

TRANSCRIPT

FACULTY SENATE
Wednesday, February 17, 2021, 3 p.m.
Microsoft Teams Meeting
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois

*All Faculty Senate members will receive an Outlook invitation to this Teams meeting.
Others wishing to join the meeting, please send your request to Pat Erickson at pje@niu.edu.*

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Akst, Allori, Aygen, Berke, B. Beyer, Blomquist, Books, Borre, Buck, Carpenter, Chen, Cheyney, Chomentowski, Creed, Demir, Dmitruk, Doederlein, Duffin, Fredericks, Furr, Glas, Grund, Hu, Hua, Ito, A. Johnson, L. Johnson, N. Johnson, Jong, Kasper, Keddie, Konen, Lampi, Liberty, Maki, Mayer, McCarthy, McConkie, McGowan, Mellon, Miguel, Montana, Nesterov, Nicholson (for Royce), Onder, Palese, Petges, Qin, Richter, Riggs, Sharp, Sirotkin, Slotsve, Smith, Subramony, Sullivan, Surjadi, Tatara, Thu, Vahabzadeh, Valentiner, Whedbee

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Bujarski, Fanara, Penkrot, Royce

OTHERS PRESENT: Barnhart, Boston, Brady, Bryan, Douglass, Edghill-Walden, Frazier, Ghrayeb, Halverson, Henry, Ingram, Klaper, McEvoy, Perry, Rhode, Weffer, Wickens

OTHERS ABSENT: G. Beyer, Falkoff, Marsh

I. CALL TO ORDER

K. Thu: Well, it's 3 o'clock, so let's go ahead and get rolling. I'm going to call the meeting to order.

II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

K. Thu: And with that, I'm going to turn to Pat and Ferald to verify the quorum.

P. Erickson: This is Pat; we do have quorum.

K. Thu: Great, thank you.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

K. Thu: Before we adopt the agenda, we have a couple of changes that I'd like to make. First of all, since we're a family-friendly shared governance body, and Simón Weffer, who is giving a report under Roman numeral XII, has a semi-emergency orthodontic appointment for one of his children

this afternoon, we're going to move him up, item XII. A., to between Roman numeral VII and Roman numeral VIII, so he can make his orthodontic appointment. So, take note of that. And then the other slight change is in Roman numeral VIII. New Business, proposed amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaw Article 3, that's a first reading. So, that should be labeled as a first reading. So, with those two changes, I will entertain a motion to adopt the agenda.

E. Fredericks: So moved.

K. Thu: Thanks, Elisa. Do we have a second?

N. Johnson: Second.

K. Thu: Thanks, Natasha. Now the way we're going to vote today is the way we've had in the past. For low-level votes, Natasha's going to shepherd the vote in the chat box. She will indicate yes, no or abstain in the chat box, and you hover your cursor over the vote that you want to take and simply click. So, Natasha, tell us when we're ready to adopt the agenda. So, there's yes, no and abstain. So, go ahead and vote. And then, while you're doing that, for more substantive votes where anonymity is particularly important, we'll use another polling technique that we've used in the past.

N. Johnson: Looks like we have enough.

K. Thu: Okay, so we have an agenda that's adopted. Just a few words about the agenda today. We have a packed agenda. So, I'm going to beg your patience. This may take us until about 5 o'clock. It wouldn't surprise me. I usually try to get the meeting done by 4:30, but meetings running to 5 is not unusual in the past. And so I would ask you to try to stay with us until 5 o'clock. At least most of you don't have to drive home. You can just turn to the living room to turn on the news or go get your dinner immediately. So, be aware that we do have a very heavy agenda today, and I just ask for your patience.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 20, 2021 MINUTES – Pages 5-9

K. Thu: With that, I'll entertain a motion to approve the minutes from the January 20 meeting. Apparently, we're not going to approve our minutes.

N. Johnson: So moved.

K. Thu: Thank you, Natasha. Do we have a second?

E. Fredericks: Second.

K. Thu: Thank you, Elisa. Any corrections, edits, comments? If not, we'll follow the same procedure in the chat box with Natasha leading the charge. I think I might have accidentally voted no.

N. Johnson: We have more than enough.

K. Thu: Okay, so we have approved minutes from January 20.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

K. Thu: Pat, do we have any timely requests for public comment.

P. Erickson: We do have one from Professor Corrine Wickens.

K. Thu: Professor Wickens, you have the virtual podium for about five minutes.

C. Wickens: Thank you. Thank you, esteemed colleagues for the opportunity to speak. I am Dr. Corrine Wickens. I am an associate professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Three weeks ago, I spoke at University Council about a situation with a former student named Rod Moyer. My objective in speaking to you today relates to this ongoing situation, yes, but seeks to address some of the issues and challenges that have been illuminated through this situation.

It is poignant that I address you today, three days after the anniversary of NIU's own active shooter on February 14, 2008 that bring to your attention questions around current practices related to reporting a student of concern. First is the question and issue of confidentiality, which I refer to the frequently asked question page from the students of concern at NIU, the question being, is the information kept confidential? And the response on it says, "All information received remains confidential to the extent permissible by law." And I'm going to explain in particular get to when it is not permissible by law in its relevance here. And then another question asked, will the person referred be able to know that I sent the form? Can I report a concern anonymously? And again, I quote the response, "Typically, the student will not be aware that they were referred to us." And I reiterate that word, "typically."

The problem I bring to you today is that the cases that I bring are not typical. But they are significant, and they're not singular. What is not stated in this FAQ is that, if the student files a Freedom of Information Act, FOIA, request, they can solicit all documents, including any student of concern report regarding themselves. And that is exactly what the aforementioned individual has done. And because I spoke up at University Council to make the broader university community aware of these issues, this individual has now found the student emails that were part of the grievance paperwork that were filed against Michele Duffy. This student, like most instructors and faculty, thought they were reporting anonymously and their information was protected, which it is, except when FOIA'ed, which is not stated in the FAQ. And that is actually what has happened, because those on the students of concern committee don't want individuals to not report such concerns out of fear of being FOIA'ed. Because, again, typically, most students don't FOIA faculty and administrators, but there is nothing the university can do when that is exactly what happens and what has happened, because we are a public institution and that is a student's legal right.

So, I'm here to ask, what constitutes best practice for case management and response for student of concern reporting. And next, has the administration actually adhered to and followed models of best practices when responding to students of concern. If this situation was singular incident, we could more easily dismiss it, or the individual raising the issue. But, unfortunately, it is not. And so I want to share three other scenarios with you.

Scenario One was just six months after NIU experienced February 14 active shooter, my spouse and I joined NIU. During that first year, a student blockaded my spouse in her office, refused to let her leave and sought to intimidate her by referencing numerous weapons at this student's apartment. After submitting the student of concern report, she was offered an escort, yes. But we often ride bikes to campus, so protection on one's bike is kind of hard to happen.

The other ones I want to reference have happened in the last few years and all within my direct realm of experience.

Scenario Two, and these are real, not made up. A teaching assistant was experiencing delusions, and the threat says it was conducted and determined that, so I am not speaking out of turn. And the individual was rated a 3, meaning the individual could percolate. And at a 3, the individual could escalate or deescalate. Eventually, my colleague was able to fire this TA for incompetence. This, likewise, only solved their immediate issues, but may have passed the issue on to another department or program that may have ultimately taken this student on.

Scenario Three. Another colleague was meeting with three graduate students on a grant-funded project. One student began acting wildly and incoherently. Feeling fear for the safety of the other graduate students and himself, my colleague got the two other students out of his office and stood there to make sure the third student was okay. Because this assistantship was grant-funded, my colleague was, eventually, able to fire the individual, but he, himself, was terrified for weeks of retribution by this individual afterward.

And then, more recently, scenario four. The student with the lit candle in the doorway of a classroom. He was asked to leave, but he started yelling and video recording the instructor and a portion of the class. He has reportedly asserted his innocence while trying to still sell his story to local, state and national news outlets. And at the same time, he has repeatedly engaged in public shaming others through email and through other digital media.

So, I return to the student of concern reporting FAQ with a question that was asked. Will the person I referred be able to know that I sent the form. And again, typically, no. But that being said, the response also states, "The university does not permit retaliation against an individual who reports concerning or troubling behavior in good faith." So, I ask my colleagues, how is this behavior, that has been widely observed and reported, not retaliatory? And how is the university allowing him to present a workshop a week ago Monday. Again, I ask, what is best practice related to students of concerns? And are administrators actually adhering to these best practices?

The common thread, like your colleagues in each of these scenarios, is how faculty and/or instructors were left to essentially deal with the situation on their own. While the university continues to assert the importance of maintaining the health and safety of the students, staff and faculty, in such cases, administrators, themselves, appear to be at a loss to handle such situations. So, I ask, why? What is being done to ensure the safety of our students, faculty and staff? In each case, at least one report was filed. Investigations and assessments conducted. But in the end, the general response was a shrug and a sorry.

I understand the needs of the individual, the rights and protections for individual NIU students. I also understand the greater narratives of which we are all involved. But I also want to recognize the ongoing trepidation around any construance of disability, mental illness or disorder. Things that cannot be named or spoken. I ask us, how might such silences facilitate the endangerment of our students, our instructors and faculty? And finally, how might “students of concern” reporting and processes be conducted to ensure the health and wellness of all the broader NIU community? And as a leader, Faculty Senate and the dual governance processes, I ask you, how might Faculty Senate, thus, take a lead?

Thank you.

K. Thu: Thank you, Dr. Wickens. You’ve raised a number of important points, both here and University Council. I think it’s something that both bodies need to consider at some point. I want you to know, as I’ve said to you personally, that I’m very supportive of faculty. The safety of faculty and students is of utmost concern, and the issues that you raise are not easy to address. I appreciate your courage and effort to bring these issues to the fore. They will not die here. So, thank you again. David, we’re going to go ahead and move on.

VI. FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

K. Thu: Next item is Faculty Senate president’s announcements. I do have some announcements, but in the interest of time, I’m going to weave them into other issues.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Proposed amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws, Article 4.8.1,
University Assessment Panel Composition – Pages 10-11
Carolinda Douglass, Vice Provost, Institutional Effectiveness
Ritu Subramony, Director, Accreditation, Assessment and Evaluation
SECOND READING/VOTE

K. Thu: And so, I’m going to ahead and move on to Item VII, Unfinished Business. Item A is a second reading of the proposed amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws, Article 4.8.1. Carolinda or Ritu, are you with us to walk us through the second reading.

