

Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University

**Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee  
Meeting Minutes**

March 10, 2022

A meeting of the Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee was convened on Thursday, March 10, 2022 in the Golden Eagles Room located at 5500 N. St. Louis Avenue, Chicago, IL. Trustee Ann Kalayil called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m.

**Roll was called and the following Trustee committee members were present:** Marvin Garcia; Ann Kalayil; Javonti Mordican; and Jim Palos (*ex officio*)

**Other Trustees present:** Charlie Serrano (via video)

**Also present:** Gloria Gibson, President; Mary Pat Burns, Board Counsel; Karl Voigt, Assistant Secretary to the Board; vice presidents; staff; and university community members.

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**Opportunity for Public Comment**

Trustee Kalayil announced the opportunity for public comment in accordance with P.A. 91-0715. There were no requests to speak.

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**Chair's and President's Remarks**

Trustee Kalayil reminded everyone of the reception for students in the Afghan student transition program in Alumni Hall immediately following today's meeting.

President Gibson thanked everyone for all the work on their reports being presented today.

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**ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION**

**Request for Approval of 2022 Tenure Recommendations**

Dr. Shayne Cofer, Associate Provost, presented biographies of the following faculty members being recommended for tenure: Zachary Bloom, Jenny Ruth Dawley-Carr, Sarah Fabian, Stacy Goguen, Orrin Harris, Cathleen Holtschneider, Manar Mohaisen, Alex Peimer, Katherine Petersen, Rachel Trana, and Russell Wartalski.

Trustee Kalayil, seconded by Trustee Palos moved to request approval of the 2022 tenure recommendations as presented.

Discussion: Mary Pat Burns stated that, in accordance with 110 ILCS/680, sec. 25-25 (Northeastern Illinois University's authorizing statute), the Student Trustee may not vote on matters of tenure. Trustees offered their congratulations to the faculty members being recommended today.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Garcia: Yes                      Kalayil: Yes                      Mordican:                      Palos: Yes

The matter is recommended.

**Recommendation to Approve Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity**

Dr. Marcelo Sztainberg, Acting Dean of Graduate Studies, reported that Northeastern is seeking approval by the Board of Trustees to offer a Bachelor of Science degree in Cybersecurity. Following Board approval, the University will seek degree-granting authority for this program from the Illinois Board of Higher Education. The Cybersecurity Program in the Department of Computer Science covers fundamental and advanced security topics to prepare graduates for joining the cybersecurity workforce or starting and successfully completing a Master’s degree in Cybersecurity or related fields.

This program covers computer science essential topics with focuses on fundamental and advanced security topics. Students in the program will also gain knowledge from program-focused topics that include cryptography, network security, digital forensics, and security analysis and reporting frameworks. In addition to the program’s theoretical foundations, the program provides required hands-on laboratories, preparing students to apply for job opportunities (internships and full-time opportunities) and/or to apply for advanced studies.

The Computer Science’s Major in Cybersecurity is designed to equip students of any cultural/ethnic background with skills needed to succeed in the real world, while the core courses develop specialized knowledge in a specific functional area, cumulatively teaching students to interact effectively and constructively in today’s multicultural world. Electives in this program help in shaping students’ experience in their cybersecurity coursework. In this major, students are advised and encouraged to select appropriate courses given their background and goals, allowing them to craft their own personalized curriculum to fit their unique, individual needs and desires. Lastly, the major includes topics like independent studies, machine learning and the internet of things.

Trustee Palos, seconded by Trustee Garcia moved to recommend approval of the proposed Bachelor of Science degree in Cybersecurity as presented.

Discussion: Trustees are pleased to see this program.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Garcia: Yes                      Kalayil: Yes                      Mordican: Yes                      Palos: Yes

The matter is recommended for approval.

**Recommendation to Endorse Purchase of Technology – Watermark Insights: Faculty Success Module**

Dr. Shayne Cofer reported that higher education accrediting bodies require that their member institutions conduct systematic assessments of student learning. To that end, Northeastern Illinois University entered into a five-year contract with Watermark Insights, LLC (formerly known as Tk20) after the Board approved the University’s recommendation at its April 9, 2015 meeting. The Board approved the University’s recommendation to enter into a five-year contract renewal at its April 16, 2020 meeting. In 2021, Academic Affairs was made aware that the application called Tk20 had reached its end-of-life and would no longer be supported. Watermark Insights offered upgrade enhancements to make it a viable assessment management system in order to maintain the University’s robust assessment processes. In addition to upgrading the assessment management system, the Faculty Success module needs to be added to the suite of Watermark applications as faculty portfolios are no longer supported within existing upgrades. Academic Affairs made a determination that it is in the best interest of the University to upgrade applications within the current system.

