ITEMS FOR INFORMATION
Academic Affairs Update to the Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee

Interim Provost Shayne Cofer
October 23, 2025

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1. Fall 2025 Updates from Academic Affairs Interim Provost Shayne Cofer

El Centro Update: Dr. Christian A. Bello-Escobar will join NEIU as the new Director of El Centro effective Nov. 3, 2025.

Dr. Bello-Escobar is an accomplished higher education leader with fifteen years of experience advancing student success, community engagement and equity initiatives across diverse academic settings.

Prior to joining NEIU, Dr. Bello-Escobar served as Director of Academic and Community Engagement in the College of Education at the University of North Georgia (UNG), where he led strategic efforts to expand access and retention for first-generation students and future educators and secured more than $8.3 million in student success grants to support migrant/seasonal farmworkers, first-generation students, future educators and Latinx students.

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Dr. Bello-Escobar earned his Doctor of Education in Leadership from Valdosta State University. He has a Master of Education in Professional Counseling with a concentration in College Student Affairs from the University of West Georgia and a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Georgia State University.

A first-generation college graduate and former undocumented student from Acapulco, Guerrero, Mexico, Dr. Bello-Escobar is passionate about creating pathways for students from marginalized backgrounds to thrive in higher education. His leadership philosophy emphasizes collaboration, data-informed decision-making and the belief that inclusive excellence drives institutional success. At NEIU, he looks forward to building on El Centro's legacy as a vibrant hub for student learning, cultural celebration and community empowerment.

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2. Illinois State Equity Plan and Student Success Equity Intensive (SSEI) Update

Dr. Sandra Beyda-Lorie, Executive Director for Learning Innovations

FY25 Focus
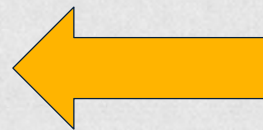
- Establishment of baseline metrics and 5-year goals with implementation roadmap for 11 equity strategies
- Coordination of data collection with OIRA
- Implementation of regular strategy team meetings for progress monitoring

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Advancing Our Equity Commitment: Notable Achievements: Efforts to Reduce Student Debt

- Updated and centralized nearly all internal scholarships onto Academic Works
- Created faculty tracking system for ACM usage with Fowlett Bookstore and Brightspace/D2L widget
- Implemented earlier AR holds to reduce student debt accumulation
- Improved Student Payment Services website for clarity on deadlines and support
- Designed an FYE NEIU Financial Literacy Module

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Advancing Our Equity Commitment: Notable Achievements: Curricular & Pedagogical Efforts

- Launched Fall 2025 pilot of redesigned FYE in 5 courses
- Developed FYE assessment system
- Completed analysis of high DFW courses (Fall 2023-Sum 2024) via College Equity Teams
- Designed data tracking system for new math pathways designed to replace non-credit Math 091/092 (nearly complete)
- Increased adoption of equity-focused MATH 173 practices via faculty training

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Advancing Our Equity Commitment: Notable Achievements: Advisement

- Gathered input from all advisor groups to identify areas for improvement
- Launched NEIUstar training protocols for faculty and advisors
- Developed Faculty Advisor Expectations document
- Created version 1 of standardized Academic Course Record (ACR) form
- Launched partnership with National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) for comprehensive undergraduate advisement review

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Advancing Our Equity Commitment: Notable Achievements: Institutional Changes

- Institutionalized Equity-in-Faculty Hiring training for Search and Screen Committees
- Redesigned freshman and transfer student orientations and onboarding events, providing clear sequence for how students move through NEIU from admission to registration

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Next Steps

- Aligning our work with the University's Strategic Plan

- NACADA review process and recommendations

- Continue convening equity-focused strategy groups to move this work forward

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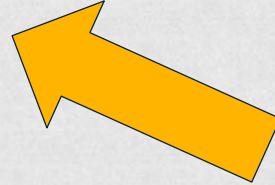
3. Fall 2025 First Year Experience (FYE) Update
### Jeremy Babcock, Director, First Year Experience

