

Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University

Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 14, 2020

A meeting of the Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee of the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University was convened via video conference on Thursday, May 14, 2020 at 8:35 a.m. Trustee Ann Kalayil, Chair of the Committee, called the meeting to order.

Roll was called and the following Trustees Committee members answered present: Ann Kalayil and Fatima Siddiqua

Other Trustees present: Carlos Azcoitia, Sherry Eagle, and Jim Palos

Others present: Gloria Gibson, President; Mary Pat Burns, Board Counsel; and Karl Voigt, Assistant Secretary to the Board; Vice Presidents; staff; and University Community members.

Opportunity for Public Comment in Accordance with Public Act 91-0715

Trustee Kalayil announced the Opportunity for Public Comment. There were no requests to speak.

President Gibson provided a brief COVID-19 update. The University is in alignment with the Governor's Restore Illinois initiative to phase-in return to work guidelines. The University is also working with local and federal guidelines to assist in the safe return to work. There is no date as yet when University employees, beyond essential employees, will be returning to campus. The COVID-19 Task Force meets three times per week and is working through the various guidelines to ensure campus safety prior to re-opening. All plans are still in the preliminary stages, and all public university presidents are working to align campus opening processes. CARES Act funding to students is now underway. The University has set aside roughly \$200,000 from the \$3 million CARES Act funding for students for future needs. Not all students are eligible to receive CARES Act funding so the University's Foundation has assisted in managing donations to the University's Student Emergency Fund. The University has credited many student fees for the current term. There are no plans to reimburse tuition and the only fees being assessed for summer classes are online technology fees. Senator Durbin took time recently to speak via teleconference to Illinois University Presidents. Additional federal legislative relief is being taken up.

Provost Rome informed Trustees that Provosts from Illinois Universities are also meeting on a regular basis. A fall transition team has been assembled to begin to determine how the University will deliver instruction in the fall semester. The fall transition team is presently gathering information from other universities about their plans, surveying Northeastern students and faculty about their remote learning and teaching experiences, and what their respective technology needs are. At this time, there is no firm date by which the University will recommend the fall instruction plan, but the team is considering various ways that the University may deliver instruction following summer; online, online/face-to-face, and regular face-to-face. Dr. Rome will prepare a fall instruction timeline with scenarios for Trustees. Faculty development courses are being offered this summer and fall to assist faculty in preparing their courses for a multi-delivery scenario. A portion of the University's CARES Act funding is being dedicated to enhancing technology to expand the University's online course delivery and helping students get the technology tools they require. The Provost also announced that a recently instituted strategic

scheduling for courses this year that has resulted in significant savings to the institution. This scheduling plan will continue.

Dr. John Fraire, Interim Assistant Vice President for Enrollment, reported that enrollment credit hours are 1.8% ahead of same time last year. Prior to the pandemic, the University's new enrollment goal for fall 2020 was an increase of 5% for new freshman and graduate students, and a flat transfer goal over fall 2019. At this time, there is confidence that this goal will be achievable, however, realistic fall enrollment figures will not be reliable until mid-summer. Summer transfer enrollment is running ahead of last year, and this is typically a good indicator of fall enrollment. 200 more prospective new students have indicated their intent to enroll for fall; these decisions were made following the Governor's stay-at-home order. This is a positive indicator that the University could realize a good fall enrollment based on the "staying local" decisions being made by students and prospective students alike. Recruiters and enrollment advisors continue to work assertively with prospects.

Dr. Frank Gaytan, Associate Provost for Student Success and Retention, announced that during the extended spring break, more than 100 faculty members participated in training through the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) to help them take their courses online for the remainder of the semester. Faculty responses to the training were very positive. In the last week of classes, 86% of students were logging in to Desire2Learn (D2L), the University's online teaching and learning platform. In the final month of classes, 98.6% of students interacted with D2L. After the stay-at-home order, 5% of enrolled students withdrew and 2.2% had an incomplete. 86% of students received a passing grade, and 2.5% of students did not have a recorded grade. Summer enrollment increased following the online only announcement for summer classes and students have registered for more credit hours. Freshmen registration at this time for fall 2019 was 48%. Today those same students registering for fall 2020 is 47.5%. Advisors are calling every single registered student from fall 2019 and spring 2020 to find out their registration status for fall 2020. As of today, advisors have helped 70 students get registered for fall. Students surveyed about their technology in the learning environment revealed that they are more income insecure than technology deprived. Other issues students are facing is competition at home for quiet study space and limited broadband access. The University is exploring purchasing wifi hotspots to help students going forward. Dr. Gaytan will report to Trustees student technology hardware needs from a broader audience than has been previously surveyed. Additionally, a fuller qualitative response by students to the quality of their online experience will be reported back.

Vice President Manish Kumar reported that the University is reviewing its classroom technology upgrades as well as continuing to improve campus and location wifi upgrades. The University has provided loaner computers to students who requested them, but the number of requests has been relatively low. Vice President Kumar will continue to work on updating the University's technology strategic plan, as well as reviewing student surveys to determine how the University can improve the online student experience.

Trustee Kalayil asked if there was any old business. Seeing none, she asked if there was any new business. Seeing none, Trustee Kalayil announced that at the next committee meeting on August 20, she would like the committee to receive information regarding assessing academic programs; these include defining success indicators, identifying programs to grow and programs that need re-alignment, and new programs being recommended. Trustee Eagle requested an expanded explanation of the Provost's strategic scheduling initiative and how it saved the

University money. Trustee Kalayil requested all the materials be available to Trustees no less than one week prior to the next scheduled committee meeting.

There was no further business.

Adjourn

At 9:48 a.m., Trustee Siddiqua, seconded by Trustee Eagle, moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Kalayil, Chair
Karl Voigt, Assistant Board Secretary
Approved June 11, 2020