

# Faculty Senate

Transcript

January 18, 2022



MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tyler Silvestri".

Tyler Silvestri  
Secretary for Academic Governance



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**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Good afternoon. Secretary Silvestri, are we at quorum?

**Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri** We are.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you so much. So good afternoon, all. We should get started. We are calling this meeting to order. Our first item of business is approval of the agenda for today's meeting. Are there any objections to the approval of today's meeting as distributed? Seeing none. Today's agenda is approved. The next item of business is the approval of the draft minutes for December 14, 2021. Is there any objection to approving the draft minutes for December 14, 2021 as distributed? Hearing none and seeing no hands raised. The draft minutes are approved. Remarks, President Stanley.

**President Samuel L. Stanley Jr.** Thank you and good afternoon, everyone. I'm really pleased to be with you all today as we start a new semester. Hard to believe, but yes, it's a new semester. I want to thank you to Chairperson Kelly-Blake and the entire Faculty Senate for your engagement in academic governance. This has really been a tough semester previously. We're coming into challenging times but I appreciate working together to make things better. I'd also like to congratulate MSU economist Professor Lisa D. Cook, who was recently nominated by President Joe Biden to serve on the Board of Governors with the Federal Reserve System. This is a huge honor and major accomplishment. I want to say thanks to the faculty, staff, and students who created the programming for our annual community conversation in honor of the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. The event was virtual but memorable with a thought-provoking and inspiring speech by our own Professor Tamura Lomax. This was recorded and for those who missed it, I encourage you to listen if you have the opportunity.

I now want to briefly update you on our COVID response and outline how we're working towards resuming in-person classes as planned and then speak a bit about our financial situation. As you know, the rapid spread of the Omicron variant in December prompted our decision to hold most classes virtually for the first three weeks. Omicron is much more transmissible than previous variants and can more easily infect individuals who are vaccinated than previous variants. Having been vaccinated, however, greatly reduces the chance of severe disease, hospitalization and death, and having received your boosters significantly lessen the risk of infection. The risk of disease and death is almost entirely present for unvaccinated individuals. As we saw case counts rising from Omicron throughout the US and around the area at the end of the year, we anticipated the possibility



**President Stanley, cont.** of large numbers of cases this month among students, faculty, and staff even with our precaution.

Our main concern was less about the risk of classroom transmission but more that a surge in cases could lead to students having to miss classes while ill, isolated, or quarantining, putting them behind in their studies in the critical first three weeks of the semester and increasing the possible risk of failure. We believe starting with remote classes for the first three weeks would allow all students to have full access to their coursework at the semester start. We also believed it could help reduce teaching disruption stemming from faculty or staff absences. As it stands now, our predictions have been on target with cases having risen with our return to campus although they now may be plateauing. During the week of January 10th, the university in partnership with Ingham County Health Department identified a total of 546 cases, down from 661 cases the previous week connected to MSU. There were 328 student cases and 218 employee cases. Note that there was a higher number of employee in the week before the return to campus, consistent with disease acquired in the community versus campus transmission.

Review of cases from other universities with similar mask policies and high vaccination rates show similar increases in cases but little evidence that college classrooms are associated with transmission. I want to remind everyone that the deadline to receive and verify your boosters is February 1st or as soon as you are eligible. We've partnered with the Ingham County Health Department to host vaccine and booster clinics at the Breslin Center. The first clinic was yesterday and there are two additional opportunities, January 26th and 31st. In addition, proof of vaccination or recent COVID-19 test is now required for athletic, music, or theater events on campus. With our mask mandate remaining in place and the requirement for boosters now active, I think we're on track to resume in-person classes on 1/31. We will continue to monitor the situation here and throughout Michigan, keeping the safety of all as our guiding principle. The pandemic has been challenging for all of us. There's a high level of frustration, but there will be better days ahead. Last week I sent an email to employees providing a financial update for the university.

As you all know, the pandemic has had a major financial impact on MSU, as well as all other higher education institutions and the US economy, and that impact will continue for the foreseeable future. The pandemic hit at a particularly difficult time for MSU in terms of financial status. The combination of no tuition increases over the previous three years, a continuing significant decline in international student enrollment---which had been taking place since at least 2015---and the cost of the legal settlement of 2018 had created a small structural deficit where expenditure's greater than revenue, where reserves and excess



**President Stanley, cont.** investment proceeds were used to cover the result in shortfalls of the general fund. The pandemic exacerbated all of this. First, the university experienced a decline in tuition revenue in fiscal years '21 and '22, to primarily to even more substantial reductions in international student enrollment. Second, the university incurred and continues to experience increased costs related to COVID, around testing, HVAC improvements, infrastructure for vaccine mandates, personal protective equipment, mental health services, and other measures to maintain the health and safety of the campus community.

Third, the university continues to experience increased costs that are unrelated to COVID as a result of the typical inflationary increases of the cost of healthcare, the utilities and supplies and services. While we honored contractual raises the university previously committed to and were continued to increase during that time. We also made a special point of continuing financial aid allocations to support students during the pandemic and actually increasing those financial aid allocations. This combination of declining revenue and increased expenses result in the university's general fund facing a hundred-million-dollar budget challenge in fiscal '21 and an additional 169-million-dollar budget challenge in fiscal '22. We faced these challenges using a set of principles to minimize the damage to our core missions. We approached financial decisions with tenants of fairness and acknowledgement of shared sacrifice. We were all in this together. We continued student progression, increased financial aid as I mentioned. We applied temporary measures rather than permanent cuts wherever possible, such as utilizing furloughs instead of layoffs. And it was very important to us to preserve our academic programs.

That last tenant, as I said, was particularly important to me, [inaudible 00:07:17] university during two fiscal crises. With all represented employees, we had been limiting to ways to approach short term budget challenges. For example, we could not make any adjustment to contractual wages or benefits. And we're forced to rely in some cases on closing academic and support programs to achieve significant savings. Thus, in keeping with the principles outline above, we've responded with a series of actions to close the budget challenges in each year. In fiscal year '21, the 109-million-dollar budget challenge was addressed with a 3% reduction for all units, support staff furloughs and temporary reductions in executive management, faculty and academic staff wages, and retirement benefits totaling 47 million dollars cumulatively. The remaining 62 million need was addressed through the receipt of federal relief funds and institutional reserves. In fiscal year '22, the 169-million-dollar budget challenge was addressed through a combination of modest tuition increase, a one-time increase in state appropriations and additional 3% budget reduction for



**President Stanley, cont.** all units in temporary retirement benefit reductions across all employee groups, totaling 80 million dollars cumulatively.

The remaining 89 million need was addressed to receipt of federal relief funds and institutional reserves. While we face continuing challenges, our financial picture is stabilized, and we have been able to remove and mitigate many of the reductions originally put in place. We ended wage reductions for faculty and academic staff after 10 months, two months earlier than it was originally planned. We ended a retirement match reduction after 18 months for some in January 22nd, while beginning an 18 month retiring match reduction for the majority of support staff along the same parameters, reductions in both instances ending six months earlier than initially anticipated. Supporting faculty and academic staff who hadn't seen a pay increase through the pandemic like their support colleagues did with a 2% base salary increase starting this month. And finally, recognizing most regular and temporary employees with a \$1,500 gratitude bonus subject to eligibility criteria announced on December 13th.

When the pandemic first began, we anticipated the wage and retirement reductions might have to last two years but because we ended reductions early and because we added the mid-year 2% raise and \$1,500 gratitude payments where the 90% of faculty and academic staff have now received unexpected to new additional wage increases that match or exceed the wage reductions, they experienced for 10 months. And we were looking at a second salary increase within this calendar year. As you all know, MSU is one of the few universities that provide a double match for retirement contributions. During this fiscal crisis, a number of universities including John's Hopkins University and Boston University completely stopped the retirement contributions. It was critically important to us that we continue at least a one-to-one match during this time that we commit to restarting the two-to-one match when fiscally possible. We have done just that. As you know, it has been proposed that we use reserves to retroactively restore the retirement benefits. While pretty use of some reserves during these extreme times helps prevent deeper cuts, there are limits to how deeply and frequently we can cut into reserves.

Reserves often sit directly within units to fund ongoing and multi-year programs and projects, faculty startups, and graduate student financial support across the entirety of their programs. These funds are held in earmark for those purposes to support the work of the university. At this moment in time, we do not believe that using reserves are making additional reduction in other areas to cover these costs is feasible or prudent. Last week, Thomas Jeitschko had an opportunity to review these materials in greater depths with the use of CFA budget [inaudible 00:10:41] subcommittee. I'll also be meeting tomorrow with members of the leadership of



**President Stanley, cont.** this body, along with Provost Woodruff, EVP Beauchamp, Associate Provost Lang and CFO Frace on this topic. I was also planning to continue to discuss our financial situation, listen to your concerns, and answer questions at the Academic Congress, which I understood is being convened. I was somewhat surprised yesterday afternoon when I received an email calling the Congress into session and opening an electronic vote.

