

Northwestern University
Minutes of the Faculty Senate
Videoconference
June 1, 2022

The Northwestern University Faculty Senate held its standing monthly meeting on June 1, 2022 over Zoom videoconference. President Robert Holmgren called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. A quorum was present.

The president noted that the minutes from the May 4, 2022, meeting were approved and entered into the record.

The president then began his report.

The president said following Dillo Day student covid cases doubled. He said Evanston cases seem to have leveled off at roughly 44 per day.

The president then recapped what happened in the Senate over the past year. He said that one of the main goals of a faculty senate is to provide a mechanism for direct communication with the administration. The Senate leadership does this in two ways, he said: 1. Every quarter the Executive Committee holds a meeting with the University President, Provost, and other senior administrators. 2. Every other week the Senate Presidents meet with the Associate Provost for Faculty, and monthly with the Provost. At both of those meetings, he said, the agenda is set by the Senate. He noted these agendas often derive from discussion items from previous Senate meetings.

The president said the Senate also strives to be proactive and not reactive. The Senate does this he said by aligning the standing committees with the proper administrative offices. He listed several examples of these partnerships, including the Associate Provost for Faculty working with the NTE Committee (follow-up to the NTE survey), the Budget and Planning Committee Chair serving on the Resource Planning Workgroup, the Research Affairs Committee meeting quarterly with the Vice President for Research and his counterpart in the medical school, the Student Affairs Committee meeting with the

Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, and the Senate President serving on the Policy Review Committee.

The Senate also passed a number of resolutions, he said, but the year began with a follow-up to last year's resolutions on the Cheer Team. The president noted that new Athletic Director Derrick Gragg spoke to the Senate in the fall. He also said that Dr. Gragg commissioned an independent report, hired a new coach, and placed the Cheer Team under the purview of the Athletic Department.

The Senate also passed two resolutions on matching retirement contributions, which the president said may not have produced the desired result, but did highlight faculty sentiment. He also pointed out that the University President and the Chair of the Board of Trustees commented on the second resolution (i.e. what factors would lead to the suspension of retirement benefits in the future), stating that they both believed the pandemic was a unique, once-in-a-lifetime event.

In the fall, the president said the Senate passed a resolution on all-gender restrooms. He said that an architect has been chosen and funding has been secured for putting an all-gender restroom in Annie May Swift Hall. The administration is also doing a survey, he said, of other University buildings to see where else all-gender bathrooms could be built.

The president said the Senate also passed a resolution on hiring and retaining staff. After that resolution, he said the Provost spoke to the faculty and heard their feedback on the critical staffing situation.

The Senate also passed a resolution on academic freedom in the study and teaching of social and racial justice, which the president said was an important moment of solidarity.

The president commented on the concern over police activity on campus and the subsequent creation of the Community Safety Advisory Board (CSAB). He said that Senators Therese McGuire and Steve Adams served on the CSAB. While they have made progress, he said that committee has not yet completed its work.

The president said the Senate also provides a forum for key administrators to speak to the Senate, and likewise for senators to pose questions to those administrators. This year the Senate heard from Senior Associate Vice President for Equity TiShaunda McPherson, Ombudsperson Sarah Klaper, Vice President for Athletics and Recreation Derrick Gragg, Vice President for Operations Luke Figora, Provost Kathleen Hagerty, Senior Associate Vice President for Finance and Treasurer Mandy Distel, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees J. Landis Martin, and Chief Investment Officer Amy Falls.

The president concluded his report by saying he thought the Senate accomplished a number of important things. Going forward, he said he hopes the Senate is even more successful.

The president then asked if there were any questions.

Senator Kyle Henry asked if the Senate leadership communicated with the central administration about concern over Dillo Day. He said he shared his individual concern to Vice President Figora and others about the effect such an event might have on the end of the academic year. The president said the Senate leadership met with the Provost Office and pointed out that the timing of Dillo Day could potentially disrupt finals.

