

Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University

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

March 16, 2023

A meeting of the Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee of the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University was convened in the Golden Eagles Room located in the Student Union at 5500 N. St. Louis Avenue, Chicago, IL on Thursday, March 16, 2023. Trustee Ann Kalayil, Chair of the Committee, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

**Roll was called and the following Trustees were present:** Marvin Garcia; Shyrice Howell; and Ann Kalayil

**Also present:** Gloria Gibson, President; G. A. Finch, University Counsel; Josie Gough, Partner, Burke, Burns & Pinelli, Ltd., Board Counsel; Karl Voigt, Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees; vice presidents, staff, and University community members

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**Opportunity for Public Comment in Accordance with P.A. 91-0715**

Trustee Kalayil announced the opportunity for public comment. There were 2 requests received. Neither speaker was able to attend the meeting.

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

Trustee Kalayil welcomed everyone and provided an overview of the series of meetings so far this year. January focused on Academic Affairs. Today's meeting is focused on enrollment and retention.

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**ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION**

Consideration of 2023 Tenure Recommendations

Dr. Shayne Cofer, Associate Provost, reported the following faculty members are being recommended for tenure:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Department</u>
Patricia Aguado	Social Work
Sarah Bey West	World Languages and Cultures
Samantha Brown-Xu	Chemistry
Aissetu Barry Ibrahima	Social Work
Ahmed Khaled	Computer Science
Hsiao-Chin Kuo	Literacy, Leadership and Development
Lauren Meranda	Art + Design
Amanda Montes	Teacher Education
Noreen Powers	Literacy, Leadership and Development
Beth Reinke	Biology

Trustee Garcia, seconded by Trustee Kalayil, moved to recommend approval of the faculty above listed for tenure.

Discussion: Trustees offered their congratulations.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows: (the Student Trustee may not vote on tenure)

Garcia: Yes                  Howell:                          Kalayil: Yes

The matter is recommended.

Recommendation of Honorary Doctorate and Commencement Speaker

President Gibson reported that the Board of Trustees is being asked to consider the award of the University's honorary degree of *Doctor of Humane Letters* to Illinois Attorney General, Kwame Raoul. The University received confirmation that Attorney General Raoul has accepted Northeastern's invitation to serve as its May 2023 Commencement speaker.

Trustee Garcia, seconded by Trustee Howell, moved to recommend approval of conferral of the University's honorary *Doctor of Humane Letters* upon the May Commencement Speaker, Attorney General Kwame Raoul.

Discussion: there was no discussion.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Garcia: Yes                  Howell: Yes                          Kalayil: Yes

The matter is recommended.

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**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

Nursing Program Update

Dr. Connie Zak, Interim Director of Nursing, reported on the progress towards the University's nursing program. The program has an interdisciplinary working group of faculty from across the University who have assisted with writing a mission statement for the program. The program is being built around a liberal arts education with an emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the recruitment and structure of the program to address the gaps of these elements in a historically traditional nursing program. The curriculum is presently working its way through shared governance. Trustees asked for information at a future meeting that addresses what the cohort investments are and what the anticipated outcomes are.

Current Summary of Enrollment and Retention

Ryan Trout, Undergraduate Admissions Director, reported on enrollment goals for Fall 2023. First-time full-time freshmen goal for Fall 2023 is 565, a 9.5% increase over 2022. Fall 2023 Transfers goal is 780, a 33.6% increase over 2022. The University has received 7,697 first-time full-time applications for Fall 2023, compared to 3,957 for the same time last year. The University has accepted 5,387 prospective students compared to 1,865 for the same time last year. 373 students have completed an intent-to-enroll, compared to 93 for the same time last year. 69.7% of these applications were received through the CommonApp, with 30.3% through the NEIU website.

The University has received 654 Transfer applications for Fall 2023, compared to 572 for the same time last year. 294 have been accepted, compared to 226 for the same time last year. 107 students have completed their intent-to-enroll, compared to 84 for the same time last year. 14% of these applications were received through the CommonApp, with 86% through NEIU.

Overall Fall to Spring retention is 84.3%. Retention of first-year students is 80.1%. Retention of transfer students is 87.8%. Recruitment events are already underway at regional community colleges and high schools. 12 orientation sessions are planned for the summer beginning in early May.

## **Overview of Components of Enrollment/Retention Distribution**

### Registrar's Office

Rahshida Walker, Interim Registrar, provided an overview of the Registrar's Office, the services offered, and the office's 2023 goals. These goals include implementation of Degree Works, degree auditing system, and integrating this platform with Banner. Also underway is an electronic graduation application and for students who have University holds, providing unofficial transcripts to prospective employers. Ms. Walker provided an overview of the services the Registrar's Office in aid to recruitment and retention which include transfer course articulation, course enrollment guidance, and academic standing computation.

### Admissions - Undergraduate

Ryan Trout provided an overview of the undergraduate recruitment and admission process and described the duties of this office, both on site and off, as well as providing an overview of the recruitment tactics employed by the University. The office's recruitment activities have increased significantly over last year. Customer service in recruitment is paramount.