I understand that in the rarity of these meetings being called, there may be some confusion and differing opinions about when it is appropriate for a Congress to be a straight electronic vote versus when a more formal meeting with discussion and debate occurs. I understand electronic has already been distributed with no meeting plan, but I also hope that long term, we can collectively agree to follow the spirit of a Congress has ascribed in academic governance's bylaws to "serve as a forum for the dissemination and exchange of ideas and information between the faculty and the administration." As we look ahead at the priority of the strategic plan of staff and faculty success, it has become clear---especially with the pandemic---that stronger caregiver support is needed for many faculty and staff who are navigating significant personal challenges in addition to substantial workloads.

This has been a critical issue for shared governance, and we have been listening. We are working to create and invest in a comprehensive university-wide caregiver program that further supports our Spartan community. Suzanne Lang and Rick Fanning are co-chairing a comprehensive study group in consulting with Dr. Leslie Gonzales, who is with the college and education in Center for Gender in a Global Context. In closing, we will continue to provide the campus community with COVID-19 updates as quickly as possible as we monitor cases and illness levels. And I want to again, thank you for your efforts to contribute to a successful fall semester and I'm optimistic that working together, we will have a very successful spring semester as well. Thank you.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you, President Stanley. Does anyone have any questions for President Stanley at this point? Alright. Provost Woodruff, your remarks.

**Provost Teresa K. Woodruff** Thank you very much. I want to add my spring semester welcome to everyone in the Faculty Senate and I'm delighted to be here with all of you. I did send my start of semester welcome email to faculty and academic staff last Monday and included a number of policy updates which I think will be familiar for everyone within this body. It also had a section on values, courage, trust, and ethics that really encompass the breadth of the many



**Provost Woodruff, cont.** initiatives that we are looking forward to as we continue this journey together. I hope many of you had a chance to read that and certainly am happy to take any questions on that along the way, but I hope it really does set the frame for our aspirations for not only this semester but for beyond. I'm very delighted to update you on some arts and culture leadership achievements. The first of which is our Broad Art Museum director, Mónica Ramírez-Montagu was selected by peers in the Association of Art Museum Directors to one of six individuals nominated to the White House for service on the National Museum and Library Services Board.

This is a presidential appointment with its selection here in 2022. The MSU Museum and Science Gallery director, Devon Akmon, led the strategic plan taskforce of the American Alliance of Museums and produced the AAM soon to be released 2022-2025 Strategic Framework and I'm really pleased that he is on this national stage. And the Wharton Center executive director Mike Brand was selected to serve as the head of the Broadway League's Board of Governors and is also serving for his 32nd year as a Tony Award voter. I think you can all join me in providing thanks and recognition to these three arts and cultural leaders for their outstanding work both here at MSU and beyond. The MSUToday series, featuring all 10 of our MSU 2021 recipients of the prestigious NSF Career Grant Awards and their leading-edge research is now complete. If you haven't had the opportunity to follow these stories as they have rolled out, now is a great time to look back at the full set. They are on the MSUToday website, and I want to really congratulate all 10 faculty members for their spectacular scholarly work.

I also want to echo President Stanley and his note of Lisa Cook's election to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. Many of you know Dr. Cook as a professor in the Department of Economics in the College of Social Science and a professor of International Relations in James Madison College. She is among the nation's foremost public intellectuals in economic growth and development and innovation as well as financial institutions and markets. She is going to bring a distinctive MSU framework for thinking about economic development and intellectual press and economic prosperity. We all wish her very, very well. From our Department of Physics and Astronomy, the Committee on Education of American Physical Society recently selected MSU's Department of Physics and Astronomy to receive an Improving Undergraduate Physics Award for improving undergraduate physics education and this was based on a number of significant reforms that we've within our introductory courses for engineering majors and life science majors as well as the integration of computation across all levels of our physics curriculum.





**Provost Woodruff, cont.** They also noted that it's clear that the department can serve as a model for other large public institutions and that many of our recent improvements are certainly transferable to a wide range of colleges and universities keeping within our ethos of a land grant institution to take what we learn and transform those around us. So please join me in congratulating the faculty and leadership who helped elevate the outstanding work of the department to such a level of national recognition and praise. I also wanted to share a brief update regarding our graduate school and its leadership. Dr. Thomas Jeitschko has now fully transitioned to the role of senior associate provost. Search committee chaired by Teresa Mastin was seated and charged and the deep pool of applicants was received by the committee supported by Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs. As Search Committee's work has extended into this month, I elected to appoint a responsible administrator for the short gap in the interregnum between the start of the year and the seating of that next dean and associate provost.

I'm happy to report that associate Dean Eric Torng has agreed to serve in this capacity and I'm very grateful for his service to the graduate school and for his leadership during this time of transition. Finally, last Thursday, Dave Weatherspoon, our associate provost for Enrollment and Academic Strategic Planning sent out a message regarding academic strategic implementation based on a work group that he has convened to develop our strategic implementation based on the university's planning. I have already had great positive input of the many voices that have been brought into this implementation step and the enthusiasm for the way in which we are taking the suggestions of the university's strategic plan and really creating a way for those to be placed into action. So I very much thank Associate Provost Dave Weatherspoon for his work in this regard. And with that, I'll turn it over to the chairperson. Thank you.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you, Provost Woodruff. Any questions for Provost Woodruff about her remarks? Alright. EVP Beauchamp, your remarks.

**Executive Vice President for Health Sciences Norman J. Beauchamp Jr.** Thank you, Chairperson Kelly-Blake. As we think about COVID and the impacts it's had and the work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., I think quote that he shared that of all forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and inhuman and I'm really proud of MSU's strategic plan and where we're headed to try to go directly at that work. It is emblematic of better together because to move the dial on these injustices, it will require us to work together. So I've been very pleased with the way the health colleges come together and doing a combined MLK event to recognize the importance of working together and how this is



**EVPHS Beauchamp, cont.** something that needs to touch all of our work every day. I'll post in the chat an article that was published in the Detroit Free Press that was referencing Dr. William Anderson, who's a faculty in the College of Osteopathic Medicine. He's aged 94 but physiologically, he seemed about 28 and he leads the Slavery to Freedom, An American Odyssey Lecture series. He worked very closely with Dr. King in his work.

A big part of our effort is to increase the number of providers to help reach all the communities we serve and really proud to report our College of Osteopathic Medicine received provisional accreditation for starting a new physician assistance program. We had a successful public health visit from the Council of Education on Public Health Accreditation. We'll hear back in the spring but that went really well. And a big part of how we trained is through our Learning and Assessment Center which is a collaborative simulation center between veterinary medicine, osteopathic medicine, human medicine, and nursing and that received re-accreditation. So really, really excited about those things. And the Nursing College interim dean Leigh Small has just really taken the helm and she is working now at looking at a way to bring more students into their accelerated nursing training program, again, to increase the number of practitioners in our communities.

We're wrapping up our search in the College of Human Medicine for a dean. We expect to come back at our next meeting, hopefully with an announcement of that individual and we are initiating our search in the College of Nursing and so that will start next week, and we'll work closely with the College Advisory Council on that. I would just thank Tyler and the members of Shared Governance as we've sought to make sure that we're doing all of our procedures in the best possible way. So, with that, I turn it back to you, Chairperson.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you, EVP Beauchamp. Any questions for EVP Beauchamp regarding his remarks? Alright, seeing none, I guess it's time for my remarks. So greetings, everyone and happy new year. Clearly the new year has started with his own set of challenges, but we continue to commit to the work of academic governance. The University Committee on Faculty Affairs, on December 7th, endorsed the restoration of compensation resolution. For those of you who have not signed the petition endorsing the restoration of faculty and academic staff compensation, benefits and merit raises, I strongly encourage you to do so and for you to encourage your peers and colleagues to do the same. We have over 1800 signatures and the majority of those are from tenure system faculty. On January 11, the university Steering Committee of which I chair, the voting eligible faculty passed the motion to convene the Academic Congress to vote to endorse the resolution. You should have received the academic governance



**Chairperson Kelly-Blake, cont.** email with a Qualtrics link to vote, so please vote and encourage your eligible constituencies to vote as well. Your vote is critical. And why is it critical?

