



UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT'S
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION
FISCAL YEAR 2019
PREPARED ON JUNE 7, 2019

As stipulated in the May 2018 agreement between the University President and Northeastern Illinois University Board of Trustees, a performance evaluation will be conducted in the summer to assess the University President's progress in four key areas: recruitment, retention, graduation rates and fundraising. This document summarizes some of the key metrics and data that should be used to help evaluate the President's work in support of these areas.

While data and metrics are provided throughout this report and in the appendix, they alone should not be the sole determinant of performance. Often, data do not provide adequate context given the highly complex nature of the following four areas. Instead, data should be accepted alongside other evidence whether anecdotal or formal, and in a format that is both numerical and narrative. So, Trustees are encouraged to evaluate the University President's progress and performance holistically, also understanding that stemming negative trends could take several years.

From the day I first arrived at Northeastern, I clearly made known to the entire University Community that my two key priorities would be centered around Access and Success. Those two areas continue to be my areas of focus. Access requires a strong **recruitment** plan that enables prospective students the opportunity to pursue higher education at Northeastern, and it also demands financial support in terms of scholarships, which we create through **fundraising**. Success, on the other hand, calls for a **retention** program that effectively helps our students throughout their educational experience so they can meet their academic goals and improve our **graduation rates**.

So, as you can see, the four areas in which I will be evaluated – recruitment, retention, graduation rates and fundraising – are very well aligned with my two top priorities.

RECRUITMENT

Ultimately, I am very focused on enrollment numbers. These figures not only help determine tuition revenue but they also help shape the size of the University's budget. However, the success of our recruitment efforts is measured in a variety of other ways. In light of these, the focus of this evaluation will take into account movement through the enrollment funnel, leading up to the final enrollment numbers, which will not be available until mid-September.

- Number of applications received (May 2018 vs. May 2019)
 - Undergraduate Freshmen (5,646 vs. 4,647 = -18 percent)
 - Undergraduate Transfer (982 vs 972 = -1 percent)

- Undergraduate Total (6,746 vs. 5,750 = -15 percent)
- Graduate Total (647 vs. 798 = +23 percent)

- Number of applications in progress (May 2018 vs. May 2019)
 - Undergraduate Freshmen (1,200 vs. 1,599 = +35 percent)
 - Undergraduate Transfer (305 vs. 347 = +14 percent)
 - Undergraduate Total (1,524 vs. 1,994 = +31 percent)
 - Graduate Total (452 vs. 517 = +14 percent)

As you can see, the number of applications has been trailing slightly behind last year's number; however, I am very encouraged by the number of applications that are currently in progress, which are up by double-digit percentages.

My time this year has been prioritized to focus on meaningful and intentional outreach efforts to the high schools and neighborhoods that present great recruitment opportunities for us. With a substantial delegation of faculty and staff at my side, I have participated in outreach efforts in Chicago neighborhoods such as Humboldt Park, Little Village, Bronzville and Niles. Also, I have begun work in creating pipelines between Northeastern and area community colleges, such as City Colleges (Kennedy-King, Wright, etc.), Oakton Community College and other feeder institutions, especially Chicago Public Schools. It's worth mentioning, too, that we've made progress with International Student recruitment, having renewed Dr. Cris Toffolo's appointment as interim director of that area. We also look forward to welcoming a new cohort of 20 MBA students from India that are a result of a new, strategic partnership that we started this year thanks to the Board's approval.

I am very proud of the work done by the Enrollment Services staff who work under the leadership of a new executive appointment that I had made during the past year. In October, I hired Dr. John Fraire to serve as my Interim Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services. Dr. Fraire has served as Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs at Portland State University. Prior to that he spent almost eight years as Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment at Washington State University where he helped to increase freshman enrollment by nearly 30 percent.

We hope that he can recreate some of those successes at Northeastern before he completes his interim assignment on October 31, 2020. His focus during the past several months has been to update and modernize processes in Enrollment Services and to create the infrastructure that enables us to be more effective and efficient in our recruitment and admissions operations.