Seeing no further questions, the president moved on to the next item of business: vote for Faculty Senate President-Elect. The president said each candidate will first make a statement and then the floor will be open for discussion. The president then asked Senator Regan Thomson to choose heads or tails to determine who speaks first. Senator Thomson chose heads and the outcome of the coin flip was heads.

Senator Thomson said it was a privilege to be considered a candidate for President-Elect of the Faculty Senate. He said the written statement he shared with the Senate detailed various accomplishments that qualify him for such an important position. Within in his department (Chemistry) and outside of it, Senator Thomson said he has a reputation as a reasonable person, a person who listens to and values the opinions of others, a person who thinks first before speaking, and a person who works well with others to produce useful outcomes. He said he believes he has the respect of his colleagues not only because of the work that he does, but the way he goes about his work. That is, the care he said he has

for process and the deep respect he has for other people. He added that, for him, the sharing part of shared governance is finding middle ground and working with people to get things done. The idea of shared governance is a powerful one, he said. It allows for ideas from across the University to be represented in the Faculty Senate in a way that transcends the hierarchical structures in home departments and schools. However, to be effective, Senator Thomson said the Senate needs committed faculty who are invested, who work within the committee structure, and who are considerate of their colleagues. He said shared governance does not work if the administration fails to see the Senate as a legitimate voice, a voice that will work with them on the shared goal of bettering the University. He indicated that the personal qualities and communication skills that he possesses can help focus the Senate's voice and present issues to the administration in a clear, rational manner, all of which will help strengthen the legitimacy of the Faculty Senate. He then thanked the senators for their consideration.

Senator Amaral said it was a pleasure to be considered for the position of Faculty Senate President-Elect. He said he tends to be more exuberant, and that may lead people to have certain opinions of him, but he said he values consensus and collaboration. He said he's worked with senators and faculty across almost every school on committees and grants and various research projects. He said he has been able to collaborate with people from different backgrounds, and who have had different experiences and different goals. Senator Amaral emphasized that he believes in listening to people, and that one needs to actively ask what people think. He said this was why he sent a survey to senators prior to this meeting: because he wanted to learn what members of the Senate thought about things. He said it was very encouraging to learn that most of the respondents were in the Senate because they wanted to improve Northwestern. That is why he is in the Senate too, he said. He said it was also surprising to him that respondents said they felt ineffective and powerless. Such responses are concerning, he said, and that he believes this is due to the fact that people are not being heard. He said he has had personal experience with the difficulty of going through committees and being stymied. Senator Amaral acknowledged that he thought the Senate could do more in terms of communication and organization. He said he could not promise results, but he could promise a lot of effort to listen and take those opinions to the administration. At this moment in the world, he said there are too many things going wrong for the faculty not to take a stance and not to fight and push for something better. He said he thinks the university can be a place to lead some of that action, and that he hopes senators will trust him enough to elect him to the leadership of the Senate.

The president then opened the floor for discussion.

Senator Josh Hauser asked what the top three items each candidate has on the list for when they meet with the new University President. Senator Amaral said he has one item he would like to prioritize: reviewing how the Board of Trustees is structured. As it stands, Senator Amaral said he believes the Board has many problems, including diversity. He added that he thinks the Board is particularly resistant to listening to faculty, and in order to have effective shared governance, faculty must work with the Board. Since the Board is about to go through a program review, Senator Amaral said this was a pivotal moment to improve the chances of faculty, students, and staff being heard by the Board. Senator Thomson said the first item on his agenda would be ensuring the University President continues to hold quarterly summit meetings with the Faculty Senate's Executive Committee. The second item on Senator Thomson's list would be continuing to support staff. Third, he said he would push for faculty hiring to open up across all departments.