C. Douglass: I’m here, Kendall. Can you hear me?

K. Thu: Yep, go ahead, Carolinda.

C. Douglass: Again, this is a proposed amendment to the Faculty [Senate] Bylaws, Article 4, related to the University Assessment Panel. There are two changes that we are requesting. The first is in relation to 4.8.1.3 Staff Representation. Basically, in the past we had two staff members on the panel, one from student affairs and one from the academic support units, typically, under the vice provost at that point, it was the undergraduate academic affairs; I guess now it’s senior vice provost. We have not been able to fill these seats, and we also have somebody now who currently serves in both capacities. And so we are asking that we change that representation to just one staff member

that's either from academic support and/or from student affairs. In this case, the person who's serving right now is in both.

And then the second change below is related to administrative representation, the removal of Item C, the associate vice provost for curriculum as an ex officio, nonvoting member, that position no longer exists.

K. Thu: Thank you, Carolinda. These are changes that are meant to reflect the changing tide of membership. And so with that in mind, I'll entertain a motion to approve?

Unknown: So moved.

K. Thu: Do I have a second?

C. Doederlein: Second.

K. Thu: We're going to vote on this using the more official voting approach that Pat will walk us through.

P. Erickson: Thanks for your patience. I'm getting all of my ducks lined up here. I'm going to put a hyperlink into the chat. Give me just a second to do that. Okay, you should see it there. And just as a reminder now, you can click on that link and vote. You'll see numbers 1 through 10. And I'll remind you that 1 = yes, 2 = no and 3 = abstain. And I think you can see people voting now. And we need two-thirds of those voting to pass this. And it looks like we've accomplished that, still some votes coming in.

Yes – 46

No – 1

Abstain – 2

K. Thu: All right, so the motion passes, and we have new membership for the University Assessment Panel. Thanks, Carolinda.

C. Douglass: Thank you.

B. Proposed amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws, Article 4.6.2.1,
General Education Committee Composition – Page 12
Omar Ghrayeb, Senior Vice Provost
SECOND READING/VOTE

K. Thu: Next, Item B., proposed amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws, Article 4.6.2.1, the composition of the Gen Ed Committee. Omar, I hope you're with us for the second reading?

O. Ghrayeb: Yes, Kendall, I'm here. And actually, as I presented last time, the proposed changes to reflect the current membership to the GEC. As Carolinda presented, we have positions that we don't have within the provost's office anymore. And we added one designee of the provost from the

Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Right now the director of assessment serves on GEC. So, we thought we propose this language that would give us the flexibility as well.

K. Thu: Thank you, Omar. Once again, it's just an effort to update membership on these committees to keep current. With that, I'll entertain a motion to approve.

T. Buck: I move we approve this.

K. Thu: Thanks, Todd. Do we have a second?

S. Vahabzadeh: Second.

K. Thu: Thank you, Sahar. And then back to the voting modality that we just did. Pat will update the voting system.

P. Erickson: Give me just a second. Okay, you should see that link now in the chat.

K. Thu: I guess I went to the wrong one.

P. Erickson: It says GEC proposal.

K. Thu: Okay, now I have it. And it looks like there are sufficient votes to approve, correct, Pat?

P. Erickson: Yes.

Yes – 45

No – 0

Abstain – 3

K. Thu: Thanks, everybody. Thanks, Omar.

O. Ghrayeb: Thank you, Kendall.

- C. Proposed faculty employee definitions – Page 13
Peter Chomentowski, Chair, FS-Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee

K. Thu: With that, we move on to Item C. under Roman numeral VII., Unfinished Business. Before I turn it over to Peter, a few backdrop notes. This is a proposed change to faculty employee definitions. As you may remember, we brought this before the Faculty Senate during our January meeting. The feedback that we received at that meeting indicated we had more homework to do. So, as a reminder, this effort was an initiative to streamline and make consistent our definitions of faculty across various bylaws and policies, including, hopefully, the bylaws for the BOT.

The Faculty Senate-Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee worked on a draft last fall. They came out with a draft that was presented to the full Faculty Senate in January. It was clear from that meeting that we needed to do more vetting of the definitions with a variety of groups, including the

instructors, other faculty, clinical faculty. And we also got some important input from the provost. As a matter of process here before I turn it over to Peter, the idea here is to make a constitutional change. So, if we take a vote on this today, and I hope we do, this will be a signal that's transferred or communicated to the University Council about the Faculty Senate's desire to make this change. It is the University Council's purview to propose changes to the constitution. So we, as a Faculty Senate, we do not have that power. So, with that, Peter, do you want to walk us through the document that Pat is projecting for us?

P. Chomentowski: Well, I think you pretty much summed it up. This was a process that's been going on for about six months now, where we've been talking to everyone across campus about how would we actually do this. These were the categories. We started with four and we ended up with five. And, like I said, this has been gone through the president, the provost, HR and, like I said, even departments trying to classify what positions actually currently are being used at NIU. And we actually looked at which ones weren't, and then tried to streamline a definition that can be used across, like Kendall was saying, across the constitution, because there was no real clear definition of anything. That's pretty much where we're at right now.

K. Thu: Thanks, Peter. I see a note from Marcia, can we make it a little larger and just give folks an opportunity to read through. I don't want to read through every line. It's dangerous to try to wordsmith in a large group like this.

P. Erickson: How's that, a little bigger? Or is that okay?

K. Thu: I can read it, and I have trifocals on. So, if I can read, hopefully, everybody else can. So, some of the changes that we made since the last time. You'll notice that every single heading has the word, faculty in it. So, we have tenure track faculty, instructional faculty, clinical faculty, research faculty and then limited-term faculty. And so the effort here was to [inaudible] the definitions as clear and as pithy as possible. So, Evgueni, I saw your hand up momentarily, but then it disappeared. Do you still have a comment?

P. Chomentowski: I can't see who has their hand up, Kendall. Can you?

K. Thu: I thought I saw one up, but it disappeared on me.

P. Erickson: Was that Professor Nesterov?

K. Thu: I think so. There he goes. Go ahead. Go ahead, Evgueni. Are you muted? Can you see whether he's muted, Pat?

E. Nesterov: Is it working now?

K. Thu: Now we can hear you.

E. Nesterov: Sorry, I had some technical issues probably. I'm actually curious, and I think I tried to discuss this last time. And I think [inaudible] communication [inaudible] about the definition for post-docs. I am actually opposed to describing post-docs as faculty. I agree with them to be research

staff, and we can describe them as staff, but I think describing post-docs as faculty, first of all, it's very uncommon. I have not seen this kind of definition for post-docs as being faculty. And second, I think this would create a very dangerous precedent, because post-docs are not faculty. They have no rights of faculty. And so, if we describe them as faculty, this might basically open a can of worms for [inaudible]. So, I am really, I have myself on my research, I have two post-docs. I don't consider them faculty. They are colleagues. They are researchers, but they are not faculty. And there is no way to describe them, I think, as faculty. So, I think that, trainees, they basically research [inaudible] there are different ways to define them, but I think defining them as faculty, I think that's a mistake.

P. Chomentowski: Wasn't this something we talked with Jerry Blazey about?

K. Thu: Yes, we talked with Jerry Blazey about it, and then also with, I believe, with Provost Ingram. We did hear this, Evgueni, and we did talk about it. There are post-docs at NIU that actually teach and want to teach, because they want to add it to their CVs. I agree that, not only post-docs and perhaps some of these other positions, don't fit nice and neatly in any of these categories, but we didn't want to leave them out. And maybe I'll ask Provost Ingram. I think she may be listening in, if you'd like to comment on this.

B. Ingram: I guess what I would say is that it's very department-specific or very disciplinary-specific on how disciplines think about post-docs. If you just look around, there are departments that define them as research staff. But there are disciplines where post-docs are considered part of the faculty, because they have teaching responsibilities. And so, it's not as clear cut as you might think if you just look at other institutions. But it's very discipline-specific.

K. Thu: Thank you, Beth. Other comments?

A. Glas [via chat]: What about TT "instructors," e.g., those who are hired as TT assistant professors but are awaiting completion of Ph.D. and, thus, have "instructor" as their title until then?

S. Weffer [via chat]: The ADEI post-doc here at NIU had teaching responsibilities.

K. Thu: Okay, if not, let's see, Simón has a comment here. Oh yes, ADEI post-doc here at NIU had teaching responsibilities. Yes. Thanks, Simón. So, that's an example of where post-docs are actually engaged in teaching. Evgueni?

E. Nesterov: Just to add to this, we have TAs, teaching assistants, who are doing teaching, but we don't consider them, nobody would probably suggest, to consider them as faculty. Post-docs who are teaching, they are teaching post-docs. Yes, there is such a definition. But I don't think they are faculty. Otherwise, you have to extend the definition of faculty on any TA, like teaching assistant, because they're also teaching [inaudible] research.

K. Thu: I don't think that including them in this definition is going to change the way individual departments treat their post-docs. So, this is not intended to tell you and your department, Evgueni, how you deal with and how you consider post-docs at the local level. So, Arlene and then one other, and then we need to move on.

A. Keddie: Are each of these categories intended to be mutually exclusive? If they are, there seems to be some overlap between instructional faculty and limited-term faculty. If you look at adjuncts, for instance, and it says, under instructional faculty, this would also include faculty with a limited contractual relationship. And then, if you look under limited-term faculty, which is new, adjuncts are listed there as well. So, I'm not sure what's going on there.

K. Thu: They're not meant to be mutually exclusive. The categories are meant to provide guidance at a high level, and we're not dictating to departments how it is that they consider these positions. It's primarily to provide guidance. It's a reference point. And you're right, Arlene, these are not clean-cut categories. There's just, frankly, as Peter and I found out, there's no way to make it perfectly clean, because there is overlap. But, hopefully, it provides additional clarity, if not perfect differentiation.

So with that, I think I'd like to, this would be an advisory vote. It doesn't make the changes so. There will be more vetting in the University Council.

P. Erickson: Kendall, Professor Glas has had his hand up for quite a while. Can we just take his question?

K. Thu: Absolutely.

A. Glas: Just to clarify only because, from my personal experience, as a tenure track faculty, I started as an instructor until I had been officially awarded my doctorate. But the previous question clarified that these are not exclusive categories, and one could be a tenure track faculty, even though, for up to a year, contractually, you're still an instructor as you wait for the conference of your degree.

K. Thu: That's right. Thank you for the clarification. As I started to do, just again to point out, this is an advisory vote to the University Council. It provides the voice of primarily tenured and tenure track faculty on these definitions. So, Pat, if you'll put the poll in as you have done in the past.

