

Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University  
**Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee Meeting Minutes**  
May 20, 2026

A meeting of the Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee of the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University was convened on Wednesday, May 20, 2026 in the Student Union Golden Eagles Room located at 5500 N. St. Louis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Trustee Ann Kalayil, Chair of the Committee, called the meeting to order at 1:14 p.m.

**Roll was called and the following Trustees were present:** Betty Fleurimond (via video conference); Carlos Garcia; Ann Kalayil; Michelle Morales; and Daniela Navarrete

**Also present:** Katrina Bell-Jordan, President and Karl Voigt, Assistant Secretary to the Board

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

Trustee Kalayil announced the opportunity for public comment. There was one registration placed in advance and one presentation made.

1. **Brandon Bisbey**, representing University Professionals of Illinois (UPI), Local 4100

**Topic:** request to align official University holidays in February and Spring Break dates with calendar of CPS and the majority of other state universities

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**Remarks**

Trustee Kalayil acknowledged outgoing Student Trustee, Daniela Navarrete. Today marks Daniela's last committee meeting as Student Trustee. The committee thanked her for her dedicated leadership, service, and valuable contributions to, not only the committee, but to the Board.

President Bell-Jordan reported the past two weeks have been filled with graduation-related events, including academic honors, master's hooding ceremonies, and various student affinity group celebrations. The commencement ceremony on May 15th was a joyful occasion with over 700 graduates, supported by over 100 faculty and staff, and numerous volunteers. Student credit hours for FY26 are on track, with 99.6% toward the goal already met as of the latest update. Strong indicators for FY27 enrollment show over 20% of the student credit hour goal already met. A robust continuing education marketing campaign is targeting students in Chicago who have some college education, but no degree completion. Simultaneously, a summer enrollment campaign is encouraging students from other institutions to take summer classes at NEIU while they are home. A full report on legislative activity and advocacy will be presented at the June 11th meeting. A delegation from the University recently attended the Latino Policy Forum's advocacy day in Springfield as another opportunity to engage with policymakers about the need for adequate and equitable funding for and the benefits of public higher education.

Trustees added they would like to see more promotion of the commencement speakers in the future and to hype those who are NEIU alums.

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**Committee Charter Review**

Trustee Kalayil referred to a recent re-working of the Committee's charter and Trustees engaged in a brief discussion. There was no objection to the revised language and consent was given by the committee to adopt the refreshed version.

January 16, 2020 version

The Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee is responsible for fact finding, deliberating, advising, and making recommendations to the Board of Trustees regarding NEIU's academic, student affairs (co-curricular), and enrollment management programs and services needed to ensure quality and excellence in realizing NEIU's mission. The committee will also ensure that a robust technology

infrastructure and roadmaps exist to ensure student and academic success. The Committee will serve as diligent and knowledgeable Board members and provide governance over program and service development, review, assessment, accreditation, and discontinuance; enrollment, performance, and retention; faculty tenure and staff support; governance over the technology strategy, and providing appropriate academic, student affairs and enrollment management resources in support of student success.

#### May 2026 refreshed version

The Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee (ASAET) assists the Board of Trustees by providing oversight, guidance, and recommendations related to NEIU's academic programs, student affairs (co-curricular) functions, the enrollment management lifecycle and strategies, and the technology roadmap necessary to advance the University's mission and support student success. This includes program and service development, review, assessment, accreditation, modification, and discontinuance; enrollment performance, retention, and completion; faculty tenure and staff support as related to academic excellence; and the alignment of technology and institutional resources in support of student success, together with such other related matters as may be delegated by the Board of Trustees.

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### **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

#### Academic Affairs

Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Shayne Cofer, introduced and congratulated Dr. Kenneth Vogelsonger and Dr. Amanda Dykema-Engblade as recently being appointed Associate Deans of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Sudha Srinivas, Acting Associate Provost, provided an update on the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) peer reviewer satellite location visits from March 2026. The University received a positive report from the HLC on recent visits to its Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies, El Centro, and University Center of Lake County locations.

*“Visits to each of these locations demonstrated the diversity of services provided to meet the needs of the diverse NEIU learner and the communities the university serves. NEIU is to be commended for its use of these locations to embrace the needs of the communities that showed up to the sessions (the first two in the pouring rain) to tell the story of how much NEIU has improved their lives.”*

*“The locations visited for NEIU demonstrate compliance with all of the required elements to the highest level.”*

Dr. Srinivas expressed her deep gratitude on behalf of Academic Affairs to the directors and staff at each of the locations, to the faculty who teach there, and to the students for their hard work and engagement with the HLC peer reviewer. The University's accreditation formal review will take place in 2028.

Dr. Srinivas provided an update on the program consolidation and redesign resulting in the new B.A. in Geography and Environmental Studies and the B.S. in Applied Geosciences. In AY23-24, the University paused admissions to the B.S. in Earth Science program due to low enrollment. The Earth Science, Geography, and Environmental Studies programs were tasked with creating a program redesign and consolidation. The three distinct degree programs have been repackaged into two distinct programs with two concentrations each:

- B.A. in Geography and Environmental Studies: Geography concentration, and Environmental Studies concentration

- B.S. in Applied Geosciences: Geodata and Geospatial Analysis concentration, and Earth Ecosystem Resource Management concentration

The University is awaiting IBHE approval of its request for a Reasonable Modification and Extension (RME) related to this redesign. The University expects the redesigned B.A. program will be able meet its 15-25 majors threshold within 3 years. The B.S. program is expected to take between 3-7 years to achieve a similar threshold. Trustees thanked Dean Tim Libretti, Associate Deans Ken Vogelsonger and Amanda Dykema-Engblade and the program faculty for their work in shepherding these changes.

