

Northwestern University
Minutes of the Faculty Senate
Videoconference
June 3, 2020

The Northwestern University Faculty Senate held its standing monthly meeting on June 3, 2020, on a videoconference platform. President Lois Hedman called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. A quorum was present.

The president welcomed the Senate and noted that the minutes from the May 13, 2020 meeting were approved and entered into the record.

The president then gave her report.

The president began by stating that there will be two items of new business at the end of the meeting.

The president said that the primary focus of the Senate and its leadership has been facilitating communication between the faculty and the administration as the University makes plans in response to the pandemic. Their focus has been to ensure faculty are an integral part of the decision-making process. She added that the May Senate meeting and the Spring Faculty Assembly provided opportunities for administrators to share their plans and for faculty to comment on those potential plans. She also noted that this meeting is an additional opportunity to provide faculty perspectives.

The president said the Senate leadership continues to meet with the Provost Office regularly. They have recommended faculty serve on at least one of the working groups. The president said she will serve as the Senate's representative on the Fall Quarter Planning Group.

The president asked that senators stay connected with the Senate over the summer given the extraordinary circumstances. She anticipates the need for feedback from senators and their constituents during that time. Additionally, she said she hoped faculty will continue to reach out if they have concerns about forthcoming plans for the fall quarter and beyond. She gave two examples of faculty reaching out—charging for parking on campus while the campus is limited to essential workers only

and ensuring that food service workers be paid through the Spring quarter. She said the issue with parking was resolved with refunds being sent to faculty, and the Senate continues to engage with administration for answers to the questions faculty have asked about the food service workers.

Lastly, the president said there has been a good response from those departments with seats up for election in the Senate. She encouraged senators whose current term is ending to help their departments facilitate elections this summer.

The president then called for a vote for Faculty Senate President-Elect. Senator Bob Holmgren, who represents the Department of Molecular Biosciences and chairs the Research Affairs Committee, was running unopposed. Votes were cast and Senator Holmgren was elected President-Elect of the Faculty Senate for the 2020-21 academic year.

The Senate then heard a report from the Non-Tenure Eligible Committee. Senator Elsa Alvaro gave a brief overview of the committee's [report](#) following their survey of all full-time NTE faculty at Northwestern. Senator Alvaro said there were over 700 responses to the survey. She said this rich data set gave the committee a window into the NTE faculty experience at Northwestern, and how the current policies and procedures affect those faculty members. She then focused on the committee's recommendations that were based on the results of the survey. These recommendations fell into two categories: overall recommendations that capture broad themes and specific recommendations that pertain to certain areas needing attention. The overall recommendations are as follows:

We recommend that the Office of the Provost create and maintain written guidelines for school-specific policies that impact non-tenure-line faculty. (Action: Office of the Provost)

School-specific policies and procedures should be available online, easy to find and access, and clear. These documents should be reviewed every two years by a committee of faculty which includes a majority of non-tenure-line faculty and that can make recommendations to the dean. In addition, we recommend that new faculty are notified of these policies as part of their orientation. (Action: Schools)

We recommend that the Office of the Provost allocate the resources and coordination necessary to create an equitable academic community in which all faculty can thrive.¹ This should include, when feasible, increased budgetary support to adopt the recommendations outlined in this report. (Action: Office of the Provost)

Senator Alvaro then delved into the specific recommendations, which were divided into the following five categories: job security, career advancement, salaries, inclusion and recognition, and course load. There were multiple recommendations in each category, all of which can be found in the report listed above.

The president asked for a motion to approve the full report from the NTE Committee. A motion was made from the floor and seconded. The president then opened the floor for discussion.

Past President Baron Reed commended Senator Alvaro and the NTE Committee for producing such an outstanding report. He also thanked them for their efforts in putting together such a thorough study.

With no further discussion, the president called the question. A vote was held and the motion to approve the full NTE report was upheld.

The president announced a closed session so the Senate could consider nominations for honorary degree.

The president then introduced Jaci Casazza, Assistant Provost and University Registrar, Miriam Sherin, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, and Mark Francis, Associate Provost for Operations and Facilities.

The Provost Office representatives reiterated the policy for the end of the spring quarter and also discussed potential return to campus plans for the fall quarter. The latter included diagrams for how in-

¹ In April 2019, the Faculty Senate passed a resolution that called for the creation of a position at the Office of the Provost to oversee non-tenure-line faculty affairs university-wide: Northwestern University Faculty Senate, "Minutes, April 10, 2019," https://www.northwestern.edu/faculty-senate/meetings/minutes_fs_4.10.19.pdf

person instruction might look and possible changes to the academic calendar for quarter programs. Their presentation can be found [here](#).

Following their presentation, the president opened the floor for questions.

Senator Robert Hariman said Scenario C (8 week quarter with one week for exams; ends before Thanksgiving) seems to genuinely jeopardize academic integrity. Scenario A (10 week quarter plus one week for exams; two day Thanksgiving break and students take exams remotely) and B (9 week quarter with one week for exams; term is completed before Thanksgiving break) do not. He wondered why Scenario C was included. Assistant Provost Casazza said she wanted to include all the potential options that were available even though she agreed with Senator Hariman that Scenario C is not a good option.

