

Northwestern University  
Minutes of the Faculty Senate  
Guild Lounge and Videoconference  
October 16, 2023

The Northwestern University Faculty Senate held its first meeting of the 2023-24 academic year on October 16, 2023 in Scott Hall's Guild Lounge and over Zoom videoconference. President Regan Thomson called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. A quorum was present.

The president noted that the minutes from the special meeting on August 9, 2023 meeting were approved electronically and entered into the record.

The president then introduced University President Michael Schill. President Schill thanked the Senate leadership and the Faculty Senate for the invitation to speak at the first meeting of the year. He also reiterated his belief in and support of shared governance. He acknowledged that his first year as University President has been turbulent, full of highs and some very painful lows. He said he would address both that evening, beginning with the highs.

President Schill said faculty continue to perform pathbreaking work. Research funding surpassed \$1 billion this past year. He said what excited him most about this achievement is the impact on society—the inventions, the knowledge created, the cures discovered. He said he was also encouraged to see Northwestern move up a spot in the U.S. News and World Rankings into a tie for ninth. Despite his skepticism of the rankings system, President Schill said there are some worthwhile metrics, including U.S. News' prioritization of access and social mobility, which helped Northwestern. The second change that fueled Northwestern's ascent in the rankings, he said, was the improvement in peer reputation, a powerful measure of Northwestern's eminence.

President Schill said Northwestern's students continue to amaze him. Last year, he said he visited each school and college at least twice. He said he always has lunch with the students there and he also held a series of roundtables with Vice President of Student Affairs Susan Davis. He said

Northwestern students are incredibly smart, driven, caring, and talented, which is further evidenced by two students winning Rhodes scholarships.

Since he last met with the Faculty Senate, President Schill said he developed a set of [guiding principles and priorities](#). He said he will spend the majority of his time and fundraising around this vision. Under the umbrella of research and innovation, he said, are the following priorities: advancing the biosciences, leading in decarbonization, renewable energy, and sustainability, fostering interdisciplinary innovation among social sciences and global studies, harnessing the power of data analytics and artificial intelligence, and enhancing the creative and performing arts. Under the umbrella of community, President Schill said the following are priorities: investing in employees, building resilient students and a sense of belonging, promoting access, opportunity, and diversity, defending freedom of expression and promoting engagement across differences, and enhancing the student-athlete experience while continuing to ensure their health and safety.

President Schill spoke briefly about leadership transition: Brian Brayboy became the Dean of SESP in June; Jonathan Holland joined Northwestern as the Dean of the Bienen School of Music in September; Christopher Schuh began leading the McCormick School of Engineering in August; Eric Perreault was named the Vice President for Research in September; Mandy Distel took over as Chief Financial Officer in June; Luke Figora became the Vice President and Chief Operating Officer; Stacy Kostell became the Vice President and Dean of Enrollment in September.

President Schill said the latter appointment, Vice President Kostell, faces a tremendous challenge after the Supreme Court ruled that universities cannot use race-conscious admissions. He wrote in an op-ed that the Supreme Court made a mistake in their decision by undermining the value of diversity. He pointed out that Provost Hagerty convened a working group last spring and over the summer to develop a strategy for facing this challenge. The strategy is four prongs: **1.** Inclusion and belonging: making students feel that they belong here and they will go out and encourage other students to come to Northwestern. **2.** Use essay questions that encourage students to reflect on obstacles they've faced and how individualized backgrounds might contribute to the university. He added that there is a huge likelihood universities will be constantly sued and he personally believed the university should be testing some of the boundaries on this order. **3.** Expanding pathway programs and encouraging local students to attend Northwestern. **4.** Exploring relationships with

community colleges. He said if this happens there will have to be agreements on what credits count and how to support those students once they arrive at Northwestern. President Schill also acknowledged that maintaining diversity will be a challenge, but one worth pursuing.