P. Erickson: Okay, give me just a moment to pull that up.

K. Thu: Again, 1 is yes, 2 is no, 3 is abstain.

P. Erickson: Okay, you should see it now.

K. Thu: And we'll give that a minute.

G. Chen [via chat]: 6.1.1 Definition of University Faculty. The university faculty shall consist of all full-time staff members holding the ranks of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor or clinical faculty. How does "part-time" faculty fair in 6.1.1 Definition of University Faculty?

K. Borre [via chat]: One thing to consider is if we develop institutional relationships with businesses and they build labs or other buildings for use by faculty and then also put their own employees in as post-docs or research faculty, will those business interests then have influence over faculty business? This happened at UNC Chapel Hill.

G. Aygen [via chat]: A very important point, Kristen.

T. Buck: Is it okay if I ask something while we're polling?

K. Thu: Absolutely. It will take care of the silence.

T. Buck: I was just curious, the point being categorizing people as faculty in the constitution, would that then give maybe groups that you wouldn't necessarily consider full-time employees the right to create a union, because, hey, in the constitution it says we're faculty?

K. Thu: The answer is I don't think so. Myself and the faculty union and the instructors union, we try to steer clear of intermingling shared governance and union activity. So, the answer is, that's not the intent. Now whether instructors or other groups decide to look at these definitions and take advantage of them in some way, I can't speak to that, I can't predict that. But usually unions have their own definitions that they use. So, the instructors union has their own definition of instructors. The faculty union, tenure track union, has their own definition. So, that's not the intent. I've worked with my counterparts at other universities to see how they separate shared governance from unions, and they try to make clear, whenever possible, activities and policies from shared governance versus from unions. I'm not sure that's the best answer to your question, but that's my best shot.

T. Buck: Thanks. I was just throwing that out there, like maybe that's an effect that we hadn't considered by calling everybody, basically, who's working there teaching, as faculty, that's all.

K. Thu: So, Pat, it looks like we're done with the voting.

P. Erickson: Yes, I think so.

K. Thu: So, it looks like most are favorable to it. We will report this vote tally to the University Council and then let University Council do its work going forward.

Yes – 38

No – 15

Abstain – 3

K. Thu: So, with that, thank you, Peter. Thank you for the work of your committee. We'll continue to work through the University Council and see, hopefully, where this goes.

XII. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. IBHE Strategic Planning Advisory Committee – Simón Weffer – report
[Note, this item was moved up in the agenda.]

K. Thu: With that, I think we're [inaudible] Strategic Plan of the Illinois Board of Higher Education in time for you to get to your orthodontic appointment. So, Simón, the virtual podium is yours.

S. Weffer: Thank you, everyone. And thank you, Kendall and the Faculty Senate for allowing me to slide in. I can't see anyone while I'm presenting right now. I haven't quite figured that out in Teams yet, unlike Zoom. But just to give you an idea of what's going on. Linda Saborío has probably talked a little bit about IBHE and the strategic plan. I am actually on the advisory committee. I'm one of about, I think, it's five or six faculty out of a group that's almost 40, a group of stakeholders that includes presidents of institutions. President Freeman serves on the committee along with me. President Z [Zaldwaynaka "Z" Scott] from Chicago State. We have individuals from industry, legislators and a ton of consulting companies, not-for-profits that have positions that relate to higher education.

The overall plan is to create a document that provides a road map for higher education in Illinois moving forward. And I think one of the most important things to emphasize here is that this is not just a plan for during the Pritzker administration. This is a plan that will apply to whomever the next governors are over the next eight to 10 years. So, it's very important that, while we might have a relatively friendly governor in terms of higher ed allocations and budgeting with the Pritzker administration, there's nothing to say that he will still be there and still get reelected in two years. And so, that's why this strategic plan is so important.

Here what I have is the original rough timeline. We were supposed to be in developing and drafting the strategic plan. This was an overly ambitious plan to begin with and has gotten pushed back. I'll show another slide that will show what we're doing. Right now, we're meeting both as the advisory committee and as design work groups. And that is where we are here on this slide. If you look at the bottom part of the pyramid, there was a community engagement and focus groups. These happened over the summer and into the fall. The consulting company that IBHE contracted with did a survey. I believe, again, this was one of the things that Linda kept on pushing everyone to take part in, which were the surveys. There was survey data that included faculty, staff, administration and students, K-12 parents, sort of the system at large.

And then a series of focus groups. And it's from these focus groups and survey that they pulled data, and I'll talk about that a little bit in a sec, to develop sort of three big topic areas. That was brought to the advisory committee to start having discussions about it. The advisory committee refined it, came up with some ideas and some points on each topic and then pushed it to the design work groups, which this idea of a theory of action is new to me, but I think, as academics, we can understand that it's trying to operationalize, trying to create metrics for some of the issues. For example, I know President Freeman has been working on diversity, and some of them are smaller group meetings in the advisory committee. And so they had robust discussions about how we

measure diversity, what makes sense, so that there is accountability, both for IBHE, for the state and for our institutions.

I have recently found out that I will be on one of the design work groups on the future of education in the future of work. And so I will be reaching out to some of our colleagues here at NIU as I get materials. I know we have some very strong colleagues in the College of Education that work on this topic, and I've already begun reaching out to them so that they can help me as we move forward with some of those issues.

And then after the advisory committee gets the reports back from the design work groups, we'll craft a document, and then that will be submitted for public comment. And it's really important, when either Linda or I come back to this body and let you know that it's time for comment, we must, we must, we must make sure that our opinion is heard, our ideas are heard, about this document. And that's just sort of couched some of the concerns that I have.

The flow of work is supposed to start with the context & visioning and core principles. One of my concerns right now – and I don't have it on my final two slides – is I don't know how much of what's happening in the advisory committee is really tying to the core principles of higher education. It's a bit nebulous and tenuous, and I can maybe get into that in some one-on-one conversations after this presentation.

These were the three major areas the consulting company came up with. I think most of them are things that we all agree with: increase post-secondary credentials and degree attainment, close equity gaps, improve affordability, increase access and manage costs. However, I have no idea how they got to these bullet points. They have not provided any of the data in terms of the surveys. They have not provided any of the data in terms of the focus groups. And within some of these things, I am trying to look for it, maybe it's not on this slide, but came up in further discussions. One of the things was increase in asynchronous learning. And so immediately I shot my hand up, and I wanted to know who was saying that, because, clearly from our students, we know the last thing our students want is more asynchronous. Now, if we're talking about individuals that are looking to further their career by gaining new credentials, maybe someone is an elementary school teacher and wants to get a certificate in special education or reading or bilingual education. Maybe that is reasonable and possible. But the documents, as they stand, have not really laid out what is meant by increase asynchronous. Nor has it addressed what the equity issues are if we increase asynchronous, because we all know, or many of us know, students that don't have access to high-quality WiFi aren't going to have the same experience and access to education as those that are able to have high-speed Internet.

From those three big groups, we came to these six groups, and these have gotten broken out a little bit more fine-grained. As I said, I'll be working in the Future of Work and the Future of Learning – or Future of Education is how they've rephrased it. And there are now nine design work groups that will be working to operationalize, create metrics and then report back to the larger body.

Here are my concerns in these next two slides of the strategic plan to this point. And I will say this: When I presented this at University Council, President Freeman did point out that she had had some very positive experiences, and so she was in a little bit more of a positive frame of mind. I am a

little bit more pessimistic, but I think it's also in part to being an undergraduate of the University of Chicago and having hope beat out of me over the course of four years there. So I come by my cynicism and doubt honestly. But I think there are several very big issues that we need to look at in this document and hope to try and make some changes to the final document.

There's no discussion of state commitment. We can talk a big game about closing equity gaps, hiring more BIPOC faculty, finding ways to retain and recruit BIPOC faculty. That is, in fact, one of the things that President Freeman stated in our very first meeting, the need for the state to commit so that we can recruit and retain BIPOC faculty and staff, because otherwise, we're dealing with constant turnover.

There are no goals or consideration for the investment in staff and faculty development. I think we know how bad the finances have been in Illinois in terms of higher education and the constant cuts that have happened above and beyond the Rauner years. I think it's too easy to make Rauner the scapegoat for everything. But, obviously, the disinvestment in higher education, faculty and staff, and facilities is much more than just his four years.

There is no focus on the broad base importance of a system to encourage and support research. This, I think, was one of the more disturbing parts of the initial draft of the document. Research, we know, is so important. And if we think about our role at NIU and being an R2 institution, and we think about UIC and U of I, as well; and to not have a document that is supposed to be a road map for higher education, to not talk about supporting research, to not talk about supporting artistry, is shortsighted in terms of the impact that higher education has within the communities that they serve, but also on the economic impacts, as well.

Very little regard for the role of general education and its foundational aspects to all of higher education. I think that's pretty straight forward.

Nothing about how higher education institutions are communities outside of the education of students. I think we would all agree that NIU plays an important role in the DeKalb community. I think we would say that all of our institutions of higher education, in whatever community that they are in, play crucial roles in reaching out, in inspiring, in being good neighbors, in providing a support for non-profits, for school districts, for hospitals. And yet, it was very, very transactional, the initial draft.

And then limited understanding and discussion of the importance of the role higher education plays in promoting social justice and a civil society. You don't get a group of individuals storming the capitol if they don't understand how our civil society works and the breakdowns in our civil society. And, of course, the larger importance of social justice. Obviously, those of us in the faculty, many of us in the faculty, were working on social justice issues before the murder of George Floyd, and we will continue to do so well beyond whatever happens in 2021. But there was no connection between higher education and the larger goals, larger ideals, larger values in our society.

There was a clear over-emphasis on immediate job placement. One of the things that I highlighted is that a dear friend of mine from the University of Chicago who is the lead engineer for Google Chicago, points out every time he's asked to go back to Chicago on alumni panels, that he doesn't

need people to learn code, because in five years, there will be a new language that his coders will need to know. What he needs are individuals that can solve problems. And that's part of what higher education does, whether we're talking about problem solving in philosophy using Voltaire, or someone that goes to a community college to get credentials or get skills in welding or in electricity, who solves problems dealing with volts. It is still problem solving, and there is no mention of these broader ideals in the document.

And, as I said before, there is no statement regarding asynchronous and synchronous learning platforms. They are not all equal. If anything, I would have hoped that everyone that is on that committee that has a K-12 student that has spent all or part of their time in remote learning should know that asynchronous is not the same as synchronous. Being in a classroom with your colleagues or with your classmates, learning from a faculty member, is fundamentally different no matter how hard we try, and I know we all do as faculty, try very hard to replicate as best we can the in-person experience, we know we can't. We can get close. We can get real close sometimes. But we can't replicate it. And to act as if these are all the same.

