Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University
Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2026

A meeting of the Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee of the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University was convened on Thursday, September 17, 2026 in the Student Union – Golden Eagles Room located at 5500 N. St. Louis Avenue in Chicago. Trustee Ann Kalayil called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

Roll was called and the following Trustee committee members were present: Betty Fleurimond (via video); Carlos Garcia; Ann Kalayil; and Brecel Limon

Trustee committee members not present: Michelle Morales

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

---

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

Trustee Kalayil announced the opportunity for public comment. There were no registrations placed.

Chair's and President's Remarks

President Bell-Jordan reported that faculty institute on August 20 featured scholar and celebrated author Dr. José Bowen presenting his keynote address: Educating Humans to Thrive in an AI World. The student move-in day on August 20 was a success. 4674 students are returning this Fall from last Fall. 1st year retention is up from 60.29% in Fall 2025 to 65% in Fall 2026. On August 28, the Executive Committee of the Board took action to change the University's tuition model from in-state/out-of-state and international rates to domestic and international rates. The change is effective in the Fall 2026 semester. The One Stop Center move in will begin on October 5 with the ribbon cutting on November 17. Dr. Bell-Jordan extended an introduction and welcome to Dr. Kiantra Loza, the new Vice President for Enrollment Management and Dr. Eric Pegués, the new Executive Director for the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. The University has already begun its FY28 Legislative Advocacy and more detailed information will be presented at a later date.

Trustee Kalayil welcomed the students, faculty to the Fall 2026 semester, as well as welcomed the newest Cabinet members.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Academic Affairs

Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Shayne Cofer, welcomed the newest tenure-track faculty in Fall 2026: Ankit Agrawal and Aishwarya Vijayan, Computer Science; William Balco, Anthropology; Laura Domagala and Kathy Donofrio, Nursing; Madelaine Romito, Counselor Education; Jesse Self, Justice Studies; Nicholas Witt, Teacher Education; and Yingshihan Zhu, Philosophy.

The following retired faculty were awarded Faculty Emeriti designation over the Summer 2026: Lidia Filus, Mathematics; John Kasmer, Biology; Mark Melton, Special Education; and Dan Milsky, Philosophy.

Dr. Cofer reported on the following retirements and resignations from July 1, 2026: 18 tenured/tenure-track faculty, which included 7 Professors, 8 Associate Professors, and 3 Assistant Professors. The following non-tenure track retirements/resignations included 9 instructors, of whom 5 were senior instructors.

Dr. Cofer reported that the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Leadership, Equity and Inquiry, launched in Fall 2026, has enrolled 23 students in its first cohort.

Dr. Gretchen LaCivita, Executive Director of the Master of Science in Nursing – Entry into Practice Program reported that the University is still waiting for two approvals; Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and the Illinois Board of Nursing (IBON). HLC site visit will take place on October 5-6. IBON will meet in November and their site visit will take place shortly thereafter.

New Nursing program team members: Director of Simulation, Alex Rodriguez; Simulation Operations Specialist, Colin Winkelmann; Assistant Professors, Dr. Kathy Donofrio and Dr. Laura Domagala. The Program is currently searching for a Clinical Experience Coordinator and a Program Assistant.

Dr. LaCivita provided images of the built-out Nursing Program spaces at El Centro and answered Trustees' questions. Trustees will be able to tour the facility prior to the November 19 Regular Board Meeting at the El Centro location.

Enrollment Management

Vice President for Enrollment Management, Dr. Kiantra Loza, reported that the Fall 2026 enrollment is 5674, of which 4202 are undergraduates, 1472 are graduates, and 717 are transfers. Overall enrollment is down 2% over Fall 2025. Fall 2026 credit hour total is 55,345 or 97% of goal. Student demographic highlights this Fall compared to last Fall include Asian student enrollment up 11%, Black student enrollment up 10%, Latino student enrollment down 10%, and White student enrollment up 2%. Fall 2025 to Fall 2026 retention is 65% compared to 60% same time last year. As mentioned earlier, the Executive Committee of the Board took action to update the University's tuition model from in-state/out-of-state and international rates to domestic and international rates. This change became effective as of Fall 2026. The new tuition model will give NEIU wider recruitment opportunities to promote its academic excellence, affordability, and big-city experience. Four new targeted campaigns are being launched to promote the changes. Division wide strategic initiatives include structured focus groups, cross-divisional work in the area of student onboarding, re-engaging institutional partners and strengthening transfer, international and recruitment pathways. Construction on the One Stop Center was completed September 12. Phased move-in will begin on October 5 and the formal ribbon cutting will take place on November 17. The center will officially open to students on November 18.

