

Northwestern University  
Minutes of the Faculty Senate  
Videoconference  
March 9, 2022

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The Northwestern University Faculty Senate held its standing monthly meeting on March 9, 2022, over Zoom videoconference. President Robert Holmgren called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. A quorum was present.

The president noted that the minutes from the February 9, 2022, meeting were approved and entered into the record.

The president then began his report.

The president said the NU Covid Dashboard showed 62 total cases in the last seven days. Of those, two were faculty cases. He also said the average number of daily cases in Evanston was down to 6.6, the lowest number of average cases since August 2021.

The president said the University will be requiring all students to take an in-person Covid test within the first week of their return to campus. Faculty, he said, will again be able to have ten percent of their class session remote. So far, he said, a decision has yet to be made about masking in class.

The president said he considered utilizing a hybrid format for this meeting. However, the results of a poll sent to all senators showed only 14 of 67 respondents were willing to attend in person. He said the Senate has operated well with remote meetings, but he has sensed an erosion of collegiality in recent months, perhaps due to the loss of interacting before and after meetings and the usual table discussion taking place during meetings. In order to be effective in person, the president said he thought roughly half the senators would need to attend in Scott Hall. He said the leadership will continue to poll the senators to see what format works best for the rest of the academic year.

Since the last Senate meeting, the president said the Executive Committee met with the central administration and the Senate also had the annual luncheon with the Board of Trustees. He said this meeting would be dedicated to discussion of subjects that arose during those meetings. He then shared some of the topics the Executive Committee discussed with the central administration. First, staffing at Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) remains a challenge. The president said there were currently four open positions at CAPS, which continues to have high turnover. Second, the Senate passed several resolutions last year related to incidents on the Cheer Team. Since then, a number of changes have been made to the Cheer Team's operations. The president said the Cheer Team has a new coach and the coach now reports directly to the Athletic Director's office. Also, the president said the external report on the incidents that took place last year would be completed very soon. Third, the Reimagining CTECs Committee, which began its work a couple of years ago and was on hiatus during the pandemic, will be reconstituted this summer, the president said. Fourth, the resolution on staffing—passed at the February meeting—was received by new Vice President for Human Resources Lorraine Goffe. The president said she was well aware of the issues related to staffing and is devising a plan to try and address those problems. Finally, last fall, the Senate passed a resolution about the availability of gender-neutral bathrooms on campus. In the case of Annie May Swift Hall, the president said a project to build a gender-neutral bathroom has been approved and funded. The president said the University is also looking at other buildings where it might be possible to site a gender-neutral bathroom.

The president concluded his report and then opened the floor for questions.

Senator Kyle Henry cited students concerns in the Daily about the University's current masking policy, especially in regards to the immunocompromised. He wondered if those student concerns were raised with the central administration. The president said the administration's response was to maintain masking in classrooms to keep some protections in place for the immunocompromised. Going forward, the president said the immunocompromised should be considered when the administration decides on a masking policy for the spring quarter.

Senator Luís Amaral said he was part of the Reimagining CTECs Committee. He said one of the struggles the committee faced was the lack of consensus over whether or not numerical scores were

appropriate for evaluating teachers. The struggle being in the convenience of scores versus the biases such scoring systems tend to produce. Senator Amaral said he believed the Senate should look into this matter and come up with a recommendation for the CTEC Committee to consider. The president said he agreed that the CTEC Committee is important, and their progress should be followed closely by the Senate. Senator Amaral added that instead of observation, he would like to see some guidance from the Senate in terms of the direction the committee should be going. The president said this was a good topic for the Educational Affairs Committee to consider.

Senator Fred Turek said he believes if the CTEC Committee considers bias, it should be considered across the board.

Senator David Uttal said issues of bias should be empirically-based. He said it is too important an issue to go on feelings. Hard data available must be utilized, he said.

Senator Karen Alter said it would be useful for the Educational Affairs Committee to gather some data that senators may share with their departments and then provide feedback in service of a recommendation.

Discussion of the presidential report ended.

The president then introduced the School of Communication's new Executive Artistic Director Tanya Palmer.