- 19 FYE Course Sections running for the Fall 2025 semester
  - 304 out of 523 first time freshmen currently enrolled
  - 8 FYE sections will be offered in the Spring 2026 semester in an effort to reach a majority of the remaining freshmen who need to take an FYE course

- FYE Peer Mentor Program
  - 10 peer mentors, weekly meeting/training sessions
  - Monthly Freshmen Meet-Up Social Events
  -August (71 students attended, September 101 students attended)

- FYE Faculty Development & Curriculum Updates
  - FYE Faculty Institutes offered in May and January
  - FYE Faculty & FYE Peer Mentor Luncheon (August)
  - FYE Curriculum Writing Summit in November
  -Updating our FYE Learning Objectives & determining what is non-negotiable in a FYE course, what differentiates it from a standard course section, and best pedagogical practices
  - FYE Faculty Resource Course in D2L

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Fall 2025 First Year Experience FYE Update (Cont.)

- Implementing Fall 2025 FYE Student and Instructor Survey
    - To assess effectiveness of FYE courses with engagement with the NEIU community, self-development, classroom-instructor involvement, academic learning/enrichment, knowledge & application of NEIU resources
    - Our Fall 2024 student response rate was 27%, and instructor rate was 67%, so working to increase participation

- Hanover Consulting Research Report
    - Prepared specifically for NEIU with best practices and benchmarking analysis from related institutions
    - Monthly Freshmen Meet-Up Social Events
      -August (71 FY students attended), September 101 FY students attended)
    - Will be incorporating elements of this into an updated FYE program design

- Additional Items of Note
    - Application opening soon for 2025-2026 Dr. Lawrence Frank FYE Scholarship, Kamaria Noble was the 2024-2025 recipient ($2700)
    - FYE Program is now housed in the Angelina Pedroso Center for Cultural Diversity & Intercultural Affairs!
    - Student Facing FYE Golden Eagle LAUNCH Program
      -Learn/Ask/Understand/Navigate/Connect/Have Fun Northeastern

One Stop Center Update
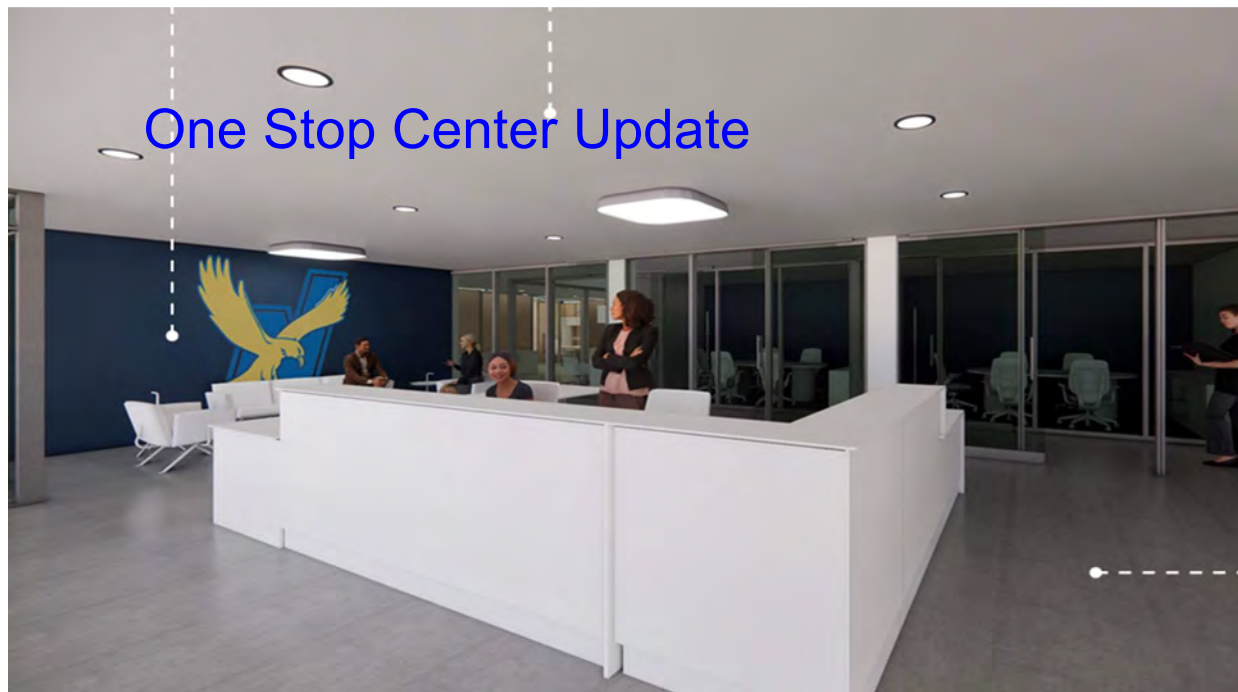
NEIU One Stop Center–Functional Areas