RETENTION

Student retention is another area that determines enrollment. Our institution's ability to retain its students has a direct impact on revenue. So, along with recruitment, this remains a high priority. Since assuming the role as University President I have assessed our institution's ability to retain its students and have decided that it required new leadership. In November, I, along with the Acting Provost,

identified Dr. Francisco (Frank) Gaytán to serve as Interim Associate Provost for Student Success and Retention. Dr. Gaytán now oversees the Learning Success Center (which includes TRIO, Wentworth, Project Success and Proyecto Pa'Lante), General Academic Advising, Summer Bridge Program, the First Year Experience Program, and the activities under the Title V Individual Development Grant.

In a relatively short period of time we have already begun to see some positive results, having improved retention by more than 12 percentage points among first-time, full-time freshman. Transfer student retention, compared to this time last year, has also improved, having risen more than 2 percentage points since this time last year.

- First-time, full-time freshman retention (See Fall-to-Fall Retention chart, May 13, 2019)
 - F17 to F18 = 35.9 percent (May 13, 2018)
 - F18 to F19 = 48.2 percent (May 13, 2019)
 - This represents a 12.3 percentage-point increase in one year.

- Transfer retention (See Fall-to-Fall Transfer Retention chart, May 6, 2019)
 - F17 to F18 = 46.8 percent (May 6, 2018)
 - F18 to F19 = 49.1 percent (May 6, 2019)
 - This represents a 2.3 percentage-point increase in one year.

While we celebrate these gains, I know that we have a lot of work ahead of us. I continue to have strong confidence in Dr. Gaytan, his very capable team of professionals, University-wide faculty, staff and administrators to continue improving on our retention rates.

GRADUATION RATES

Of the four areas of evaluation, this is the most challenging to quantify. Of course, one can look at the four-, five-, and six-year graduation rates, which I have provided below. They fall much below expectations. However, in fairness to me as a newly appointed President, these are data points that take several years to influence. Northeastern's graduation rates are a high priority for me, and my efforts to improve student success are very closely tied to strong graduation rates. I believe that my work in both access and success will have a direct and positive impact on graduation rates.

I also ask you to consider another metric, which is a strong indicator of students' ability to graduate, which is the number of students who have declared a major. All of our research and analysis show that those who have declared a major are more likely to be retained and, therefore, graduate. While the Fall 2019 percentage is not available yet, the Fall 2018 data not only show an improvement over last year, but it is very close to meeting the goal that has been established.

- Number of those students with 45+ credit hours who have declared a major (Fall 2017 vs. Fall 2018): 86.0 percent vs. 87.4 percent = 1.4 percentage point increase, which is 0.7 percentage points away from our goal.

- Most current six-year graduation rate (Fall 2012 to Summer 2018): 21.2 percent

FUNDRAISING

Finally, our fundraising efforts also play a role in our University's revenue situation. We encourage a definition of fundraising to include money raised through development activities as well as money raised through grants won. As you know, we completed the University's first-ever capital comprehensive fundraising campaign, and it was a huge success. Together we raised \$12.9 million in gifts, pledges and planned gifts during the campaign, which started in January 2014.

Below is a brief summary of some key metrics that demonstrate our fundraising success during the past year.

- Unaudited fiscal year statements of financial position (FY 2018 through 4/30 vs. FY 2019 through 4/30)
 - NEIU Foundation Endowment (\$11.7 million vs. \$12.3 million = +\$583,000)
 - NEIU Foundation Net Assets (\$14.0 million vs \$15.0 million = +\$910,000)
- Total Corporate and Foundation Funding (FY 2018 vs. FY 2019)
 - FY18: \$989,578
 - FY19: \$928,679
 - Difference: -\$60,899
- Giving by category (FY 2018 through 5/31 vs. FY 2019 through 5/31)
 - Alumni giving (\$676K vs. \$622K = -\$54K)
 - Corporate giving (\$1.41 vs. \$1.42 = +\$10K)
 - Faculty, staff, retiree (\$593K vs. \$548K = -\$45K)
 - Friends (\$249K vs. \$190K = \$59K)
 - Student (\$454 vs. \$7,800 = +\$7,346)

I am very pleased with these results, as well as the efforts of Northeastern's Division of Institutional Advancement, which has been working diligently to raise these funds and to help me build the relationships that are a necessary part of our donor cultivation strategy. I look forward to continued success in this area as well as the possibility of another capital campaign in the near future.

