

Northwestern University

Minutes of the University Faculty Assembly Meeting of May 14, 2012

The University Faculty Assembly held its 2nd and final meeting of the 2011-12 academic year on May 14 in the 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 4:30 PM by Faculty Senate Vice Chair Babette Sanders.

1. Faculty Senate Vice Chair Babette Sanders welcomed everyone and gave a brief historic overview of the newly established Faculty Assembly.
2. The minutes of the January 25, 2012 meeting were approved and will be posted to the Faculty Senate website.
3. Babette Sanders introduced John Elson, Chair of the Faculty Senate Handbook Committee, who reported that the Handbook Committee, made up of nine faculty members, collaborated with Associate Provost Jim Young and Deputy General Counsel Stephanie Graham to update the Faculty Handbook, which had been last revised in 2001 and was outdated in many respects. The revisions did not make any date policy changes, although there were a number of policy areas that the committee members thought should be changed. It was decided that those areas, such as changes to the provisions on integrity and research and submission of proposals for grants, needed to be considered by a committee with broader expertise in conjunction with administrators with specialist areas. The Faculty Senate is planning to have a regular process for revising the Handbook on an ongoing basis to ensure it remains current.

John Elson explained that a final draft of the revised University Faculty Handbook was submitted to the Faculty Senate for approval. The Faculty Senate has had a first and second read and will take a final vote on the Handbook at the June 6, 2012 Faculty Senate meeting. Babette Sanders thanked John Elson, the Handbook Committee, Stephanie Graham, and Jim Young for their hard work and dedication to this enormous and significant undertaking. She encouraged everyone to read the Faculty Handbook carefully and to send any additional comments on areas that may need further attention to Faculty-Senate@northwestern.edu for consideration in future revisions.

4. President Morton Schapiro talked about diversity at Northwestern University. He began by applauding the faculty statement regarding their goal to create a positive, inclusive, and dynamic Northwestern Community, which is a goal everyone at NU supports. Unfortunately, all higher education institutions face diversity issues, but he firmly believes that NU can succeed in creating an inclusive community as long as everyone talks openly and honestly, working together and not blaming each other.

President Morton Schapiro reported that student input on diversity and inclusion has been very productive and eye-opening. Students have been extremely articulate in voicing their dissatisfaction, but also in providing firm ideas, making it clear that administrators, faculty, and staff, all need to be held accountable and work together as a community towards a solution. The administration was requested to and will prepare a document that will showcase the timeline of what actions have already been taken, as a reminder that despite a lot of good effort, NU still has a long way to go.

The petition, "Creating a culture of diversity at Northwestern University," was introduced. The petition calls on the administration to publicly commit to do the following: 1). Diversify Demographics 2). Diversify the Environment 3). Diversify the Curriculum 4). Diversify the Intellectual Culture. A lengthy discussion ensued. Faculty members were reminded of their charge to devise courses, put them through curricular review, implement, and teach them, so they were strongly encouraged to think about ways to engage curricular change since they own the curriculum.

After a lengthy discussion, it was determined that it was not appropriate to take a vote on the petition at that time. A motion was made, and seconded, to table the discussion. The petition will be given to the Faculty Senate for further action.

5. Babette Sanders introduced the next agenda item, which speaks to the role of non-tenure eligible faculty at Northwestern. Several issues and concerns were brought up and discussed including, enormous teaching loads, no recognition for innovations in research and in the classroom, little or no voting rights, and disproportionately lower salaries. The driving force for change lies at the school level, but the administration was strongly encouraged to get involved. A reward and/or merit system must be devised to recognize and fairly compensate non-tenure eligible faculty. President Morton Schapiro agreed that non-tenure eligible faculty have emerged over the last couple of decades, yet the university

structure has not recognized them suitably. He is in full support of finding a resolution for this serious issue.

6. Babette Sanders introduced the next agenda item, which asks the NU administration to define what shared governance means to them and whether there is a role for faculty in the budget deliberation process. President Morton Schapiro stressed that faculty involvement in shared governance and the NU budget process is strongly encouraged and welcomed by the administration. The administration does have more responsibility in the budget process, but not exclusively, and the larger the role of the faculty the better it is going to be for the future of the university.

