

Northwestern University
Minutes of the Faculty Senate
Scott Hall (Guild Lounge) - Evanston, Wieboldt Hall 421 - Chicago
April 10, 2019

The regular monthly meeting of the Northwestern University Faculty Senate was held on April 10, 2019 at Scott Hall's Guild Lounge in Evanston with videoconferencing to the Chicago campus in Wieboldt Hall 421. A number of Senators participated remotely. President Baron Reed called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. A quorum was present.

The president welcomed the Senate and then gave his report:

The president said that Morty and Mimi Schapiro will be hosting a dinner at their home for the Faculty Senate on Thursday, June 6, 2019.

The president and President-Elect Lois Hedman attended a mental health awareness training session offered by the Office of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). The president-elect is coordinating with that office to offer a similar training session for the Senate in the fall. The training will be focused on identifying people—students in particular—who are in a state of crisis and helping them connect with the resources they need in that moment.

The president and president-elect also had a conversation with Luke Figora, who is the Senior Associate Vice President and Chief Risk & Compliance Officer, about problems and opportunities surrounding ethics training at the University. The need for training of various kinds, such as for inclusive pedagogy, has been noted in other conversations currently taking place on campus. The Faculty Senate should expect to play a role in some of these discussions as they continue to take shape.

The president said elections for the position of president-elect in the Senate are forthcoming. In accordance with the recent changes to the Bylaws, the Executive Committee functions as a nominations committee, and will bring at least one nomination to the Senate at the May meeting. The president asked for senators to send nominees to the chairs of their respective committees.

Nominations may also come from the floor at the May meeting. However, he encouraged senators to contact the Executive Committee before the May meeting so they can then contact the nominee to ensure they are willing to serve as president-elect. In addition, all nominees will put forward a statement to be included in the packet for the June meeting, at which time the election will occur.

The president said the Spring Faculty Assembly is scheduled for Wednesday, May 22 in the James L. Allen Center. This meeting will have two parts: a presentation and question and answer session with President Schapiro as well as a presentation from TGS Dean Teresa Woodruff. Dean Woodruff plans to share her Vision 2025 plan and discuss what it means to belong to the Graduate Faculty.

Following his report, the president addressed a motion from Senator Alessandra Visconti to amend the approved March meeting minutes. The Senate considered the following changes:

Original:

Professor Jackie Stevens said she found some tension in the points made by Professor Nielsen: citing data on disadvantaged groups and then saying that administration of these policies is context-specific. She said the purpose of tenure is not to protect the Holocaust denier but to protect people making statements that are disfavored and in less powerful positions. Professor Stevens said she sees a difference in the Northwestern language in the Handbook and the University of Chicago language, and that the latter provides more protection for a professor's curriculum that may include harsh and offensive language. Her final point spoke to the issue of NTE faculty serving on committees (mentioned earlier) stating that NTE faculty cannot be trusted in those positions because they may be unwilling to take an adversarial position.

Amendment:

Professor Jackie Stevens said she found some tension in the points made by Professor Nielsen: *Nielsen cited data on how powerful institutions typically fail disadvantaged groups and then was arguing to empower the administration with more discretion.* Professor Stevens said the purpose of tenure is not to protect the Holocaust denier but to protect people making statements that are disfavored and in less powerful positions. *Although Professor Nielsen said she thought the University of Chicago policy and the Northwestern policy were not that different,* Professor Stevens said she sees a difference in the Northwestern language in the

Handbook and the University of Chicago language, and that the latter provides more protection for a professor's curriculum that may include harsh and offensive language. Her final point spoke to the issue of NTE faculty serving on committees (mentioned earlier) stating that NTE faculty *depend on the administration for their jobs and* may be unwilling to take an adversarial position.

The president then asked if the Senate had any objections to the above amendment. With no objections, the [minutes of the March meeting](#) were officially amended.

The Senate then heard reports from standing committees.

The Non-Tenure Eligible Committee presented the following resolution:

Whereas Northwestern should be an academic community in which all faculty are provided with institutional support to thrive, and

Whereas an integrated view of the University is needed to support all faculty, create an equitable climate, and achieve transparent decision making,

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate fully endorses the petition for an NTE Associate Dean position in WCAS and emphasizes the need to address the concerns of NTE faculty across all schools,

And that the Faculty Senate recommends that the Office of the Provost create a position at the rank of assistant provost or above to oversee non-tenure-line faculty affairs university-wide.

The president then opened the floor for discussion on the resolution. Following discussion, a motion was made to support the Non-Tenure Eligible Committee's resolution. That motion was seconded and then approved by the Senate.

The president then welcomed the Senate's guest speaker, Board of Trustees Chair Lanny Martin.

