

Northwestern University
Minutes of the Faculty Senate
Guild Lounge and Videoconference
June 4, 2025

The Northwestern University Faculty Senate held a standing monthly meeting on June 4, 2025, in Scott Hall's Guild Lounge and over Zoom videoconference. Faculty Senate President Jill Wilson (Industrial Engineering and Management Sciences) called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. A quorum was present.

The president noted that the minutes from the May 7, 2025, meeting were approved electronically and entered into the record.

Actions

1. The Northwestern Faculty Senate elected Senator Rebecca Zorach (Art History) as its next President-Elect.

Meeting Summary

I. Report of the Faculty Senate President

The president's report, along with standing committee reports, can be found here: [June 2025.pptx](#). Below is a brief summary the president's report.

- An internal Senate survey will be sent to all senators on Thursday, June 5th, and will remain open until June 20th.
- Reminder: Faculty Senate reception at President Schill's on June 5th at 5:30 p.m.
- Update on the interactions with the Board of Trustees:
 - The Academic Affairs Committee hosted a panel of researchers discussing the impacts of the recent grant cancellations. Panelists described the difficult process of obtaining grants, the percentage of grant submissions that are typically awarded, the direct impact of the halted funding on faculty, staff,

and students, and the severe disruption to the research pipeline. The president said the conversation was highly informative for the Board.

- The Board also invited a group of faculty, including some from the Senate, for a lunch, which the president said provided a crucial opportunity for faculty to speak directly with Trustees.
- Tell Me Something Good: Senator Swati Kulkarni (Surgery) is the lead investigator on a recent drug trial suggesting that a widely used FDA-approved menopause treatment is effective in preventing breast cancer. Dr. Kulkarni presented those findings on June 1st at the annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology.

II. Vote for President-Elect

The president introduced the two candidates for President-Elect: Senator Jacqueline Babb (IMC, Medill) and Senator Rebecca Zorach (Art History). Each candidate gave a five-minute statement and then the floor was opened for questions.

Senators asked both candidates about their shared governance philosophy, strategies for ensuring faculty have a say in the university, how they would work with the administration and the Board of Trustees, what changes they might try to implement within the Senate, how they would handle issues where there was no clear consensus amongst senators, what units the candidates would consider bringing in to speak before the Senate, what they were most proud of while chairing their respective committees. Senators also thanked Senator Babb and Senator Zorach for running for this important position.

The Senate then voted and chose Senator Rebecca Zorach as the next Faculty Senate President-Elect.

Senators who spoke during this portion of the meeting: Debu Chakravarti (Obstetrics and Gynecology), Ian Horswill (Computer Science), Ian Hurd (President-Elect, Political Science), Eric Zaslow (Mathematics), Thrasos Pappas (Electrical and Computer Engineering), Susan

Pearson (History), Ceci Rodgers (Medill), Axel Mueller (NTE, WCAS), Danny M. Cohen (NTE, SESP), Jon Guryan (SESP)

III. Standing Committee Report

a. Student Affairs

Senator Ana Maria Acosta (Physical Therapy and Human Movement Sciences), chair of the Student Affairs Committee, said her committee focused on further understanding the student experience at Northwestern, specifically executive actions/orders that have impacted students at Northwestern (slides 11-16). Three main categories emerged this year: cuts to DEI and the removal of civil rights from vulnerable groups, the sweeping changes to immigration policy (Visa revocations, pause on Visa interviews, certain Chinese students having Visas revoked and others being further scrutinized), and the frozen and cut federal research funding that has significant impacts on current graduate students and has led to a 20% reduction from the prior year in graduate students admissions. Other ancillary, but important topics discussed this year included AI cheating, time to degree for graduate students, sixth funding cuts for graduate students, and overall budget questions.

Senator Acosta outlined several faculty concerns related to the above. Namely, how is the University upholding its values when those values are under attack at the federal level? How can communication to all stakeholders be centralized—not separating communications to students and faculty? What ways can faculty continue to support international students amid reductions in Visa granting and renewals?

Senators asked questions about committed funding for five years for graduate students who are already at Northwestern, and how bridge funding will work if grant money stays frozen or is cut altogether. Senators also had further questions about guidance for international students and whether or not they should travel abroad. Faculty Senate Researcher Tricia England cited [recent reporting in the Daily Northwestern](#) about an email from Northwestern's Office of International Services and Student Scholars warning international students that reentering the country may

be difficult should they choose to leave. Senators likewise worried about legal representation for those students and the cascading effects of losing international students, both undergraduate and graduate.

Senators who spoke during this portion of the meeting: Greg Beitel (Molecular Biosciences), Rebecca Zorach (Art History), Mark Johnson (Biomedical Engineering), Judy Rosenbaum (Law), Susan Pearson (History),

IV. Faculty Salary Report

Senator Ian Horswill (Computer Science), chair of the Salary and Benefits Committee, reported faculty salary changes over the past year (slides 15-28). He credited Faculty Senate Researcher Tricia England and Senior Director of Institutional Research Debbie Crimmins with the vast majority of data collecting and organizing. Senator Horswill also reminded senators that the data in the slides is aggregate, which limits the conclusions one can glean from a report like this one. He paid special attention to the salary increases for faculty continuing in rank (slide 23). While they are still waiting on this data from school to school (will be included in the committee's year-end report), the data university-wide is approximately the same for every rank across the University.

A senator from the University Libraries requested data on Librarian salaries be added to the report in future years. She said being included in the reports would be helpful to both union represented and non-represented librarian faculty as they continue to advocate for themselves. Accordingly, the following data was shared for the record:

As part of the union contract, a non-tenure track path to promotion was implemented for librarians, with three levels: assistant, associate, and senior.

For FY2024, assistant librarians have a starting salary of \$71,750. Associate librarians start at \$82,000 [that's me and my salary]. Senior librarians start at \$92,250.

Next year, those numbers will increase to minimums of \$73,543 for assistant, \$84,050 for associate, and \$94,556 for senior. After that, librarians and library workers will bargain for their next contract.

In terms of distribution, the libraries currently have four senior librarians, six associate librarians, and the remaining 20 or so are assistant librarians. Salary data for the non-unionized librarians is not currently available.

Senators asked about continued efforts to ensure salary equity and if there might be a study done to see if faculty salaries at Northwestern have kept up with inflation. Senators also noted the huge range in salaries for faculty, particularly on the low end for non-tenured humanities faculty and the phenomenon of salary compression. It was also pointed out that the salary figures were based on nine-month contracts. A senator also wondered if a report on supplemental income could further inform salary data on either end of the spectrum, but especially the low-end where faculty are forced to seek out other income sources.

Senators who spoke during this portion of the meeting: Jon Guryan (SESP), Kasey Evans (English), Liz Hamilton (University Libraries), Anne Zald (University Libraries), Susan Pearson (History), Ian Hurd (President-Elect, Political Science), Larry Christiano (Economics), Julie Marie Myatt (Theater), Cat Fabian (NTE, SoC), Ana Maria Acosta (Physical Therapy and Human Movement Sciences), Dan Mroczek (Medical Social Sciences), Judy Rosenbaum (Law), Danny M. Cohen (NTE, SESP)

V. Thank You

The president thanked the Senate staff, the Senate leadership, the Executive Committee, and all the senators for their work this year. Past President Regan Thomson (Chemistry) thanked Senate President Jill Wilson (Industrial Engineering and Management Sciences) for her steady leadership and firm commitment to faculty governance.

VI. New Business

The president said they would continue to meet with the administration over the summer and would share any necessary updates with faculty.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Jared Spitz
Secretary to the Faculty Senate