The Office of the Provost informed us today at 11:20 AM that the Office of the President is contesting the validity of the vote of Academic Congress because we are not meeting as a group to deliberate. The past three Academic Congress votes have used the electronic vote format without a meeting. On February 3rd, 2018, a vote was convened on whether the Faculty Senate should consider a vote of no confidence in the Board of Trustees. On April 11th, 2018, an Academic Congress was convened with an electronic vote format to endorse the selection criteria for the presidential search. And on May 7th, 2018, an Academic Congress vote was convened on a list of nominees to sit on the presidential search committee and the support they provided in their communication for suppressing the Academic Congress vote is one, Academic Congress meeting in 2004, that was in person. We are trying to understand what the Office of the President gains from suppressing the vote. This does not inspire confidence. We have a scheduled meeting with executive leadership tomorrow, Wednesday January 19th, to discuss compensation restoration. We expect to have a productive and hopefully confidence building meeting.

I want to stress that from our perspective, the goals of the faculty and administration are aligned. We all want MSU to be the best university at which to work and learn. We seek and welcome the opportunity to strengthen our partnership in meeting our shared goals. Finally, we want to thank MSU and our surrounding communities for the week-long series of commemorative events to honor the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. I hope that would take time to reflect on Dr. King's life and legacy. And not the legacy of I Have a Dream, but the legacy of "Justice will roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream." Dr. King founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957. Their motto was to "Save the soul of America." That model is especially salient considering the lack of robust attention in higher ed to the first anniversary of the January 6th attack on the capital. Unfortunately, we allowed that anniversary to pass without recognition or reflection. In today's meeting, we will have a presentation on RPT and DEI from the Provost Office and an update on academic freedom and race and racism from Senator Pegler-Gordon.

So why are these agenda items especially relevant? They speak to us all playing by the same rules, which are simple and elegant. The majority rules, minority must be heard and respected, cooperation and decency must prevail, and the interests of the whole must outweigh those of any individual. The academic freedom update is especially salient not only for teaching about race and racism and what happens to



**Chairperson Kelly-Blake, cont.** those engaged in this work because we have all heard and read about the horror stories of threats against those committed to providing this vital education, but also for ensuring that our teaching is not threatened in any circumstance. Thus, it is imperative that we teach about the January 6th attack as an ongoing threat to democracy and why a real democracy takes work. Institutions of higher education must commit to saving the soul of America. This is our work. Thank you. So with that, we will move on to our unfinished business and that is an update on academic freedom and teaching about race and racism with Senator Anna Pegler-Gordon. Oh, apologies. Senator Alan, I didn't see your hand.

**Senator Jamie Alan (CHM)** I just raised it. So I first wanted to thank you for that and thank you for your leadership, Chairperson Kelly-Blake. I had a question for anyone who might be able to answer this. 2022 has been a very hard year. I'm paying a very heavy mom tax in the fact that I have had zero days that have been child free. I've had a child home in quarantine every single workday since 2022 started. In the past when we've talked about the modalities of teaching, it was pretty clear that face-to-face was preferred. And I know that we are virtual until the 31st. President Stanley, it sounded like you were preparing to switch back to face-to-face on the 31st. I'm hoping we are going to be experiencing quarantines. What flexibility is going to be there for us, particularly us with young kids such as myself, should there be cases in quarantines and daycare closures, et cetera, et cetera? Should there be cases and quarantines and daycare closures, et cetera, et cetera, because I know there are a lot of people like me who are experiencing these same hardships. And I am continuing to do all parts of my job, but if this virtual option goes away, it's going to be extremely difficult for me. Thank you.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you, Senator Alan. President Stanley, do you want to reply?

**President Samuel L. Stanley Jr.** I'll answer, and then with your permission I'll ask for Provost Woodruff to expand a little bit, because we've had extensive discussions about this. We're very, I hope, very sensitive to this issue and recognize how difficult, it obviously was one of the things that drove our decision to go remote in these first three weeks, because the feeling was the prevalence of cases, particularly in the community based on what we've seen in Delta from other places around the country, we're going to be peaking during this time to increase the chances that that could be taking place, and of course some of the school districts have already shut down or have made plans to go remotely during this time as well.



**President Stanley, cont.** We've been very sensitive to individual needs on this, and I think the provost and deans will be working very closely to do that, but there may be more detail available from Provost Woodruff.

**Provost Teresa K. Woodruff** Yes, and that summarizes it well, and Senator Alan, I hope you and your family are well, as well as all of our senators, and I think the prudence of the transition into the first three weeks remote has been a really important part of ensuring that our educational work can continue as you outlined. That has been good for students and faculty and the scholarship and research that has been ongoing because of the latitude that has been provided over this first few weeks of the semester. As we continue the education over the remainder of the semester, we'll remain vigilant to the circumstances around us. We will develop strategies as we have in the past. February is a high flu season for children and adults alike, and we have always had ways in which faculty assist each other when faculty succumb to illness-- Which is a part of our ordinary academic setting, but of course this is an extraordinary time, so we continue to work with the deans. They in turn will work within the department structures of their colleges to develop contingency plans, and we know that you will support each other as we all go back to more of the kinds of modalities that is traditional to MSU. That will be our next step as we continue in this spring semester.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you. Senator Alan, was your question answered to your satisfaction?

**Senator Jamie Alan (CHM)** I suppose I would like to know if remote teaching will continue to be a possibility for those of us who need it.

**Provost Teresa K. Woodruff** It continues to be a possibility, as in the last semester we established the modalities that began in December. And our hope is that we move towards those modalities, but again, with conversation with your chairs and deans. We'll be providing additional ways of which we can continue our in-person education, potentially with other faculty enabling to you or also through remote opportunities. We'll try to be more flexible, but we'll work together with the deans on each of these modality questions.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Senator Ewoldsen.

**Senator David Ewoldsen (ComArtSci)** Yeah, I guess my question is-- I know faculty who have said they do not want to go back for various reasons, and they have been threatened by their chairs, and so is that the policy, that we're going to



**Senator Ewoldsen, cont.** bully faculty into going back into the face-to-face, or is there flexibility for faculty who really feel concerned? For example, when you're teaching 170 students in a classroom that's set up for 220, so social distancing is impossible. When you look at the faculty handbook, it certainly seems to give us the right to teach our courses in the manner that we see most consistent. When you read through all the obligations for teaching that are printed in MSU documents, nothing is ever said about the location of it. I'm just curious about what's the foundation for forcing people to go back and what's going to be the policy for people who refuse to go back?

**Provost Teresa K. Woodruff** There is no policy for threatening an individual. That is certainly nowhere within the work that we do.

**Senator David Ewoldsen (ComArtSci)** It's happened.

**Provost Teresa K. Woodruff** I have great chagrin when I hear that kind of response, and so we'll make sure we talk with the deans to ensure that there is a positive engagement that we have with each of our faculty. So, thank you for bringing that to our attention, and as we continue through the semester and work within a variety of modalities, our goal is to try and provide continuity to our students, and certainly many of our students want to have the in-personness that they were expecting as they came to this campus.

For many of our students, if you're an international students, their requirements for being in person, we want to make sure that we provide for those opportunities to maintain their visa status. We want to ensure that the students have access to the laboratories and are able to learn in a setting that is best enabling to their outcomes. I will ask Associate Provost Largent, I think many of these questions are undergraduate, but if they're a graduate question, we can also address those. But Associate Provost Largent, do you want to speak to any of these matters that have been brought to us by our senators?

**Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education & Dean of**

**Undergraduate Studies Mark Largent** I'm not sure which one to start specifically, probably that the decisions about course modality are made by beginning with a question of what the intended learning outcomes are for a course, and whether or not those intended learning outcomes can be met in one or multiple ways. For courses that the learning outcomes can be met in multiple ways, then the question is what is the distribution of in person, hybrid, and online



**Associate Provost Largent, cont.** that's appropriate for the learning outcomes? But the learning outcomes aren't just specific to an individual class.

Our learning outcomes for our undergraduate students are also aggregated to think about what the undergraduate learning experience is in the whole. While any one class might meet its particular learning outcomes by meeting entirely online or entirely in person, a student undergraduate's learning outcomes in the aggregate probably cannot be met that way, which is why a diversity of courses with a diversity of instructional modalities is necessary.

That being said, when we have questions arise about an individual class and whether or not the currently assigned teaching modality is appropriate to it, the first question we ask is what are the intended learning outcomes? The second question we ask is what were students told when they enrolled in the course? If students were told it was going to be an online course, then they should reasonably expect it will be left online. If it was told it would be an in-person course, then they would reasonably expect that it would be taught in person.