The upgraded Outcomes Assessment Application which replaces Tk20 will facilitate compliance with accreditation mandates, reporting on certificate programs, examining non-traditional pedagogical delivery methods, and assessing institutional effectiveness at the program, college, and institutional level.

The negotiated renewal pricing for the remaining three years will increase by \$98,235.86 and includes a savings of approximately \$75,000 over the life of the contract in discounts and waived fees. The new cost reflects the complete cost of the system, managed hosting, training server, user technical support, a dedicated client success manager, and implementation of the new applications.

**Project Cost**

Watermark Insights, LLC Assessment Management System - upgrade cost to finish existing 5-year contract:

	<b>Original Cost</b>	<b>New Cost</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Implementation Fees	-0-	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
Year 3 7/1/2022 to 6/30/2023	\$60,099.00	\$85,411.00	\$25,312.00
Year 4 7/1/2023 to 6/30/2024	\$61,902.00	\$87,973.33	\$26,071.33
Year 5 7/1/2024 to 6/30/2025	\$63,760.00	\$90,612.53	\$26,852.53
Totals	\$185,761.00	\$283,966.86	\$98,235.86
Contingency amount		10,764.34	
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>\$109,000.00</b>

Trustee Kalayil, seconded by Trustee Garcia moved to endorse that the Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee accept the University’s recommendation to modify its current agreement with Watermark Insights (formerly Tk20) for the remaining three years of its five-year contract.

Discussion: there was no discussion

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Garcia: Yes                      Kalayil: Yes                      Mordican: Yes                      Palos: Yes

The matter is endorsed by the committee.

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**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**Academic Program Cost Analysis – College of Business and Technology**

Dr. Mike Bedell, Dean of the College of Business and Technology, presented a program cost breakdown for the college. Up until about 10 years ago, the college used almost no metrics. It was important to determine and use metrics to better manage programs and the college as a whole. A goal each year is to ensure that tuition revenue always exceeds the cost of running the college. The college employs 99 full and part-time faculty, and 63 staff including student employees, to serve approximately 1,100 full-time equivalent students. Annually, the college’s career center helps place and administer approximately 200 jobs and internships. Decisions about running courses are not made on a course-by-course basis, but based on student need, including a need for multi-section courses. Low-enrolled courses are subsidized by high-enrolled courses, and graduate electives are subsidized by core graduate courses. The undergraduate revenue per credit hour is conservatively estimated at \$345.80. This estimate does not track with what’s posted on the University website due to the state’s tuition guarantee program; each cohort pays a different tuition rate. From a cost perspective, it’s less expensive to have larger course sections. In addition to excellent instruction from tenure-line faculty, students benefit when industry-leading

professionals teach courses. AACSB requires that each business college maintain 40 percent of the college faculty as tenure-line. This year's tuition revenues are \$7.8M combined undergraduate and graduate programs for academic year 2022, without summer courses, against \$6.6M in expenses for the same period. Spring 2022 total credit hours are 9,867. Grant revenues are not included in this analysis. Online programs rolling out soon will increase enrollment, revenues and credit hours. Dean Bedell sees future program growth opportunities as the college's ability to develop programs that are predictive of market demand and to respond to programs within the college that are not working well.

### **Enrollment Management Update**

Vice President for Enrollment Management, Dr. Kimberley Buster-Williams, provided Trustees with a 2022 enrollment update. The goals for Fall 2022 applications: 4,801 first-year, 1,796 transfers, and 1,346 graduate. Fall 2022 enrollment goals: 400 first-year, 900 transfers, and 529 graduate.

Applications to date are 3,592 first-year and 448 transfers. Intent to enroll commitments to date are 82 first-year and 103 transfers. March through August is the period for focusing on yield. If the University admits 2,919 first-year students, the yield could range from 438 to 730 (15% to 25%) enrolled students. The recently established onboarding team received its new charge in February to focus on increasing the first-year yield by employing only required steps to enroll students and reduce the amount of time it takes to move new students through the entire onboarding process. Another part of the overall process improvement is decoupling advising and registration, and initiating proactive scheduling. These steps are critical to increasing freshman yield. A financial aid portal is being added to the University's new CRM (Slate) as a companion module to further aid in an efficient enrollment process. To help improve the graduate inquiry-to-application process, the new director of graduate admissions will be responsible for creating a strategic enrollment plan for the University's current graduate market, automate the admissions processes to the extent possible, and expand opportunities for more human interaction with prospective and new students. Trustees are hopeful for a yield increase based on NEIU for You 2.0, and are looking for an improvement in customer service.