Senator Karen Alter spoke in favor of Senator Amaral. She said she has asked and received his support on projects well outside the parameters of his own research. She also said Senator Amaral has been a pioneer on diversity efforts in his department. She said she also served with him on a committee to help establish mentoring norms. Senator Alter said she liked that Senator Amaral has so many creative ideas, and added that she didn't think he would be a free agent of these ideas. Rather, she said she believed he would share his thoughts with the Senate and also be open to feedback from others, taking that feedback as an ambassador to the administration. She expressed concern about the Senate's practices. Namely, the fact that her committee did not meet much this year. Such a trend, in Senator Alter's view, is worrisome.

Senator Henry asked both candidates what they would do to continue to improve communication from the Senate leadership, either with the senators or with the general faculty. Senator Thomson said he thought an email—akin to those sent by the Provost or University President—outlining the key items the Senate is working on each month would be quite valuable. Senator Amaral said he agreed with Senator Thomson's suggestion. He said he thought the Senate could do more to communicate to the faculty what it is working on each month. He said he was concerned about the central administration's

claim that they listened to faculty during recent crises. He said he was unaware of any faculty being consulted outside of the Senate leadership, which led him to worry the University was not using the expertise across campus. As Senate President, he said he would make sure faculty would be consulted.

Senator Mark McCareins asked Senator Amaral what his action plan as Senate President would be for achieving structural change within the Board of Trustees. Senator Amaral said he is aware that the only way the Board can change is if the Board decides itself to change. He said his hope is the Board would respond to the thoughts and desires of the Northwestern community by considering different models employed by other universities. Many of the faculty, Senator Amaral said, accept things the way they are. He said he wants to bring up the discussion of what Northwestern could do differently. He said the faculty have no power outside of persuasion. He said he does believe Board members care about the University, and he hoped they would listen if a consensus was reached in the Northwestern community. He acknowledged that change would be hard and unlikely, but expressed a desire to start such a conversation at the very least.

Senator Lois Hedman said she was also concerned about changing the Board being the one priority Senator Amaral would have as Senate President. She said there are concerns much broader than decisions made during the pandemic. She said she thought the Senate was instrumental in improving the circumstances for NTE faculty. She also admitted she has felt quieted and talked down to by Senator Amaral. She said that she is concerned there would not be room to listen. Senator Amaral said he tried to become aware of the things the Senate has done. He said he has read reports from past committees, including the one composed after the NTE faculty survey. He said the NTE report was a wonderful example of actions taken by the Senate to listen to and respond to faculty concerns. Personally, he said he believed more follow-up is needed because some schools have yet to change in ways that they could. He also said that he listed changing the structure of the Board as his top priority because he sees such a change as transformative for the University's future. If faculty were serving on the Board, Senator Amaral claimed, then the retirement contributions would not have been paused. Likewise, he said the trend towards more NTE faculty, and more NTE faculty on precarious contracts, might not have been approved if faculty actively contributed to decision making.

Senator Julie Marie-Myatt asked how the Faculty Senate can advocate for more equity in an institution that at its core is not equitable. She also lamented the wealth the University possesses despite many faculty seeing negligible change in their salaries, in the staff they can hire in their departments, etc. Senator Thomson said change of the type Senator Myatt talked about will not happen overnight. He said continued dialogue and continued pushing towards equity is necessary with the knowledge that they might not see change immediately. Senator Amaral said he sympathized with Senator Myatt's comments. He said he too felt frustrated at the cut in costs when surpluses were being announced. He said he thought the Organization of Women Faculty were a good model for how to respond. They surveyed faculty and were active in efforts to make substantive changes for faculty. He compared this to what he characterized as the Senate's inaction during the pandemic. He also decried some of the choices made by the administration during the pandemic: cutting staff in IT and the Office of research, for example. He said he wrote letters to the University President and the Provost because he said he believes in thinking together about the consequences of something. Senator Amaral promised he was willing to stick his neck out to say these moves were wrong.

Senator David Uttal asked if this was the first contested election the Faculty Senate has had. The president said it is the first in four years. He added that the Senate Bylaws stipulate the Executive Committee nominates someone for President-Elect, and at the penultimate meeting the floor is open for more nominations. Senator Thomson was the Executive Committee's choice and Senator Amaral nominated himself.