President Schill then spoke about athletics. He said he terminated former football coach Pat Fitzgerald over the summer after an anonymous complaint that hazing occurred in the football program. He said the university also terminated the head baseball coach after allegations of bullying other coaches. Given concerns about student privacy and the current lawsuits, President Schill said he couldn't speak about much of the specifics involving hazing. He did however say his main goal in July, that night, and in the future is to protect all students, and to ensure nothing like that ever happens again. Towards that end, President Schill said the university is taking the following steps: Monitoring the football locker room to ensure safety. The appointment of Attorney General Loretta Lynch to conduct a review and make recommendations on two items: what accountability measures might be instituted to ensure something like this never happens again and whether there are aspects of the athletics culture or practices that made this type of behavior possible or otherwise inconsistent with Northwestern's athletic values. He said the latter point will hopefully strengthen collaboration between faculty and athletics. He added that that the appointment of Attorney General Lynch aligned with the parameters outlined in the Faculty Senate's resolution in August. She plans to interview a wide range of university members. She also plans to speak with the drafters of the letter that prompted the resolution and has already spoke with Faculty Senate leadership. Lastly, President Schill acknowledged the difficulty the University endured this summer, and he apologized for his role in that by delaying the firing of Coach Fitzgerald. Nonetheless, he stood by his decisions to fire Coach Fitzgerald. He also thanked the Senate leadership for their advice and support during those challenging times.

President Schill then spoke about Ryan Field and the proposed new stadium. He said some faculty never supported the new stadium and will never support it and some do support the new stadium. He reiterated the email he sent over the summer: he views the hazing problem to be separate from the Ryan Field reconstruction. He said he continues to support the building of a new Ryan Field as long as the cost of the reconstruction is roughly equivalent to what the University would have to pay to renovate the current stadium and the University does not have to sacrifice any of the ambitious academic goals it has set.

President Schill said his last point on athletics spoke to Northwestern's uniqueness, in that it highlights the breadth and the depth of the student body. He said Northwestern's current coaches care deeply about Northwestern's students and its community. One of the things that made it so hard over the summer, he said, is the perceived dent to Northwestern's exceptional pursuit of elite academics and athletics. He said he still believes Northwestern to be exceptional in that regard even if some former coaches failed to meet that standard.

Lastly, President Schill commented on the tragedy unfolding in the Middle East. He said the effects of Hamas' brutal attacks have yet to play themselves out on the world stages and, he fears, on Northwestern's campus. He said the world and Northwestern mourns the deaths in Israel and Gaza. He said he prayed for the release of hostages and innocents, and that civilian lives will be spared. President Schill acknowledged the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is an emotionally charged issue no matter the side. He said he doesn't want to or feel capable of analyzing the problem. But he does think faculty have a role as leaders in the academic community to support our students, to support each other, to focus our energies on what universities do best, to understand how we got here and what we can do to make a better future.

The president then opened the floor for questions.

Senator Ezra Getzler (Mathematics) said he wanted to make a statement on the events in the Middle East. He said he felt President's Schill's response has not reached the heart of what is happening and the difficulties to come. He said that for many at Northwestern, the attacks on Israel on October 7 was a defining moment in their lives. In the face of the University's silence after the attack, Senate Getzler said he was contacted by more members of his department and with more urgency than on any previous issue. In the view of many with which he has spoken, the University abdicated its responsibility to its students and its employees, and that absence, in his view, will have serious repercussions. President Schill thanked Senator Getzler for his remarks. He said people feel the way he does on both sides of the issue, which is why commenting has become so difficult. He said he respects Senator Getzler's views and he is doing the best he can during what is perhaps the most difficult decision he has ever faced. He added that people should not feel sorry for him—people are dying, students are hurting, and more people are in danger. He asked for the focus to be on those who need it most.

Senator David Kalainov (Orthopedic Surgery) said he is on the Budget and Planning Committee, which met with President Schill and Provost Hagerty last spring. He said it was his understanding after that discussion that the money Northwestern would spend on refurbishing the current Ryan Field is nearly equivalent to the money Northwestern plans to spend on the reconstruction of Ryan Field. He said he believed the stated amount was approximately \$110 or \$120 million. He asked President Schill if that was fair to say. President Schill said the cost to renovate Ryan Field is higher than that—he said they never fully went down the path to renovation to scope out in detail all the work that needs to be done. He said the estimates he has seen were over \$200 million for renovation, which speaks to the horrible condition Ryan Field is in. He said he would rather have a new stadium that depreciates much more slowly and to leverage a \$500 million gift than to have a stadium which is entirely based upon smaller donations. He said he sees how people could have a different opinion on this, but it ultimately was the decision he made.