- Financial Aid, Scholarships, Student Employment
  - 22 staff
- Academic Advising (General)
  - 7 staff
- Graduate Admission
  - 4 staff
- One Stop Center
  - 1 staff

What is a One Stop Model?

- **Accuracy and Timely**
  - Accurate information
  - Timely, next steps identified
- **People**
  - Generalists and specialists
  - Emphasis on customer service
- **Technology and Processes**
  - State of the art processing (technology-driven)
  - Cross-functional connections
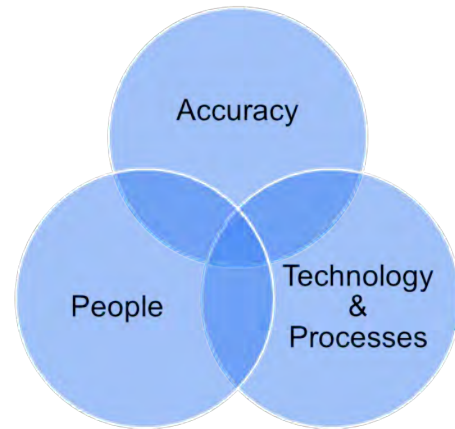
What Makes a One Stop Model Successful?

- Customer-Service Oriented
- Efficiency
- Correct Information

Measures of Success
- ✓ Student Satisfaction (reduced complaints)
- ✓ Helping Students Meet Deadlines (timely registration, FAFSA completed)
- ✓ Efficient Service Delivery (reduced bounces by streamlining services)

Human-Centered and Student-Centric

Traditional	Human-Centered
Institution-Centered	Student-Centered
Administrative efficiency (rules, policies, structures)	Empathy (designed around the student experience)
Reactive and siloed (each department manages its own services)	Proactive and holistic (integrates services across departments)
Processes are often complex, red tape, paper based	Intuitive, streamlined, digital
Success measured by compliance, or #s of students processed	Success measured by student satisfaction, engagement, retention, student outcomes

Tier 1 Service

- Tier 1—Cross-trained Generalists
    - Service-focused and friendly
    - Ability to assist students with up to 80% of inquiries
    - Front-line staff who are problem solvers
    - Help students on how to navigate
    - Direct students to specialized assistance when needed
    - Schedule appointments with specialists

> • How do I apply for financial aid?
> • I need help finding a job on campus?
> • How do I enroll in a payment plan?
> • How do I add a class?

Tier 2 Service

- Tier 2—Specialists in Each Area
  - Referrals are triaged by Generalists (knowing who students need to see)
  - Ability to handle difficult inquiries
  - Guide students in decision-making processes
  - Clear steps outlined for students

> - I need help choosing classes for next semester?
> - What happens if I drop a class?
> - I need help choosing classes for next semester?
> - I am interested in a graduate program in Student Counseling.