Executive Director Palmer thanked the Senate. She said she wanted to speak to the Senate because her position was newly created in the School of Communication, and one of the goals for the position is to build cross-department and interdisciplinary collaboration. Executive Director Palmer said she came to Northwestern from Indiana University, but prior to that she spent fifteen years at the Goodman Theater. She said she will oversee programming at the Wirtz Theater for Performing Arts in Evanston as well as the new Wirtz Theater for the Performing Arts and Media in Abbott Hall on the Chicago campus. Additionally, she said she will be looking for ways to support collaborations, particularly in the departments across the School of Communication, but also more broadly across the University. She

said those collaborations could happen in the theater spaces or they could manifest in research topics, ideas for projects for students or faculty, etc. She extended an invitation to senators to reach out to her if they had an idea for collaboration, however their work may be in conversation with any department in the School of Communication. She expressed a sincere interest in forging and supporting those collaborations.

The president thanked Executive Director Palmer for joining the Senate.

Senator Steve Adams and Past President Therese McGuire then gave an update on the Community Safety Advisory Board (CSAB). Senator Adams provided a brief background on the CSAB, which was formed in response to student protests, and is working to strengthen relationships with the campus community and safety efforts. Currently, Senator Adams said the CSAB is in the process of moving from ideation to implementation. Prior to the fall quarter, four sub committees were constituted to explore the following topics: mental health, safety and security work analysis, the complaints process, and racial identifiers and crime notices. He said those four groups have all completed their work and made recommendations, and in a couple of the categories action has already been taken. In the category of mental health, Senator Adams said an agreement was made to have private ambulances take students to the hospital as opposed to police cars. Further ideas related to mental health are the creation of a campus community response team (social workers, mental health providers) who can respond to mental health emergencies. Senator Adams said that committee also developed escalation matrices for when an officer might still be needed during a mental health crisis. In the category of safety and security work analysis, he said there is an effort in place to refocus energy on a community safety organization, not simply police. Armed security responses will be focused on the highest threat scenarios, but they suggested removing police from tasks where an armed presence isn't necessary. They also put together a plan to recalibrate police staffing for special events and building out a community safety officer team. Past President McGuire added that a community safety officer group already exists, but the University plans to expand staffing levels for that team of unarmed officers. Senator Adams said that subcommittee also seeks an increase in transparency around use of force incidents and would like to deemphasize militarized and surplus weaponry used by the police. He also said there are plans underway for annual security climate surveys. Senator Adams said the third group already had a recommendation implemented: complaints involving safety and security, or policing in general, are now

routed through EthicsPoint Compliance rather than directly to the Safety and Security Office. Also, he said crime notices will no longer include racial identifiers in most cases, and only in active threats will crime notices include identifiers. Senator Adams said the next steps are for the CSAB to write a thorough report. The hope is the report will be out sometime in May, he said. Once the report is completed, the work of CSAB will conclude and potentially new committees will be formed to address any other issues. Past President McGuire added that she found CSAB to be a passionate and caring group of individuals. She said she learned a lot and she believes good things are coming from the CSAB. Senator Adams agreed. He said a lot of edifying dialogue took place between people across categories on campus, all with the goal for progress to be achieved.

The president then opened the floor for questions.

Senator Turek asked what specifically the follow-up will be in regards to the recommendations. Past President McGuire said the CSAB will disband, but another similar body will be created to monitor the progress of the recommendations.

Senator Alter thanked Senator Adams and Past President McGuire for their hard work. She said she has likewise been impressed with the CSAB's presentations. However, in conversation with her colleagues, Senator Alter said their memory remains tied to the events last year that led to the formation of CSAB. She then asked if there was a marketing plan for the rollout of the recommendations. Senator Adams agreed and said he would take that feedback to the committee. He added it is very important the University acknowledge student voices and the impact they had in lobbying for constructive change.

Senator Amaral said he attended the second round of protests after reports from the initial protests recounted acts of police aggression. He said he thought it was important to have faculty witnesses at the rally. During the second march, he said he faced similar acts of aggression when standing in line waiting for the march to begin, and was deeply discouraged by such behavior. He added that he was frustrated by the administration's response to the students rallying, and he wondered who was allowed to oversee the students when they hold such rallies on campus. Related to that point, Senator Amaral said he thought it was important for the CSAB to make a recommendation regarding who is protecting the students during a rally. He also thought it was important to have a timeline for implementation. He

understands it might not be fulfilled, but a record of a timeline should be noted. The president emphasized that the Senate leaders who meet with the administration have repeatedly brought up CSAB and stressed its importance.