And then finally, and this is the most important thing, and I did not put it on the slide, because I think this is something that, once I say it, it will resonate with everyone, there were only two mentions of faculty in the entire document, only two. And that's a tremendous problem, because at the end of the day, higher education is built and delivered by the faculty. Now one of the instances was an emphasis to diversity the faculty. And as one of the few Latino tenured faculty at NIU, I appreciate that. But that should not be the limited way in which we think about faculty when we talk about faculty, and that faculty should be part of the road map for higher education in the state of Illinois moving forward.

Hopefully, I will lean a little bit more in President Freeman's direction and become more hopeful as we continue through the process of developing this document. And I will report back as it makes sense. But Linda can also report back, as well.

K. Thu: Thanks, Simón. I just want to say I appreciate all your work above and beyond the call of duty in representing NIU and NIU faculty. And we have the utmost confidence in you. And I invite faculty, staff and students to connect with you directly if they have additional questions or comments, because this is extremely important work, and it's taking place in very short order, right.

S. Weffer: Yes, this is a very short timeline, but I will say, if Linda tells you to get on the horn and get people out, faculty should be able to mobilize through shared governance to make sure that our voice is heard. Thank you. Thank you very much. Listen to Linda. She's the canary in the coal mine. And thank you very much.

L. Saborío: I really want to say thank you, Simón. Did you get a chance to look at the document that I'm going to be sharing today with Faculty Senate?

S. Weffer: No, I didn't.

L. Saborío: I didn't know that you weren't going to be here the whole meeting. The document that Amy, my colleague, shared with you?

S. Weffer: Oh yes.

L. Saborío: Yes, this is what I'm sharing with Faculty Senate today is really a compilation of a lot of work that we've been doing on the FAC over the last couple of years. And it's like an executive summary and our recommendations to the Strategic Plan Committee. So, if you get a chance to take a look at it.

S. Weffer: I hope the document actually makes it to us.

L. Saborío: I'll send it to you. It's on the FAC-IBHE site.

S. Weffer: Yes, I think Amy sent it. And again, if anyone has any questions, please do reach out to me. I'm happy to chat.

K. Thu: Thanks, Simón. Thanks, Linda.

G. Aygen [via chat]: Thank you, Simón.

T. Buck [via chat]: Excellent job, Simón.

J. Akst [via chat]: Thank you. I share your concerns.

I. Montana [via chat]: Thank you.

B. McGowan [via chat]: Wonderful presentation.

K. Borre [via chat]: Yes, thank you. Significant points made. Your concerns are valid ones.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Proposed amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws, Article 3,
Standing Committees of the Faculty Senate – Pages 14
Kendall Thu, Faculty Senate President

K. Thu: Next on the agenda, we have Roman numeral VIII, New Business. This is, as I mentioned, is an addendum to the agenda. It's actually the first reading. This is a first reading of Faculty Senate Bylaws to make our ad hoc social justice committee permanent. Hopefully, it won't be a mouthful if we can get the bylaws passed. So, just by way of brief backdrop, as you may remember, late last summer, I formed an ad hoc committee to identify and address institutional social justice issues and, in particular, listen to the concerns that we heard coming out of the Black Student Union meetings, as well as other meetings that took place last summer and individual conversations that I've had.

So, the ad hoc committee has been working all year long to come up with a series of actionable items in response to institutional racism issues. The committee has made tremendous progress. I've seen drafts already from subcommittee members. And just as a reminder, the full report will be due

to the Faculty Senate Steering Committee on March 17. It will then come to the full Faculty Senate on March 24. And at that time, the Faculty Senate will discuss the recommendations. As Ismael and I point out, this is only one step, it's not the first step, it's certainly not the last step, in an ongoing effort to deal with a variety of institutional racism issues at NIU.

This effort is to make this committee permanent. While the last couple of years, we've made an effort to reduce the number of committees that we all serve on, in this case, we're going to add one, which I think is important for everyone. There are two pieces to this. One is the composition of the committee. And, again, this is just a first reading. And to sort of repeat the words of Ferald Bryan, our parliamentarian, about a first reading, a first reading is just to sort of create a notice to you that this is coming down the pipeline. This is the time when, if you have concerns or questions or comments, that you should provide them so that, when we get to the second reading, there are no surprises. I drafted this set of bylaws. I then vetted it with the ad hoc social justice committee members. And I want to thank all of them for the feedback that they gave me. It then went to the Faculty Senate Steering Committee yesterday, and so this is the result of all of that. So, again, there are two pieces. One is the membership of the committee. And the second piece consists of the duties. And if you scroll down a little bit there, Pat, maybe we can get them all on one screen, that is all the duties, you can see that there are five of them. And I think the most important one is probably the very first one, which is the primary work of this committee in a sustained, ongoing fashion, is to identify factors contributing to institutional racism, sexism and classism at NIU. We're missing ableism. I think we're missing something here from the work that maybe I didn't forward it. So, Beth McGowan and I fixed the first sentence, Pat. It's not represented in this draft.

P. Erickson: I'm bringing it over in a Word document, so where are we?

K. Thu: There should be ableism in there, in addition to institutional racism, sexism and classism, and ableism. Beth, are you with us? Maybe you can.

B. McGowan: I'm here. Yes, I would probably even re-write it a little bit more the second time through; but, yes, I would probably switch out sexism to heteronormativity. But, yes, it's ableism and sexism. But does this have to be exact in the first reading?

K. Thu: No, no, that's the whole point of the first reading is to catch the mistakes. The sentence that you and I worked on, Beth, is not reflected here; so, my apologies for not getting this in here.

B. McGowan: No worries.

K. Thu: So, we'll correct that. And if there is other language that goes into any parts of this, but particularly this part, please let us know. So, we will have an updated version of 3.5.2.1.

J. Akst [via chat]: Ageism?

K. Jaekel [via chat]: Homophobia and transphobia?

X. Hu [via chat]: Homophobia, transphobia.

K. Borre [via chat]: Ableism and ageism both. Intersectionality?

K. Thu: Exactly, Kris Borre. That's the language we used. It's identify factors contributing to the intersectionality of all of these categories. And so, again, my apologies for that not getting into this draft. But we'll make those corrections, and we'll distribute it before the next Faculty Senate meeting.

K. Thu: Okay, thanks, Vernese.

T. Boston [via chat]: Xenophobia

T. Sullivan [via chat]: Mathephobia

K. Jaekel [via chat]: Timothy Sullivan, can you explain that futther?

T. Sullivan [via chat]: Being afraid of math!

K. Thu: So, with that, any other comments or suggestions. If you have suggestions for the duties, in particular, please send them to me directly. I'll do my best to incorporate them. Bylaws are a strange thing. They are all about sort of setting the tone and the shell for the work of the committee. But they can't be too specific to be overly rigorous – or not overly rigorous – overly specific with what the committee might want to do. You create the bylaws and then the committee, itself, will sort of take the direction it wants to go. But I think it's important for this committee to establish itself and, hopefully, some members of the current ad hoc social justice committee will be members of this committee going forward. So, that's a first reading. We'll correct 3.5.

V. Edghill-Walden: Excuse me, before I go, I had my hand raised. I wanted to offer a recommendation for the wordsmithing of 3.5.2.1. Oftentimes, I use or use the human diversity definition that we have in our website as a guide for how we address all of the identities. And I think that, if that's the case, you are going to be more inclusive if you use it as a guide as opposed to trying to figure out who we've missed, because that particular definition is purposefully and intentionally inclusive of all groups.

K. Thu: Thanks, Vernese. In fact, I did look at that, as well. I think if you saw the revised sentence, you would see that.

V. Edghill-Walden: Can I also make one other recommendation? Is that in this committee, and I realize it's up to the faculty to finalize the language. But I think the facilitation of discussions could be a little broad, because I think there are a lot of groups that do that on campus. And then, I think at the end of the day, what I hear from BIPOC faculty often is that, what are we going to do afterwards. So, what's the actions that will come out of the committee that will provide movement on solving some of these issues, I think would be helpful.

K. Thu: Okay, thanks, Vernese. So, with that, unless there are some other comments, we will go ahead and move on. So, you've got the intent of what we're doing here. We will update the language and incorporate other comments into it as you see fit. Again, please send those to me

and/or Pat, or actually, both of us. I'll do my best to get them incorporated before the second reading in March.

IX. FS/UC RULES, GOVERNANCE AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Ben Creed, Liaison/Spokesperson

A. President of Faculty Senate/Chair of University Council Call for nominations – Pages 15-16

Per Faculty Senate election results, an updated list of those eligible to be nominated will be provided as a walk-in item during the February 17 Faculty Senate meeting.

Nominations will be taken from the Faculty Senate floor during the March 24 Faculty Senate meeting. Faculty are asked to review the list being provided at this time and use the coming weeks to prepare for making nominations at the March 24 meeting.

Letters of acceptance of nomination are due in the Office of Faculty Senate by Friday, April 9.

Letters of acceptance of nomination will be provided to Faculty Senate members via email by Wednesday, April 14, and also will be included in the April 21 Faculty Senate agenda packets.

Election of the 2021-22 Faculty Senate president will be held during the April 21 Faculty Senate meeting.

K. Thu: Next, we move on to item IX in the agenda. I'm going to let Pat move ahead in the projection. This is the selection of Faculty Senate president and chair of University Council. And before I turn it over to Ben and Pat to walk you through it, I just want to say that I have not made up my mind about whether or not that I will run for another year for Faculty Senate president. Irrespective of that, if you have an interest or if you know of somebody that you'd like to nominate to be Faculty Senate president/UC chair, by all means, move ahead with that, despite my ambiguity. Given that, I understand that you probably would want to know what my decision is, so the deadline really is March 24 for nominations. So, I will endeavor to give you a decision by the first week of March, whether I'm going to run or not. If you are interested, irrespective of my decision, feel free to contact me to learn more about what the position entails and what the pros and cons of being in this position are. So, again, I will try to let you know my disposition and my future by the first week of March. So, with that, I'm going to turn it over to Ben Creed, who is the liaison/spokesperson for the FS/UC Rules, Governance and Elections Committee. So, Ben, I'm going to hand it over to you.

B. Creed: Thanks, Kendall, and thanks, Pat. Pat is showing the updated list on the screen of folks who are eligible to be nominated to serve in this role. As Kendall, mentioned, nominations will be taken from the Faculty Senate floor during the March 24 Faculty Senate meeting. Faculty are asked to review this list being provided at this time and, in the coming weeks, prepare to make those nominations during the March 24 meeting. Letters of acceptance of nomination will be due to the

Office of Faculty Senate by Friday, April 9. Letters of acceptance will then be provided to Faculty Senate members via email by Wednesday, April 14, and included in the April 21 Faculty Senate agenda packets. The election of the 2021-22 Faculty Senate president will be held during the April 21 Faculty Senate meeting. And, again, the list of eligible faculty are on screen now. So, at this moment, it's mainly information to let folks know what will be happening, kind of a timeline.