Student Success and Retention

Interim Assistant Provost for Student Success and Retention, Irma Ortiz, reported on the most recent retention figures. Fall 2025 to Fall 2026 retention was 65% compared to 60% over same time last year. Female student retention (67%) outpaced male student retention (62%). African American and Other/Unknown student demographic groups were retained slightly below goal (57% and 56% respectively), while Latino, Asian and White student demographic groups met or exceeded their goals (67%, 73% and 83% respectively).

Student Affairs

Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, Dr. Terry Mena, introduced the new Director of Student Disability Services, Elissa Caropresso. Elissa joined NEIU in July and comes to Northeastern with a signification background in disability service and scholarship.

Dr. Brandon Johnson, Director of Housing and Residence Life reported that the current occupancy at the NEST is 93% compared to 92% same time last year. There are currently 29 rentable beds and a waitlist of 132 individuals. Since the University assumed operational control of the NEST in May, a new housing management platform has been deployed (eRezLife) and two additional full-time staff have been hired. Over this past summer, the NEST opened rentable beds for summer camps, conferences and intern housing, realizing a new income stream. Additional trial rentals will be initiated in Summer 2027. Current priorities: continue to improve the resident experience, strengthen long-term occupancy and financial planning, and explore philanthropic and naming opportunities. The NEST is expected to operate at a loss for the next three years and reaches full-funding after three years. The contributions to the loss are far less

than what the University was paying in occupancy penalties when the facility was owned and operated by the Chicago Housing Foundation. In September 2025, NEIU purchased the NEST as part of the University's debt refinancing plan.

Director of Student Leadership Development, Veronica Rodriguez, introduced the University's campus community groups platform, NEIU Connects. Students will have much more robust and interactive ways to connect to events and services at the University through the NEIU Connects app. Students are being encouraged to sign into NEIU Connects and start exploring.

Technology

Chief Technology Officer, Eliot Rodriguez, reported on the various technology initiatives at the University. In July, after an 18-month implementation, the University deployed its new enterprise financial management system, Workday Finance. The University has been using Workday H.R. for the past several years. Workday Finance is only being used for University operations, while Banner is still being used for student financials. The University recently transitioned from legacy telephone service to cloud-based communications, allowing for greater communication flexibility for staff as well as representing a significant savings in legacy equipment and operations. Legacy classroom technology continues to be replaced with newer instructional and hybrid-learning capabilities across all classrooms at the University. These upgrades make classroom technology more reliable with fewer disruptions and expands the University's flexible learning environments. In June, the University deployed Mimecast as an additional layer of enterprise technology security. Since implementation, 7.4 million emails have been scanned of which 2.4 million spam messages and malicious email attacks were captured and quarantined. In response to the explosion of AI into the academic environment, the University has appointed Dr. Xiwei Wang as Special Assistant to the President for AI Governance and Strategy. In this one-year appointment, Dr. Wang will be responsible for assembling an AI Governance Council and Charter which will be charged with addressing and implementing the following:

- AI took intake and review process
- Create institutional guidelines for temporary AI use
- Conduct a University-wide inventory of AI tools currently being used
- Create an AI risk assessment framework
- Develop an institutional AI strategy roadmap
- Make recommendations on interim/temporary and final AI policies
- Create an AI training program and materials
- Create an AI governance KPI dashboard and reporting structure
- Draft an AI stakeholder engagement plan
- Conduct annual AI governance and risk assessment reports
- Make recommendations for permanent AI governance structure

New Business

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

Motion to Adjourn

At 3:17 p.m. Trustee Garcia, seconded by Trustee Limon, 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 November 19, 2026