### Admissions - Graduate

Tim Sheahan, Interim Director of Graduate Admissions, provided an overview of the graduate recruitment and admissions processes. The graduate program's goal is to provide timely, engaging, and appealing communications to prospective students. The program relies heavily on faculty participation in recruitment, along with financial aid and the Registrar to help prospective students keep moving through the pipeline and to enroll.

### Admissions Operations

Steve Pajak, Director of Admissions Operations, reported that the purpose of this office is to process all admission transactions for both undergraduate and graduate. Undergraduate decisions are made by this office, but support is provided to the Office of Graduate Studies, Analytics, and Research with graduate admission decisions. Since the implementation of the Slate CRM in January 2022, the admissions office operations have been significantly streamlined, as well as improved efficiencies in the admission decision process, which reduces the amount of time to respond to applicants from several weeks to less than a week or within 1-3 days. The University also implemented Slate.org which improves communications among undergraduate admissions officers and students, schools, and counselors by tracking the admissions process workflow in real time with notices about which missing data need to be supplied.

### HOPE Chicago

Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, Terry Mena, reported that HOPE Chicago is a nonprofit organization seeking to reduce economic and social inequity by funding postsecondary scholarships and non-tuition costs for Chicago Public Schools graduates. The scholarship is funded by Hope Chicago and open to all students who graduate from one of five partner high schools after having attended 11th and 12th grade at the school. The purpose of the partnership with Hope Chicago is to remove academic, personal, and financial barriers for CPS students from recruitment, enrollment, success and degree completion at NEIU. The first cohort in Fall 2022 had 40 students enrolled, 37 of whom are living in the NEST. The Fall to Spring retention for this cohort is 95%. So far, there are 222 Hope Chicago students who have been admitted to Northeastern for Fall 2023.

### Office of Financial Aid and Office of Scholarships

Executive Director of Financial Aid, Maureen Amos, reported that the Financial Aid (FA) Office works with students and prospective students to remove barriers to financial aid when financing their education. Financial literacy services are also provided by the office, along with calendars and deadline reminders to students for important financial aid matters. In addition, the FA Office works closely with both the Admissions Office and Registrar's Office to provide support in those areas. Ms. Amos provided an overview

of the office's goals for FY2023, including increasing the number of student employees at the University. The FA Office impacts student retention in several ways including completing 30% more financial aid packages for 2023-2024 compared to the same time last year, and provided high-touch personal contact opportunities through virtual counseling and telephone counseling.

Dr. Michelle Morrow, Director of Scholarships, reported that the Scholarship Office continually works on the following areas: to enhance awareness of institutional scholarship opportunities to increase applications for and award of funding; encourage students to apply for state and private funds; host workshops with campus partners, which include scholarship essay writing workshops; stay aware of and apply for grants that assist in funding initiatives (e.g., student emergency fund, and student fees); visit First Year Experience (FYE) classes to provide student presentations; add short instructional videos on financial aid, scholarships, and student employment to the website; and enhance relationships with secondary education and community partners. For Northeastern's student population, scholarships are important in filling funding gaps when other aid does not cover all expenses. They are especially beneficial to students who may not be eligible for need-based funding. Scholarships help lessen students' loan debt so they are less likely to stop out. Many NEIU scholarship recipients are motivated to continue with their studies, and awards reinforce recognition of their hard work. Especially notable for NEIU scholarship recipients, this aid can lessen the hours that students need to work a job freeing them take more classes and graduate sooner.

#### Student Information Systems and Graduate Recruitment

Due to time constraints, Trustee Kalayil moved to Academic Advising. These reports are incorporated herein by reference.

#### Academic Advising

Director of the Advising Center, Dr. Jamie Riess, provided an overview of the Academic Advising and its goals. The center works with degree-seeking undergraduate students who have not declared a major. Academic Advising, in addition to providing course selection, and major exploration, provide students with information about how the University works, policy guidelines, and empowers students to direct their college experience. Academic Advising directly impacts retention by keeping students engaged, helping them monitor their academic progress, and provide students who are falling behind with appropriate services and guidance.

#### Proyecto Pa'Lante and Project Success

Executive Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Dr. Shireen Roshanravan, presented an overview of Northeastern's Success Programs. The programs were founded in the late 1960s and early 1970s to promote college access and success while centering and affirming Black and Latina/o/x experiences in higher education. The goal of these programs is to close equity gaps in access, aspiration and completion rates for African Americans, Latina/o/x, and other traditionally underrepresented and underserved communities in higher education through holistic and culturally relevant support services. Both Success Programs retain students at higher rates year-over-year than students who are not enrolled in them. Other components to these programs include individualized academic advising, merit-based scholarships, and bi-lingual and bi-cultural student support staff. Dr. Angelica Rivera, Director of Proyecto Pa'Lante and Erica Brown-Pierce, Director of Project Success provided other context to the presentation and answered specific questions about their programs.

#### Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Updates

Due to time constraints, these reports are incorporated herein by reference.

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**Motion to Adjourn**

At 1:30 p.m. Trustee Howell, seconded by Trustee, moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Kalayil, Chair of the Committee  
Karl Voigt, Assistant Board Secretary  
Approved April 13, 2023