

# Northwestern University

Minutes of the University Faculty Assembly of June 7, 2016

---

The Spring University Faculty Assembly, the last of two meetings, of the 2015-16 Academic Year was held on Tuesday, June 7, 2016 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 4:05PM by Faculty Senate President Edward FX Hughes. Approximately 130 Faculty and Administrators were in attendance.

**1. Welcome and Introductions:** Faculty Senate President Edward FX Hughes welcomed everyone and provided an overview of the meeting Agenda and expectations, also defining the guidelines for discussions, questions, and remarks.

**2. Remarks by President Schapiro:** President Morton Schapiro thanked Faculty Senate President Ed Hughes for his outstanding leadership and for doing a remarkable job advancing shared governance at Northwestern. President Schapiro presented an abridged version of the report he gave on the state of the University at the Spring “Conversations with the President” hosted by NUSAC (Northwestern Staff Advisory Council). The following are highlights of his presentation:

- **Advancement in Admissions:** Over the last decade, the nature of the student body has changed as more diverse first generation students of ranging socio-economic backgrounds are being admitted. Pell-eligible student admission has risen to 17% and is expected to continue rising. The admissions rate is 10.7%.
- **Investment Advisory Committee:** President Schapiro emphasized his commitment to responsible investing and talked about the formation of an advisory committee on socially responsible investing.
- **Faculty Hiring and Retention:** Northwestern continues to hire and retain top Faculty. This year there has been an increase in offers being made to, and accepted by, high caliber Senior Faculty. Faculty retention rates are also extremely high.
- **Infrastructure Update:** Many of the building projects are almost complete including the Kresge project which is slated to be completed earlier than originally scheduled.
- **Fund Raising Campaign:** Northwestern University has raised nearly 2.9 billion dollars of the 3.75 billion dollar goal. President Schapiro gave credit for the fundraising success to the work of the staff and Faculty.

**3. Discussion:** President Morton Schapiro responded to questions from audience members as well as to questions submitted by Faculty in advance of the meeting as follows:

**How is the university handling extra financial pressures given the deadlock in**

**Springfield?:** President Morty Schapiro remarked that Northwestern being a private institution with a \$10 billion endowment is relatively protected from the deadlock in Springfield.

**Given the UCLA shooting, what is the University doing to make the community here feel safer and to enhance emergency procedures in case something ever happened?:** President Morty Schapiro explained that NU conducts live shooter drills, a desktop drill, and employs actors to aide in educating members of the NU community on emergency procedures. Northwestern also closely partners with Chicago Mayor Emanuel.

**How are town gown relations with Evanston and Northwestern these days?:** President Morty Schapiro explained that relations between Evanston and Northwestern have improved greatly and continue to improve. The University continues to make strikes, partnering with the Evanston mayor, alderman, and city manager. Northwestern is investing in the school District 65 k-8 and continues to invest in Evanston Township High School.

**I'm wondering if you could comment on the trends with online education and how Northwestern might perceive that and how they may interface with that:** President Morty Schapiro explained that online education has not been as disruptive as originally thought. He is proud that under Provost Dan Linzer's leadership NU has been at the forefront and actively engaged in this trend.

**The message that our undergraduates are hearing loud and clear is that to be a successful Northwestern graduate you need to make a lot of money and have a social conscience. The message comes through statements of public events and to the "branding" in which we portray students with multiple majors and fancy careers. We bring these alums to speak at graduation. My students who want to be social workers or high school teachers do not recognize themselves as part of the future Alums about whom we brag. Why are we narrowing the definition of success that we market to ourselves in the outside world? What does that say about the mission of the University?:** President Morty Schapiro repudiated the premises stated in the comment/question and remarked that NU does the opposite. In the Visitor Center, for example, the individuals who are being celebrated on the wall are from various academic areas and across many professions. The same is true of the many individuals showcased in the Alumni magazine and materials generated by schools and the Library.

**In the Fall, I believe, you had told us that the 46% of the entering undergraduate class for next year had been students who identified themselves in the field of Engineering am I accurate in that?:** President Morty Schapiro explained that the figure of 46% is not correct and in actuality what was stated is that 22% of the freshman class will be in the McCormick School of Engineering, up considerably from 16%.

**Over the past five years, but particularly in the past two years, I've noticed that there's been a really significant uptick in funding for undergraduate research particularly the kind of funding that can offset unpaid internships. I think this is fabulous because particularly in the arts and the humanities a lot of our students are not only at a disadvantage on the quarter system competing with students who are on the semester system but unpaid internships are just a racket and in a terrible situation. My question is will Northwestern ever have onsite childcare?:** President Morty Schapiro appreciated the compliment and agreed with the comment about the unpaid internships being a racket, adding that they advantage students with parents who have the financial means. At Northwestern there are over 1000 students being paid to do research and NU is expanding so that if, for example, a student receives an unpaid internship at the Art Institute of Chicago, NU will pay them. President Schapiro asked that Provost Dan Linzer address the question about daycare in his upcoming remarks.

**How might a Trump or Clinton Presidency affect Northwestern?:** The financial impact could leave NU extremely vulnerable. President Schapiro remarked that almost 30% of Northwestern's operating budget is research support, most of which comes from government funding.

**What keeps you up at night?:** President Morty Schapiro is concerned about the budget/over expanding and the safety of students.