Advisor/Coordinator/Recruiter Spaces

Solution One: Calendly Appointment System

- Easy for students to book appointments with advisors
- Integrated with Google calendar
- Email confirmations and reminders to students
- Consistent way of scheduling appointments
- Ability to track appointment requests and schedule staff as needed
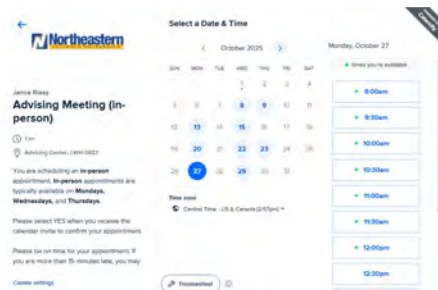
Solution Two: Current Phone Tree
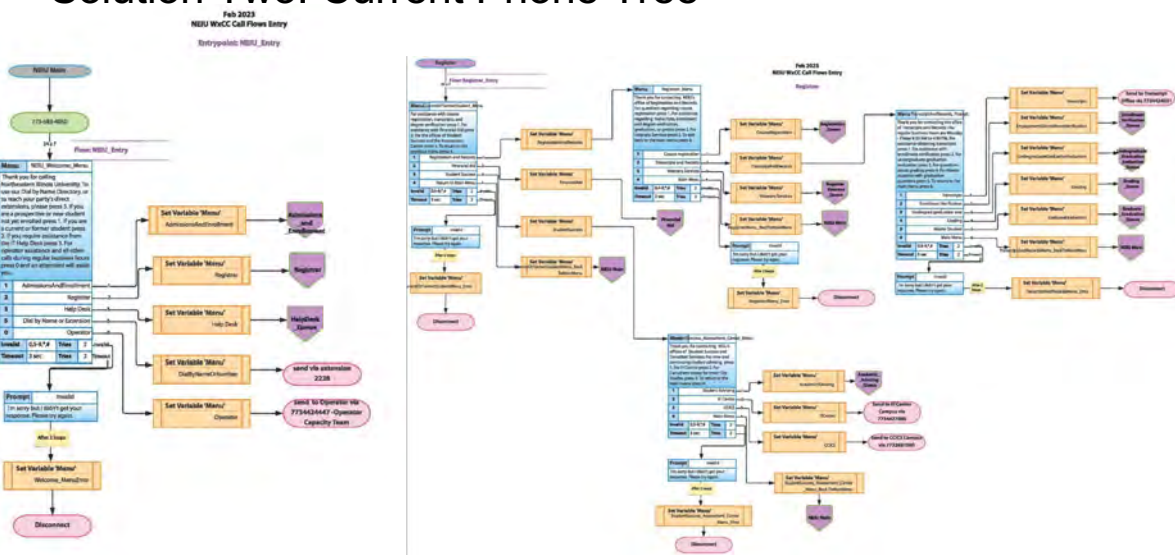
Contact Center

New Main Line Number for the University will be:

773-442-NEIU

- Inbound calls to a main line
  - Eliminate multiple options
  - Talk to a person (resolve or refer as needed)
  - New phone tree diagram is currently being drafted to simplify the caller experience (more news on this soon)

- Outbound calls for targeted campaigns
  - Early term check-ins
  - Missing FA documents
  - Registration reminders

Huddle Room

QUESTIONS?

Floor Plan

New 2025-26 IBHE Initiatives

"One Click College Admit" in partnership with Common App

- Optional in 2025-26 for IL public colleges/universities. Required in 2026-27.
  - NEIU is one of a few IL public universities that had a guaranteed admission GPA (2.5) for new first-time students, so NEIU is participating this year.
- IBHE and Common App will inform qualified students that they will be admitted to NEIU if they apply, and will be given the chance to apply with no more than a few extra clicks.