Senator Ian Hurd (Political Science) said there is concern on campus that the costs of the athletics department's scandal might affect the University's mission. He asked if President Schill could assure the senators that the costs of cleaning up the mess will come first out of the athletic department's budget. President Schill said he would do everything humanly possible to ensure the costs of the hazing fallout don't impact the academic mission of the University. He said it is too early to estimate exact costs, but the University is insured for large portion of the lawsuits. He said he would not comment on the coach's lawsuit. In any event, he does understand the concern and he's made very clear to the Board that it can't reduce Northwestern's ability to achieve its academic goals.

Senator Deborah Cohen (History) wanted to register a concern about the place of athletics within the University. She said the underinvestment in core University missions has been substantial in the last five years. She said for many people viewing this situation, including members of her department, the question is why is Northwestern building what she understands to be the most expensive football stadium in the nation. She said there is a big difference between a \$400 million stadium and an \$800 million one. Beyond that, she expressed concern about the large number of Evanstonians opposed to the rebuild. President Schill said most of the debate in the Land Use Commission meetings was focused on the concerts and their impact on the neighborhood. He said it is an expensive stadium, but it is funded largely through a generous gift by a family who does give to the academic wing of the University as well. He said if they go through with the rebuild then the

University would have to use its own money. President Schill said the question about the role of athletics is a good one. He said he believes athletics is important to Northwestern and he knows the Board believes that too. Senator Cohen followed up by asking President Schill about the gap between the Ryan family's \$400-some million gift and the stadium's projected \$800 million cost, specifically wondering how that gap will be made up. She also added that she does think athletics is important, similar to the orchestra and theater, but, in her view, athletics seems to hold a privileged position in admissions in the way it currently functions. President Schill said athletes are not the only other part of the university that admissions looks at additional skills beyond academics, such as the music school. He said he understands the debate around these issues and how the Olympic sports are funded, which tend to be predominately women's sports and open up questions of equity. Returning to Ryan Field, President Schill said the rebuild would be funded by the Ryan's gift, additional philanthropy built into the model, some University capital, as well as debt that will be paid by the operations of Ryan Field.

The president then said the Senate needed to move on, but he thanked President Schill for joining the Senate and answering its questions.

The president then entertained a motion to ratify the standing committee chairs. The motion was seconded and the floor was opened for discussion.

Senator Ian Hurd (Political Science) asked about the athletics committee. The president said that is an ad hoc committee and will be discussed later on.

With no further discussion, the Senate voted on and approved the following standing committee chairs:

- Therese McGuire, Budget & Planning Committee
- Steve Jacobsen, Committee on Cause
- Jacqueline Babb, Educational Affairs Committee
- Kalyani Chadha, Faculty Handbook Committee
- Ana Aparicio, Faculty Rights & Responsibilities Committee

- Mark Witte, Governance Committee
- Cat Fabian, Non-Tenure Eligible Committee
- Tom Hope, Research Affairs Committee
- Joseph Ferrie, Salary & Benefits Committee
- Angela Lee, Secure Faculty Survey Committee
- Rebecca Zorach, Social Responsibility Committee
- Ana Maria Acosta, Student Affairs Committee.

The president then entertained a motion to ratify the members of the Committee on Cause. The motion was seconded and the floor was opened for discussion.

Senator Ian Horswill (Computer Science) asked what this committee is specifically. The president said the Committee on Cause is a committee that reviews faculty appeals.

Senator Getzler said it was his understanding that the Committee on Cause has met infrequently. He wondered how often the committee had met in the past few years. The president said there were no meetings last year or the year prior.