That being said, there are staffing issues that are relevant to particular faculty members and in particular courses that we have make adjustments to the permanent modality. In those cases, if there are staffing issues, we do just what the provost has suggested. We ask department chairs and we ask other faculty members to make the staffing arrangements necessary to account for an individual's instructional needs. Ideally you make that without changing the modality of the course because the students enrolled in an online course or a hybrid course or an in-person course.

But there have been cases where, if we look at what the students' needs are, what the advertised instructional modality is, and what the staffing limitations are, we've approved every request that's come forward from the college asking us, given us working through all of these issues, this is our recommendation. I haven't said no to any of them yet, and we have seen about four dozen permanent changes that are made. I'd also lean on the fact that ideally, we really want to make sure that faculty have the ability to make temporary changes in terms of days or a short number of weeks as they make a transition back.

For some courses, leaving them online because the asynchronous mode might work better for a unit, and that unit might not start and end right at the three-week period, so we're seeing some flexibility in that space as well that colleges are allowing for. I'm struggling a little bit because it's difficult to talk about 7000 classes with one statement, and we really do want to look at each instance and each faculty member, and each student's needs, and its very specific context.



**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you. We have some questions, so Senator Ruvio?

**Senator Ayalla Ruvio (BUS)** My question is not directly related to this topic, so maybe we'll finish this discussion first and then I'll ask my question. Would that be okay?

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** That would be fine. Senator Halbritter, is your question related?

**Senator Bump Halbritter (CAL)** It is. A lot of the talk that I've been hearing about plans seem to be predicated upon assumption that students want to return face to face, and that doesn't comport with some of the things that I've been hearing across colleagues from their students. What happens, and we've talked a bit about faculty concerns about returning to the classroom, what happens when students decide that they can't return to the classroom?

Let's even assume that maybe those reasons for not returning are valid, which now puts us in a situation of classes that are going to be suddenly high flex, where some students are returning face to face and some students are attempting to attend online, as we've been in the first three weeks, as they've been conditioned to in the first three weeks. How do we prepare in the coming 10 days or 11 days to get our faculty ready to actually deliver on that situation when it happens?

**Provost Teresa K. Woodruff** Senator, there is a plurality of views, both of students and of faculty, and certainly of parents and administrators, so there's a plurality of the way we think about our own circumstances and the way in which we engage with the institution, the way students engage with the learning material, the way teachers or educators engage with their students.

We've been working with the deans as we have begun to know that January 31st is in the offing, that the COVID context is changing, the numbers are coming down, and that inevitably we are a residence based MSU. One of the things that you alluded to is that we are developing, and Associate Provost Largent said so eloquently, we're really moving to a time when we may have multi-modalities that will be part of our durable institutional footprint for education.

What we need to provide, though, to students as well as to faculty, is an expectation of what they can expect on January 31st, et cetera, and making sure that we can provide to them the sense of what they enrolled for this semester outside of the first three weeks. It's what they can expect going forward I think is the best way to go forward as we then continue to look at individual cases along





**Provost Woodruff, cont.** the way. We are committed to working with deans and department chairs as we continue to navigate individual circumstances in the context of the larger decisions that we've made about the institution as a residential university.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you. President Stanley.

**President Samuel L. Stanley Jr.** Just first of all, I really appreciate the discussion, and these issues are extraordinarily complex, and I don't think there is a single answer to this question at this point in time. It's very hard to come up with a single resolution. Having said that, I do want to emphasize that this body as well as our student body as a whole have been extraordinarily compliant with the mandates we've put forward.

The mask mandates I think have been done extraordinarily well. That is one of the prime reasons why we feel it's safer to be in classrooms because masks do make a difference and have been effective. Then second, the vaccination rates, particularly for faculty, are extraordinary. They approach 99%. My guess is that the people who are eligible have had boosters among this population of faculty. There may be some exceptions to that, but my guess is they do, but we are requiring boosters now, and the student rate is around 92 or 93%.

This is really, if you look at it, and I'm putting on my infectious disease hat now, a relatively safe environment compared to what you're facing outside, and so that would be whether it's K through 12, or obviously students can't all be vaccinated, whether you're going to the grocery store, whether you're having a casual conversation with someone you know over dinner.

These are much safer environments and a very controlled environment where you can see everybody is masked, where a high population of people have been vaccinated, so as I look at it, the relative risk from the teaching experience in classroom at Michigan State University, not at the University of Florida or Texas, but the University of Michigan is comparable to what we're doing with probably a slightly higher rate of student vaccinations, to me is something you can feel pretty comfortable and safe.

Can I make 100% guarantee? No. There's not 100% guarantees, but again, in those places that are ahead of us, OSU, U of M, in terms of having started, we have not seen evidence from them at this point in time and from our conversations that there is classroom transmission taking place. That to me is an important as we think about this, is where is risk and most of the cases we believe we're seeing are related to cases that are in the community or some may be related to roommates



**President Stanley, cont.** in dormitories and so on. What we're not seeing is in our research work that's continued during this time, or in the classroom, we're not seeing outbreaks that are taking place at MSU.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you, President Stanley. Senator Juzwik.

**Senator Mary Juzwik (EDU)** Thank you so much, Chairperson Kelly-Blake, and thank you, Senator Alan for being willing to share and testify about your own situation. I appreciate the conversation we've had so far about modality. Thank you, everyone, for raising these issues, but it is my hope that the committee that's being convened, I believe by Provost Woodruff if I'm not mistaken, and Suzanne Lang, I forget her title, I'm sorry for not using the honorific, it is my hope that we can discuss the caretaker tax that Senator Alan brought up.

To me what is needed is not Senator Alan and others in her boat teaching classes online while trying to take care of their children who are sick all at the same time. Senator Alan needs relief from her teaching assignment if the children are sick, and so what I would advocate for is some kind of a different framework, because we may struggle through as caretakers, it is a task and it is taking a toll.

I'm really concerned about the sustainability, especially for my colleagues with children under the age of five and other care-taking intensive situations where quarantine situations and so on can't be, what's the word, paid off, a caretaker cannot be procured in the interest of public health. I'm really concerned about the broader implications of the caretaker tax that is being experienced by so many of our colleagues, both faculty and academic staff, support staff, all across the institution.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you, Senator Juzwik. Senator Pegler-Gordon.

**Senator Anna Pegler-Gordon (JMC)**

Yeah, I just wanted to chime in on a couple of facets of this conversation. The first is in relation to this caretaker tax and caretaker crisis. I just want to mention again that Faculty Senate passed a resolution on this exact issue, I believe back in 2020, urging the administration to take this crisis seriously, particularly in terms of the impacts on women faculty, who bear the biggest burden of this tax, on faculty of color, on first generation faculty, all of whom may have far fewer resources to support them and to advance, and we emphasized this very strongly.



**Senator Pegler-Gordon, cont.** Now, two years later, almost two years later, we hear that a committee is going to be formed to look into this. It is so frustrating to have raised this issue so long ago, and to have had to wait so long, but I absolutely 100% agree with Senator Juzwik and others who have sort of emphasized this as being absolutely central to the discussion. A second point I just want to make is that I do agree with Associate Provost Largent that it's difficult to talk about 7000 classes in one statement, and with the president that it's difficult to come up with a single solution, although the question hadn't primarily been phrased in terms of safety and your response was in relation to safety, which was not really the question.

But what I will say is there is one solution that I think could help, is that chairs should listen and work with faculty. Deans should listen and work with their chairs, and this has to come from the top down. I'll say this because I actually had a different situation. My youngest daughter left for college this year, so I'm not a caretaker any longer. Everyone in my household is vaccinated.

I requested of my dean to actually be able to meet in an independent study in person because we are working on a book and we are actually having to look at paper and bindings, and to do some graphic design work, and to physically create this book as part of an independent study. I was just told oh, sorry, that's not happening yet. You can't do that. Maybe just wait for three weeks, see if we go back online, and so on. I do think that while I respect my dean very much, I think that some of this messaging has to come from the top. You need to listen to your faculty and what they want, and be accommodating and understanding, because my dean was just like oh no, I can't do anything about this.

I was in a situation where it was the reverse. I wanted to meet in person so that we could get started on our work, and so I just think that that one answer that we just need to have stronger messaging from the top that deans and chairs really need to listen to and work with their faculty and not just say I can't do this because I'm hearing from the upper administration that we have to have this uniform policy. Frankly I think right now the messaging is uniform policy to the deans and chairs, not work with your faculty, and so I'm not actually blaming my dean on this. I think that we just need to have a really strong message from the top about that issue. Thank you.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you, Senator Pegler-Gordon. Senator Ruvio.