Senator Laura Beth Nielsen wanted clarification on if the three scenarios are recommendations and professor's still have discretion over how they manage their courses timeline. Associate Provost Sherin said that is correct for the spring quarter. She said the Provost will be sending a message to the University community encouraging faculty to have empathy and flexibility during this time. Senator Nielsen followed up on the conversation centered around the academic calendar by mentioning that faculty in her department always want to District 65 and 202 calendars to be taken into consideration.

Senator David Uttal asked if it might be possible to start the quarter earlier than September 16. Assistant Provost Casazza said that they do have flexibility within the 30 weeks (three quarters, 10 weeks per quarter) if they petitioned the federal government. However, thus far government has not allowed any flexibility in regards to using the summer for some of those 30 weeks.

Senator Claudia Swan asked to what extent graduate teaching factored into the formulas for return to campus. Associate Provost Sherin said the issue of graduate students returning to campus is somewhat different because most of them do not live on campus. She said they are also being considered in terms of what classes will be remote, what classes will be in-person, and how space will be handled. Assistant Provost Casazza added that she meets with all of the graduate associate deans at all of the schools weekly, and she receives feedback from them regularly on how these scenarios might apply to their programs.

A senator asked in the Zoom chat function if the calendar changes only apply to the fall quarter. Assistant Provost Casazza said that is their sincere hope right now. However, she noted that it is far too early to know what the winter quarter will look like, let alone the spring.

Senator Kathy Martinez asked about if the extension for withdrawal during the spring quarter applied to Feinberg. Assistant Provost Casazza said that change is intended for programs on the quarter system. If a program in Feinberg is partnered with TGS and on the quarter system, she said then it does apply to those specific programs.

Senator Helen Thompson said that some of her constituents were advocating for a reading week if Northwestern decides to return to quality grades in the fall. Based on that, she said that then Scenario A would be the preferred option.

Senator Nick Marchuk asked if there would be funding available to support students who could use things like lab equipment remotely. Associate Provost Sherin said that a proposal for technology resource funding for incoming students is currently under consideration.

Past President Baron Reed spoke in favor of the longest calendar option for two reasons. He said it is closest to what Northwestern does already and it will make returning—when that is possible—to normal practices a little bit easier. The second reason, he said, is that it is easier to be flexible when there is more time in the quarter. He also pointed out that end of spring considerations for what students are experiencing now is as urgent, if not more so, as it was when the pandemic started.

Senator Fred Turek asked if the administration expects most of the students will return to campus during the fall quarter even if they are taking classes remotely. Associate Provost Sherin said they anticipate many of the first and second year students will be living on campus, and some third and fourth year students will be living in the Evanston-area. She said they hope that each student will also have some kind of meaningful in-person academic experience even if most of their classes will remain online. As restrictions lessen, she said they also hope these in-person interactions will increase.

Senator Bob Gordon asked why the options for the fall calendar did not include start dates earlier than September 16. Assistant Provost Casazza said that she felt faculty might not want to start before

September 16. Associate Provost Francis said the University also has to plan for the students to return to campus in sequences rather than the typical two-day move in.

Senator Sue Pechter wondered if there would be an opportunity for general faculty input for the choices in the fall quarter. Assistant Provost Casazza said the administration was hoping to get the Senate's feedback as the representatives of all faculty. She expects this decision will need to be finalized in the next few weeks. They want to make sure to faculty and chairs have plenty of time to prepare.

Senator Mark Witte asked how other schools like Stanford are handling the summer length rule. Assistant Provost Casazza said there is a rule in place where faculty have between two to three months during the summer when they can't be working on other things. The administration makes every effort to preserve that.

Senator Julie Myatt asked a clarifying question about Scenario B, specifically when it ends. Assistant Provost Casazza said all the scenarios will have students home by Thanksgiving. Associate Provost Francis said almost all universities are following a strategy wherein they will be done with the quarter or semester by Thanksgiving.

Senator David Schoenbrun asked about whether the space planning has taken into consideration medically vulnerable faculty and staff, and how that mechanism will be communicated. And, relatedly, one of his constituents is concerned that if their remote class does not fill, their career will be negatively impacted as a result. Associate Provost Francis said they are being sensitive to everyone's health. He said there is a task force that is looking into how confidentiality will be managed should a faculty, staff member, or student need to remain off campus for medical reasons. Assistant Provost Casazza said that in the fall most classes will be remote based on the space limitations. As things open up, they will remain mindful of his constituent's concern.

Senator Lilah Shapiro said she was concerned about Scenario A because it asks students to study over Thanksgiving break, which is a very difficult time to focus even under normal circumstances.

Senator Fred Turek reiterated the point that faculty in the sciences would have difficulty starting the fall quarter early due to a number of obligations and complicated factors.

Senator Helen Thompson asked if Northwestern will provide PPE to faculty who return to campus. Associate Provost Francis said yes—everyone who returns to campus will receive a mask.

Senator Steve Carr said some contracts preclude faculty from teaching before September 16. Assistant Provost Casazza concurred.

