The Faculty Senate

www.facultysenate.neu.edu

facultysenate@neu.edu
Some of the Functions of the Senate

• “To act as a coordinating body to establish mutually satisfactory academic goals and standards among the various colleges and divisions;”

• “To be consulted ... on all policies, proposals, and problems of faculty concern, including such matters as the creation of new colleges, new campuses, and new departments;”

• “To initiate consideration and recommendation on any matter of faculty concern.”
Composition of Senate

- Thirty faculty members of the Senate are elected proportionately from the degree-granting colleges and the School of Law.
- President appoints nine administrators to serve on the Senate.
- Provost chairs the meetings (votes only in the event of a tie).
Senate Agenda Committee (SAC)

- Senate elects six members including Senate Agenda Chair and Secretary of Senate
- SAC responsibilities
  - Set the agenda for all Senate meetings
  - Assign and staff Senate committees, including ad hoc committees
  - Provide regular channel for consultation and communication between the faculty and administration
  - Represent the faculty on University-level committees or councils on long-range planning
  - Meet at least once each year with the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees to report on Senate issues
Why Should Faculty Care About the Senate?

• Primary vehicle for faculty input into major university-wide policies and procedures
  – e.g., Senate recently approved a modified duties policy for parents of recently born and adopted children
• Senate and Senate Agenda Committee (SAC) have direct contact with the senior leadership team of the University, including the Provost and President
• The Faculty Senate reviews and votes on many important policies and procedures, including substantive changes to the Faculty Handbook
• SAC staffs search committees for academic administrators
• Senate committees evaluate academic administrators
Faculty Handbook
www.northeastern.edu/facultyhandbook

• Includes policies and procedures pertaining to
  – tenure and promotion
  – merit reviews and raise procedures
  – search committees for academic administrators
  – faculty personnel policies
  – faculty rights with respect to teaching and research
  – academic freedom
Faculty Handbook

• Last year, there were no substantive changes to policies and procedures. The task involved updating the Faculty Handbook so that it reflects current policies and procedures.

• This year we have charged an ad hoc committee to make recommendations about possible substantive changes.
SAC Priorities and Initiatives

- Shared governance
- Faculty Handbook
- Faculty development
- Assessment and instruction
- Research
- The students’ concerns
- Hybrid budget system
Shared Governance

• Shared governance refers to the principles and practices that guide how faculty participate in significant university decisions.
• Basic premise is that academic decisions should be entrusted to the individuals who have the relevant expertise to make informed decisions on a particular issue.
• The most influential and widely cited document on the principles of shared governance is the “Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities.”
  http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/policydocs/contents/governancestatement.htm
• This statement was jointly created by the American Association of University Professors, the American Council on Education (ACE), and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB).
Shared Governance

• Develop problem-solving mechanisms for the purpose of improving collaboration and mutual respect, and preventing conflict between administration and the faculty.
• Ensure that the SAC or the relevant Senate committee has appropriate representation in the formative, early discussions of major academic initiatives and policies.
• Clarify the Senate’s, the college faculties’ and the colleges’ roles and responsibilities in shared governance.
• Improve communication between the Senate and faculty and between the SAC and the Senate, and increase faculty and senators’ participation in the Senate and Senate committees.
Shared Governance

• Ensure that the Senate and the faculty have appropriate input on major university-wide initiatives, such as
  – Regional campuses
  – Institutional Master Plan
  – Redefining the core and distinctive characteristics of the our undergraduate experience
Faculty Handbook

• Determine what areas of the Faculty Handbook are thought to be in need of substantive changes and work toward a revised handbook.

• Multi-year project
Faculty Development

• Assess the university’s efforts to recruit, retain and advance faculty of diverse backgrounds, and reaffirm the importance of diversity as a core value of the University.

• Examine the roles, rights, titles, and responsibilities of non-tenure track faculty at Northeastern, including, but not limited to professional development and participation and representation in faculty governance.

• Support the implementation of policies and procedures that help faculty achieve an appropriate balance between work and home life.
Assessment and Instruction

• Identify strategies for enhancing the freshmen students’ educational experience.
• Improve the assessment of our core undergraduate curriculum.
• Improve the implementation of TRACE.
Research

• Review how the announced research priorities of the University (sustainability, security, and health) are being promoted and implemented across the University.

• Review the existing policies and procedures to ensure effective utilization of University's investment in the Holyoke Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center.

• Review the existing policies and procedures for the establishment, maintenance, and retirement of Centers, Institutes and Research Facilities at the University.

• Review the existing policies and procedures at the University related to conflicts of interest (COI), especially as they pertain to the research activities of the faculty.

• Assess the adequacy of research infrastructure of the University for both funded and unfunded research with focus on support staff, research facilities and seed funding.
Student Concerns

• Review the University’s policies on student academic dishonesty and make recommendations, if deemed appropriate, to modify NU’s policies.

• Explore ways in which the faculty and the University might work to ameliorate this growing burden of textbook costs for students and their families.
Hybrid Budget System

• Evaluate the implementation and initial outcomes of the hybrid budget system, including the recommendation of the 2010-11 Financial Affairs Committee to maximize the transparency of the budget information.
How You Can Help

• Get involved. The single best predictor of an effective senate is faculty involvement. We have senate committees that are tackling a broad array of university-wide issues.
• Be informed. Please take a little time out of your hectic schedules to read the reports from the Senate meetings.
• Attend at least one Faculty Senate meeting each semester. The schedule of Senate meetings is on our website: www.facultysenate.neu.edu
• Discuss Senate and university-wide issues at your college faculty meetings.
• The Senate Agenda Committee considers each idea it receives and will also respect the request for confidentiality. Give us feedback: facultysenate@neu.edu or x3353
• Contact your senators: facultysenate.neu.edu/about_faculty/faculty_membership/20112012