**Senator Ayalla Ruvio (BUS)** Thank you, Chairperson Kelly-Blake. I would like to raise a point of actually concerning those who are not on campus this semester.



**Senator Ruvio, cont.** We either teach online or we are on sabbatical, or we don't teach at all. For us, getting the booster makes much more sense to get it in the fall when we are back on campus, rather on getting it now, but if we're talking about blanket policy, the policy about a booster has mandated us all to get it by February and it really doesn't make much sense to me. I don't know. I was wondering if the policy, those who are making it, can consider the option to give those who are not on campus this semester the option to take the booster when they are back. I would like to mention another point that relates to that. If you are a faculty member and you had a compliance issue with the mandate of the booster, the vaccine, it doesn't matter, you have no one to talk with.

Your only option is to wait until the system will reset itself and you can file for an exemption, but there's no one to talk with. I called every office that has to do with the COVID vaccine, and the answer was one, we can't help you. You're faculty and this is a compliance issue. It's really making it hard on us to be compliant and to do what we were asked to do, but really my question is can we, as a policy, can those who are not on campus this semester can take the booster when they are back? Thank you.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** President Stanley, do you want to reply?

**President Samuel L. Stanley Jr.** I think in discussions we've had; I know that this particular issue has actually come up where someone has said that they don't want to get a booster. From a medical point of view, I'm not sure I could understand what the reason would be because I think Omicron and COVID is present everywhere. This is a fundamental issue, so I think probably the best thing to do would be to maybe have you have a conversation with our university physician, Dave Weismantel, so there's no reason why you should have to answer my question of what the reason would be, but I think it's not something we really contemplated was someone delaying.

I guess maybe your argument is that the booster may be more effective, your protection may be higher in the immediate couple weeks following the booster than it is three months from now when you come back. That may be true, but what I've just said, what I believe to be true is the risk that you're engaged in if you're in the United States, pretty much anyplace in the United States, the risk is probably, in the general population, is higher than it is on campus given the high prevalence of vaccination on our campus.

There's very few states that approach the level of vaccination on our campus. My argument would be that the best thing for your particular health would be as a physician, but let's not get into those clinical things. I think a call with Dave



**President Stanley, cont.** Weismantel maybe to put forward your things and we would definitely follow up on that. If you don't mind, just send me a DM and I'll remember to do it. Thank you.

**Senator Ayalla Ruvio (BUS)** Thank you.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you. I think we can move on to our unfinished business, and Senator Pegler-Gordon, I will hand it off to you.

**Senator Anna Pegler-Gordon (JMC)** Thank you so much, Chairperson Kelly-Blake. This is just a brief update on the discussion about academic freedom and teaching about race and racism that we had at our November meeting. At that time, we passed a resolution affirming a joint statement on efforts to restrict education about racism, and we also discussed a letter from James Madison College Faculty Senators with specific concerns related to MSU. Senators raised a range of important concerns, including the issue of teaching and the impacts on students, which I hadn't originally considered, and I have started to follow up on that, but I have not followed up on it fully.

It is clearly a broad issue and I do need a little more time on that, so I apologize for not having completed those discussions with students with ASMSU and with COGS and so on. But there was one specific concern that I was able to learn more about in relation to our discussion of the spring conference on teaching and learning. Just to recap on that, conference organizers have planned to have affinity group discussions connected to a conference presentation on race and identity, and if you want more information, it is in the information on the Academic Governance website from November, the Faculty Senate meeting.

These affinity groups were publicized among conservative news outlets, and the decision to have affinity group sessions was reversed. In a statement, MSU Deputy Spokesperson Dan Olsen, stated that quote, "We regret the impact the invitation had on some. We are examining and updating the format of the two optional facilitated discussions to be more inclusive. All conference participants are welcome to attend either discussion and we are no longer inviting individuals to join based on identity."

In our discussion in Faculty Senate, I was asked to try to find out whether university administration was involved in reversing the program committee's decision. Senator Ken Prouty and others who spoke agreed that it was a very important difference to the issue of academic freedom and whether there was a violation of academic freedom if the university administration was involved or whether this decision was taken by the program committee in response



**Senator Pegler-Gordon, cont.** to negative publicity. And it wasn't really clear in that statement by Dan Olson, who the "we" was. So I reached out to Jeff Goebel, former associate provost for teaching, learning and technology because his office, the Hub for Innovation in Learning and Technology, was the main organizer of the conference along with some other groups.

And Jeff Goebel emailed me and he said, and this is a quote from his email, "The program committee developed the affinity groups, which were connected to a talk on race and identity as part of the conference. The decision to eliminate the affinity groups was taken at the highest levels of the administration. I wasn't in the room. So I am not sure who precisely was there."

So this is very clear that the decision to change the conference approach to teaching about race and racism was taken by upper administrators. And it's not clear who exactly it was taken by because it was made apparently in secret without any input from the conference organizers. And I would just like to state, at this point, I think this is a very concerning violation of academic freedom in relation to teaching about race and racism at MSU.

I am going to plan to continue to look into this. The At Large Members have not had an opportunity yet to meet with the upper administration. And when they are doing so tomorrow, obviously their focus is on the issue of restoration of benefits, which is absolutely central. And I wouldn't want at all, this revelation to take any part of that time.

I think we really do need to focus on the restoration of benefits. But I will continue to work with the academic governance and with administrators, as well as to work with the students, to look into the concerns of students. And my goal would be to potentially introduce an MSU focused resolution in relation to these issues at our next Faculty Senate meeting.

But I just wanted to give you an update because frankly, I was quite shocked to learn that this decision was taken at the highest levels and that it was taken without the participation of the people organizing the committee. As we discussed in November, that is a critical difference, and it is a significant concern. So that was my update. And I don't know if there are any comments, but I just wanted to make sure that you knew that in our first Faculty Senate meeting after we discuss this.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you, Senator Pegler-Gordon. So I would offer that you be in touch with us about time you would need to provide further updates once your information becomes more complete and thorough. We would be happy to have that presented here. So thank you so much for that.



**Chairperson Kelly-Blake, cont.** So we should move on. So our next item of business is new business. It is the faculty promotion, tenure recruitment, hiring and retention presentation by Provost Woodruff, Academic Associate Provost, Suzanne Lang, and CDO Jabbar Bennett. I don't know if we provided specific time for this. Did we Secretary Silvestri?

**Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri** We did, but then the presentations got combined.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Yeah, I know, I'm saying, do we have a certain amount of time that we allotted for the presentation?

**Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri** No, not said.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Okay, alright.

**Provost Teresa K. Woodruff** Well, we're delighted to present on this topic, and there are a number of folks who are going to be presenting. I wonder if there's the slide deck that we could put up for discussion?

**Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri** I haven't received it. Someone might. Whoever has, CDO Bennett, it looks like, you're welcome to share your screen.

**Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer Jabbar Bennett** I'm happy to share my screen. Just a second.

**Provost Teresa K. Woodruff** Well, I think while we're getting that up, I'm not going to introduce all of my colleagues here at the outset, but there are a number of folks who will be presenting today, including from the Chief Diversity Office, the Office of Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs, the Office of Academic Services and Strategic Implementation, and importantly, the Office of Faculty and Academic Staff Development.

And I also call out the University Committee on Faculty Tenure for their campus-wide leadership. And we do appreciate all of you in recognizing the importance of this topic for us to discuss. And I think just as a frame for all of us to think, as I think about this topic, and I'll be relatively brief and then turnover to others who will be speaking that one of the ways we're thinking about this is really within the promotion and tenure setting of the university and higher education.



**Provost Woodruff, cont.** We think about how we're viewed by each other, firstly, and then by our employer secondly. And so we'll be talking a little bit about both. But really the way in which new knowledge is created and decisional authority over that progression is largely within the local unit we set as an institution guiding philosophies and principles, and then how one values that work under those broader guiding principles is really set locally.

So, there is of course a confounding nature of creation of new knowledge of one hand while living and teaching within a current system. And it is in that natural tension where tenure becomes an important part of the way we think and work. In other words, or perhaps better stated, it's that developing new knowledge that may be counter to prevailing understanding needs to have a certain way of thinking. So that one person is not placed at a disadvantage because of the ways in which we are learning about something new that may be antithetical to something we must know.