Senator Ceci Rodgers said that she felt it was more humane to start on September 16 for faculty who do teach during the summer so that they have time to prepare for the fall quarter and recuperate.

Senator Hermann Riecke said that Senator Turek is right that many faculty in the sciences have contracts and grants that require they do research for a certain amount of time in the summer. However, even if a faculty member has two and half months of summer salary from a grant, he presumed they would be willing to start early.

Past President Reed asked if final exam sessions are remote could they begin later than usual. Assistant Provost Casazza said if they are remote, it won't necessarily mean finals are asynchronous. She said they still need a workable schedule. Associate Provost Sherin said that extending the time students need to focus on school when they return home could be a challenge.

Senator Hao Zhang said that two and a half months salary from NIH is not a federal limit. It is Northwestern's policy.

The president asked how classrooms will be cleaned in between classroom instruction. Associate Provost Francis said they are looking at expanding the passing period between classes. Cleaning will be up to the students, he said. They are looking for enough sanitary wipes so they can give them to each student before they enter the classroom.

Senator John Thorne said that he heard faculty may be asked to clean rooms. Associate Provost Francis said they would not ask the faculty to do that. He added that the only unusual step in the music school, for example, might be the cleaning of instruments.

Senator David Schoenbrun asked if there have been attempts to evaluate the quality of ventilation in different buildings. Associate Provost Francis said they have. The ventilation systems vary based on the age of the building.

Senator Venkat Chadrachar wondered if the administration thought students might be less receptive, or less careful wearing masks than the current personnel on campus are. Associate Provost Francis said faculty will not be enforcing these rules. They hope that everyone is responsible. He said he's less concerned about the masks than he is about social distancing. Associate Provost Sherin said this is a big consideration for Student Affairs and other units in deciding how to communicate the importance of taking these measures seriously.

The president thanked the Provost Office representatives for coming to speak with the Senate and listening to faculty's concerns.

The president then announced two new business items, the first of which is report from Senator Noshir Contractor speaking on behalf of the Research Affairs Committee.

Senator Contractor said that the Research Affairs Committee did an extensive review of how leaders across the schools work with IRB. He said they have prepared a detailed report and intend to present it to Vice President for Research Milan Mrksich, Senior Vice President for Business and Finance Craig Johnson, and Interim Provost Kathleen Hagerty. He shared four points from the committee's executive summary, which were as follows: there was a lot of variance across the schools (serious delays in some schools and adequate support in other schools); inconsistency regarding communication between investigators and IRB; lack of responsiveness; and capacity to be able to process requests in a timely fashion.

The president introduced the second item of new business, a resolution from the Social Responsibility Committee.

Senator Josh Hauser presented the resolution:

Whereas, The unlawful killing of yet another black person, George Floyd, this time at the hands of four Minneapolis police officers, and the nation-wide and international protests that have followed, have again revealed the deep wounds of structural racism in American society; and
Whereas, These events have occurred in the setting of the COVID-19 pandemic that has had a disproportionate impact on Black and Brown citizens; and

Whereas, We are reminded once again that institutional silences about racism have become complicit with it; and

Whereas, This time calls on all of us to think creatively and urgently about race, inequalities, and justice in our community, and we join with President Schapiro and Interim Provost Hagerty in these efforts; and

Whereas, We as a university faculty have the opportunity to facilitate awareness, sensitivity, and learning for our students and for each other as colleagues, in the issues of race that have historically undermined the ideals of our society;

Be it resolved, That we as a Faculty Senate support commitments to the hard work of racial justice in our roles as teachers, researchers, advocates, and leaders.

Be it further resolved, That we consider the ways our personal privilege and power may perpetuate systemic inequities and alternatively use our positions to promote racial justice and equity.

Be it further resolved, That while the content of these commitments will necessarily be different for each of us, we strive to highlight and address issues of racial inequalities and racial injustice in each of our areas of scholarship and work to challenge the realities of racism in our courses, our research, our writings, our policies, and our work as clinicians.

Be it further resolved, That most fundamentally, we must *listen* with humility to students, colleagues, patients, and families who are the victims of racism, engage in the necessary dialogues that require us to examine our own institution, and *advocate* with passion for a community that reflects the values of equality and justice.

A motion was made to approve the resolution. That motion was seconded. The president then opened the floor for discussion.

Senator Hariman thanked the committee for putting together a resolution on such short notice.

Past President Reed also thanked the committee for pulling this together so quickly. He also mentioned that the University will be conducting a search for a new Chief Diversity Officer. He welcomed feedback from senators and their colleagues if they have thoughts on what that position should do for the University.

Senator Ceci Rodgers said the resolution was moving and beautifully written.

With no further discussion, a vote was held and the Senate approved the resolution from the Social Responsibility Committee.

The president then thanked Roger Boye, the Senate's parliamentarian, the Senate's staff—Secretary to the Senate Jared Spitz and Faculty Senate Researcher Tricia England, the Executive Committee, and of course all the senators for their service this year. President-Elect Therese McGuire thanked the president for her efforts and service this year as well. She also said she is looking forward to working with the Senate as president next year.

With no additional new business, the meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jared Spitz
Secretary to the Faculty Senate