Senator Fred Turek (Neurobiology) asked why this committee is voted on separately. The president said it is a requirement of the Senate's Bylaws.

With no further discussion, the Senate voted on and approved the following members of the Committee on Cause:

- Steve Jacobsen (Chair, earth and Planetary Sciences))
- Caryn Ward (Medill)
- H G Munshi (Medicine)
- Mark Johnson (Biomedical Engineering)
- Yvonne Curran (Neurology)
- Sarah Bartolome (Music Studies)
- Heather Risser (Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences)

The president then began his [report](#).

The president said the Faculty Senate held a special meeting of the Faculty Senate on August 9, 2023 to address the situation in athletics. He said there were four resolutions on the docket that evening, but only [three passed](#) due to loss of quorum. The first resolution called for an external review of athletics and the hazing that took place, to make the findings and recommendations public, and to develop a long-term oversight plan with follow-up. The second resolution called for an evaluation of the relationship between NU's academic mission and the athletics program. Resolution three called for an oversight mechanism outside of athletics with faculty and Senate involvement.

The president said he and Past President Ceci Rodgers met with the Paul, Weiss (law firm tasked with the external review) investigation team led by Attorney General Loretta Lynch on September 15. They discussed ways in which the Senate could be a partner in their work. He said the investigation team expressed as interest in being able to meet with a small group of senators to provide updates, which prompted the president to form an ad hoc committee on athletics. The members of that committee are as follows:

- Mark McCareins (NTE-Kellogg)
- Debra Cohen (History)
- Ian Hurd (Political Science)
- Jill Wilson (Industrial Engineering & Management Sciences)
- Ian Horswill (Computer Science)
- Sarah Bartolome (Music Studies)

As it relates to athletics, the president said he believed the Faculty Senate should participate in meaningful and collaborative ways to help improve the situation, while being mindful of the external review. He stressed that the Senate should follow-up on the resolutions it passed this summer and should position itself to be included in helping realize future recommendations on athletics. He also said finding ways to educate itself on athletics by interacting with that unit more.



The president shared a few other items of note from the summer. He said the Senate leadership followed up on the ombuds office after Ombudsperson Sarah Klaper visited the Senate last year. She recently sent the president a copy of her annual report and he said there appears to be positive movement in terms of staffing and support for that office. He said he also met with representatives from Northwestern's Staff Advisory Council (NUSAC) to discuss their efforts to field a staff survey. He said staff surveys are similarly infrequent and it might present an opportunity for working on shared goals. The president noted that Past President Ceci Rodgers has led an overhaul of the Faculty Senate website. The new website should premier in November. The president also said he met with a group of senators from the Chicago campus to discuss ideas for what a downtown meeting would look like. Plans for that meeting are ongoing. The president also organized an event on free expression with Jonathan Friedman, Director of Free Expression at PEN America, which was co-sponsored by the Office of the President and the Center for the Study of Diversity and Democracy. Lastly, the president highlighted the (re)orientation event and social mixer for senators in late September.

The president asked if there were any questions or comments following his report.

Senator Cohen said it was her understanding that resolution three on athletics called for the disbanding of the Committee on Athletics and Recreation (CAR). The president said the word disbanded was not in resolution three. Senator Cohen said that regardless her sense of the resolution was that CAR was not up to the task of effective oversight of athletics.

Senator Therese McGuire (Strategy) said CAR's role is not oversight of athletics. She said there will be an evaluation of CAR's role and if that role should be changed.

Senator Luís Amaral (Mechanical and Biological Engineering) said the Senate could be more efficient. He said there should be more guidance to external visitors. He said President Schill spent too much time on flowery issues when he could have spent more time on serious questions. He said the report the president gave also wasted time. He also wanted to know if the athletics budget is actually independent or if their budget is more tied into central's, citing pauses on faculty searches and other critical spending measures as evidence of the latter. The president said the items Senator Amaral raised are important, but not everything can be accomplished or answered in the first half of

the first meeting of the year. He said the plan is to be deliberate in the approach to meetings this year, including discussing the University's budget in November, prior to the Provost and the Treasurer visiting in January so that valuable questions may be posed.