It also as a system whereby within the faculty ranks, how we think about valuing my work becomes sometimes conflated with how we value me as a person, or how I value myself, becomes conflated sometimes with how one sees one's work. It is also the case that within universities of higher education, there's a thriftiness when we really think, and I'm thinking about this in the writ large way, there's a thriftiness about the way accolades for success are given. And in many institutions, it is that these processes within the university is to winnow out rather than to help create an environment for success.

And this is something we're really thinking about very deeply at MSU and really as an academic provost, I look to see how and acknowledge that work that is contributing towards the larger intellectual knowledge base and to bring broader visibility to that faculty excellence both through the national academies, through the American academies, and through a series of pathways toward honorifics.

But in the end really, values, and culture, and progression, and dwell time are really part of locally controlled system. So there has to be a natural engagement. And what we'll present today is a bit of the concepts and philosophies and guiding principles and that is the end together with what's happening within units. And each unit across our campus has different individuals and therefore different determinations of what they believe is excellence, and risk, and innovation, and different ways of valuing the perils and pitfalls of learning and doing something new or different.

And so we want to move, I think from, we want to maintain excellence, the implementation of which is developed within the units. We want to move away from thriftiness to generosity, with praise and attributes of success. And I think in





**Provost Woodruff, cont.** so doing, we can redefine the MSU of today and set the stage really for tomorrow.

So on the next slide is really just one slide about the way I think, which is about the recruitment of decanal hires. And it is within those decanal leadership decisions that then sets the stage within the colleges themselves. And as I look at deans, I really look for disciplinary depth, those who extraordinary within the portfolio that we have defined and ossified as individual parts of the organization, those that would have distinct determinations for an area of study, but also someone who can have institutional vision.

So if we have someone who really has absolute disciplinary depth, but doesn't see the ways in which their colleges can engage across other ways of thinking or other widths of working, then the leadership metric is there but missing a valuable piece. And so my rubric has been to identify those individuals who really have both as part of their portfolio.

And then as we have those individuals who really think from a disciplinarily and scholarly depthful way, and also see how the work fits across the institution, they begin to create a cohesive link between recruitment and hiring promotion, tenure and retention, all of which starts at day one for an individual faculty.

So that gives you the predicate for the way I think in these terms. And of course, all of you have seen the materials that last year was ratified by the UCFT on our philosophy of tenure and the nature of faculty. And I think all of that really goes into the ethos of what we'll discuss today.

So let me next turn it over to CDO Bennett for a few thoughts, and then we'll move through the remainder of the slides and the thinking, and then perhaps come back in the end for some more depthful dialogue. Jabbar.

**Chief Diversity Officer Jabbar Bennett** Thank you for that Provost Woodruff. So I'm going to walk us through a bit of the thinking and framing around how we approach the searches, but also a bit about our processes. And also as we think about the strategic goals that have been set by the institution and a lot of the work that the provost is doing within the academic units with her team, understanding how we should see the connection between recruitment, hiring promotion team, and retention of diverse faculty.

I've heard the provost and others say that retention begins at the moment of hirer. And thinking about the ways that we can really help signal and demonstrate to our new hires, the ways that we want to help them be successful within the units but also for supports that lie outside as well.



**Chief Diversity Officer Bennett, cont.** So with recruiting and hiring, and you can look at the bullets here, the only way we're going to get where we want to be, it's going to have to do things a bit differently, and I would say, maybe go the extra mile. So if we want diverse candidate pools, we have to really take it upon ourselves to work, to help support the central mechanisms that are getting these job descriptions and position profiles out to diverse audiences.

The positions, of course, we are very careful to think about how they're worded to make sure that they're not gendered in some way or may, for whatever reason, make certain people feel like, "This is not a position for me that I can apply to." And I talked about us working our own networks. But as an institution, we're being thoughtful about where we advertise and how.

We have made some institutional subscriptions to different outlets where we know we can get the news about appointments to different places. So we hope that you all will continue to work with us in first, getting that pool developed that is diverse and deep to help result more likely in a diverse hire.

I shared this overview of the search process, just to say that, as you're thinking about preparing for the search and making resources available to committees, putting the position together and thinking about the various candidate qualifications, and then engaging in the actual recruitment process and selection, all of these have multiple steps involved, but if each place along the way, a bias can occur.

Biases relate to how we think about, or what we believe about a particular candidate based on their level of preparation, where they came from, who they trained with. All of that works to play into what could end up being, again, an adverse impact on these different candidates. So I share that and when I do have an opportunity to speak with executive search and faculty search committees, talk about the ways that we can mitigate bias along every step of the way.

So what we think about when we begin a search. We start with a very diverse committee. We ensure that each committee member understands the purpose and process of the search. And I just talked about an overview of the search itself, but also what our individual responsibilities are.

The fourth bullet down is related to assigning or identifying an affirmative action advocate who works with the chair to ensure the objectivity is maintained throughout every stage of the process. But I also charge each of us to be vigilant, to be vocal, and to also just be aware of conversations that may happen during searches, where we're not sticking to the most objective thinking and framing in language. We are bringing things outside of the materials that were submitted or shared to consider these candidates. We all have to play our part.



**Chief Diversity Officer Bennett, cont.** And of course, we have to comply with institutional requirements as well as federal and state laws related to compliance. And as many of you may know, my office has a key role in helping to ensure that we do follow these steps and to provide support to you and your committees for additional information.

I have been speaking with committees about embracing holistic review, and I think many of us may do this, but I want to provide a concrete model of something that we can think about. And this is the EAM model that really looks at experiences, attributes of metrics. And as you can see here at the top, this is designed to create a qualified and richly diverse interview and selection pool with the focus on excellence.

And I've shared this model. And I also have, of course, the reference to the actual manuscript, if you'd like to read that review on your own, we sent to around excellence at the core and the traditional or conventional metrics that we think about if we're hiring faculty, scholarship, thinking about grants and publications, certification patents, honors, and awards.

But as we think about our own institutional priorities related to diversity equity inclusion and other areas that are really important to us, it's really important to also think about the attributes and experiences of candidates who could bring something new, something different, something additional to help move us along in different ways.

Again, we remain thinking about excellence at the core and centering on metrics, the things that we've done traditionally. But I'm encouraging us also to think about various attributes. You see many examples here, as well as experience that can really help us build a deep pool, but maybe even hire a candidate that is particularly suited to help do this work in a different way and enhance the activities, the research, the teaching, and so forth within your unit. Happy to talk more about this with anyone at any time. But for the purposes of this, I will stop here.

The last thing I want to talk about before passing this off to Suzanne, is a way that Michigan State has truly demonstrated, again, its interest, but also commitment to advancing inclusive excellence. And that's through the 1855 professorship initiative, really aimed at thinking about what is our responsibility and our mission at the land grant institution in the future, thinking about ways that we can organize relevant knowledge as we think about the faculty who we're hiring within our units to help drive responsive research teaching engagement and beyond.



**Chief Diversity Officer Bennett, cont.** And what we may end up doing ultimately as well is being a model for peers to think about other land grants who may also want to acknowledge their beginning, but really focus on building toward the future. In this initiative this year in working with the provost and Dave Weatherspoon, who oversaw the process, there were several categories that were identified that aligned with our priorities as an institution, thinking about social and environmental justice, minority politics, urban journalism, law and democracy, diversity and data science, cultural leadership and practice, and also one health.

And I'm happy to report that this was an extremely competitive review process, as you may imagine, with 76 impressive proposals that were submitted in 13 professorships that were granted. These professorships were represented across nine different colleges or primary units and 16 unique collaborative units.

So you can see a list of all the college or primary college recipients below, which lets you know that the heads of these units and their leadership teams, their faculty really thought creatively around how they could utilize these professorships and what the promise would be of these individuals would help to enhance the research teaching and the scholarship, and even service as it relates to their local units but across the institution. With that, I'm going to turn this over to Suzanne Lang to continue with the rest of the presentation.

**Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs Suzanne Lang** Thank you, Dr. Bennett. I'd like us to think about reappointment, promotion, and tenure and the promotion of fixed term faculty and academic staff through the lens of an employee life cycle. In the human resources profession, there are different stages of engagement an organization has with an employee. Whether we're talking about recruitment, hiring, promotion, or retention, it's important to think about these activities through a holistic model and not as isolated activities.

Recruitment is not a standalone activity, neither is hiring, development, promotion or separation. All of these activities are interconnected and inform one another from an organizational strategy perspective. Setting up each of these activities for success increases faculty and academic staff retention. Success of our faculty and academic staff is my office's primary goal.