K. Thu: Thanks, Ben. I will point out that the bylaws specify that both tenured and tenure track faculty are eligible. However, I would discourage those who are not tenured from assuming this position, because it's taxing, and it's not conducive to achieving tenure. And in the future, we might think about changing the bylaws to make it only for tenured faculty. But that's something for future consideration. So, this is just an informational item at this point. Do you have any questions or comments to Ben or myself or Pat?

Okay, if not, thanks, Ben, and thanks, Pat. And with that, we'll move on to Roman numeral X, Items for Faculty Senate Consideration. And before we get too far along on Item X, Vernese has indicated that she is going to defer her presentation, Item B, until another Faculty Senate meeting, because she has another meeting in Chicago that she has to get to, probably didn't realize how long this meeting was going to extend.

P. Erickson: Kendall, I think Ben has one more item, item IX. B.

K. Thu: My apologies, so, Ben, go ahead with item B under Roman numeral IX.

- B. Motion to approve Linda Saborío to serve as NIU's representative to the Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE for a four-year term (2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25) per NIU Bylaws, Article 8.5.1 – Page 17

B. Creed: Sure thing, no problem. At this time, I move to reappoint Professor Linda Saborío to serve as NIU's representative to the Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE for a four-year term. May I have a second, and then we'll have a discussion.

G. Slotsve: Second.

K. Thu: I just want to point out this letter that was sent to me by Shawn Schumacher, who is the Faculty Advisory Council chair. And it reflects the terrific work that Linda has been doing. I think we know it from our end what she's been doing. But this showcases the great work that she's been doing from the perspective of the FAC, as well. So, it just verifies what we already know that Linda is doing a great job, and we certainly, hopefully, will want her to continue, maybe in person at some point, Linda, so you can regale us with your road stories once again.

B. Creed: Thank you, Kendall.

L. Saborío: So that's what you really miss about seeing me face-to-face, it's just the road stories, all right, I know.

B. Creed: As Kendall mentioned, this letter is in the packet. And I'd like to entertain any other discussion about this. Hearing none, I'll turn it over to Pat to do the formal balloting process.

P. Erickson: Thanks, Ben. Kendall, do you want to do this as a vote in the chat, or do you want to use the Poll Everywhere?

K. Kendall: I would like to use the Poll Everywhere, because I think we need to have a record of this.

P. Erickson: Okay, I'll bring that over here, just a second. Give me just a moment to get that into the chat. Okay, you should see it now.

K. Thu: Thanks, Pat. Okay, looks like we have it approved. Thanks, everyone.

So, I want to make a comment about what's going on in the chat box here. I see that Tim Sullivan has entered the chat box by making a comment about what should be a part of our Faculty Senate Social Justice Committee's charge. And I think that he's trying to be clever or funny; but, actually, I don't find it humorous at all. So, when you're trying to say that mathophobia is the equivalent of xenophobia or ableism or homophobia or sexism or racism, I don't think that's appropriate.

T. Sullivan [via chat]: I apologize.

X. Hu [via chat]: Thank you for addressing this, Kendall.

K. Whedbee [via chat]: Thank you so much for your hard work, Linda.

X. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

- A. The Bob Lane Faculty Advocacy Award – call for nominations – Page 18
Faculty Senate will vote on the recipient during the February 17 Faculty Senate meeting. The recipient will be honored at the March 24 Faculty Senate meeting.

- 1. Nomination – William J. Mills – Page 19

K. Thu: So with that, let's move on Roman numeral X, Items for Faculty Senate Consideration. The first item is the Bob Lane Faculty Advocacy Award, call for nominations. We do have one nomination, and it is for Dr. William Mills, page 19. He was nominated by Dr. Robert Tatara, and I think many of you may know Bill. He has served as an expert during the COVID period in dealing with the safety of faculty, staff and students in the classroom. He has expertise, as you can see in the letter, in air sampling, biohazards and epidemiology. He played a pivotal role in NIU's negotiations for safeguarding our students, staff and faculty. But he's also worked with public schools in the Chicago area. And so, I'm very happy that Dr. Tatara. Go ahead, is somebody speaking? So, he's a worthy recipient of the Bob Lane award, which as many of you know, is in recognition of faculty who advocate for faculty above and beyond the call. So, with that, I will entertain a motion to approve Dr. Mills as a recipient of the Bob Lane award.

K. Borre: I move to approve.

K. Thu: Thanks, Kris. Do we have a second?

E. Miguel: Second.

K. Thu: So, in addition to just discussion, is there anybody else that wants to comment on Bill and his work. I think this is an appropriate time. I think those of you who know Bill and the work that he's provided for NIU and education, in general.

K. Borre [via chat]: Bill is a great choice?

K. Thu: So, if not, if we approve him, he will receive – correct me if I'm wrong, Pat – a plaque or his name will be engraved on a plaque in the Holmes Student Center in perpetuity. Of course, you can't go and see it yet. Or not very many people go in and see it yet. And he will be recognized at the next Faculty Senate meeting. So with that, I think we can do a vote via the chat box. So, Natasha, on this one, if you'll add yes, no, abstain in the chat box, we can all vote on Bill Mills' nomination.

N. Johnson: I have at least 24, 25 votes. [Final vote was 37-0-1.]

K. Borre [via chat]: Bill has worked in the professional and business world to improve environmental health and now at NIU has worked diligently to train students to do the same as well as serve the university as a whole for health and safety!

K. Thu: Thanks, Natasha. Well, congratulations to Dr. Mills. We'll make sure that we inform him and invite him to the next Faculty Senate meeting, and we can give him a virtual congratulations. Thanks, everyone.

- B. Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Initiatives, Accomplishments and Action
Vernese Edghill-Walden
Vice President for Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Chief Diversity Officer and Interim Chief Human Resources Officer

K. Thu: So, as I mentioned, the next item B, under Roman numeral X, has been deferred to another Faculty Senate meeting. The purpose of bringing Vernese in is just to continue to make people aware of what's going on with ADEI. As I observe the conversations going on in the Ad Hoc Social Justice Committee, it occurred to me that, not only are there a lot of faculty that don't know what ADEI, I don't know a lot of what's going on in the ADEI. So, I wanted to bring Vernese in to give us an update on all of the activities that are going on there and the ways that we connect with them. But we will postpone that presentation until, hopefully, March if we can manage to get it into the agenda.

- C. Exception to AP Style to allow use of "Dr." title on NIU website
Holly Nicholson, Web Manager

K. Thu: Okay, with that, we can move down to item C. Holly Nicholson is, hopefully, with us to talk about the use of the “Dr.” title on the NIU website and the university’s policy concerning AP Style for language on the NIU website. And so, just to set this up, I was contacted by a faculty member who was concerned by the fact that he or she couldn’t use the address, Dr., on his website. And so I wanted Holly to come in and talk about the policy that we have in place for the use of titles on our website and then share this with faculty and get your feedback. So, Holly, the virtual podium is yours.

H. Nicholson: Hi, everyone. Thank you so much for your time today. I appreciate it. I admit to being a little sneaky, I added some extra slides in here for two reasons: first, because I believe this issue is, obviously, very sensitive. It deserves time, attention, thoughtfulness and context. And also, in my recollection, I don’t think I’ve come to this group to talk about our services. So, I would like to kind of combine that with the issue at hand.

I want to introduce our team. They’re not all in this photo, but this is an amazing team. We’ve been together for quite some time, about a decade. Most of us have advanced degrees, either master’s doctoral or finishing up our master’s degrees. We have anywhere from five to 27 years of experience at NIU. Most of us have been here over a decade, and our degrees are in design, strategic communication, education and marketing. And we also have expertise through professional development in accessibility and user experience.

So, how do we support faculty, specifically? When we talk a little later about our web standards, faculty websites, your personal, professional websites, they’re not subject to our web standards, and there are several options for you. If you don’t already have a website, you can host a website in our content management system using our template or just using html code. And that means that a server in DoIT will host your site. Or you can have a site outside of our CMS on any platform that you wish.

There are also biography pages and lab sites. Those are in our NIU web templates. Biography pages tend to be part of academic department websites in the faculty directory section. In those, photography staff can help you with a professional portrait if you need one. Or we have some tips here for how to take your own portrait, and these slides will be shared with you later.

So, you are the content experts. We look to you – I mean, you obviously have all of the knowledge of your area. What we assist with is content strategy, user experience, design and layout, coding, adding dynamic website features and brand consistency, and also compliance. And I’ll get into our compliance here on the next slide.

We are externally responsible for making sure that all of our technology is accessible. So, anything on the website must adhere to the accessibility guidelines. This includes documents, as well, especially pdf and Word documents. So, just some tips real quickly while I’m here: When you’re creating your own documents, including syllabi, there’s an accessibility checker in Word. Make sure to enable that and enable the accessibility [inaudible] as tagged pdf when exporting to pdf. And that’s going to make your life so much better, your students’ life better. And, again, we can talk to you as a team about that if you need help.

Internally, we comply with the Communication Standards for Institutional Brand Identity, or brand standards. We comply with the editorial style guide, and that's what guides all of the communications across the university, written and on web. And for the most part, the editorial style guide uses AP Style as the basis. And then we also have our web standards. And I'll talk a little bit about how the web standards are governed in the coming slides.

When we get to our access to our content management system, we have developed three roles. There is a coordinator role, a contributor role and a manager role. In all of these, these people in the departments are the content experts as I said earlier. And they're a liaison to the web team. The coordinator role doesn't have content management system access. And they request changes using the web site update form, which I link later. This is the most common frequency of access level. This is just so people don't have to keep up with our standards, with our training, with all the compliance that we have to do. You can request your edits, and we make them in the best way that we can.

A contributor role has CMS access; however, before publishing, our team reviews it. And this usually goes very quickly. And also the web update request form, usually same day. The work flow with the publishing approval, even faster. And there are quite a few people who have this access level. They have to go through our training.

And then the last role is manager. This is a very limited role. Very few people have this role. It's for people with extensive and current web and marketing experience. And they have editing and publishing access to the CMS. And we assist them as needed.

