

Northwestern University
Minutes of the Faculty Senate
Guild Lounge and Videoconference
June 3, 2026

The Northwestern University Faculty Senate held a standing meeting on June 3, 2026, in Scott Hall's Guild Lounge and over Zoom videoconference. Faculty Senate President Ian Hurd (Political Science) called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. A quorum was present.

The president noted that the minutes from the May 6, 2026 meeting were approved electronically and entered into the record.

Actions

1. The Faculty Senate elected Senator Ian Horswill (Computer Science) as President-Elect.

Meeting Summary

I. Report of the Faculty Senate President

The president said the University has constituted a committee on AI and Teaching. The Provost's Office asked for faculty representation on the committee and Senator Francesca Tataranni (Classics) agreed to serve.

The Senate Leadership (President, President-Elect, Past President) will soon meet with the Provost's Office to continue to advocate for faculty salaries, particularly for the lowest paid faculty, and to also begin to work through the Faculty Senate's proposal to amend the Faculty Handbook regarding removal from teaching and research.

Likewise, the Senate Leadership will soon meet with Chief Financial Officer Mandy Distel to discuss the University's new budget model, particularly to gather specifics so faculty can weigh in on how the changes might affect them.

Lastly, he reminded the Senate about the Faculty Assembly on June 8 at 11 a.m. A senator asked if the proposed resolution from Northwestern's AAUP chapter would be discussed and the president suggested it be brought up during new business.

Senators who spoke during this portion of the meeting: Branden Ghena (NTE, McCormick)

II. Vote for President-Elect

The president introduced the following candidates:

- Ana Maria Acosta (Phys. Therapy & Hum. Mov. Sciences)
- Ian Horswill (Computer Science)
- Seth Lichter (Mechanical Engineering)

Each candidate made a statement, outlining their vision for the Faculty Senate and how they planned to lead.

The floor was then opened for questions.

Senators asked questions about the candidates' plans to build consensus, how to make the Senate more efficient, how they might navigate a crisis, like a fiscal emergency, and how they envision participation, particularly in the committees. The candidates answered each question thoughtfully and were heartily thanked by the Senate for their willingness to run.

After discussion ended, the Senate, per its Bylaws, commenced with ranked choice voting.

Senator Ian Horswill was then chosen as the next Faculty Senate President-Elect.

Senators who spoke during this portion of the meeting: Helen Tilley (History), Debu Chakravarti (Ob-Gyn), Rebecca Zorach (Art History), SonBinh Nguyen (Chemistry),

III. Faculty Salaries

Senator Horswill, chair of the Salary and Benefits Committee, along with fellow committee chairs Senator Cat Fabian (NTE, SoC), chair of the NTE Committee, and Senator Acosta, chair of the Student Affairs Committee, and Faculty Senate Researcher Tricia England, presented a preliminary report on faculty salaries, which can be found [here](#) (slides 10-30).

Senator Horswill said they were still waiting on data from the administration, hence the report being preliminary. However, Senate Researcher England was still able to produce the annual peer institution faculty salary comparison (slides 16-18). Along those lines, Senate Researcher England made a call for ideas on how best to improve these salary reports.

A senator asked if the loss of a grant would be reflected in the salary data and if the data presented are based on 9-month or 12-month salaries. Senate Researcher England said the comparisons are bird's eye averages and so there isn't enough granularity to determine if grants are included.

A senator also asked about the scale of merit raises. Senator Horswill said it is a little less than 3% of the salary and benefits (~\$2 billion) expenses in the annual budget.

Senator Horswill then contextualized the salary data, and Senator Acosta followed up with charts on the historical trends in salary data at Northwestern and its peers (slides 20-25). Senator Acosta demonstrated how Northwestern has fallen behind average peer salaries in the last five years, both in growth rate and actual dollars. A senator asked about revenue trends for the schools and the presenters said they could look at that University-wide.

Senator Fabian then shared an update—following up on the resolution passed in April 2026— on NTE salaries and cost of living (slides 27-30). This data, she said, was initially gather to show the degree of the need of Council of Language Instruction faculty, and that prompted a broader study of NTE faculty salaries across disciplines. She stressed that some of the salaries, like, for example, assistant professors of instruction, are for faculty who have been in their positions many years but have few pathways to promotion and have thus seen a

percentage decrease in equivalent compensation since the Senate has been tracking NTE salary data.

A senator asked if other schools have promotion policies for NTE (it appears to be ad hoc and varies by school for both tenure and non-tenure track faculty).

Senators who spoke during this portion of the meeting: James Fitzgerald (Neurobiology), Branden Ghena (NTE, McCormick), Sarit Markovich (Strategy), Maria Dizon (Pediatrics), Rebecca Zorach (Art History), Julie Marie Myatt (Theatre)

IV. Restructuring Standing Committees

President-Elect Rebecca Zorach presented a [plan to restructure the Faculty Senate's standing committees](#). President-Elect Zorach said this plan was prompted by conversations with the administration on how to improve communication with the Senate.

Two new committees are being proposed: an IT Committee and a Facilities and Sustainability Committee, both in response to evolving changes in campus life and the need for faculty input in these areas. The mission of three other committees is being expanded and altered: Faculty Survey becomes Community Affairs (both internal NU community and the broader communities in Evanston and Chicago), Committee on Cause members will serve on an additional committee unless they are tasked with a case, and the Governance Committee will expand its remit beyond the Bylaws to general University policy. Lastly, since their missions so closely align, the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities and Faculty Handbook Committee will be combined into one standing committee.

V. New Business

During new business, the Senate briefly discussed the proposals to amend the Faculty Handbook on the agenda for Spring Faculty Assembly. It was made clear that the Faculty

Senate has, along with the Provost, purview over the Faculty Handbook and would consider any recommendations from Faculty Assembly members.

Senators also expressed a want for a survey on United Healthcare. The president said there are plans for a potential survey to go out this summer to determine faculty's experience with the new healthcare provider.

Senators who spoke during this portion of the meeting: Branden Ghena (NTE, McCormick), Larry Christiano (Economics), Ian Horswill (Computer Science), Ann Bradlow (Linguistics) Cat Fabian (SoC, NTE), Rebecca Zorach (Art History), Maria Dizon (Pediatrics)

VI. Thank You

The president thanked the Senate staff, the Senate leadership, the Executive Committee, and all the senators for their work this year. President-Elect Zorach was then handed the ceremonial gavel. She thanked President Ian Hurd for his calm and consistent leadership of the Faculty Senate this year and expressed excitement for the year to come.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jared Spitz
Secretary to the Faculty Senate