Senator Henry said one way the Faculty Senate could help with accountability is having one of the standing committees follow up a year or so after the report is published. Senator Adams reiterated that everyone serving on the committee wants progress to be achieved.

Senator Josh Hauser said he works on the Chicago campus and he notices a difference in security on that campus versus Evanston. That is, an increased presence of police officers on and around the Chicago campus. He asked if the Chicago campus was considered during CSAB's discussions. Past President McGuire said she was on the group that looked at the Department of Safety and Security and how police time could be reallocated. She said it was clear from the beginning of the discussion that security needs are different in Evanston versus Chicago. She said that difference was always a part of the discussion. She added that the differences in what is recommended for the two campuses will be made clear in the report.

Senator Ravi Jagannathan asked how the CSAB plans to make recommendations in regards to training, and how implementation of this new model (unarmed responders) will be carried out. He also asked if additional cameras on the downtown campus might serve as a more effective deterrent as opposed to having a larger police presence. Past President McGuire said Senator Jagannathan's questions were good ones, but she unfortunately did not have answers for them because they stretched beyond CSAB's purview. She did say that while serving on CSAB she learned that armed officers and unarmed officers both go through rigorous, albeit different, sets of training. She also said the new campus community response team will require a lot of resources and staffing of individuals who will have a background in mental health response. Senator Adams said he could bring up some of these issues with the committee as the final report is being prepared.

The president thanked Senator Adams and Past President McGuire for the update and their service on CSAB.

The president then introduced Senator Carol Heimer. Before Senator Heimer presented her committee's proposed resolution, she gave some background. She said state regulation of instruction, particularly on racial issues, has increased recently. So far, much of the attention, has been focused on K-12 instruction, but there have been recent moves by state legislatures to regulate the teaching of Critical Race Theory at the University level. There has been pushback by educators at all levels, she said. For instance, what scholars mean when they cite Critical Race Theory and what legislators mean when they speak about Critical Race Theory greatly differs, which indicates state regulation is misinterpreting scholarship, and therefore impinging academic freedom. The larger point, she said, was that faculty should be deciding how to best research and teach, not politicians. Senator Heimer then made a motion to approve the following joint resolution from the Educational Affairs and Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committees:

Whereas academic freedom is essential to responsible teaching and research, and to the functioning of a healthy University and society,

And whereas Critical Race Theory represents an area of recognized scholarship relevant to the study of racial and social justice,

And whereas academic freedom to explore scholarship and teaching related to social and racial justice has come under recent attack across the United States within numerous state legislatures,

Be it resolved that the Northwestern University Faculty Senate opposes legislative attempts to censor credible scholarship and teaching related to racial and social justice,

And be it further resolved that the Northwestern University Faculty Senate stands in support of our colleagues at Universities and K-12 institutions whose functioning may be affected by such legislation.

The president then opened the floor for discussion.

Senator Henry said he thought the resolution was great. He also added that the AAUP released a similar statement signed on by 94 different national associations.

Senator Turek said agreed it was a great resolution. He asked if a private school like Northwestern could be affected by the types of legislation the resolution mentions. Senator Heimer said Northwestern is insulated to some degree, but if politicians get actively involved in the allocation of federal funding, then Northwestern could be affected.

Senator Jagannathan said he had was concerned about the inclusion of K-12 institutions. He said he felt uncomfortable speaking about an area where he is not an expert (early childhood and secondary education). He then asked why K-12 was included in the resolution. Senator Heimer said it was included in part because those institutions are undergoing the most pressure, and the pressure is of a political and not research-based. She said it was the committees' attempt to say these kinds of academic freedoms should be extended to all educators. Senator Jagannathan then asked if it was possible to remove K-12 from the resolution. The president then consulted the parliamentarian who said a formal motion to amend the resolution would need to be made if Senator Jagannathan would like to remove the phrase "and K-12 institutions".

Senator Jagannathan formally made a motion to strike the phrase "and K-12 institutions" from the resolution. The motion was seconded and the president opened the floor for discussion of the proposed amendment.

