

Northwestern University

Minutes of the University Faculty Assembly of December 4, 2015

The Fall University Faculty Assembly, the first of two meetings, of the 2015-16 academic year was held on Friday, December 4, 2015 in Swift Hall Room 107 on the Evanston Campus, with a videoconferencing connection to Wieboldt Hall Room 421 on the Chicago Campus. The meeting was called to order at 2:15PM by Faculty Senate President Edward FX Hughes. Approximately 115 Faculty and Administrators were in attendance.

1. Welcome and Introductions: Faculty Senate President Edward FX Hughes welcomed everyone and gave a brief self-introduction, subsequently introducing President Morton Schapiro and Provost Dan Linzer. He provided an overview of meeting expectations and laid the ground rules for discussions, questions, and remarks.

2. Remarks by President Schapiro: President Morton Schapiro presented an abridged State of the University address which included the following items:

- **Research Support:** Northwestern University has been enormously successful in attaining sponsored funding, bringing in approximately 620 million dollars in external research funds which is roughly 29% of the overall NU budget.
- **Fund Raising Campaign:** Northwestern University has raised nearly 2.7 billion dollars of the 3.75 billion dollar goal, and is expected to go beyond 4 billion. President Schapiro gave credit for fundraising success to the talented people at NU who create products that are easy to sell to donors.
- **Applications:** There continues to be an increased interest in attending Northwestern University, as undergraduate applications are likely to hit 35,000 in number.

3. Discussion: President Morton Schapiro responded to questions from the audience as well as to questions submitted by Faculty prior to the meeting, which were sent to the President in advance of the meeting. The questions and answers are as follows:

Football players were told they don't need a union because the School will meet their basic grievances. What has the University done to meet those demands that sparked the union movement from the football players?: President Morty Schapiro remarked that it is hard to know exactly what the demands were that sparked the union movement and added that there is an inherent problem with the question being asked in that it implies that there was strong support on the football team, but that is alleged and has not been proven. He stated that Northwestern has always been at the forefront of the NCAA legislation with the autonomy move and has greater discretion over what can be done for the athletic program. Further, he explained that Northwestern has pushed forward for the other power five conference a number of things that have always been done, including the treatment of concussions with "eye in the sky" even at away games and the way athletics medicine was separated. President Schapiro

knows of no great unrest on the football team and firmly believes Northwestern has done every best practice. He is not aware of anything that NU should be doing that it isn't doing already.

Morty, how did your two older children's college experiences change the way you think Universities should be run?: First, President Morty Schapiro shared his experiences with two helicopter parent talks and remarked that it was entirely unrealistic for parents to simply turn off being parents and found it incredibly arrogant from the viewpoint of the institutions the implication that they knew more about a child than a parent would. President Schapiro does not give helicopter parent talks but instead asks parents to be a partner for four years. Second, he believes there is a big disconnect sometimes between the overall reputation of an AAU research University and their care and concern for undergraduates, so he will make sure Northwestern keeps a close eye on undergraduates.

From statements by Morty and Dan, I understand that the university is flush with money from a successful We Will campaign. One priority for the money will be hiring "stars." How will the presumably high compensations offered to the stars square with the compensation for the rest of us existing "non-stars?": President Morty Schapiro emphasized that the Northwestern Faculty body already consists of stars and this fact can be easily proven when looking at the rankings of sponsored research. He explained that people as great as the people that are already at NU will continue to be hired and the retention of "stars" remains a top priority.

A follow-up question was asked. **What's implied by this hiring outside stars can create dramatic inequality within Departments and so I didn't hear anything in your response addressing the issue that would have to come from another source about the maintained whether your stars or non-stars what you might do with these resources to address the inequality issue:** President Morty Schapiro replied that currently there is a Faculty initiative on salaries, benefits and treatment that will address these issues. He believes the University needs to invest in the current Faculty otherwise a wrong message will be sent that one will only be treated fairly with an outside offer.

University Faculty who are not tenured or on tenure tracks feel extremely insecure because they're on year-to-year contracts that they worry might not be renewed. Have you considered changing the contract system or doing anything groundbreaking to make these highly valued (by students) teachers feel less like second-class citizens?: President Morty Schapiro explained that this is an effort the University has been engaged in on an ongoing basis and there is ample evidence that some of the greatest undergraduate teaching, especially at the introductory level, at Northwestern is done by contingent Faculty not in the tenure line. He acknowledged Weinberg as a national leader in treating Non Tenure line Faculty in a way that is consistent with the incredible value they provide.

What are the efforts being made to attract more middle income students? My assumption is we have students whose families are very well off and the ones who receive significant

financial aid with not as many in between. I think that fosters a skewed and divided campus culture.

Follow-on Comment from Another Faculty Member: Poor whites seem to me one of the most neglected “class” (actually, since the working class disappears they are increasingly in limbo) in America. There seems to be little political or bling advantage in furthering their cause. Many of them vote republican, like guns and heavy metal and the way they dress does not become “irony” at the fashion shows. While I was at Harvard, there was one very enlightened Dean who made a special effort to recruit and grant students of this background in a powerful reverse-discrimination drive. As a result, some of my best students were first-generation university poor whites. President Morty Schapiro explained that changing the formula for financial aid has resulted in the middle income student generally paying only half of the tuition at COFE schools. Further, he talked about Northwestern University’s involvement with QuestBridge, a non-profit program that connects low-income students to participating higher education institutions, that enables low-income students of all backgrounds and races to attend college.