Note: we will see more Fall 2026 applications and admits than last year, but the extra lift will be among students who chose not to apply to NEIU on their own. We expect low yield among this lift.

New 2025-26 IBHE Initiatives

Readmit and retention initiative in partnership with ReUp

- At no cost to NEIU, IBHE has paid to contract with ReUp to encourage stop-outs to re-enroll.
- Targeting students with a clear path to return who:
  - Have not enrolled in 6-24 months (retention initiative)
  - Have not enrolled in 2-25 years (readmit initiative)

How it works:
- NEIU shares information with ReUp and ReUp does all the outreach. (in progress, outreach will begin late-October)
- Targeting Spring 2026, Summer 2026, and Fall 2026
- IBHE is on a year-to-year contract with ReUp, but they have renewed their pilot for a full year, and hope to continue offering this service annually.
- Once students respond affirmatively to ReUp, the students re-enter the typical workflow, therefore essentially no additional strain on NEIU.

IBHE's initiative only includes undergraduate students.

Fall 2025 Retention Update

- Early AR hold (continued pilot effort) 10/15/25
    - -45 credit hours, $500 balance, not Hope Chicago, AFTER financial aid applied
    - Total debt: $2.97 million

- NEIUStar Progress Survey results and continued effort to increase faculty participation
    - Attendance Survey 39.3% completion
    - Progress Survey 1 55.8% completion
    - Progress Survey 2 closes

- FY Advising Directors bi-weekly reporting
    - % of First Year students that had a 1-1 advising meeting within first 8 weeks

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Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment and Technology Committee
Northeastern Illinois University

NEST Housing Updates

Dr. Terry C. Mena
Vice President for Student Affairs
& Dean of Students

October 23, 2025

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DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

NEST Transition Plan Update

- **Management Agreement:** A nine month agreement with **American Campus Communities (ACC)** to support a 9-month operational transition
- **The Director of Housing & Residence Life is** posted for a national search process, hired by Jan. 2026
- Scheduled housing **management software presentation for new housing CRM to** product by Dec. 2025
- Kick-off meeting with UTS, Security, Facilities, and Human Resources was held in October 2025**. Enrollment Management and Marketing Coordination Meeting** in Nov. 2025
- Revised **FY2026 Operational Budget** for 9-month ACC Management Services

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	Restricted Fund (320040-41650)	Unrestricted Fund (110010-41650)	Total FY2026 Budget	FY2025 Actuals (supported by NEIU)
Revenues				
Housing - Student	$ 3,800,000	$ -	$ 3,800,000	$ --
Less: Allowance for Bad Debts @10%	(380,000)	-	(380,000)	-
Net Housing Revenue	3,420,000		3,420,000	
Expenses				
Personnel Costs	76,100	80,000	156,100	9,875
Contractual	1,055,900	1,123,100	2,179,000	1,831,300 ***
Permanent Improvement	281,000	-	281,000	-
Awards and Grants (Housing and Peer Mentor Scholarships)	-	573,000	573,000	532,595
Debt Service	2,007,000	-	2,007,000	-
Total Expenses	3,420,000	1,776,100	5,196,100	2,373,770
			-	-
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues over Expenses	$ -	$ (1,776,100)	$ (1,776,100)	$ (2,373,770)