Senator Carol Heimer requested that senators moving forward ask for each candidate to offer their thoughts. She then shared her experiences working with Senator Thomson in the past, including serving on committees with him, on which he did more than his share of the work and tracked everything that was going on whether he was able to attend a meeting or not. She also said she was impressed with Senator Thomson's experience with shared governance in a wide variety of areas across the campus. Senator Heimer then referenced the discussion about the Board of Trustees. She said she was troubled that the Board was being pigeonholed into only one function when they are also a fundraising body, which limits their ability to diversify in an economic sense. She said also this year was the discussion of the safety of Northwestern students and policing on campus and she wondered how the candidates would've handled those discussions and how they would've advised President Schapiro

to respond the protests. Lastly, Senator Heimer asked the candidates to share how they would create an agenda going forward that doesn't prejudge the answers to the questions each candidate are trying to pose. Senator Thomson said he has not given a lot of thought to the restructuring of the Board of Trustees. But in terms of diversity of thought, he did however sit next to a recent Trustee who was a painter from New York, a change from the typical profession of most Board members. Senator Thomson said that not knowing the full context of everything going on during the protests left him hesitant to formulate a strategy for what President Schapiro should have done. He conceded, however, that President Schapiro's response seemed heavy-handed. Finally, Senator Thomson said his agenda would come down to keeping questions open-ended, ones that senators formulate themselves rather than him dictating what he hoped they choose. Senator Amaral said Senator Heimer alluded to the reason why so many Board members have backgrounds in private equity and investments: they fundraise. However, other Boards, he said, are able to fundraise without selling seats. He said that Northwestern's Board is especially large with a preponderance of individuals who are already wealthy. He also questioned whether the fact that someone has money should be a qualifier for why someone gets to run a university. With regard to the campus police, Senator Amaral said data on police violence in the United States is prevalent and disturbing. He said on issues like this he will always personally stand on the side of the students. The Senate must decide what stance it wants to take, he added, but if elected he will also make his own decisions and speak often about what he believes. Regarding the final issue of how he would construct his agenda, Senator Amaral said he will actively ask people what they want. But he also believes he could provide some guidance on how faculty could have more of an impact.

Senator Fred Turek disputed some of Senator Amaral's positions on the size of the Board and the way the Board is constructed. He said he was most concerned though about Senator Amaral's stance on reshaping the Board. He said shared governance works when each group focuses on its own area. The Board, Senator Turek said, thinks about the University fifty years from now and they don't encroach on faculty matters. Because, as he put it, when the faculty tell the Board what to do, the Board could then tell the faculty what to do as well.

Senator John Thorne said he does not agree with the vocal minority of senators who believe Senate leadership has conspired to silence their voices. Conversely, he contended that those members

monopolized Senate meetings. He then shared the opinion that he does not believe one survey could determine how senators feel given such monopolization of the microphone at meetings. He then asked either candidate where in the Senate Bylaws the Senate is empowered to select who serves on the Board of Trustees. Senator Amaral followed that by sharing a personal story about growing up in Portugal and the monumental task of achieving a tenured position in Chemical and Biological Engineering at Northwestern. He said such experiences inform how he looks at the world: he sees the world for what it could be, not for what he is told it should be.

Senator Steve Adams said he is personally interested in having a Faculty Senate President who has some context for the flow of the year and business of the Senate. He said he believes Senator Thomson is one to speak his mind and make suggestions beyond the obvious. He then endorsed Senator Thomson. He also said that no matter who is elected he can be certain they will care a great deal about making the University a better place.

