

Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University  
**Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee Meeting Minutes**  
May 16, 2024

A meeting of the Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee of the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University was convened on Thursday, May 16, 2024 in the Student Union Golden Eagles Room located at 5500 N. St. Louis Avenue, Chicago, IL 60625. Trustee Ann Kalayil, Chair of the Committee, called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

**Roll was called and the following Trustee Committee members were present:** Marvin Garcia; Ann Kalayil; Edwin Medina; and Michelle Morales

**Also present:** Katrina Bell-Jordan, Interim President; Karl Voigt, Assistant Secretary to the Board; vice presidents; staff; and University community members both in-person and viewing remotely

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

Trustee Kalayil announced the opportunity for public comment. There were three registrations placed in advance.

1. **Gabriel Cortez** representing the El Centro Advisory Committee and ENLACE Leadership Institute  
**Topic:** to share best practices by El Centro and Proyecto Pa'Lante for onboarding and testing
2. **Susanne Pawlikowski** representing AFSCME  
**Topic:** University's haphazard technology deployments and inadequate staffing, training and support
3. **Denise Cloonan Cortez** representing self  
**Topic:** to recognize interim leadership, the positive campus morale and where we go into the future

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**Chair's and President's Remarks**

Trustee Kalayil stated that this is the last committee meeting of the academic year. Thank you to outgoing Student Trustee, Edwin Medina, for his contributions and congratulations to everyone for a successful year. Several Afghan students accompanied a recent trip to Springfield to watch legislative proceedings and met with Lieutenant Governor Stratton and several deputy governors.

Interim President Bell-Jordan congratulated the recent NEIU graduates and thanked the Trustees, faculty and staff for their participation in a joyful commencement ceremony. The Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee recently recommended approval of the FY25 preliminary operating budget. Thank you to Trustee Kalayil for taking the Afghan cohort members to Springfield.

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**ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION**

Action Item: Committee Recommendation Regarding Tenure Awards

Trustee Garcia, seconded by Trustee Morales, moved to recommend awarding tenure for Gretchen LaCivita, Ph.D., Executive Director of NEIU's Master of Science in Nursing program, and for Nathan Putnam, Associate Dean of Libraries. These recommendations come with support from the College of Education, Dean Thomas Pillion, the NEIU Libraries, Dean Steven Harris, and Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, R. Shayne Cofer.

Discussion: there was no discussion

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Fleurimond:                      Kalayil: Yes                      Morales: Yes

Garcia: Yes                      Medina: \*

\* the Student Trustee is not permitted to vote on tenure

The motion carried.

Action Item: Committee Recommendation Regarding the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Program Budget

Trustee Garcia, seconded by Trustee Medina, moved to recommend approval of the budget for the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree program as presented.

Discussion: funding in the three deficit years is expected to come from the state through program grants. If state funding does not materialize, additional support is actively being solicited from private donors. Trustees would like to see a fundraising plan. It may be possible to share an office employee once the program is up and running. In regards to the simulation lab, if construction delays the proposed El Centro lab, would it be possible for the program to share a simulation lab with another institution's approved program?

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Fleurimond:                      Kalayil: Yes                      Morales: Yes

Garcia: Yes                      Medina: Yes

The motion carried.

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## **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

### Academic Affairs

Interim Provost Shayne Cofer reported on how the University gauges the health of its academic programs. All programs are regularly reviewed. Different programs are targeted each year to receive a more focused examination. Qualitative and quantitative reviews consider many factors such as program and institutional accreditation, and assessments. National benchmarks are employed to understand program productivity, efficiency and vitality. Other factors include program revenues, communities served, enrollment, student to faculty ratio, and completion and success as balanced against the University's mission. With respect to low enrolled programs, the University reports this information to the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) annually. Dr. Cofer reviewed NEIU's low enrolled program data with Trustees and answered their questions.

### Enrollment Management

Maureen Amos, Executive Director of Financial Aid reported the latest data related to the U.S. Department of Education's FAFSA updates. The 2025-26 FAFSA is slated for an October 1, 2024 release. The improvements to the process, while there have been some problems, overall are improving the student/family experience and making financial aid easier to obtain. These operational changes will continue to improve over time. Ms. Amos shared NEIU's financial aid data for the current academic year and progress toward the 2024-25 academic year and answered Trustees' questions.

Director of Undergraduate Admissions, Ryan Trout, reported the latest Fall 2024 enrollment information. As of May 13, the University has received 9,574 first-year student applications, has admitted 6,428 applicants, has 713 confirmed intents-to-enroll (ITE) and has enrolled 47 students. The University has also received 1,291 transfer applications, has admitted 607 applicants, has 315 ITE, and has enrolled 84 students. Campus visit tours, workshops for transfer students, placement testing, and a summer of new student orientations are currently underway.

Irma Ortiz, Associate Provost for Student Success and Retention, reported on the various initiatives being produced in coordination with undergraduate admissions. These include new student orientations, one-on-one visits with onsite admission counselors, working closely with ITE students to ensure they are receiving the advisement and connections to Success Programs they need, and providing similar high-touch advisement and registration assistance to first-year and transfer students. The Student Success and Retention teams are coordinating onboarding support for admitted students onsite at their high school campuses.

Tim Sheahan, Director of Graduate Admissions, reported the latest Fall 2024 enrollment information. The University has received 945 applications, has admitted 354 applicants, has 218 ITE, and has enrolled 56 students.

#### Student Success and Retention/Technology

Rahshida Walker, University Registrar, reported on the University's implementation of Degree Works. This technology replaces the current degree audit tool and is an Elucian product so it is integrated with current student self service portals. The new product incorporates graduate programs into the degree audit trail. Nuanced search features assist academic advisors and future phases of implementation will include educational planner and transfer equivalency functions. Students will have an easier time understanding their academic progress which will include information as to what courses and requirements are still outstanding toward degree completion.

#### Student Affairs

Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, Terry Mena, reported the latest NEST information. Spring 2024 occupancy rate was 75.89% against a goal of 91%. Of the 327 total leases, 95 were renewals and 231 were new. NEST occupants were surveyed this past semester; 380 were invited to respond with 207 completed surveys received. 89.9% of respondents rated The NEST experience as satisfactory or above. The top 5 positive remarks were for event programming and initiatives, management response, security, fitness and entertainment centers, and customer service and staff presence. The top 5 areas of improvement were for roommate selection, elevator maintenance, general maintenance response, move-in conditions, and cannabis use.

Katy McGuinnis, Director of the Career Development Center, reported data on initiatives over the current academic year. The Center hosted 3 career fairs (2 in-person and 1 virtual) with 210 employers and 823 students participating. The Center added a virtual internship fair for Social Work students and alumni. These activities represent a 62% increase in student participation over the previous year. The Center provided 203 in-class presentations which reached 2,390 students and alumni. The Center reached 912 students and alumni through 1:1 appointments.

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#### **Old / New Business**

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

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**Motion to Adjourn**

At 4:02 p.m. Trustee Morales, seconded by Trustee Garcia, moved to adjourn. The motion carried by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Kalayil, Chair of the Committee  
Karl Voigt, Assistant Secretary to the Board  
Approved September 19, 2024