*** Includes Occupancy contribution ($1.8 million) and Operations and Programming Cost ($60.5K).

Fall 2025 Paid Report Summary as of October 14, 2025					
Cohort	**# of Students**	**Total Charges**	**Scholarship**	**Paid**	**Balance**
General NEST Residents	247	$1,375,158.00		$555,027.40	$820,130.60
Afghan Transition Prgm 21-22	1	$6,486.00			$6,486.00
Afghan Transition Prgm 23-24	6	$38,916.00			$38,916.00
CASEP Housing Awd Fall 2024	2	$10,810.00	$3,513.40		$7,296.60
CASEP Housing Awd Fall 2025	7	$38,916.00	$25,798.00		$13,118.00
CBT Housing Awd Fall 2023	1	$5,405.00	$493.00		$4,912.00
CBT Housing Awd Fall 2024	2	$12,972.00	$2,454.04		$10,517.96
CBT Housing Awd Fall 2025	6	$32,430.00	$19,903.15		$12,526.85
Discover Yourself Fall 2024	3	$15,134.00	$1,101.33		$14,032.67
Discover Yourself Fall 2025	14	$76,751.00	$52,457.51		$24,293.49
Future Teachers Fall 2021	1	$5,405.00	$1,215.42		$4,189.58
Future Teachers Fall 2023	1	$6,486.00	$6,443.45		$42.55
Future Teachers Fall 2025	3	$16,215.00	$13,214.65		$3,000.35
Honors Housing Awd Fall 2024	3	$16,215.00	$13,947.80		$2,267.20
Honors Housing Awd Fall 2025	6	$32,430.00	$19,651.80		$12,778.20
HOPE Scholarship	51	$283,986.00	$17,707.64		$266,278.40
Soc. Justice Housing Awd Fa20	1	$2,702.50	$2,702.50		
Soc. Justice Housing Awd Fa21	2	$11,891.00	$4,717.72		$7,173.28
Soc. Justice Housing Awd Fa24	2	$8,648.00	$381.60		$8,266.40
Soc. Justice Housing Awd Fa25	11	$59,455.00	$38,802.46		$20,652.54
STEM Housing Awd Fall 2022	1	$6,486.00		$	$6,486.00
STEM Housing Awd Fall 2025	6	$33,511.00	$22,599.55		$10,911.45
Total	**377**	**$2,096,408.50**	**$247,105.02**	**$555,027.40**	**$1,294,276.12**

The scholarship amounts do not reflect scholarships provided by grants or other financial support (i.e. ARTP, HOPE)

Afghan Refugee Transition Program Status

ASAET Committee Meeting
Thursday, October 23, 2025

Progress and Success

(as of 10/20/25)

Cohort I

Four - Currently in the program:
(3 undergraduate / 1 graduate)

Enrollment Hours:
10 - 12 hrs
One – 3 cr hrs (graduating Fall 2025)

Average Overall GPA:
3.1

Spring 2025
Two Graduated

Cohort II

Ten - Currently in the program:
(9 undergraduate / 1 graduate)

Enrollment Hours:
11 - 15 hrs

Average overall GPA:
3.80

Fall 2025
Two schedule to graduate

Support Services

(AY 25-26)

ARTP students continue receiving services that focus in four areas:

Case Management
Conference and Professional Development
Housing support
Over wellness
Academic Planning
Mentoring Services

Program Financials

FY26

a. FY26 (7/1/2025) - NEIU received an approval to spend the deobligated FY25 IDHS grant funds through 6/30/2026 up to $102,000.

a. NEIU received a one time state appropriation - $500,000 in FY25. The total remaining balance is $366,343 which been approved to use in FY26.

FY 2026

Thank You

University Technology Services (UTS) – ASAET Executive Summary (October 2025)

Overview:
UTS continues to advance NEIU's digital transformation through modernization, secure system integrations, and initiatives that enhance the student, faculty, and staff experience. These efforts align closely to strengthen technological infrastructure, promote accessibility, and support data-informed decision-making.

Key Initiative Spotlights

Artificial Intelligence (AI) @ NEIU:
UTS is leading the university's AI strategy, exploring responsible applications of artificial intelligence to improve operational efficiency, student outcomes, and institutional innovation.

Workday Finance Implementation:
The Workday Finance project remains on track for a July 1, 2026 Go-Live, with several components ahead of schedule and early testing already in progress. This initiative will modernize financial management, strengthen accountability, and deliver real-time financial insights across NEIU.