And we encourage the university community to reimagine faculty hiring and retention as ongoing activities, as regular components of academic and professional life, rather than as special occasions or reactions to particular circumstances. MSU's workforce strategy is informed by three key strategic



**Associate Provost Lang, cont.** plans, the MSU 2030, DEI and RVSM strategic plans. Next slide please. There we go. Jumped one. There we go. As we all know, a tremendous amount of effort and work was undertaken to develop MSU's 2030 strategic plan, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plan and the Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct plan. In the MSU strategic 2030 plan, faculty and staff success was called out as a strategic theme with a goal to support career development and wellbeing of staff, faculty, and post-doctoral research associates at MSU focusing on creating a best-in-class workplace culture and environment in which excellence and opportunity thrive.

The DEI strategic plan provided several recommendations that support and inform the MSU 2030 plan in the area of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion as well. Recommendations from that plan include to ensure greater diversity among faculty, academic staff and administrators, to support the continued success of diverse faculty academic staff, administrators, and campus leaders. Three, to increase equitable retention practices with the goal of supporting staff and faculty of diverse backgrounds and to ensure that faculty and academic staff affairs and human resource policies and practices promote equality and equity.

Staff and faculty success really involves creating an environment in which excellence and opportunity thrive which will attract and keep talent and create conditions where staff and faculty can do their best work individually and collaboratively. And then, one of the metrics in that section is to increase recruitment for participation in leadership or professional development programming by staff and faculty from diverse and historically underrepresented programs. Now I'm ready for the next slide. Thank you.

So, when we take a look at the composition of faculty and academic staff over the past 20 years, I want to orient you to the slide first. When we look at the total number of faculty and academic staff, or a head count by year, from 2001, 2011, and 2021, we're looking at data that are inclusive of all faculty and academic staff.

So that means senior system, fixed term faculty, and academic specialists, both fixed term and in the continuing system. And each of those years in our bar graph is given a different color, dark green for 2001, medium green for 2011, and then light green for 2021. And we can see the breakdown in terms of the ethnic and racial differences within our faculty and academic staff.

So, Dr. Bennett has discussed the principles for effective and successful recruitment and search activities. And we can see over time that there have been marginal changes in diversifying our faculty and academic staff. But I am here to say that we—and the rest of us who are presenting today are in agreement—that we must do better.



**Associate Provost Lang, cont.** As we continue to engage in this area and commit ourselves to create a diverse and inclusive workplace, it's imperative that we remember that each of us play a part in this role, as well as when we sit on search committees and make decisions about position qualifications, all of these activities influence our ability to have a more diverse and excellent faculty.

Next slide, please. So, in terms of success of MSU's faculty and academic staff in my unit's primary goal, the promotion and tenure or continuing process are a reflection of a faculty and academic staff members entire academic career at MSU. University policies, processes, and development activities are in place to set individuals up for success.

I often tell candidates for positions that we pride ourselves on recruiting as competitively as we possibly can. And once we make a decision to hire an individual, we want that individual to be a success, and we do everything that we can and to try to help them be a success.

So one of the most basic policies, but a foundation and key policy, is the annual evaluation policy. Every faculty and academic staff member should receive a written evaluation from their chair or supervisor on an annual basis. This is not only to ensure that they are informed of their performance, but also of their progress towards promotion and merit increases.

Some principles towards effective evaluations in your trajectory toward promotion include, each unit should have clearly formulated and relevant written performance criteria and should provide these to faculty and academic staff at the time of appointment, and as necessary throughout the individual's career, each individual should have a clear understanding of what is expected of them in the appointment.

Individual performance is assessed against those expectations. Each individual receives an annual written letter of feedback. All assigned duties should be given weight in the evaluation. It's through the recognition that comes from being promoted through the academic ranks, should be available to all whose performance warrants it.

If you aren't aware of any processes available to you in terms of how you might go through evaluation for promotion, and I'm speaking specifically for fixed term faculty or academic specialists, oftentimes the process is not as clear as it is for tenure system faculty.

**Associate Provost Lang, cont.** I encourage you to reach out to your chair or your unit administrator to get more information about the pathway available to you. And that I would like Faculty Senators to know that a task force has been put together that is making progress on clarifying what the process is for our academic



specialists. And now I'd like to turn it over to my colleague, Marilyn Amey, to talk about some of the support that we provide for promotion reappointment and tenure.

## **Interim Associate Provost for Faculty and Academic Staff Development**

**Marilyn Amey** Thank you, Suzanne, and thank you senators for having us here today. We do have a slide here that talks about separation numbers. Not sure if we-- I think I may have jumped ahead a little bit. But picking up where this slide that you're looking at is, I would draw your attention to what I would describe as not a very often referred to resource that is available to us all. And that's the faculty guide for reappointment, promotion, and tenure. It does have on it, the most current policies and practices of the university. And as you know, then within those guidelines' colleges often stipulate additional or descriptive definitions of that work, especially, I'll use as an example, outreach and engagement activity. What that means in a given college is likely to vary somewhat, but those expectations and definitions should be clear within the college unit and perhaps more locally at a department unit.

I think the statistic that is listed here is important to hold up that over the last 20 years, two thirds of any entering cohort attains tenure, and this would be in the tenure system faculty. And at the final review stage 90% received tenure, which is certainly as good as our counterparts and better than many institutions nationally, who are also research universities. This is not to say that our process is well understood to all and that we can't do much better work to make it more clear. I would go to the next slide, please. I'm not sure who has it.

This refers, I think, back to the earlier conversation from today, both in terms of caregiving, but also the impacts of COVID and the pandemics on everyone here. The statements that were forwarded the opportunity when Interim Provost Sullivan was here, and the first-time extension was put into play about COVID as an automatic extension. Provost Woodruff articulated means of accepting COVID pandemic impact statements that could have been included in the way in which one narrates one's work on an annual basis or during promotion and tenure or handled as a separate document, and that is still in place.

So, as one of the senators earlier was articulating the circumstances that confront her at this time, it would seem very appropriate since 2022 will be-- or 2021 will be the year that was being encompassed in an annual review. Most of the academic **Interim Associate Provost Amey, cont.** community here has continued to be affected by the pandemics and so work has shifted, home life has shifted, and it has affected people in different ways. So taking the opportunity to be articulate and explanatory as one sees fit of how work has shifted, is an invitation that is



open to all and should be taken into account by those who are doing the review processes. I will use as a very brief example, that having made the pivot in 2020 in spring to virtual on the spot in the moment at the good direction of President Stanley in 2020, quite a number of faculty on campus never mentioned that effort in their annual evaluation as reported by chairs and deans.

And when one thinks about the time involved in doing that and trying to be responsive to students to their own lives and circumstances, that was a significant effort put out by all. It wasn't that people were not working extremely hard, but they often chose not to articulate that in any way in their materials, and from an equity perspective, if something isn't shared, it shouldn't be assumed, and it can't be reviewed very well. So I would encourage you as individuals and with your chairs and review committees to encourage again, clarity in articulating the work that it is that one is doing. Part of what we also know from data that is on our next slide, is that we have exit separation numbers here that are presented. And you see based on what Suzanne was saying earlier about our efforts with faculty of color, from different racial and ethnic backgrounds over time that we can always do better, and these exit numbers are for you to see as to how we are doing.

What is true is that we have not perfected in any way a successful exit interview process or program, and that's something that I know is under Dr. Bennett's interest for this year, as well as Dr. Lang, because we need to know more about why people are leaving. I think we're all very aware of the climate issues that exist on campus and the concerted effort to improve them. And that is certainly a factor in why people choose to leave MSU. Under the circumstances of the pandemic, we are likely to continue to see people making different decisions about their lives and perhaps leaving the academy altogether. But it's also important to note that several of the people who have left the institution and probably more to come, are leaving for opportunities that don't exist at MSU.

And so that exit in interview becomes really important in understanding the dynamics, figuring out how to support people to their most fulfilling career here, which involves again, from the very beginning, setting out a retention plan from the moment of hire that will continue to help individuals thrive and feel like they have opportunities to grow and to succeed here. So these numbers show something, what exactly they show is less confirmatory, but it is an exploration that is underway. I know for Faculty Senate that this is a really important concern as to what do those numbers accurately reflect. And it's something that I think we **Interim Associate Provost Amey, cont.** all need to be attending to and discovering more fully what those numbers mean. Next slide, please.





What I want to suggest to you in, someone is saying, I have the last slide here, is that the combination of people who are speaking today really takes seriously the need to help people develop successful careers from start to finish. And the Office of Faculty and Academic Staff Development, that is our role is to help people be successful, and for academic staff and fixed-term faculty included in that. They represent a significant portion of our professional staff as you know, and our educational workforce, and yet their trajectory are sometimes very truncated. They're not very clear, and yet they represent a significant contribution in all respects to the work of the university. So what is on the slide is what happens every February, and I encourage you to encourage your colleagues to attend what is now called Thrive Sessions.