So, the roles in each area should be strategically assigned, and we did work with every area to go over all of these roles. It should be limited in each area so that content or updates aren't duplicated or there's no contradictions. Managers usually have access to a whole group of sites. And we work with each college according to your preference. So, in some cases, everyone in the college uses the web update request form, and the college communicator is copied on it. In some other places, they have a contributor, and they use the web update request form. There is just a mix, and we will work with you to create the best structure possible. I'm very happy everything is working really smoothly now. But, of course, if there are any issues, please contact me.

Our goal here is to help your site be the best that it can be. So, in most cases, that means letting you concentrate on your priorities and your expertise, while we carry the load of technical implementation, compliance and content strategy. And I do want to say, with any service model, there will be times when the service you receive doesn't meet expectations or align with our core values as a team. We're all human, and I'm very sorry if that has ever happened. But, if you have difficulties or questions, please contact me. My email is hnicholson@niu.edu. That will be on a later slide. I would love to talk to you to understand the issue at hand and to try to work it out with you. But for the most part, we have really wonderful relationships with all of our campus partners.

Now we'll get into web governance, and we'll start to get into the issue at hand. In 2017, our team went through process reengineering, and we established the Web Steering Committee to oversee our web standards. We didn't feel that the six of us should be in charge of the web standards for the whole university. We definitely wanted to make that an inclusive process. We received approval

from this group, from President Freeman, and we are now on the website of Committees of the University. On this committee, there are representations from each academic college and some administrative divisions. And we're always happy to talk about the representation there.

In 2019, a subgroup of the RIAC Committee formed to talk about how our team could support faculty better. And they gave us some fantastic recommendations, which we implemented. And one of those recommendations was to release faculty from the web standards on faculty sites, which we did. And one of the other ones was to have a faculty representative on the Web Steering Committee. Fantastic idea. So, we added that member in 2019. Currently, it's Jim Horn. So, he is another contact you could have. If you have any suggestions about the web standards or the website or workflow, please feel free to contact Jim, as well.

The purpose of the Web Steering Committee was to approve web standards and workflow processes. And, once we make any changes, those updates are sent to President Freeman for review. I think it was President Freeman, at the time, I think she was acting president, approved our standards. And now we send her updates when we update them.

Our editorial standards, again, for the most part, follow AP Style. And we chose – I say we, our area, there was a lot of people involved, our leadership – felt it best to follow a style guide for consistency in all writing. And style guides really also allow objectivity and fairness. In this case with the Dr. title, using AP Style, anyone can have their degree come after their name, still giving proper respect to their hard work and acknowledgment, but in a consistent way so that everybody does it the same.

However, after the unfortunate opinion piece about Dr. Jill Biden was published in the Washington Post, I just want to say that was very offensive. None of us agree with anything that was said in that piece, and it had no bearing on the way that we standardize the Dr. title or degrees. Our standards were in place long before that. But once that was published, our leadership asked to take another look at our compliance with AP Style in this particular matter. So, AP Style says that you use Dr. in the first reference as a formal title before the name of an individual who holds a doctor of dental surgery, medicine, optometry osteopathic medicine, podiatric medicine and veterinary medicine. And you list academic degrees after a person's name if they don't fall into one of those categories. Longstanding AP Style rule.

To make an exception to this and include the Dr. title on our website, we would make an exception to our editorial style guide for the web in the web standards, and that requires Web Steering Committee approval. Again, we don't just make changes on our own as a team. There are also a lot of logistical issues with implementation that was going to be difficult for our team. And so, we needed to seek the committee's advice for that, as well. The committee voted unanimously to have discussions with their deans and decide at the college level. This was absolutely their preference. They went back, talked to their deans, who consulted faculty, did benchmarking, considered industry best practices and how the decision would affect other people at NIU that have different credentials.

And so, this is a summary of the decisions that were made at the college level. As you can see, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences was the only one who decided to make an exception to the Dr.

title with an individual opt-in via a form. We have not yet determined an implementation timeline, but once we do, if you are in that college, you will receive communication from us and from college leadership about how that will all work. There will be a deadline and a form, and we'll make the changes on the website.

If you have any concerns with this, I would recommend contacting your dean. They may just not have heard that this was an issue for faculty. I'm sure they're happy to continue the conversation. But like I said, in many cases, they did confer with their college senates and college councils, and even did a faculty poll in one college.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any issues, hnicholson@niu.edu. I have our web update request form linked on here, as well as our support email address. We tend to centralize a lot of our communications, because we share support.

Jason asked, when was the college-level vote done? It was different times in early February. By February 9, I think, all of the conversations had been completed, but each college handled it differently, so I can't speak to that. If you know who your college communicator is, your college marketer, whoever is on your college marketing staff, they will be able to tell you. Or you can also ask your dean if you want to.

And so the web communications email, we have back-up on support. And so if our support person is out, we share that email box, and that's why we kind of centralize those communications, because we don't want anything to be missed. So, again, I thank you for your time today. Yes, Kirk, Pat has the slides, and she will send those out.

J. Rhode [via chat]: Holly and her team are truly amazing.

B. McGowan [via chat]: Thank you for the presentation and your work.

Y. Ito [via chat]: Holly, thank you for your wonderful service and consideration.

S. Richter [via chat]: Research on faculty use of titles shows a great deal of complexity for underrepresented groups.

K. Thu: Thanks, Holly. Your division does a lot of work, and our NIU website is better off for it. There's no question about it. I've been here 22 years, and I remember the old days. You and I have had a couple back-and-forth in collegial fashion, and I think for me the issue has been the extent of faculty consultation, particularly on the title issue, as you know. You've already heard me say this. And the extent to which faculty should have autonomy in self-identifying. Now I realize you've gone to college senate, but this has not come before Faculty Senate before, and so I wanted to give Faculty Senate members an opportunity to weigh in. I'm a little concerned that, from the beginning, that one faculty member was added to your governance team. And then not until I guess February when this issue came up, it's been brought back to colleges and somewhat vetted. But I'm not clear how the college-level vetting actually took place. I know that other universities in Illinois do allow for those that have an Ed.D. degree, for example, or a Ph.D., to use the term, Dr., as a preface in their website. It's fairly common. And so I wanted to make Faculty Senate members aware of this

and to give them an opportunity to weigh in, because it really is part of our identity as academicians and the way we represent ourselves to our potential students and colleagues around the state and country. I want to open it up to questions or comments if anybody has them in response to what Holly has presented. I know it's getting a little bit late in the hour and maybe your coffee's wearing off at this point. Does anybody have anything to add.

H. Nicholson: Real quick, can I just say thank you to everybody with their amazing comments in the chat box. I really appreciate that. We have so many great campus partners, and we love you all.

K. Thu: If you have further questions for Holly or me, by all means follow up with us. And I want to thank Holly for taking the time to join us today and look forward to collaboration going ahead.

H. Nicholson: Thank you, appreciate it.

K. Thu: Thanks, Holly.

D. Grades and the pandemic for the spring semester
Beth Ingram, Executive Vice President and Provost

K. Thu: We're making headway on our agenda here. Next up is item D, Grades and the pandemic for the spring semester. The agenda item here shows that Beth Ingram, our provost, is on the spot. But, actually, we're going to sort of co-facilitate this conversation about grades for the spring semester. And just by way of backdrop and then I'm going to turn it over to Beth. As you remember, last spring we had to pivot on a dime when COVID reared its ugly head, and we had to make decisions about grading in the spring semester. [inaudible] structure looked like. And then in the fall semester, at the very eleventh hour in the semester, we made changes to the grading policy for those students that received Fs. They were automatically given a U, and we didn't really have enough time, as a Faculty Senate, to weigh in. I took the policy suggestion in December, I circulated it to Faculty Senate members. We didn't have a chance to talk about it as a group. I got feedback. Most of the feedback was positive for a policy of automatically changing Fs to Us, except in the cases of academic misconduct. Most of the feedback was positive, but I had a number of faculty respond to me with legitimate concerns. And so the idea of having this discussion now in February, is it gives us more lead time to have a conversation and get your feedback, as faculty members, on what you would like to see. With that, I'm going to turn it over to Provost Ingram and thank her for joining us at Faculty Senate today. So, Beth, are you there?

B. Ingram: I am here, yes. Thanks, Kendall. I don't know if I have much more information to add to that. I did have a conversation with a member of our student government about a week ago, who was asking about whether we were going to consider different grading policies. And I said it's really up to the faculty and that discussion was going to ensue. He did make an interesting comment. He said, well, if you're going to do it, you should do it right at the end of the semester so that students have an incentive to work really hard. And you should surprise them at the end. Now, I don't know how feasible that is, but I thought it was an interesting take on the issue. I think really we just want to open it up for thoughts.

K. Thu: Maybe, Beth, you could just remind, for me at least, the way we handled grades last spring. I know how we did it in the fall.

B. Ingram: I don't know if Omar is still on here, because he did the logistical piece of it, but what we did in the fall was essentially what we did in the spring, which is faculty assigned grades as normal, including an F. But then the registrar would convert all the Fs to Us. Now I think in the spring we allowed students to choose, is my recollection. So they had to opt in. In the fall, we just did it automatically. There was a lot of logistical headaches involved in having students opt in or opt out. So, that was the difference between the spring and the fall, as I recollect.

K. Thu: Omar, are you with us? Do you want to chime in?

P. Erickson: Kendall, Omar had to leave the meeting.

K. Thu: Okay. So, it's very important. Faculty, obviously, as Provost Ingram indicated, it's really up to us to kind of shape the way in which we want to approach grading for the spring semester. I mean it could be just normal grading. It could be something similar to last spring, although that has logistical challenges. It could be the way we did it in the fall, or maybe something different than that. And it's extremely important for us to get some feedback. So, I'm going to start with Linda who I see has a hand up. Linda, go ahead.

L. Saborío: Hello, I have a question. In terms of a U, what does that mean when the student wants to repeat if they have, say, a U two semesters in a row?

K. Thu: They have to repeat. It's not a grade. It doesn't give them a free pass for a particular course. If you're taking a course, for example, that's required for the next step, you still have to go back and retake that course. The only difference is that U is not counted in GPA.

L. Saborío: Okay, so the first U is just like, it would be a first repeat and then a second repeat. Same rules as an F. Thank you.

K. Thu: And, Beth, correct me if I'm wrong about that.

B. Ingram: That's getting into a level of detail that I'm just not familiar with.

K. Thu: I'm pretty sure that's correct.

J. Akst [via chat]: I think you're correct, Kendall.

B. Ingram: I think when I talked to Omar, he says it's just like an F, except that it doesn't count in your GPA.

K. Thu: That's right.

B. Ingram: Or academic progress.

L. Saborío: Thank you.

K. Thu: And I see where Jason has weighed in as well.

K. Borre [via chat]: How does the need to repeat courses affect financial aid?

P. Chomentowski: I know talking to our kinesiology director that the Us still follow the Fs, so meaning that, for some of our classes, if you fail them twice, you can't repeat that course again. And so the U actually does work the same way. If we have students get a U twice, it's the same thing, they cannot repeat the course a second or third time.