University Phone System Modernization – Webex Calling:
UTS is replacing legacy on-premises systems with Cisco Webex Cloud Calling, creating a unified and resilient communications platform.

Five-Year Cost Savings: 66.55% ($721,000 total; $144,199 annually)

Key Benefits: Lower overhead, built-in compliance, simplified management, real-time analytics, scalability, and disaster resilience

Area Highlights

Client Services:
Key initiatives are improving classroom technology and student printing services. These upgrades provide modern, reliable learning environments and more efficient access to digital resources.

IT Security:
Enhanced cybersecurity protections strengthen account access, ensure secure payment processing, and proactively address vulnerabilities before they impact university operations or student systems

Enterprise Applications:
Ongoing improvements are streamlining access to vital student systems such as health, advising, recreation, and accessibility resources—delivering more consistent and secure experiences across platforms

IT Infrastructure:
Recent infrastructure upgrades are expanding network reliability and redundancy, ensuring uninterrupted access to online services and critical academic tools

IT Project Management:
UTS continues to manage and align technology projects with NEIU's strategic priorities, ensuring initiatives are delivered efficiently, on time, and with measurable institutional impact

University Technology Services
Digital Transformation & Area Initiatives

ASAET Committee Meeting
October 23, 2025
Northeastern Illinois University

Eliot Allan Rodriguez
Chief Information Officer

Initiative Spotlight: Artificial Intelligence (AI) @ NEIU

AI Governance Plan			
Phases	**Activites**	**Status**	**Timeframe**
Phase 1	• **Obtain additional consulting services to assist with reviewing our governance, risk management and strategic readiness for AI technologies**	In Progress	Sept - Oct
	• Establish a University Wide AI Policy and Usage Guidelines	In Progress	
	• Work with University Leadership to Establish an AI Governance committee in collaboration with the existing University Data Governance Group	In progress	
	• Inventory existing AI systems and assign ownership (RACI matrix)	In progress	
Phase 2	• Develop AI risk framework and system classification	In Progress	Oct - Dec
	• Conduct risk assessments on existing and new AI projects		
	• Establish processes for continuous monitoring and auditing		
Phase 3	• Provide employee training/guidance on responsible AI use	Pending	Nov - Dec
	• Monitor compliance through audits and usage analysis		

Initiative Spotlight: Workday Finance

Status:
The initiative at this time remains on track for a July 1, 2026 Go Live. Some components of the initiative are ahead of schedule as some testing has already begun.

Budget	Hours	Dollars
Sow Value (Including Prism, Extend, Adaptive)	6951	$1,785,892
Actual (As of 9/1/2025)	2052.25	$520,991.25
Forecast (As of 9/1/2025)	4238.75	$1,264,990.75
Estimate At Completion (EAC)	6600	$1,690,771
As of 9/1/25:	Under Budget 351 Hours	Under Budget $95,121

Initiative Spotlight: University Phone System Modernization - Webex Calling

Current Costs: On-Premises Solution & 3rd Party Platforms

Service	5 Year	Annual
Cisco On Prem	257,400	51,480
Cisco Webex Spark Flex	422,400	84,480
Webex Contact Center	341,352	68,270.40
E-911	62,000	12,400
	$1,083,152.00	$216,630.40

Future Costs: Service Consolidation & Transition to Cloud platform

Service	5 Year	Annual
Webex Calling	$362,152	$72,430.80

Cost savings: 66.55% | 5 Year: $721,000.00 | Annual: $144,199.60

Webex Calling Key Benefits:
- Lower Overhead
- Built-In Compliance
- Unified Experience
- Simplified Management & Real-time Analytics
- Scalable & Reliable with Disaster Resilience
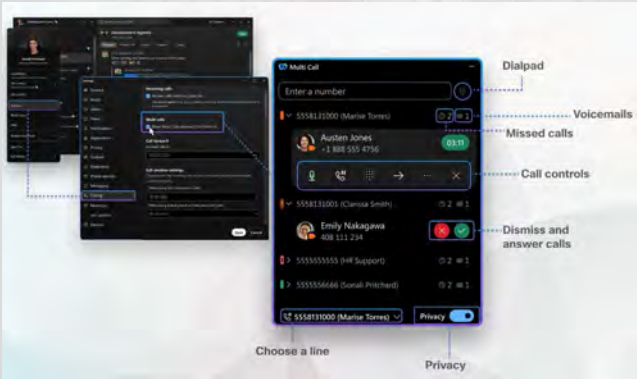
Client Services