Senator Hannah Feldman said she understood Senator Amaral's comments on the Board. She said he is someone that recognizes where the power lies and the need to start thinking about the Board as the place where change should happen. She then asked Senator Thomson if discussing the Board with the new President, who comes from a public system where Boards function very differently, would be an important thing to do. She also said, as a faculty member of the Middle East and North African Studies Department, she has seen firsthand Board members' influence over what can and cannot be taught, and how much money is or is not given to study certain areas in the Middle East. Senator Feldman recognized, too, a different approach to change among the candidates—Senator Amaral sticking his head out despite the risks and Senator Thomson highlighting compromise in his written statement and talking about change taking a long time in organizations as large as Northwestern. Related to that point, Senator Feldman asked Senator Thomson how he felt about compromise as opposed to raising new, possibly impossible, but nonetheless exciting ideas. Senator Thomson said as Senate President his job would be to represent the Faculty Senate. He said if he is elected and Senator Amaral is still in the Senate and raises the issue of the Board, he would welcome such a conversation, as well as the deep thinking and interrogative approach such a serious issue demands. And if the Senate decides to bring that topic to the University President or the Provost, then he said he believes he would be the right person to amplify those ideas. To the point about substantive change, he clarified the comment he

made about how long progress can take. He said that should not be construed as his doing nothing in his department on diversity and equity. On the contrary, he said there were immediate changes he advocated for that were enacted and had positive outcomes. Senator Thomson then reiterated that he was interested in the position of Senate President because he enjoys amplifying other voices. That's not to say he is without opinions, Senator Thomson said, but that he values being the one to speak up for the group be it in his department for the graduate students or for senators should he be elected. Senator Feldman noted that in this moment in history at Northwestern she said she thinks this is the time for big, radical ideas, and for active fighting. She said she would want the Board to be a priority, and that she would want the Senate to advocate for as much voice and opportunity across campus as possible, hence her support for Senator Amaral's striving to challenge the status quo. Finally, she pressed for whoever is elected to think about how Northwestern can join the ranks of more progressive institutions in rethinking how education and the teaching necessary for that education is prioritized above all else.

Senator Judy Franks said she valued both candidates approaches as they each have strong qualities. She then asked what characteristic each candidate would adopt from the other. Senator Amaral said he leads several initiatives with faculty from various departments and disciplines. He said maybe the way he expressed things might give people the impression that he would railroad other opinions, but he stressed that was not the case. He said he does tend to talk too much and he needs to work on that. Senator Thomson said the experiences most senators have had with each other is through Zoom, and added that the election process even further distorts perceptions. He said it was a difficult question to answer, but he appreciates Senator Amaral's passion a great deal.

Senator Hauser said he appreciated the richness of the conversation. He then asked each candidate what one character trait they have and what one experience most qualifies them for the position of Faculty Senate President-Elect. Senator Thomson said he spoke with the program assistant in the Chemistry Department about his speech and one thing the program assistant said he appreciated about Senator Thomson was his preparation and his openness to listen to all points of view. He said that, aside from working in the Senate, being Director of Graduate Studies most prepared him for the role of Senate President. Senator Amaral said he is supportive and encouraging for people who share new ideas and who want to make things better. He then envisioned how this would be his approach to leadership in the Senate. One experience, Senator Amaral said, that has informed his call to action was how the

administration responded to two recent crises. He said he felt the administration did not communicate with the faculty. He expressed sincere disappointment over this lack of communication.

Senator Heimer said this was an illuminating discussion, but she said she was concerned about timing. She then called the question. The Senate voted to end discussion.

The Senate then voted on the position of President-Elect. Senator Regan Thomson won the election and will serve as Faculty Senate President-Elect next year.

Following the vote, the president introduced Salary and Benefits Committee Chair Hao Zhang. Senator Zhang then gave a [report](#) on the faculty salary data the committee collected. He said the committee's goals were to visualize salaries (median values) between 2016-2022 and to estimate the loss of wealth due to the temporary removal of retirement matching. He said, overall, according to the data they collected, faculty salaries matched or beat annual inflation until 2020 when actual salaries began to be outpaced by inflation adjusted salaries, all schools were affected (the Law School the most), NTE faculty appeared to be affected more than most, and the loss due to the six month freeze on retirement matching will be quite significant. Senator Zhang then displayed and analyzed the visualizations which can be found in the link above. He added that the report and these figures are not finalized. He said that he welcomes feedback from senators before the committee submits its findings.