### Enrollment Management

Claudia Mercado, Interim Vice President for Enrollment Management, reported that as of May 6 Fall 2026 undergraduate enrollment is up by 17.7% over same time last year. Graduate enrollment for Fall 2026 is up by 24.8% over same time last year. NEIU remains a predominantly transfer-oriented institution with Fall 2026 transfer student enrollment currently at 105% of goal. In AY25-26, credit hours are at 99.6% of goal with Summer courses still enrolling students. International student registrations continue to decrease, largely due to the federal governing landscape.

### Student Success and Retention

Interim Vice President for Student Success and Retention, Irma Ortiz, reported that the early alert pilot has been expanded to include all undergraduate students (except HOPE Chicago recipients) who have fewer than 45 earned credit hours and a balance owed of at least \$500 after their financial aid has been applied. 358 student accounts were identified in Spring 2026 as having a combined \$1.4 million owed. As of May 6, the University successfully collected \$710,000, bringing the annual amount recovered to \$3 million.

Faculty completion of NEIUSar Progress Surveys continues to rise. In Spring 2026, 46.5% completed attendance surveys (7.2% increase over Fall 2025), 57.9% completed progress survey 1 (2.1% increase over Fall 2025) and 65% completed progress survey 2 (2.7% decrease over Fall 2025).

As of May 19, Fall 25 to Fall 26 retention is trending at 44.6%, about 6.7% better than same time last year.

### Student Affairs

Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, Terry Mena, introduced Amanda Ngola, Director of Student Counseling Services who reported on the Mental Health Early Action on Campus Act (MHEAC) initiative. The University is in year three of the grant funded through the Act. The first goal of the grant is to promote access and services. NEIU recently added three part-time counselors to support students at CCICS, El Centro and the Nest through extended individual and drop-in counseling hours and increased evening programming. The second goal is reducing barriers for technology and support. A laptop loan program and a contract with Timely Care, a virtual platform offering counseling and crisis support, increases access to virtual wellness activities. The third goal seeks to expand University resources and programming to include transportation support, mental health and basic needs kiosks, and wellness rooms. Wellness rooms are available at multiple sites, including the PE building and El Centro, offering activities like meditation and sound bathing. These rooms can accommodate multiple people and are used for classes and relaxation. The final goal is assessment and evaluation. Community partnerships, including neuropsychological testing and a mental health screening tool, have broadened the evaluation criteria. All of these efforts aim to expand student access to available services, which supports student retention.

Terry Mena reported on the End Student Housing Insecurity (ESHI) Act grant. The grant supports basic needs assistance such as rent, utilities, and transportation assistance, for which students must apply. Of the 57 applications received, 40 students were awarded, while 17 were denied or provided incomplete applications, but still received support through other University partnerships and the emergency fund committee. The grant also supports programming for homeless and students in care, including emergency

housing, the annual 'Friendsgiving' meal program, and the student food pantry, which is avidly utilized by students.

Trustee Garcia left the meeting at 2:36 p.m.

### Technology

Chief Information Officer, Eliot Rodriguez, reported on the University's ongoing technology initiatives. The Workday Finance transition is the most significant technology implementation being undertaken. Workday Finance is critical for streamlining financial processes and systems, and addressing audit findings. Training and adoption efforts, including user readiness reviews and LMS training, are underway to ensure full user training before the go-live date of July 1st. Classroom technology refresh was started in FY26 and will continue on an annual basis. Eighteen classrooms will receive technology upgrades in the next cycle, including new podiums, document cameras, hybrid learning equipment, and wireless collaboration tools. The upgrades will be implemented across all University locations and include technology to support both hybrid and standard classrooms. There are 44 other technology initiatives taking place across the University such as implementation of an email security platform on June 9th to reduce phishing attempts. Enterprise phone system upgrades continue and will be phased in over time following the Workday Finance implementation. The University will continue to use the Banner student information system. Other important work is the employee laptop refresh program, which will continue to replace machines out of warranty and those that are too old to support current security standards. From the governance side of the house, a draft AI policy and framework, focusing on security and audit aspects, is being reviewed by the information security committee. While the policy is not finalized, significant stakeholder input and consultant findings are being considered to ensure employee awareness of this disruptive technology ahead of a secure and effective rollout of AI across the University. University leadership understands AI is disruptive and requires thoughtful governance and risk mitigation strategies. However, it also offers opportunities for productivity gains and can help NEIU achieve its highest vision.

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### **New Business**

Trustee Kalayil asked if there was any new business to raise. Hearing none, there was no further business.

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### **Motion to Adjourn**

At 3:08 p.m. Trustee Morales, seconded by Trustee Navarrete, moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Kalayil, Chair of the Committee  
Karl Voigt, Assistant Secretary to the Board  
Approved June 11, 2026