

# Northwestern | FACULTY SENATE

Dear Northwestern Faculty,

I hope your classes and other endeavors are going well in this first week of the spring quarter! At the Faculty Senate, as elsewhere, spring is a time to mark our progress in the current academic year and to plan for 2023-24.

As you know, the [Faculty Senate](#) is Northwestern's only elected representative body. We work through committees, which prepare proposals that express faculty values and interests, brought to us from senators, often through their faculty constituents. These proposals can take time, as the Senate works deliberatively and negotiates in a shared governance structure with university administration.

Your senators participate in important policy and academic discussions with senior leaders. They sit on university-wide committees that review academic policies, campus safety and wellness, resources and planning, and other critical areas. The Faculty Senate President participates in monthly senior leadership meetings that include department heads in central administration and deans of the university's schools. This is new under President Mike Schill and reflects the high level of trust placed in the Faculty Senate to work constructively in shared governance.

I hope you'll take the time to read this newsletter, written to give you an overview of Senate activities, and to share your thoughts and suggestions with your department's Senate representative or by emailing me and the Faculty Senate leadership.

## RECENT FACULTY SENATE MEETINGS

The full Faculty Senate meets monthly, as does the Senate Executive Committee, consisting of the chairs of the 12 standing committees and the Senate's President-Elect, President, and Past President. University leaders are frequently invited to monthly meetings to brief senators on new initiatives and pressing issues of importance to faculty and the broader University. The meetings are also where Senate committees bring formal resolutions that are then delivered to the University President and Provost, and the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

- *January Faculty Senate meeting:* Provost Kathleen Hagerty and Senior Associate Vice President for Finance and Treasurer Mandy Distel presented Northwestern's 2022 Financial Report and took senators' questions. The report was detailed and illuminating, as it added historical context to the overall budget discussion and outlined goals and priorities for the next fiscal year, including devoting more resources to faculty and staff salaries. To read more, see the [January meeting minutes](#).
- *February Faculty Senate meeting:* Vice President for Operations Luke Figora and Chief of Police and Senior Associate Vice President for Safety and Security Bruce Lewis briefed senators on the recommendations of the Community Safety Advisory Board and a separate external review of the campus police. Some of the recommendations were adopted at the beginning of the 2021-22 academic year, including reducing racial identifiers in crime alerts, expanding the use of unarmed responders to low-risk events and re-routing policing complaints. The Campus Safety and Wellness Committee, constituted at the beginning of the current academic year, is working on other recommendations for reducing the use of armed police, including a Campus Alternative Response Team to respond to student mental health crises and Safety Ambassadors to respond to more common low-risk events, such as being locked out of a building. The Faculty Senate has had representatives on both committees. Much more detail about this can be found in the [February meeting minutes](#).
- *March Faculty Senate meeting:* Northwestern's Chief Diversity Officer Robin Means Coleman and Assistant Provost for Diversity and Inclusion Michelle Manno updated senators on their work to support diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus. There are a number of new initiatives supporting faculty and students, which are discussed in some detail in the [March meeting minutes](#).

Separately, NU Ombuds Sarah Klaper spoke about the work of her office, which has received more than 350 requests for services in the first 18 months of the office's existence. The Faculty Senate first proposed the creation of an ombuds office and lobbied for several years to bring it to fruition with Klaper's hiring in August 2021.

## COMING UP:

### April 12, 2023 Faculty Senate Meeting:

*University Governance: The Board of Trustees*

*Guest Speaker: Board of Trustees Chair Peter Barris*

*Resolution on Bird-Safe Windows*

### May 10, 2023 Faculty Senate Meeting:

*Nominations for 2023-24 Faculty Senate President-Elect*

*Vote on Nominations for 2024 Honorary Degrees*

### June 7, 2023 Faculty Senate Meeting:

*Election of 2023-24 Faculty Senate President-Elect*

*Select Committee Reports*

## STANDING COMMITTEES

The Faculty Senate's standing committees continue their work on a variety of issues and projects, some of which came before the full Senate in the winter quarter:

- The Senate's Secure Faculty Survey Committee finished its evaluation of methods and providers for a full faculty survey. At the February meeting, Chair Gina Petersen shared the committee's recommendation to administer an updated version of the 2015 Faculty Perspectives survey. Work continues in partnership with the Provost's Office (more on this under "Additional Events").
- A resolution aimed at [improving the transfer student experience at Northwestern](#), including better data-gathering, greater transparency, and additional support, passed unanimously at the Faculty Senate's March meeting.