The president then opened the floor for questions.

Senator Ezra Getzler said he was confused by the logic of only including half of the retirement contributions being counted towards the figuring of losses. Senator Zhang said Northwestern matched retirement for half a year, so annually Northwestern contributed 5% as opposed to the standard 10%.

Senator Courtney Blackwell asked if the data accounts for the year faculty were hired. She said in their department if someone is hired today they make the same salary as someone five years in. She wondered if there was a way to incorporate this discrepancy in salaries for those hired years prior. Senator Zhang said he agreed. The data did not account for years of service because that data was not

shared. He said they can try to find out if the central administration would be willing to share more information.

Senator Henry thanked Senator Zhang. He said it was incredibly useful for all faculty to see this data . He said he also hoped it would be made available to all faculty once the report is finalized. Senator Zhang was appreciative. He said the data will be available to everyone in Northwestern.

Senator Amaral said he did a similar analysis in which he found the same result. He said he also studied the audited reports required by nonprofits, ones that list the top administrative salaries. He said the trend there is different (higher bumps in salary) and the restrictions on salary growth have not been shared widely.

The president thanked the Salary and Benefits Committee. He then introduced Social Responsibility Committee Chair Josh Hauser who presented the following resolution for Senate consideration:

WHEREAS Northwestern has expressed a strong commitment to sustainability and sound environmental policy;

WHEREAS this year's "One Book" selection is Hope Jahren's *The Story of More*, which stresses the urgency of confronting climate change in one's local community;

WHEREAS gas-powered leaf blowers are harmful to both the environment and the health of workers;

WHEREAS their gas engines are inefficient and generate large amounts of air pollution;

WHEREAS they produce high levels of formaldehyde, benzene, fine particulate matter, and smog-forming chemicals, which are known to cause serious health problems;

WHEREAS leaf blowers disturb beneficial insect ecosystems and compact the soil, resulting in unhealthy soil that is more susceptible to erosion;

WHEREAS the noise generated by leaf blowers is disruptive to classes and can also lead to serious hearing problems, including permanent hearing loss;

WHEREAS, because of their harmful impact, more than 100 cities in the United States and the University of Southern California have already restricted or outright banned the use of gas-powered leaf blowers;

WHEREAS the City of Evanston has banned them effective April 1, 2023, and it would be good for Northwestern to show that we have taken the lead;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate requests the university discontinue the use of gas-powered leaf blowers on both its Evanston and Chicago campuses immediately and find a sustainable alternative.

The president then opened the floor for discussion.

Senator Barbara Newman said she helped draft the resolution with the English Department's former senator, Helen Thompson. She said she thought the resolution was simple and fairly straightforward, and that while Evanston may be banning gas-powered leaf blowers in April 2023, she thought it was important and worthwhile to act now.

Senator Turek said he is in favor of the resolution. He also wondered about banning other similar inefficient engines, like snowblowers. Senator Hauser said issues like that one were absolutely worth considering for next year.

The Senate then voted on and approved the resolution from the Social Responsibility Committee.

The president first thanked Past President Therese McGuire, whose term in the Senate leadership will end in August. He spoke glowingly about her commitment and willingness to serve.

President-Elect Ceci Rodgers thanked Senate President Bob Holmgren. She praised his ability to listen and to remain calm no matter the situation, and for his leadership in advancing critical faculty issues.

The president also thanked Senate Researcher Tricia England, who he said provides invaluable input that ensures faculty can make reasoned and calculated arguments to the administration. The president likewise thanked Senate Secretary Jared Spitz.

The president thanked the standing committee chairs and recognized six committee chairs who will be leaving the Senate: Allan Horwich, Carol Heimer, Hermann Riecke, Hao Zhang, Steve Adams, and Josh Hauser, all of who did a fantastic job.

The president also thanked the senators and then wished them a wonderful summer.

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jared Spitz

Secretary to the Faculty Senate