, nor are

² <https://sova.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Beyond-Transfer-Inquiry-Guide-Jan-2023.pdf>

they specific to community college students. Instead, she said the committee wanted to put forth recommendations that would assist community college students, but also all transfer students.

Senator Alter said she has been following Professor Prasad and lauded her work. She said this resolution makes a significant statement and is a great initiative.

Senator Witte said he was also part of the movement to put this resolution forward. He said the hope of this resolution is that it would make advising easier. There would be clear and transparent articulations of credit and students would be more aware of what they were joining. Senator Wilson thanked Professor Prasad and others and the effort they made to put towards this issue.

Senator Amaral asked if students transferring in from the Chicago area get a full-ride scholarship. Senator Wilson said transfer students are evaluated for financial aid, and if they qualify, they are given that aid. Senator Amaral then said we might need to reconsider some of the requirements for incoming students, like living on campus, that might create more barriers to entry. Senator Wilson said this is precisely why the committee asked for data collection in the resolution. Senator Amaral said he supported the resolution regardless.

With no further discussion, the Senate approved the motion. The president-elect then thanked the committee and Senator Wilson for their efforts.

Following that, the president-elect asked if there was any new business.

Senator Amaral said senate meetings operate like a press conference. He argued this defeated the purpose of the Senate, which is to inform and enable discussion. He said he wanted to hear more from experts on the issues like policing on campus than from administrators.

Senator Getzler said the presentations could be conveyed online or in a document. He said the numbers could be presented in advance and the sessions could be devoted more to discussion.

Senator Henry asked if the Senate wanted any role in responding to or crafting its own ideas on AI technology, particularly the Educational Affairs Committee. In terms of ethics and pedagogy, the Senate should have a role, he said. Likewise, he said the University could play a role in protecting intellectual property and regulation.

Senator Newman said the committee briefly raised the issue of AI technology. They saw very quickly there was not a consensus on it. She offered to make a passionate speech on the harm ChatGPT can cause at the next Educational Affairs Committee meeting.

The president then asked if there was any other new business. Seeing none, the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jared Spitz
Secretary to the Faculty Senate