Current State: Deployed

Initiative
Incremental Classroom Technology Upgrades B Wing
Printer Refresh Phase 1 of 2

Student Impact:

- Beginning to modernize classrooms & printing with the latest technologies for enhanced student learning & printing experiences

Key Initiative in Progress

Initiative	ETA
Faculty & Staff Computer Refresh Assessment	Fall 2025

Area Summary

First point of contact for all technology support at NEIU, and includes the IT Services Desk & Media Services Group. The group also collaborates with the university in support of new technology initiatives being rolled out.

IT Security

Current State: Deployed

Initiative
DUO MFA security enhance for employees (ongoing).
PCI DSS recertification for compliance with state audit and cyber insurance policy (completed).
Annual IT Penetration Testing (completed).

Student Impact:

- Strengthened account access protections

- Ensures payment processed are handled securely & in compliance

- Identifies & resolve potential vulnerabilities before they impact operations or student systems

Key Initiative in Progress

Initiative	ETA
Development of the University's Artificial Intelligence Policy and Governance Process	Ongoing

Area Summary

Oversees the protection of all assets, data/information systems and processes that enable the university to fulfill its critical mission, and ensure compliance with current IT Security standards.

Enterprise Apps

Current State: Deployed

Initiative
Technology Integrations: Medicat, Watermark, ActiveNet, Clockworks, eVision
Implemented Key technology integrations to improve operational efficiency & student services
Strengthened data integration platform to address security requirements and ensure compliance

Student Impact:

- Greater accessibility and streamlined process to health, advising, recreation and accessibility resources
- Ensures payment processes are handled securely & in compliance
- Strengthened account access protections

Key Initiative in Progress

Initiative	ETA
Workday Finance Integrations	Ongoing

Area Summary

Oversight of the university enterprise application systems & services, including design, development, implementation, support and maintenance.

IT Infrastructure

Current State: Deployed

Initiative
Expanded multi-factor authentication for students
Upgrades made to our Infrastructure Services including: Virtualization Software, Systems & Network services.

Student Impact:

- Strengthened account access protections
- Provide network redundancies for student access to services through critical upgrades

Key Initiative in Progress

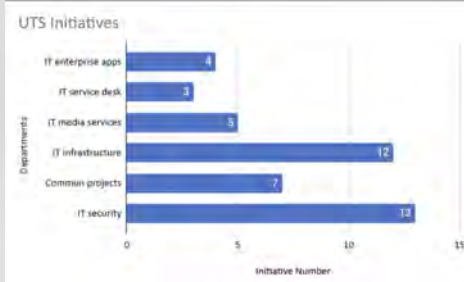| Initiative	ETA
Modernization of Telephony system to a cloud based phone system	Spring 2026

Area Summary

Oversees the management, analysis, maintenance and management and support of the entire network infrastructure & telecommunications systems for NEIU.

IT Project Management

UTS Current Initiatives: 44

UTS Initiatives

Key Initiative in Progress

Initiative	ETA
Digitization of PM Business Process for Greater Accessibility	Fall 2025 - Spring 2026
Assessment of Project Management Platforms	Fall 2025 - Spring 2026

Area Summary

Oversees the planning, coordination and delivery of technology-based initiatives at NEIU. Ensuring projects are executed efficiently, on time, and in alignment with the university's strategic goals.

Thank you