Senator Seth Lichter (Mechanical Engineering) seconded Senator Amaral's remarks about the dilute content in the University President's remarks. He then asked to what extent the University shares financial information. Senator Getzler said he was a former chair of the Budget and Planning Committee. During his time as chair, which was about ten years ago, he said members of that committee could join in the budget discussion with the administration, but they could not share specifics with the faculty. Senator McGuire is the current chair of the Budget and Planning Committee, and she said her sense is the University was to be as transparent as possible. She said they have been willing to answer questions that committee has and have been willing to meet with them when they ask. She said the committee has another meeting coming up on October 30 with Vice President and Treasurer Mandy Distel and Associate Vice President of Budget and Planning Daniel Durack. She said the topic of that conversation will be how to get more faculty input into the University's budget. The president said they will discuss this more at the next Senate meeting after the Budget and Planning Committee meets.

Senator Judy Rosenbaum (Law) said she was concerned about the representation of the Chicago campus senators on the Executive Committee and the Committee on Cause. She said, when the conversation shifts to athletics, she hoped that the Senate will take a closer look at the University's stance that it cannot rebuild the football stadium unless it has concerts as concerts will be needed to fund ongoing maintenance. The president said that is one of the questions he hoped they would discuss during item seven on the agenda.

With no further comments, the president moved on to item six in the agenda. He said he wanted to get feedback on certain issues throughout the year, and building access is the first one he wanted to discuss. Recent security incidents on campus led to new building access protocols. He asked the Senate if they are happy with current access protocols. He also asked if areas not at risk should remain more open and if the new protocols are impacting the student experience of campus life.

Senator Barbara Newman (English) said she does not like the updated system for building access. She said it doesn't seem very effective as a security measure given that the main entrance is always unlocked during the day, meaning unauthorized visitors are still able to enter in at least one entryway. Yet, she said the locked doors are inconveniencing students, faculty, and staff if they want to enter a locked door of a building. She added that if this system must be in place, she doesn't see why all Wildcards can't open all doors. The president said that was a nice encapsulation of his experience too.

Senator Caryn Ward (Medill) agreed with Senator Newman. She said that many people are polite and hold doors open for individuals walking near the entryways even they don't have their Wildcard out.

Senator Mark Witte (NTE, WCAS) said he was concerned about the lack of broad communication surrounding events that led to the new access policy. He said faculty should be notified and have the chance to give input on matters of this kind.

Senator Julia Oliver Rajan (Spanish and Portuguese) said Kresge's access was restricted because two unhoused individuals were sheltering in her department, using their kitchen and bathrooms.

The president said this feedback was helpful. He said he plans to share it with Chief Operating Officer Luke Figora and perhaps invite him to join the Senate.

The president then moved on to item seven on the agenda, planning further discussion of athletics. He said he wanted to engage in internal discussions amongst senators, similar to when the Senate used breakout tables to discuss the internal survey.

Senator Johnson (Biomedical Engineering) then made a motion to consider discussion of resolution four concerning athletics from the August meeting:

**RESOLUTION 4: Temporarily pause planning and marketing of the new Ryan Field**

WHEREAS in recent years the university has made major and high-profile investments in athletics, particularly in the football program, while harassment and abuse in the football program went unchecked, and

WHEREAS the university has announced plans to construct a new \$800 million Ryan Field, and envisions this project as a “once-in-a-century” investment in the campus and community, and

WHEREAS such a defining, long-term investment must be developed and considered with care and intention, and

WHEREAS the university must demonstrate and prioritize an unwavering commitment to its academic mission, students’ welfare, and Athletics Department reform, free of the distraction of a major construction project, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees and Northwestern leadership pause the planning and marketing of the new Ryan Field until the university demonstrates that it has taken the steps described in the three preceding resolutions.

The motion was second and the floor was opened for discussion.

Senator Getzler said his main concern with bringing the resolution is that it is not the faculty’s decision. Rather, the Board of Trustees has that power, and he questioned using all the Senate’s energy on this particular issue.