For those not familiar with Northwestern's Faculty Senate standing committees, I'd like to provide a little background about their work. Before informing the Senate on an issue or writing a resolution, the committee collects information and data to determine what (or whether) action should be taken. The Senate's dedicated researcher, Tricia England, is frequently tasked with gathering data from peer institutions and unearthing the latest studies and articles that provide broader context on an issue. Committees or their chairs also meet with relevant unit heads and central administrators to flesh out the current state of the issue at Northwestern. Several standing committees held such meetings in the winter quarter, including:

- *Educational Affairs*: Standing committee chair Jill Wilson met with Associate Vice President of Student Outreach and Dean of Undergraduate Enrollment Christopher Watson to discuss transfer student enrollment at Northwestern.
- *Faculty Handbook*: Met with Associate Provost for Faculty Sumit Dhar and Deputy General Counsel Priya Harjani to gather information on faculty policies, ask about how external links to policy are managed, and to discuss communication of policies moving forward.
- *Non-Tenure Eligible*: Held their standing quarterly meeting with Associate Provost for Faculty Sumit Dhar, which included discussion of NTE contracts and salaries, how NTE senators connect with their constituents, and acknowledging the post-pandemic burnout many NTE faculty face.
- *Research Affairs*: Held their standing quarterly meeting with Vice President for Research Milan Mrksich, Vice Dean for Scientific Affairs and Graduate Education Rex Chisholm, and Senior Associate Vice President for Research Ann Adams, which included a discussion of IT policies in Feinberg and how those policies affect research faculty.
- *Social Responsibility*: Standing committee chair Celia O'Brien met with Associate Provost for Administration and Finance Mark Francis to determine Northwestern's approach to bird-friendly

windows on campus.

## ADDITIONAL EVENTS

- *Quarterly Summit:* On Feb. 21, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate held its quarterly summit with senior leadership to discuss issues of importance to the faculty and to brief leadership on the work of the Faculty Senate standing committees. President Mike Schill, Provost Kathleen Hagerty, Associate Provost Sumit Dhar and Vice Provost Jake Julia attended the Summit. President Schill informed us of his continued plans between now and May to visit various schools and meet with faculty, administrators and students. Also in attendance were Joan Johnson, Director for Faculty, Vicky Getis, Director of Teaching and Learning Technologies at NUIT, and Jennifer Keys, Senior Director of the Searle Center. They briefed us on what the University is doing with regards to the impact of generative AI technology such as ChatGPT.

The Office of the Provost has formed a new [Generative AI Advisory Committee](#) charged with monitoring developments in generative artificial intelligence applications as they relate to academic policy and practices. Updates have already been made to the [Provost's Academic Integrity policy](#), under the sections on cheating and plagiarism that now explicitly address the use of AI technology, and examples of syllabus statements have been provided. The Searle Center has created a useful [guide](#) for exploring the pedagogical possibilities of generative AI and avoiding pitfalls. You may also have attended various webinars focused on aspects of generative AI. No doubt this will continue to be of interest for future discussions and events.

- Faculty Senate leadership met with Associate Provost Sumit Dhar and received an update on the status of several surveys in development. The first, mentioned in the fall newsletter, is a Salary Equity Study being developed by the Office of the Provost in consultation with a committee of faculty and administrators. The committee met for the first time in mid-March. Also, as part of the NIH-supported Northwestern University Recruitment to Transform Under-Representation and achieve Equity (NURTURE) Program, there will be a STEM-directed survey focused on topics of diversity and equity. These large survey efforts consequently impact the timing of the planned comprehensive Faculty Perspectives Survey advocated for by the Faculty Senate. We will continue to work with the Provost's Office to ensure its development and timely release, while understanding the factors that may lead to a slight delay.
- The committee searching for a new Dean of Undergraduate Enrollment to replace Chris Watson, who is retiring at the end of this academic year, welcomes your input on the qualities you would most value in this position. As a member of this committee, I invite you to send any thoughts or comments to [NorthwesternEnrollment@wittkieber.com](mailto:NorthwesternEnrollment@wittkieber.com)

As a reminder, any faculty member can attend [meetings of the full Senate](#) as a non-voting member. President Schill continues to come to Guild Lounge for the meetings as a non-voting member. The meetings are in person at Scott Hall's Guild Lounge or on Zoom. The meeting agenda, along with Zoom information, is posted in advance on the Senate's website.

[Your department has an elected Faculty Senate representative](#) who stands ready to field your questions and concerns. In addition to departmental representation, NTE faculty also have dedicated NTE representatives from each school. For more information or to learn more about the Senate, you can also visit our [website](#), contact us at [faculty-senate@northwestern.edu](mailto:faculty-senate@northwestern.edu), or feel free to reach out to me at [c-rodgers@northwestern.edu](mailto:c-rodgers@northwestern.edu)

Finally, each year one-third of the Senate is up for election or reelection. Emails will be sent to the requisite department chairs and associate deans later this month. We request all elections be complete by our final meeting of the year on June 7th.

I hope you have a productive and successful quarter ahead!

Best Regards,  
Ceci Rodgers  
Assistant Professor, Medill  
Faculty Senate President

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