Mr. Martin thanked the Senate for the invitation. He gave a brief history of his time at Northwestern, including serving on the Board of Trustees for twenty years and serving as chair for the last two. Mr. Martin then detailed how the Board functions—how Board members are selected, their length of tenure, and what the Board prioritizes when selecting a new member. Like the Senate, Board committees do the majority of the detailed work. There are eight committees on the Board. Mr. Martin then noted the president’s membership on the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board. He praised the presence of a faculty member on that committee. Mr. Martin said that the Board and the administration work together, with broad policies largely being set by the Board, which are then predominately implemented by the administration. He also said the Board has made strides in improving their exchanges with the faculty. Examples of this are the luncheon with the Senate, breakout sessions with department chairs at the Board meetings, and a luncheon with faculty who were nominated to the various national academies. Mr. Martin said the Board hopes to continue to find ways for the faculty and the Board to interact because, in his view, there is more mystery between these two sides than there should be. He said that he considers faculty—all faculty—to be the most important part of a university. Mr. Martin continued that point by saying that the greatest achievement the Board has accomplished during his tenure is supporting the faculty’s contribution toward increasing the reputation and standing of Northwestern in the academic community to become one of the best universities in the world. He also said that the Board does not always recognize the differences between a corporation and a university. Mr. Martin said it is important to recognize how factors like long-term employment and the importance of preserving and enhancing reputation make governance of the university a unique challenge. As the University has gone through the budget deficit, Mr. Martin was more acutely aware of these differences. Therefore, he pledged going forward that he would do his best to ensure the chair of the Board and the president of the University are in lock-step with all strategic decisions.

The president then opened the floor for questions from senators.

Senator Fred Turek said he appreciated Mr. Martin’s comments about the growth of Northwestern’s reputation in the last twenty years. Furthermore, the Research Affairs Committee, which he belongs to, thinks Jay Walsh is doing a great job with the Office of Research. However, Senator Turek said that some of the units within that office, like the Office of Sponsored Research (OSR), have been

handcuffed by constant change, whether it be changes in regulation, employment, or office reorganization. It is difficult, he said, for individual faculty members to keep up with these changes, and they rely heavily on the support of the Office of Sponsored Research to keep them up to speed. But quite often, they are struggling to move grant proposals forward. He concluded by asking if the Board can help in any way to ensure Northwestern maintains its strong reputation in areas related to research. Mr. Martin said that research is an integral part of the University, and the Board is very proud of the fact that Northwestern has exceeded the goal of reaching \$700 million in sponsored research. He thanked Senator Turek for bringing this issue to his attention.

Senator Elsa Alvaro asked if Mr. Martin had specific thoughts on how the Board and the faculty can work together to enhance the stature of the University. Mr. Martin said that the recent implementation of meeting with department chairs at Board meetings has made a big impression on the Board. For example, they now better understand the vast differences between departments, and this opened their eyes to some of the nuances of the operations at Northwestern. He also reiterated the importance of meeting with the Faculty Senate.

Senator Laurel Harbridge-Yong said she really enjoyed the conversation at the last Board/Senate luncheon, but the Board's lack of knowledge about peer review processes struck her as large gap between the faculty and the Board. She then asked about ways faculty can positively represent what makes a university unique to the Board. Mr. Martin said that longevity of service on the Board helps members attain more knowledge about how a university operates and what makes it different from the corporate world.

Senator Claudia Swan said that one of the most striking differences between the student body now versus the student body twenty years ago is the economic diversity and the exciting exchanges that creates in the classroom. She said students now encounter individuals far different from themselves, and a lot of teaching happens in those moments of difference. She then asked whether or not the Board has made any efforts to meet with students, especially Board members who were themselves scholarship students or first generation and who could possibly serve as mentors. Mr. Martin said that the Board meets once a year with students. The model for years has been to hold breakout sessions where four or five groups of students are paired with four or five groups of Board members. One

characteristic that Mr. Martin said the Board members recognized after these sessions was how overly busy the students tend to be. He said that discussions about the pressures students are under should continue and that the Board is aware that more resources need to be directed towards supporting the mental health of the students.

Senator Venkat Chandrasekhar asked if there was a way to formalize a process to bring new initiatives at Northwestern to the Board so they are aware that support is needed in a certain area. Mr. Martin said that working through Vice President Jay Walsh and Provost Jonathan Holloway is the best model. He added that there is a Board committee on innovation and invention that serves as a platform for new initiatives.

Senator Karen Springen asked for any comments on the support for graduate students and about admissions for undergraduates, both the recent scandal and the rising rates of early admission. Mr. Martin said that the rising early admit rate is deliberate. This is done in order to secure outstanding students, and especially those who are most excited to be at Northwestern. As far as student satisfaction goes, Mr. Martin said that the Board always is considering ways to improve student life.

Senator Carol Schmidt asked about the process of how the Board views investments and issues with social responsibility. Mr. Martin said a group of trustees serve on the Investments Committee, which oversees the endowment. For many years, he said they have met with different groups of students who are interested in socially responsible investing. Mr. Martin added that the Board is now developing a sub-committee that will be devoted to considering issues of socially responsible investing. He foresees the Board developing an overall policy on investment responsibility.

Senator Lois Hedman asked if the Board was open to additional opportunities for faculty to serve on committees outside of Academic Affairs. Mr. Martin said that the Board will see how the work with the Academic Affairs Committee evolves over the next few years before they consider the possibility of adding more faculty.

The president asked about the priorities of the WeWill campaign—and the extension of its fundraising goal—are set, especially in regard to how those relate to the academic mission of the University. Mr.

Martin said the Alumni and Development Committee met with many faculty members who pitched their research that could be presented to potential donors for investment. The extension of the campaign also gives the University the opportunity to fund research projects that were not captured in the initial fundraising stage.

Mr. Martin concluded his presentation by stating that the projections show the budget will be balanced in FY2021. The Board is also working on a highly-detailed seven-year plan with the administration that should help ensure a balanced annual budget. The Board has tentative capital expenditure plans built into this seven-year projection. They include renovating the Jacobs Center, the library, and building new housing.

The president thanked Mr. Martin for his service over the last twenty years and for speaking with Senate.

With no new business, the meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Jared Spitz

Secretary of the Faculty Senate