Senator Steve Jacobsen (Earth and Planetary Sciences) wondered if it was even possible to consider this resolution since it was brought forth last year. Second, since there are a lot of new senators, he thought putting this resolution on the floor without prior notification was presumptuous.

Senator Amaral suggested the Senate vote and properly bring the motion to the floor.

Senator Lichter said he was well aware of the resolution despite being a new senator. He added that he thinks this resolution is directly within the Senate's purview. He said faculty should be more involved in decisions like these.

The Senate then voted on and approved for the motion to go to the floor.

A motion was then made by Senator Johnson to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded and the floor was then reopened for discussion.

Senator Turek said he thought the resolution was inappropriately tied into the hazing incidents with the football team. He said he was worried that would create the wrong perception of the Faculty Senate.

Senator Kalainov said he agreed with what President Schill said earlier, that the stadium and the hazing issue are separate, and also with what Senator Turek mentioned. He also thought there weren't enough stakeholders being talked to, like student athletes, before this resolution was put on the floor. For that reason, he said he opposed the resolution.

Senator Amaral said the athletics department built a \$270 million fieldhouse a few years ago and around the same time the University had a budget deficit that led to layoffs and furloughs. He said the athletics scandal is now going to cost hundreds of millions of dollars in lawsuits right when the administration said they would be investing in academics. He said this resolution is within the Senate's wheelhouse.

Senator Hurd said that since the resolution was not on the agenda and he is representing his department he would favor discussing this resolution at a later time. The president said that was the spirit of his earlier email.

Senator Joe Ferrie (Economics) said he is in favor of keeping the stadium issue separate from the hazing one. However, he said, in the context of gathering more information, he said there were two things President Schill said that raised serious questions about financing for the stadium: setting a \$200 million benchmark for renovating the existing football stadium (higher than previous stated

estimates) and stating that whatever is not covered by the capital budget and the gift will come in the form of debt (a point never mentioned before to Senator Ferrie's knowledge). Senator Ferrie said both of those items have a direct impact on the University's financial flexibility. He said he would be in favor of a pause on the stadium, not in the context of hazing, but rather related to questions about how financially sound the University's plan is for the new football stadium.

Senator Horswill said he agreed with Senator Ferrie's comments. He said the concerts funding the stadium's maintenance seemed to suggest athletics loses money rather than making it.

Senator Newman said in practice the hazing and the stadium are not actually separate. The lawsuits will hang over NU for years to come, she said. She noted that the public won't make distinctions between these two issues. She also made a point about the venue being for football and not for concerts. She said this was a sudden change and an impactful one given the environmental concerns Evanston and Wilmette neighbors have raised. The president said his intention for tonight was to have a wide-ranging discussion on the finances and the long-term impact of the stadium. He said he doesn't believe the resolution addresses any of those issues.

Senator Angela Lee (Marketing) said three items are being brought together that she thought should be broken down. Namely, taking a closer look at University's spending outside of academics (mainly on athletics), the impact on the reputation on the University if the new stadium goes forward, and how the hazing scandal might effect moving forward with construction of the stadium. She said these are all important but very distinct issues that deserve individual attention. She said colleagues in her department agree with her points, and for those reasons she planned to vote against the current resolution.

Senator Johnson said there are a number of other issues related to the stadium. But he said the vote is to suggest pausing the planning, not to stop the stadium altogether.

Senator McCareins said he was uncomfortable with the resolution for a number of reasons, many of which have been expressed. He said a number of comments that had been made thus far were speculative without the backing of data. He suggested that his committee draft some interrogatories

with detailed, fact-based questions that the Athletic Director or someone in the administration can answer.

Senator Cohen said that substantial fact-finding is necessary. However, the University said they would demolish the old stadium in December. Therefore, time is limited.

Past President Rodgers then called the question. Her motion was seconded. The Senate then voted and approved the motion to end debate.

The Senate then voted on and rejected the above resolution by a margin of 20 for, 37 against, and 4 abstentions.

The president then asked if there was any other new business. Seeing none, the meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jared Spitz  
Secretary to the Faculty Senate