Senator Jagannathan said he raised this issue because he wants to be knowledgeable about a topic when he votes. He was comfortable speaking to matters related to higher education, but did not feel he could weigh in on childhood and secondary education.

Senator Ana Aparicio said Senator Jagannathan's concern about not knowing about what is taught in K-12 schools is precisely why she would like the phrase in question to stay. She said she doesn't want legislators who are ignorant of pedagogical norms deciding what should be taught public schools. She said educators themselves can debate what is appropriate to be taught in classrooms. This resolution, she said, offers resounding support for academic freedom at all levels of education.



Senator Heimer agreed with everything Senator Aparicio said. She said it is very important for institutions of higher education to stand in solidarity with other educators on these kinds of topics.

President-Elect Ceci Rodgers echoed what Senator Aparicio and Senator Heimer said. She noted the recent assault on academic freedom, and because of that, she believed the Faculty Senate should stand up for every educator being unfairly maligned. And she said she doesn't think we need to be experts on what they are teaching at K-12 schools to support their academic freedom.

Senator Amaral said he sees these legislative attempts to limit what is taught in classrooms as an act of racism by racist people. He said kindergarten is a great age to learn not to be a racist, and not much, in his view, needs to be known about early childhood pedagogy to make such a statement. He also expressed concern over the second sentence given that Critical Race Theory is so often misunderstood.

Senator Henry said that academic freedom is codified in AAUP's principles, and there has been a struggle for K-12 experts to secure the same academic freedom rights. He indicated he did not support the removal of the phrase.

Senator Turek said he disagreed with Senator Amaral.

Senator Hannah Feldman said she supported the resolution as whole, and also keeping the phrase K-12. She said education is one of the most fundamental components of society. She also said it's not just Critical Race Theory being banned, but histories that make people uncomfortable. She pointed out, too, that the purpose of this resolution is to signal our support of colleagues affected by legislative overreach.

The Senate then voted against the motion to strike the phrase "and K-12 institutions" from the resolution.

The Senate returned to the main motion. With no further discussion, the Senate approved the joint resolution from the Educational Affairs and Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committees.

Past President McGuire thanked the committees for their resolution, and she also thanked Senator Jagannathan for his motion because it helped elucidate why the Senate was condemning legislative attempts to curtail academic freedom.

The Senate then heard a standing committee report from Non-Tenure Eligible Committee Chair Anne Waller.

Senator Waller said in spring of 2019, the NTE Committee conducted a survey of all NTE faculty, which identified some areas of concern. Those findings were presented to the University community in spring of 2020. During the summer of 2021, committee members queried their constituents to assess what progress had been made in each of the various schools. In addition to that, former Senate President Lois Hedman and current Senate President Bob Holmgren spoke with various Associate Deans about what policies had been updated since the NTE survey. Senator Waller said both the original survey report and the follow-up report expressed the belief that there needs to be more oversight of NTE contracts at the Provost level in order to create a more consistent and equitable employment system for NTE faculty. This year, she said, the NTE Committee has held quarterly meetings with Associate Provost for Faculty Sumit Dhar with the goal to explore issues of continuing concern and to pursue potential solutions. The initial meeting with Associate Provost Dhar took place earlier in the winter quarter. Senator Waller said the first discussion was wide-ranging and focused on issues identified in the follow-up to the survey report: both contract lengths and timely notification of reappointment, salary structure, job titles and opportunities for promotion, and clarity of criteria for promotion and annual raises. She noted that opening this channel of communication with the Provost Office and Associate Provost Dhar was a very important step to moving forward on these issues.

The president then opened the floor for discussion.

Senator Alter said much of the same concerns have come up in discussions in the Organization of Women Faculty (Senator Alter is co-chair of OWF) and in the Pandemic Recovery Task Force. Her sense, thus far, was that matters get tied up in the push and pull between central administration and the schools. She suggested the NTE Committee consider bringing resolutions that endorse ideas that

reduce or eliminate bureaucratic barriers holding back progress for NTE faculty. Senator Waller said a big part of the committee discussion related to the roadblocks Senator Alter described. She said a resolution might be the ultimate consequence, but she's not quite sure yet. What the committee has identified so far, she said, is the lack of system-wide structure for NTE faculty. She said they hope to identify solutions to this problem.