I would like the issue of coal divestment addressed (There was strong support from multiple Senators for this topic). President Morty Schapiro emphasized how strongly he feels about coal divestment and explained that he has, on numerous occasions, shared his views with the NU investment committee, but untimely the final decision rests on them. He will continue to advocate for coal divestment.

Morty, in about four more years, you will hit 10 years at this job. Will that be enough, or would you anticipate staying longer? President Morty Schapiro explained that he genuinely loves his job and would only consider leaving if he felt he could no longer do his job well or if he lost the confidence of the staff, faculty, students, and the Board of Trustees.

4. **Remarks by Provost Linzer:** Provost Dan Linzer emphasized his optimism that Northwestern is a great University that is doing extremely well, as are its Faculty, students, and overall health of the institution, and NU’s success should be celebrated. Provost Linzer talked about two major task forces underway this year including the Global Strategy Task Force and the Task Force on The Undergraduate Academic Experience both intended to elevate NU’s overall mission and standing. He also reported on the Initiative on Support for Faculty Excellence, an evaluation tool meant to aid in the creation of an environment where Faculty can achieve as much as possible individually and collaboratively.
5. **Discussion:** Provost Dan Linzer responded to questions from audience members as well as to questions submitted by Faculty prior to the meeting. Subsequently, the floor was opened for additional questions. The questions and answers are as follows:

I'm very glad to hear that the President and Provost have asked us to submit issues for discussion at the Faculty Assembly on Dec. 4. I hope that one of them will address the issue of publication embargoes for new Ph.D.'s who file their dissertations on ProQuest. This issue especially concerns candidates in the humanities and social sciences. Scientists publish their work in online journals, rather than books, so there is no reason to delay publishing a completed dissertation. But in the humanities and social sciences, it's very different. The norm here is to do considerably more work after the Ph.D.--extending the research, broadening the address, polishing the prose--until the project is ready for publication in book form. At most universities, the grant of tenure in these fields is contingent on publication of a book. But publishers are much less likely to accept projects that have long been available online with open access--even if they've been significantly revised in the meantime. That is why many students in these fields (and their mentors) want to hold out for an embargo of up to six years, freely granted. It is vitally important to include the graduate student leadership in this discussion, and to be as open and transparent as possible about (1) the actual policy and (2) the process by which it is developed. Provost Dan Linzer has spoken with The Graduate School and found that, at this time, the embargo policy has been suspended pending further review, which means that NU has reverted to the previous procedure in which students, in consultation with their advisors, determine the best course of action in regards to publishing their dissertations. He explained that the policy varies by field, Faculty member, and student so that they can make the determination of what is in their own interest.

I've been thinking some more about this forum and something else occurs to me. I know we're doing a lot to increase our percentage of Pell Grant recipients, which is great. But if we're not careful, working so hard on economic diversity can reduce our intellectual diversity, and that seems to be happening in spades. Doubtless Economics is a fine department :-), but should we really be recruiting 80% of our students to major in it--with the rest divided among a small number of STEM fields? I pulled that figure out of a hat, but it can't be too far off. Meanwhile, NU has spent a lot over the last few years to expand our faculty in the arts, humanities, and social sciences--only to teach an ever-diminishing number of students. Surely the Admissions Office can do something to counterbalance this trend? I would love to hear the provost and/or the president address this issue. Provost Dan Linzer presented the following actual student data on intended majors from the 2014 entering class: 20% Engineering; 11% Communications; 8% Medill; 5% Bienen Music School; 1.5% SESP; and 54.5% WCAS. Approximately 23.5% of the WCAS students were undecided; 33% planned to major in the Sciences; 36% planned to major in the Social Sciences, but only half (18%) in Economics not 80%; and 7.5% intended to major in the Humanities. He explained that the Admissions office does an excellent job recruiting the right students, but has no control over what happens once they are admitted. Over the course of the undergraduates' academic career many students change their major.

Provost Linzer was asked when the results/analysis of the Faculty Survey will be shared with the Faculty. Additionally, if specific problems have been discovered, are you going to deliver the information to the specific relevant Deans? Provost Dan Linzer answered yes to both questions stating that the results will be sent to Faculty very soon and Deans will be notified of all items that stand out.

There is a movement across the country to create “safe spaces” for students. What are we going to do to make sure the school is “unsafe” for ideas so that a variety of opinions can be expressed and there can be intellectual challenge going on. President Morty Schapiro believes in “safe places” but it need not to infringe on freedom of speech.

When will we the Faculty get the results of the Faculty Survey? It is long overdue. Can you assure us that the results of the Faculty Survey, that we all so kindly answered, will be shared with all of us? Provost Dan Linzer explained that the results of the Survey only became available recently, at the end of the last fiscal year. He reported that that data from the results have been vetted since the beginning of Fall quarter and are being shared with appropriate schools. The reports containing the survey results are scheduled to be rolled out over the next year as the committees work to finalize each one. Provost Linzer will not put time limitation/deadlines on getting the reports completed and emphasized the importance of each report being thoroughly and careful analyzed by the members serving on these committees. The goal is to analyze the data and come up with a compelling study with results that are actionable and he does not want this process to be rushed in any way.

- 6. Concluding Comments:** Senate President Ed Hughes reminded Faculty to complete their Title IX training and encouraged them to use the Senate as a major resource for articulation of Faculty interests, priorities, concerns, and good news.

President Hughes thanked President Morty Schapiro and Provost Dan Linzer for well delivered, well-articulated, concise, and cogent comments, and thanked everyone for attending and participating in the Assembly.

- 7. Adjournment:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Snyder
Faculty Senate Administrative Coordinator