Faculty members stressed that they would like to see the administration be more transparent, especially when it comes to the budget and budget process. President Morton Schapiro agreed and expressed his complete willingness to provide this requested accessibility to faculty. Provost Daniel Linzer went on to explain that the administration has in fact tried a few different things, with mixed success, to include the faculty in the budgetary process. On several occasions, they extended an invitation to the Budget standing committee of the Faculty Senate to meet with Administrators and go through the budget. In the first year they met quite regularly, but this past year members of the Faculty Senate Budget committee were not available and declined the offer to meet. The administration tried to create other opportunities, including having faculty present to the budget committee the consensus from the faculty on what the priorities are. In addition, faculty were encouraged to meet with the budget committee, committing to attend all of the meetings and devote their time to understand the complete budget and the way it is put together, but the time commitment was too great and no faculty members accepted the invitation. The administration will continue to work with faculty to create a culture of inclusion.

A question was raised about transparency as it relates to the issue of living wages and subcontractors. The Faculty Senate passed a resolution that supported the constitution of a working group on the issue, because in order to move this matter forward to the next step and to make some decisions about budgeting priorities or what might be done as a collective unit, data and information is needed. The Faculty Senate has requested that this working group gather data, perhaps look at the models of other schools, and then start to consider where that would fit in some of the budgeting priorities here at Northwestern University. Given the expressed desire for transparency, the administration was asked

whether the working group on living wages, or on improving the working conditions and pay for Northwestern workers including subcontracted workers, can be set up and if this would be one area of transparency in the budgeting process. President Morton Schapiro expressed his full support and asked Eugene Sunshine, Senior Vice President of Business & Finance, to speak to the matter. Eugene Sunshine explained that the administration determined that the best way to proceed in the matter was to roll the question of the living wages, where we were on it, and where we should go, into the Faculty Senate Budget committee for further development.

7. Babette Sanders introduced the next agenda item by asking the administration to talk about the Strategic plan in terms of how it is being operationalized, where the humanities fit in, and how the plan will be prioritized if NU doesn't meet revenue expectations. Provost Dan Linzer reported that the administration has begun to set numerous processes in place for implementation of the Strategic Plan. The deans and vice presidents present annually on the strategic planning for their unit, including reporting on specific plans for the coming year and addressing how the goals of that unit contribute towards making progress on the university wide goals of the strategic plan. The Office of Change Management is working closely with the Office of Administration and Planning on maintaining an ongoing list of the items that are making progress towards the plan, and on developing metrics to evaluate how NU is doing that. This information will be reviewed by a committee that will monitor this and help to catalyze thinking about areas that may not be on track or may not be gaining as much momentum as is suitable.

Provost Dan Linzer briefly talked about the Strategic Plan in terms of where the humanities fit in. He explained that the strategic plan doesn't make explicit reference to any specific domain of knowledge or learning and teaching, rather it contains broad themes that cut across the university, to which all areas of the university, including the Humanities, should think about how to make a contribution. For example, the Humanities are as important in conversations about energy and sustainability, or about the performing arts, or about writing and oral expression, as any other area of the university. Sanford Goldberg, Chair of the Catalyst committee added that the Strategic Plan is rather general in its terminology and permits everyone to think about how to go from the general to the specific, so he challenged everyone to think about the ways in which units can advance both themselves and also the

university simultaneously. He expressed his willingness to meet with anyone interested in discussing the matter further.

8. Babette Sanders introduced the next agenda item by asking the administration to talk about how faculty raises are determined and what guidelines are given across schools to promote equity at all faculty levels. President Morton Schapiro explained that the three professional schools, Feinberg, Law, and Kellogg have greater latitude in determining faculty salaries compared to the centrally funded schools, since administration decides on a salary pool for each unit. The administration looks at the total budget and then compares that to the various incoming revenue funding sources. Units make a request for faculty salary funding and the administration tries to fulfill that request. Once received, each unit distributes the funds accordingly to individual departments and centers and they then distribute the funds to Faculty as they see fit. The issue of salary compression was brought up. A major issue is that the external market sets a price that inflates faster than the salary pools at NU so in many cases years of service are not reflected in salaries and quite often junior faculty end up having equal or greater salaries than more senior faculty. The administration plans to look into this matter further.
9. President Morton Schapiro briefly talked about the administration's commitment towards finding suitable accommodations for a Faculty Club. As spaces open up as a result of the upcoming building projects the administration will look into reserving a permanent site for this purpose. Provost Dan Linzer explained that the administration recently proposed the Great Room to be used for this purpose during the lunchtime hours, but faculty members did not consider this a viable solution.
10. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Snyder, Faculty Senate Administrative Coordinator