Senator Lois Hedman said her impression was there had been significant changes made in certain schools. She and the president interviewed Senate NTE representatives from each of the schools along with speaking to Associate Deans. She said in particular schools—oftentimes one with new deans—significant changes were made. She also said more direct dialogue with deans might be helpful because these matters are so school-dependent. Senator Waller said it always had depended on individual deans how contracts were created and executed. She said the committee posed the question of whether or not deans should be the ones who set baselines for NTE contracts. Or, she said, should central administration be the ones who create a baseline for each school to follow. Senator Hedman she liked the idea of a floor, or minimum requirement, set by central.

Senator Henry said he agreed with the idea of centralizing some of the structural models for NTE faculty. He also made a more general point about universities across the country increasing the number of NTE faculty and what that means for the professoriate at large. Senator Waller said the salary tables demonstrate that NTE salaries are a cost-saving measure. She also said NTE faculty are serving at all levels across the University and are getting significantly less salary for similar work (chairing departments, serving on committees, etc.).

Senator Hedman said the deans do hold a lot of power. She expressed concern about devoting all the NTE Committee's energy to questioning that fact. She said the Senate should constantly be talking to administration about NTE issues because it might lead to a change in leadership at schools where these problems seem to persist. Senator Waller said one of the things that has arisen through the constituents of NTE Committee members was the fear of retribution. She said it can be very difficult for NTE faculty to directly approach deans about the topics. That's why she sees the Provost as a potential intermediary. Senator Hedman said the NTE Committee could be the voice for the entire NTE faculty.

She also said adding governance as a protected academic freedom right was an important change to the Faculty Handbook.

Senator Alter said this was why she proposed the idea of a resolution. She championed the Provost Office's intentions, and deemed a resolution a helpful tool they can use to work with the deans as well.

Senator Amaral said the NTE survey led to some tangible improvements, and it also identified especially problematic schools. He said the advantage of doing those types of surveys regularly is the continuous monitoring of the same issues. He suggested, in addition to talking with the Provost, gathering more data to bolster arguments. Senator Waller said the Senate leadership did go to each school and assess where progress had been made, and there was data on that progress. What was apparent from that follow-up, she said, was the unevenness between schools. Senator Amaral proceeded to ask why there seemed to be such resistance to surveying the faculty again. Senator Hedman (who was Senate President during the survey) said it was a tremendous amount of work preparing and analyzing the survey, not to mention producing the lengthy report. She said there is also concern about survey fatigue. She said the value of the NTE survey was its targeted approach and the fact that a survey had not been done in a while. She also said the NTE committee agreed a survey like the 2019 NTE survey should be done with some regularity. But she said it would be good to be strategic about when and how often to run those types of surveys.

Following discussion, the president thanked Senator Waller for her report.

The president asked for feedback related to the recent discussion with the Board of Trustees. The topic during that luncheon on March 4, 2022, was: How Can the University Contribute to a Sustainable Future?

Senator Turek said he was assured the notes from the luncheon would be shared with the Senate and the Board of Trustees. He said the notes should be valuable for the Senate and the Board. He also said he was struck by how much the University is already doing in the way of sustainability.

The president asked if there was any new business.

Senator Amaral suggested having an expert come and speak to the Senate about the topic at hand. He also said it might be useful to have someone present on a topic of relevance, not just on a resolution, for the Faculty Senate. The president said that standing committees could consider those issues and then, if relevant, those topics can be placed on the Senate meeting agenda.

Senator Feldman said she liked the idea of having an expert come to speak to the Senate about issues of relevance.

Senator Turek said he hoped, if these discussions take place, that the choice in speaker be balanced along the political spectrum.

The president said outside speakers came to the University and addressed the Senate when it was just getting started. He cautioned the idea of doing that again given the number of issues the Senate must address this year.

Senator Amaral said we might get written statements before meetings given that oral presentations take time. He wanted the Senate to think about doing things differently than before, in part because he hopes for more participation from senators.

Senator Christina Lewicky-Gaupp said, as a surgeon, she relies on the press for issues like Critical Race Theory. She said it would've been helpful to hear from those who are teaching this material. She said broader education in these different domains could help bring the Senate together.

The president said the Executive Committee will have a discussion about what might be appropriate for the meeting agendas going forward.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The Senate approved that motion and the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jared Spitz

Secretary to the Faculty Senate