### **Student Mental Health Counseling Update**

Dr. Nancy Easton, Director of Student Counseling Services, provided an update on the University's progress implementing directives associated with the Mental Health and Early Action on Campus Act (110 ILCS 58/), enacted in January 2020. The Act is intended to address gaps in mental health services on college campuses across Illinois, including 4-year and 2-year colleges. The components of the Act are awareness, training, peer support, and community-campus partnerships. The Act contains 17 mandatory provisions. In 2019, NEIU's initial appropriation estimate was \$231,000 annually to comply with all mandates. In 2022, NEIU continues to work on the following four requirements: implementation of mental health awareness into the university curriculum; the Board designation of an 'expert panel' to develop and implement policies and procedures related to the provisions of the Act; develop strategic partnerships with local mental health providers; and develop a formal evaluation program for awareness, training, and peer support. Several of the provisions of the Act lack clarity, and to date no funding has been appropriated to aid in complying with the Act. The Student Counseling Center has proceeded to comply with elements of the Act by re-allocating resources to cover hiring of critical professional staff. Additional legislative funding is needed to build out the remaining infrastructure. Trustees asked for more information on the makeup of the expert panel, but there is no information from the state at this time. Trustees are pleased that the University counseling services are adequately staffed to support the student body.

### **Seal of Excelencia Presentation**

Dr. Isaura Pulido, Associate Professor of Educational Inquiry and Curriculum Studies, and Co-Chair of the Seal of Excelencia Initiative, presented an update on the committee's progress. Dr. Hector Morales, the

President's Special Assistant for HSI Affairs, sends his regrets for not being here today. The President's FY22 Institutional Priorities, aligned with IBHE's strategic priorities, are: Equity, Sustainability, and Growth. These priorities serve to advance outreach and recruitment to reinforce NEIU as a diverse, inclusive "university of choice for Latino, African Americans and other students from underserved backgrounds" and to "develop and advance best practices for academic and social support structures that enhance student success and retention." As the Seal of Excelencia application process progresses these areas will continue to inform the vertical alignment of the application. This initiative is being led by the Council on the Status of Latinos at NEIU in collaboration with the University's executive leadership and a diverse community from across the University. The Seal of Excelencia is the highest award that an Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) can receive from the Seal of Excelencia in Education organization. The Seal is an official designation bestowed on institutions of higher education that certifies an institution is effective in serving Latino students. The Seal came about as a long-standing critique of HSIs that earned the HSI designation by virtue of enrolling a lot of Latino students without having a mission, strategy, or intentionality to serve them. The purpose of the Seal designation is to shift the frame of HSIs to demonstration of intentionality. NEIU's future, in large part, will be determined by its ability to meet the needs of urban, first-generation, working-class students of color, with a focus on recruitment, retention, equity, and outcomes. The field application is about aligning data and leadership. The Seal focuses not only on programmatic aspects, but also institutional response to faculty and staff recruitment and hiring, communication of student success in student recruitment, and how the institutional leadership reflects that of the student body. Dr. Gibson gave the committee charge in December 2021. All committees and sub-committee assignments have been made, and all groups are diligently at work on their particular aspects of the application. The sub-committees also have student voices represented; intentionality is baked into the entire process. In early February 2022, the sub-committees submitted their compilation of the University's practices that demonstrate intentionality and identified the 3 most significant practices to include in the application. The incorporation of the sub-committees' work into a draft of the application is to be completed by April 5, with a final draft completed by April 15. The committee will submit the final revised version to the President on May 15 and submit the final application in June. Trustees thanked everyone for their work on this process. Trustee Garcia is particularly grateful that these practices and intentional work will be institutionalized.

### **Afghan Students Transitions Program Update**

Dr. Terry Mena, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, presented an update on the program. Currently there are 17 slots for students and 11 are living in the Nest. Students participated in orientation sessions that covered academics, self-advocacy, personal wellness, involvement, and introduced students to campus resources, peer mentoring, campus tours, and Student Health and Counseling Services. In addition, staff and faculty have received trainings in cultural awareness and education, cultural assets of the Afghan community, and re-settlement stressors and impacts of these stressors in the learning environment. Additional training focused on healing-centered engagement. The Afghan Transition Program (ATP) team is composed of Student Health Services, Student Counseling Services, Student Leadership Development, and Student Affairs. The team meets regularly to discuss holistic support and services.

Liesl Downey, Vice President for Institutional Advancement and Executive Director of the NEIU Foundation, provided an update on funding received to support the ATP. To date, the Foundation has received \$66,000 in support for non-tuition related needs. The Foundation continues to seek wrap around support for these students. Trustee Kalayil thanked everyone for their support and stated the Northeastern Illinois University was the first public institution in Illinois to welcome resettled Afghan students.

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**Old/New Business**

Next committee meeting: May 12, 2022

There was no further business.

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**Motion to Adjourn**

At 11:00 a.m. Trustee Garcia, seconded by Trustee Mordican moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Kalayil, Chair of the Committee  
Karl Voigt, Assistant Board Secretary  
Approved April 14, 2022