K. Thu: I didn't know that.

P. Chomentowski: Yes, you can't do three-peating in certain core classes.

K. Thu: I do know when I was chair, if you got two consecutive Fs, you could petition the chair to take it a third time, but two consecutive Fs meant that you are, by definition, you don't get to take it again automatically.

P. Chomentowski: Yes, we can petition too, all the students.

X. Hu: Sorry if I missed this in the discussion. Is this just undergrad or grad as well?

K. Thu: Yes, Xiaodan, I saw your note in the chat box. Yes, this is just a discussion to get a sense of what faculty would like to do with grade policy for this semester. We're not making a decision here. We're not voting on anything. It's just to get a sentiment of where faculty are.

B. Ingram: What I would say is that this did pertain about the undergraduate and graduates, but not Law. Law does its own thing with respect to grades. On the financial aid question, I don't know that I feel exactly qualified to answer that. I do know that satisfactory academic progress is affected if students don't accumulate enough credit. And so, Us, in some sense, count against them if they're not accumulating enough credits quickly enough to keep up with satisfactory academic progress.

K. Borre [via chat]: Thank you.

K. Thu: That's a good question, Kris, and I will follow, I guess, with Omar. Beth, would that be the person?

B. Ingram: Yes, Omar probably knows. Yes, follow up with him.

K. Thu: Good question. Others? This is your opportunity.

P. Chomentowski: Kendall, I do know from one of our students that I had, they had a U last year, and we had an undergrad that their financial aid did come in question, because they weren't going to have.

B. Ingram: They didn't have enough credits.

P. Chomentowski: Credits.

K. Thu: Enough credits, right.

P. Chomentowski: Twelve. And I had the same thing we all did. [inaudible] and she had to take 12 credits. And they actually had the same thing where they got a U and thought, well it's not going to count. I still got a GPA. But it goes by credits, so they did have an issue where they were not going to get their money renewed for the spring.

K. Thu: Thanks, Peter. That's important for us to know.

B. Ingram: Although, an F would have done the same thing for the student.

K. Thu: Yes, right. So, what's your disposition about this? Do you want just normal grading for this semester?

B. Ingram: Is there more information that we could bring? We could look at grade distributions overall on campus to see what they looked like last fall. It's such a weird fall, though, that I don't know that the data will be comparable to previous semesters. But we can bring to bear some data if you know what you'd like to see.

A. Keddie [via chat]: Did we do it for grad students last semester?

L. Liberty [via chat]: I would be interested in looking at data.

K. Borre [via chat]: Looking at grade distributions by race and financial aid would be helpful.

B. Ingram [via chat]: I'll ask IE to work on some data.

K. Thu: Victoria, I saw your hand up.

V. Books: Hi there. I was just going to say that what I've encountered with this with students who ended up with the U instead of the F last semester is they sometimes for people who were just borderline with the GPA and maybe if not for that U would have had the F, which would have resulted in academic dismissal. So, then they're able to come back and re-enroll in the next semester, which is okay, because I think that might be sort of the concept behind it is to give people another opportunity if, for some reason, it was a bad semester due to some of these COVID issues. But those students just somehow need to be identified and supported better, because they were kind of on the edge, and that's how they ended up in that position. That's my big comment, was I just felt like I was hearing from students who I felt just somehow weren't getting the support they needed to if they were planning to continue at the university.

K. Thu: Good point. Thanks, Victoria. So, by my reckoning here, I see that Peter has his hand up back again.

K. Borre [via chat]: Yes, Vicky, that is my thinking too.

B. McGowan [via chat]: Good point, Victoria.

P. Chomentowski: Yes. One thing I was going to ask, are we going to have the dates of when they could do this? Because, like I said, last spring they were actually change it any time, so what I'm getting at is, they can only change their grade after the semester is over, is that correct?

B. Ingram: I believe that's the case, yes.

P. Chomentowski: Okay, that answers a simple question.

K. Thu: So, rather than saying, are they able to, the question is, what do you think they should be able to.

P. Chomentowski: Yes.

L. Liberty [via chat]: Yes.

B. McGowan [via chat]: For me too.

T. Buck [via chat]: I do think it can be an equity issue.

K. Borre [via chat]: Students need to be educated about the impact of the grading system in terms of credit progression toward graduation. I do not think they understand this when accepting financial aid.

Y. Ito [via chat]: That's a great point.

B. Beyer [via chat]: Agreed.

K. Thu: I saw Brad Beyer's hand up and one other. Brad, I'm going to call on you, because I did see your hand up.

B. Beyer: Yes, thank you. Obviously, I'm not a faculty member, but I did want to provide some student input, because after I talked with Kendall last week, I did have a chance to go to my leadership team within the Student Senate from our student representatives, and it's interesting, because that point of waiting until the very end of the semester was brought up pretty much unanimously. That, rather than making a decision now, it should be like within the last few weeks as we go into the final stretch of the semester. But everyone seemed to feel that there should be some sort of change to grading policy, and it should be somewhat consistent since we're still in the pandemic, because I know from what I was told and my interactions with students is that there are still students struggling. Obviously, there's a lot going on because of the pandemic. So, I thought I'd just kind of throw that out there. I still hear from students, well if we're going to make changes,

K. Thu: You just froze up, Brad. So, Brad, we're going to come back to you so you can finish your thought. I did see one other hand go up. Oh, Brad, go ahead. You froze up momentarily there for the last 15 seconds or so.

B. Beyer: I apologize. One of the other things I hear from students is that, if we're going to make changes to grading, why don't we do pass/fail unanimously. But I understand it's not as simple as that. For what it's worth, I just figured I'd throw that out there.

K. Thu: So, Brad, just so I understand the sentiment about making the decision toward the end of the semester, that's because they're concerned about students gaming the system? That's the issue, okay. So, rather than knowing ahead of time that they can always get a U in a class, they know that early in the semester and then they can just sort of slide through the semester with that class, if they work at it and then find out at the end of the semester that they can get a U, then they're more likely to do the work that's necessary to actually get a grade. Is that accurate?

B. Beyer: Yes, I would say that's accurate.

K. Thu: Okay. Other comments or questions.

T. Sullivan [via chat]: I feel if a student takes the final exam, they should be awarded the grade they earn.

J. Akst [via chat]: I support (at least for the short term) a continuation of the current U vs. F policy. I don't think there's a universal right answer.

M. Smith [via chat] I agree.

K. Duffin [via chat]: Do we have any data regarding difference in results between synchronous and asynchronous courses?

B. Ingram [via chat]: I don't know if we have that data. I'll ask.

B. Ingram: Todd did note in the chat that it can be an equity issue, as well. I don't know if Todd wants to expand on his thoughts on that.

T. Buck: I'd be happy to. It's hard to get all the thoughts out in a quick little chat box. I do find that there are a few students that may do better in the course if we're meeting in person, because of the limited access to WiFi and good computer equipment. They're trying to get by with old laptops. Some are trying to log into collaborate sessions with their phone with limited success when they're trying to upload and show projects in progress. But that's just a handful, and it seems like the other students in the class are doing fine. So, that to me seems like an equity issue, and I'd hate to fail them, seeing that they don't have the same resources as other students in the same class. I guess that was my point.

K. Thu: As we know, COVID accentuates those inequities, and I think that's part of the reason behind the grading policy that was rolled out in the spring and fall of last year. Other comments or questions? We need to hear from you.

B. Ingram: Kristen is making a point that students need to be educated about the impact of the grading system. Omar and I have actually been talking about that for several weeks now, because of the impact that it had on satisfactory academic progress. And to get more information out to campus and to the advisors so that they're keeping track and having conversations with students about how their grades affect their ability to maintain their financial aid. A really good point.

K. Thu: It's a very good point. And also, students need to know what a U on their transcript, how it will be interpreted by potential employers or grad schools or professional schools. So, that's important to understand as well. Tim Sullivan, I see you're making a point about the final exam and the grades they earn on the final exam. Do you want to pipe up.

T. Sullivan: Sure. I feel like if a student is considering doing a withdrawal from the class – or getting a U for the grade – then I thought that the student should already not have given up on the course. Where, if they take the final exam, they're really trying to go through and they feel like they've gone through the hurdles of not having whatever technology they have, and they feel like they're going for a passing grade. So, if they take the final exam, that, to me, is showing that they're really trying to do well in the course.

K. Thu: Okay, thanks, Tim, I appreciate it.

T. Sullivan: You're welcome.

K. Thu: Kris, I see your hand is up and the one other. And then we probably have to draw this conversation to a close.

K. Borre: I wanted to just say that my experience last semester compared to the spring semester was that last semester in the courses that I taught, there was more of a division between failures and A and B grades. And I had very, very few Cs. And when I looked at my students and I saw the reasons for the F, they were consistently related to work schedules, access to internet and the dates that the assignments were due. And so, I tried to work as best I could with them about allowing them to submit papers, allowing them even to submit at the time of the final. However, some of them were so far behind, even if they'd done the work, they couldn't have passed. So, I think there's a real division between an equity between those who don't have to work and have the financial advantages of really good internet and the time to spend on class.

K. Thu: Thanks, Kris. I think it's clear that, even in non-COVID times, our faculty bend over backwards to accommodate students' situations as much as they can. And I think they've double downed on that during the COVID period. So, I really appreciate that effort. So, we'll take one more comment and then we'll draw the conversation to a close. I see somebody has their hand up, but I don't know who it is.

E. Nesterov: I think I want also to maybe look at this situation with [inaudible] pass/fail grade in addition to letter grade, because, again, I think it's a matter of equity. It's a matter of access to resources. And this is as previous speakers mentioned, it actually amplified during this COVID online teaching. So, I think if we found students, for example, who [inaudible] get the higher grade, but I think it's that borderline, let's say, get something like C- or some [inaudible], I think the introduction of pass/fail would eventually help those students at least to continue studying and progress along the academic curriculum and academic education. So, I think you may want to look into that pass/fail as an extra option for students for choosing if they want to.

K. Thu: Sounds good. Thanks, Evgueni. Part of what I hear is providing as many options as possible. The problem with providing so many options as possible is it increases complexity into what the university as a whole can do. I don't know, Beth, whether you want to comment. Or maybe some final comments, Beth, and then we'll have to move on in the agenda.