4. **Remarks by Provost Linzer:** Provost Daniel Linzer thanked the Faculty Senate and Senate President Ed Hughes for this great year of collaboration and for being instrumental in advancing shared governance. Highlights from his remarks are as follows:

**Faculty Excellence Reports:** Provost Dan Linzer reported that the Faculty Excellence reports are underway and will be out soon. He explained that the series of studies, which will eventually lead to four Faculty Excellence reports, have proven to be more complicated than originally thought so additional experts have been brought in to the process to dive deeper in to the data, thus slowing down the process. He also emphasized that the Administration is not creating the reports but rather the Faculty are creating them with the help of the Administration.

**Provost Linzer talked about the following areas in which NU has made special investments to grow the Faculty:**

- **Feinberg Expansion:** The expansion at the Medical School will produce 100 new tenure line Faculty positions in Feinberg. There is significant growth in biomedical research.
- **Computer Science:** NU has made a big investment in Computer Science due to high student demand and because Computer and Data Science are foundational for so many areas across different fields at Northwestern University and many of the Faculty hires are people who span fields.

- **Global Expansion:** NU is committed to investing in Global expansion. The Roberta Buffett gift was meant to create funds for additional Faculty lines in Global Studies. The Global Task Force will soon be issuing its report on areas of strategic emphasis and areas that could have the biggest impact across the University.
- **Astronomy and Physics:** NU is investing in Astronomy and Physics, which is an emerging area of studies.
- **Native American Studies:** Three tenure line Faculty have been hired in WCAS in the area of Native American Studies; one jointly with the Kaplan Humanities Institute; one jointly with History; and one jointly with Institute for Policy Research. This year there was a focus on recruiting Faculty for the program in Environmental Policies and Cultures who look at indigenous uses of land and the environment, and bringing a Native American perspective to the studies.

**Administration New Hires:** Provost Dan Linzer announced several important Administrative hires which includes Jabbar R. Bennett as Associate Provost of Diversity and Inclusion and Marcia Isaacson as Associate Vice President of Compliance.

**Distance Learning:** Provost Dan Linzer talked about different ways Northwestern is continuing to evolve in the area of Distance Learning. A Faculty Distance Learning Work Group has been established, which identifies the most exciting initiatives put forward in the form of Faculty proposals and makes recommendations for funding. The proposals have revealed that Faculty are thinking creatively about online components of what they are doing, not only in the form of full online courses, but also in creating hybrid courses or other strategies for providing online education and changing what happens in the classroom. Northwestern continues to develop Coursera MOOCs that are often Faculty experiments in finding new modes of reaching audiences and in teaching in new ways.

**Impact of Expanding and Improving Facilities:** Provost Dan Linzer talked about the positive impacts of the many facilities projects that are creating new and/or improved learning spaces, research spaces, teaching spaces, and living spaces.

**Recommendations of the Task Force on The Undergraduate Academic Experience:** Provost Linzer remarked that there has been much discussion on the proposed calendar changes, but he also wanted to highlight other important specific recommendations of the Task Force on The Undergraduate Academic Experience that Northwestern has already taken action on. He highlighted several items including increased investment in undergraduate research; reduced credit hours required for graduation from 45 to 42 in the School of Communication; Weinberg holistic curriculum review; addition of members to CAPS (Counseling and Psychiatric Services) and eliminating the cap on the number of visits; moving forward with a shared advising portal; and CTECS review and new platform.

**Childcare:** Nim Chinniah, Northwestern University Executive Vice President, reported that NU has been working on various approaches to expanding childcare through community based childcare provision,

partnering with the Y and Bright Horizons to subsidize childcare and to create slots for NU community members. The Administration is continuing to investigate on campus childcare.

5. **Discussion:** Provost Daniel Linzer was asked the following questions:

**This question concerns the proposed mega professorships being floated within Feinberg. It may be a spin term but I believe the term is inappropriate and is creating a new higher academic title of mega professor. I see it as a university-wide issue because it ripples through the Senior Faculty within all the schools as to why they are not also mega professors:** Provost Linzer explained that the term mega professorship refers to the size of the gift for an endowed chair not the honor to the faculty. Feinberg was trying to create fully funded endowed chairs that paid for salary, benefits, and discretionary funds, calling them mega professorships.

**How can we learn more on the Chicago Campus what's going on the Evanston Campus and vice versa? There are a lot of interesting ideas out there but I find that it's hard for that right hand to know what the left hand is doing sometime. Is it the online newsletter? How do we learn where this distance learning group is? How do we learn about these innovative labs? How can we collaborate and what's the best channel for finding out this information?:** Provost Linzer responded by saying that University Relations sends out a weekly update on news around the university; there are publications from all the schools and the university that come out regularly; the NU website is updated regularly; the NU Scholars site provides useful information; the Faculty Senate and University Assemblies are a great source of information; and attending Domain Dinners.

6. **“SharkNotes”:** History Professor Ken Alder explained that “SharkNotes,” a website created by NU students and incubated at the Garage, allows the purchase and selling of course notes, which raises concerns about intellectual property, copyright, and a larger issue around pedagogy. Associate Vice President and Deputy General Counsel Stephanie Graham addressed several of the issues and offered further assistance to any Faculty member needing additional information and/or guidance.
7. **Concluding Comments:** Senate President Ed Hughes thanked President Morty Schapiro, Provost Dan Linzer, Senate Vice President and Professor Laurie Zoloth, Professor Ken Adler, and Deputy General Counsel Stephanie Graham for providing very valuable, thoughtful, and, in some cases, humorous information. He then thanked everyone for attending.
8. **Adjournment:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Snyder  
Faculty Senate Administrative Coordinator