CONCLUSION

This past year has been one of the most gratifying of my career. Now having completed one full cycle, I have been able to experience all of the events, processes and traditions that make Northeastern great. I can also comfortably shed my title as "new" President.

But during this year it has become very apparent to me so much more work must be done – aside from these four areas -- in terms of infrastructure (facilities, technology), processes (move from paper to

electronic), marketing (awareness and outreach) and revenue (from the state, donors, and tuition). As we enter FY2020, I reaffirm my commitment to these areas as well.

If I only had one observation to share about my first year as Northeastern's President it would be that our University is well-positioned for great things because of its resilience and willingness to adapt to change. During the past year, I have planted many seeds: I started new traditions (Faculty Institute), made a number of strategic hires (Gaytan, Fraire, Rome, etc.), built strategic relationships (in government, philanthropy and secondary education) and initiated processes to help us build our future (Transition Committee). I'm confident we're moving in the right direction. So, while I plant new seeds in the coming year, we will enjoy the fruits of our labor moving forward.

Thank you again for the confidence you have in me to lead this wonderful institution, and thank you for your support. I look forward to watching Northeastern Illinois University grow, adapt and succeed.

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Please see appendix attached.

NEIU Board of Trustees Annual Performance Evaluation of President Gloria Gibson

During Dr. Gloria Gibson's first year as president of NEIU she has acquainted herself with and researched the university community, focusing on the four major areas prioritized for her by the Board of Trustees upon her hire: recruitment of students; retention of students; graduation rate; and fundraising. In each area she assessed the state of the university, reviewing data and visiting with professionals responsible for each area. She determined the leadership capacity, conducted data and trend analysis, and inventoried related programs. In doing so President Gibson effectively carried out the duties of a newly hired chief executive.

In the areas of recruitment and retention she brought on new leadership, which has introduced promising initiatives. She also spent time meeting with community leaders to build connections for NEIU, focusing particularly on Chicago communities. In the coming year the Trustees look forward to her building on these new relationships. As well, the recruitment effort might investigate the benefits of sourcing students from the broader Chicagoland area.

In the area of graduation rates, data has been reviewed and her belief is that this area is tied directly to student success and students declaring a major in a timely manner. Dr. Gibson will work with her newly hired provost to positively affect graduation rates through their focus on programs and majors.

In fundraising Dr. Gibson's arrival coincided with the successful completion of the university's first-ever capital fund raising campaign. This was a clear victory for the new president, the development office, and the greater NEIU community.

The first year has been an important and successful foundational moment. As we move forward in the coming year, President Gibson will need to direct her leadership team to fulfill goals related to recruitment, retention, graduation rates, and ongoing fund raising, while building relationships and partnerships with leaders she met during her first-year introductions.

Looking beyond the four areas of focus, President Gibson can work with the Trustees on the important matter of NEIU's financial strength. The Trustees understand the challenging financial environment facing public education in Illinois and value staying informed of the financial implications of decisions that come before them. Related to this and understanding that the University again has capital resources available, the Trustees look forward to regular information provided about the progress of capital projects.

The Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University appreciate Dr. Gibson's leadership during her first year as president. This was a foundational time that she used well. She extended herself in the demanding task of leading forward a university. We look forward to working with her during the second year of her term as she capitalizes on Year One in accomplishing important tasks in leading NEIU forward.

July 16, 2019