B. Ingram: Let me just say I really appreciate the discussion and the focus on helping our students be successful and making sure that they have the information they need. And I know each of you is working really hard to make sure that our students can keep progressing. And so, what I promise to do is go back and find some data to provide to you. I don't think the decision is imminent. As Kendall said, I think there's time, since we're starting early, to have a robust discussion. And I will go back and see what data I can bring to bear on probably last spring and last fall to the question.;

K. Thu: Thanks, Beth. And thanks, everybody, for the conversation. It's extremely important.

S. Vahabzadeh [via chat]: Speaking of pandemic, is there any update on vaccination for the faculties, staff and students and moving to in-person mode and help with current situation.

D. Valentiner [via chat] To register as an individual in dekalb county:
<https://health.dekalbcounty.org/covid-19-vaccine-notification-for-individuals/>

K. Thu [via chat]: Thanks, David.

XI. CONSENT AGENDA

K. Thu: Well, let's go ahead and move on and see if we can make the 5 o'clock self-annointed deadline. We have no consent agenda, Roman numeral XI, is that correct, Pat?

P. Erickson: That's correct, Kendall.

K. Thu: I know if we lose Pat, then we're really going over the deadline.

P. Erickson: I'll be the last to leave.

K. Thu: I know you will.

XII. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

A. IBHE Strategic Planning Advisory Committee – Simón Weffer – report

K. Thu: Item A, the report by Simón Weffer, was already given earlier in the day.

B. Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE – Linda Saborío – no report

K. Thu: Item B, originally we had Linda listed as no report, but I know she does want to provide an update. So, Linda, I'm going to turn to you.

L. Saborío: Can't help myself.

K. Thu: We can't help ourselves.

L. Saborío: Right, I know. I don't have a report, you'll be glad to hear, because the FAC actually meets this Friday. But I don't know if, Pat, you have that document that you could maybe share on the screen. Thank you so much. This was just shared with me a couple days ago by the chair of the FAC. It's a culmination of a lot of work that we've done on the FAC for the last couple years, and it really highlights many of the critical issues that we as faculty on the FAC feel need to be addressed in the strategic plan. So, if you have a moment, please take a look at it. And, if there's anything missing from it, if there's something you would like to see highlighted or you'd like us to add to it, please let me know, and I will bring your suggestions and ideas back to the group. As you can see, this includes from four-year, two-year and the private independent college caucuses. It's all of our different working groups. A lot of work was done over the last couple of years. The document is available. I think it's off of the Faculty Senate page, Pat. It's called the FAC-to-IBHE, there's a link on there, and you're welcome to look at it. Please let me know.

Also, I just wanted to say very quickly before I go, thank you for your kind comments. Well, first for Shawn, though he's not here. But also to Kendall. And if anybody else has ever thought that maybe they're interested in serving in this position, it does require normally travel once a month to a different institution around the state of Illinois. I don't plan on being in this position forever, I just want you to know that.

K. Thu: Are you sure, Linda?

L. Saborío: I am sure. So, if anyone has ever thought that maybe you would like to serve, please just reach out to me, and I would be more than happy to share my experiences with you.

K. Thu: And we do cover the travel, by the way, just in case you're ever interested in it. Thanks, Linda.

L. Saborío: Thanks.

- C. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – no report
Natasha Johnson, Cathy Doederlein, Kendall Thu
Katy Jaekel, Sarah Marsh, Greg Beyer

K. Thu: The next item is a report from the University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees. There has not been a board meeting since our last meeting. However, there is a board meeting tomorrow morning, which Cathy, I'm sure you're on board. It means I'm going to miss the SPS meeting tomorrow.

- D. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee – Peter Chomentowski, Chair – no report

K. Thu: Peter Chomentowski has already given us a report that's linked to the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee.

- E. Student Government Association – report
Antonio Johnson, President
Bradley Beyer, Speaker of the Senate

K. Thu: Before we get to Student Government Association, I just want to say a couple things. Sahar has a question in the chat box about updates on the vaccination for faculty, staff and students. I don't know a lot about it. I did have a conversation with Matt Streb. I have had a conversation with the faculty union. A couple things that I can provide is that the faculty, I'm sorry, the union president in Illinois, in general, the AFT president, has been in contact with Governor Pritzker directly, trying to get faculty included in the 1B priority group. I have it on not good authority that there may be a 1C group created that faculty would fall into. That's just rumor. So, that's what I know. Of course, if you are in the priority group 1A or 1B and you're a faculty member, you still have priority. So, if you're of a certain age or if you have pre-existing conditions, you still can get into the priority group. You can go on to the DeKalb County Public Health Department website, and you can register to get vaccinated. So, for example, myself, I'm registered with the County Health Department, but I'm also in the queue for Northwestern Medicine. So, whoever gets me first, that's where I'm going to go. So, that's really all I have to add, Sahar. Perhaps we can have Matt come to the March Faculty Senate meeting to give us an update. He's sort of the point person for NIU and knows a whole lot more about this than I do. So, with that, let's move on to reports from the Student Government Association, Antonio and Brad? Antonio, are you with us.

B. Beyer: Antonio, I don't believe is with us. He had to step out for a doctor's appointment. I'm also going to keep my camera off to see if that stops the freezing. Obviously, elections are coming around; that's exciting. Anyone that serves on University Council knows that we recently completely redid kind of using the inspiration from the shared governance passes that happened last year. And we really kind of, in that same attitude, looked at our current structure of how student voices are represented. And so, as you'll now see, NIU colleges actually have certain seats that are allocated in the Student Senate. I worked with Kendall, I worked with many people across the university to really come up with a solution. So, this is what we're recruiting for. Our elections commission for this year has already begun the process of reaching out to deans and deans' offices to help recruit and get students interested in the shared governance of the university. So, I would say

to all the faculty here, if you want to help get the word out, I can certainly put my email in the chat and provide a flyer. We're really trying to get a diverse turnout for student representatives going forward. And that's really I think all I have to say. Antonio did want me to, obviously, mention the elections, but also discuss we have some upcoming, like Greek Week and Culture Week events that I'm sure will be advertised on our social media. Other than that, I think that's pretty much for the Student Government Association. But I did want to say that this did officially pass, and I'm really excited about it. It was kind of my pet project, if you will, over winter break, was putting this all together. So, I think that really covers it for us and SGA.

K. Thu: Thanks, Brad. I think you deserve more credit than what your report provides. This is a wholesale change in the Student Government Association, and you and Antonio are to be congratulated for making a wholesale change that is part of, actually, the university-wide effort to streamline our bureaucracy and our policies. And so you deserve a round of applause, quite frankly, for the leadership that you exhibit. So, well done.

F. Operating Staff Council – Natasha Johnson, President – report

K. Thu: So, with that, I'm going to not skip over Natasha. Natasha, do you have a report from the Operating Staff Council?

N. Johnson: I do. Thank you for not skipping me. We did have the CFO come at our last meeting, and she was able to present on the financials of the university. Everyone was really happy and excited to hear that it may only be \$10 million worth of deficit. And really it could be less than that, depending on how people are spending now once they get the final numbers in. So, that was good.

We also started the Ad Hoc Committee for the Civil Service Emergency Fund, so they'll be convening to figure out all the logistics on how we can help out with an emergency fund. We've already got everything set up from the foundation part. And then we'll be reaching out to any and everybody to solicit funds.

The PR Committee is working on ways to engage employees virtually. We know that everybody is separated, and people may have some anxiety about feeling alone. So, they're looking for ways to be able to engage people. They did recently send out a survey through the Forms to ask people what is it they would like to engage with to give them some options, but also to ask them what they want. And then we'll look for ways to be able to provide that for them. And that's pretty much the gist. Thank you.

K. Thu: Thanks, Natasha. Appreciate it.

G. Supportive Professional Staff Council – Cathy Doederlein, President – report

K. Thu: And then finally, Cathy Doederlein. Cathy, are you still with us?

C. Doederlein: Yes, I am, but I apologize for not being able to be on camera. Not much to report. We do have our meeting tomorrow as you noted, Kendall. So, that sort of seems to be the cycle in terms of my reporting, as always, about a month old. We will have our elections coming up. We're

figuring out the apportionment of our different divisions and determining what seats we need to replace. But typically, about half of our seats need to be replaced each election. If you know Supportive Professional Staff colleagues that you think might be interested in joining shared governance, I appreciate your help in spreading the word about the elections, which again, will be in April. But we do get the word out in advance of that so people have the opportunity to run.

We have been working on our awards process and are pleased that we're wrapping up the selections and will be notifying people soon. But just really want to thank everybody who took the time to nominate a colleague for one of our awards. We know that recognition is a really great way to be able to thank our colleagues, especially in these more challenging times. Thanks so much.

K. Thu: Thanks, Cathy.

XIII. INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. [Policy Library](#) – Comment on Proposed Policies (right-hand column on web page)
- B. [Minutes](#), Academic Planning Council
- C. [Minutes](#), Athletic Board
- D. [Minutes](#), Baccalaureate Council
- E. [Minutes](#), Board of Trustees
- F. [Minutes](#), Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee
- G. [Minutes](#), Comm. on the Improvement of the Undergraduate Academic Experience
- H. [Minutes](#), General Education Committee
- I. [Minutes](#), Graduate Council
- J. [Minutes](#), Honors Committee
- K. [Minutes](#), Operating Staff Council
- L. [Minutes](#), Supportive Professional Staff Council
- M. [Minutes](#), University Assessment Panel
- N. [Minutes](#), University Benefits Committee
- O. [Minutes](#), Univ. Comm. on Advanced and Nonteaching Educator License Programs
- P. [Minutes](#), University Committee on Initial Educator Licensure
- Q. FS 2020-21 dates: Sep 2, Sep 30, Oct 28, Nov 18, Jan 20, Feb 17, Mar 24, Apr 21
All 2020-21 FS meetings will be held via Microsoft Teams. The Teams meeting link and the agendas will typically be sent via email on the Friday preceding each FS meeting.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

K. Thu: Well, we're going to make it under the 5 o'clock hour. I want to thank everybody for your patience and for your contributions to the meeting today. Again, it was an agenda packed event, and I think it was well worth the effort to try to get everything in. We have two more Faculty Senate meetings left, one in March and one in April. Those promise to be equally packed, so again appreciate your time and attention. And with that, I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

B. McGowan: So moved.

K. Thu: Do we have a second?

J. Akst: Second.

K. Thu: I tell you what, let's do this by opening up your microphones and all in favor, say aye.

Members: Aye.

K. Thu: All right, motion to adjourn carries. Take care, everybody, and we'll see you all in March.

Meeting adjourned at 5 p.m.