The point of which is to both go through the actual processes, people always want to have as much clarity as they can about what is required of them in preparing their materials, but also, we're spending more time this year and going forward in how to think about narrating one's work, as opposed to just putting in text, what is on a CV. If you think about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts and how we can move away from a reductionist way of thinking about them as a set of check marks or tallies of effort and how they become integrated into the work of the university, that becomes more of a narrative story. And how are is one showcasing and sharing the objectives that one has, the kinds of decisions that one is making about teaching about research and scholarly activity about the kind of outreach and community engagement in which one engages and the mentoring of students, of peers, of staff, all of that becomes part of how we become our best selves, but it is often very poorly demonstrated in a traditional CV.

So part of our efforts during the Thrive Sessions for all categories of educator work is to talk more about how can one best present what it is that you value, what you're trying to accomplish as well as how that links up to your college or program missions and to the university at large. There are four sessions, they accommodate the major categories of work, and I will say to you for your edification, that enrollment this year, we do ask for pre-registration so that we can have material is appropriately available. Registration this year is up significantly from years past, and it's up significantly particularly for academic specialists and fixed-term faculty, which I think our collective offices are very happy about because it means that perhaps people are trying to be promoted in the system or understand what is required.

**Interim Associate Provost Amey, cont.** There's also movement, and you are all part of this movement on campus, where colleges are actually intentionally seeking out those who should be included and helped to put their materials together for promotion. And personally, I couldn't think of a better way to start



2022 then to recognize excellent work of our educators in all categories. And to help them feel like the university is actually very invested in them, regardless of what kind of an employment category that they're in. So I will leave that there, and I know you'll have questions.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you all. So we have maybe five minutes for questions and then we have to finish up our agenda as best we can. Senator Juzwik.

**Senator Mary Juzwik (EDU)** Thank you so much for this presentation. I'm not sure who to direct the question to, but I think Dr. Amey, you may be the person who most explicitly referenced the concern that I have. I'm currently sure on my College RPT Committee, and I am trying to figure out what recourse people have when the unit does not have clearly stated performance expectations. I wonder if any of you can comment on that, thanks.

**Interim Associate Provost for Faculty and Academic Staff Development Marilyn Amey** I will offer a thought and I know that Dr. Lang and probably Provost Woodruff would have much to say. But I will say to you as a general observation, Senator Juzwik, that I think that this is something that many units on campus are playing catch up with. Where transitions have occurred or institutional, or organizational leadership has transitioned or stayed very static for a long time, and the realization that the reality of stated expectations and how they are understood by those in the system is not clear. And that may be on an individual educator level, it may also be on the level of those who are conducting the reviews, such as yourself on a college level committee, because those rotate often, somewhat regularly. And so I think with the deans and with department chairs, we're trying to work very quickly, but very intentionally on how to get people on the same page of understanding.

**Executive Vice President for Health Sciences Norman J. Beauchamp Jr.** But there's a university level, and then there's how the colleges implement, the stated memo that the provost sent out in the way that the colleges vary. And it is immensely variable on campus, but something that I believe is seriously being addressed. It's just a slower process than any, I think any of us would prefer, but we have a leadership institute that's scheduled for the end of January with **EVPHS Beauchamp, cont.** department chairs and deans, RPT Committee reviewers, to talk exactly about this in advance of our, Thrive Sessions. And those are open to any reviewer as such as yourself or the chairs and deans, so that people are hearing the same message regardless of the level at which they seat.



**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you, Senator Horner.

**Senator Pilar Horner (SOC)** Hi, I didn't understand the slide about separations. I'm looking at it right now, I don't know if you want to pull it back up again, but I'm not sure I totally understand it. What I think I'm seeing is separations are the one who's left, and then you're taking all minorities, and I'm assuming by minorities, you mean Black, Asian, and Hispanic, but you didn't do it-- or did you do it by percentage of how many minorities are, and then how many have left? I think that would be more useful than just like-- there's this number, because there's way more white people than there are minorities. So, if you're taking it as a percentage, it makes it look like-- it's not very helpful. Like, what would be a better helpful thing is like, what's the actual percentage of minorities and how many of those have left over the years? Does that make sense?

So if you could redo that data, that would be great. And I want to underscore your assertion about doing better exit interviews, I completely agree with that. That is not being done very well. We're not capturing that data. A lot of my peers have left because they just can't compete economically, like they're just being offered more money, better positions and more money, and it's sort of coming down to that. So, I would suggest looking into that some more. And then, finally, I just want to underscore this model that was presented, the embracing a holistic review, the EAM model. One of the problems I see with models like this, which I can't-- what I'm saying is a suggestion because I want to see more on this, it's a lot easier for my colleagues when I'm in, what's it called, in meetings where we're trying to hire someone.

It's very easy to look at the metrics of awards, honors, pubs, those are pretty easy for people to get. But when you get into sort of softer experiences like this circle that you're using of culture and climate and world events, those are softer things to capture. And I would like to see that operationalize in some way or somehow given metrics because it's difficult to communicate some of these things to the folks that I'm working with, and it becomes really shifty and personal and it becomes specific to the committee. And so, I think if this is the direction that MSU is going in, that there should be a lot more work paid attention to some of these definitions or these concepts that seem a bit like life experience. How are you going to measure that, who gets to measure that, what does that mean?

**Senator Pilar, cont.** And it gets a very sort of murky. So those are the two comments I have, thank you.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you, Senator Horner. Senator Alan.



**Senator Jamie Alan (CHM)** My question is perhaps for Dr. Bennett. And I'll ask it here because I think others might be having this problem, but we're approaching times-- if Dr. Bennett, if you would like to talk offline about this, that would be fine. I agree with including people from diverse backgrounds on the search committees, we're finding it a little bit like squeezing blood from a stone. We have a chair search going on in my department. We're in the College of Osteopathic and Human Medicine, and so when we're looking from people who are diverse, the search committee is looking at the double AMC criteria, and so that excludes Asians. And so that narrow it even more and we're having a hard time finding people who might fit this definition.

And the people who do fit this definition are already tapped as the diverse people on many, many, many other committees. And so we're having a really hard time figuring out how to do this. So if you have any ideas for us or way that we can figure this problem or situation out to include diverse faculty representatives, we would love to hear how we can do this, thank you. And this is my child at home under quarantine. Thank you.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you, Senator Allen. So, any other questions before we get to Senator Mechtel's committee report? Senator Mechtel, the floor is yours.

**Senator Marci Mechtel (NURS)** Thank you. Happy new year to everyone. UCC continues to be hard at work. Our last meeting was in December of 2021, and we approved the following program request. We had three new programs and 17 program changes. Highlighting the new programs are an accelerator science and engineering Master of Science that will be effective spring 2022-- Sorry, summer 2022. Animal studies, social science, and humanities perspective graduate certificate program effective summer 2022. And for undergraduate, a retail management minor effective spring 2022. With this, we also approved course requests with 22 new courses, 20 course changes and four deletions. There are no moratoriums to report and there are two program discontinuations, one is a journalism teaching minor. UCUE was consult and Provost approved and its effective of fall 2021. And finally, professional applications to anthropology. The University Committee on Graduate Studies was consult and Provost approved and **Senator Mechtel, cont.** that is effective fall 2021. And if you want to see more details, the short report is an attachment A, and B has the very long inclusive report, and thank you.



**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you, Senator Mechtel. Senator Guzzetta, we have three minutes. What's your question?

**Senator Juliet Guzzetta (CAL)** Okay, I think this is a general comment from the floor question to Provost Lang. I was wondering if we had more of an update on the committee for care taking, how that's being formed, where they're at, when they expect to have some real ideas for us.

**Associate Provost for Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs Suzanne Lang**

Yes, happy to respond to your question. I'm working with my co-chair, Rick Fanning, who is Director of Employee Relations and also I stepped into an interim position that Sharon Butler had in terms of head of HR. We have been reaching out to individuals to ask them to participate on the caregiver working group. We are selecting people across the university staff and faculty; we are also asking individuals who are subject expert in this area and academic governance individuals who have been very involved in the resolution that was mentioned previously. So we hope to have our first meeting before the end of this month, and then we will try to progress as quickly we possibly can. Our goal is to have recommendations and feedback before the end of this semester.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you Associate Provost Lang. Alright, any other questions at 4:59, comments?

**Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri** Sorry, we do still have this item 5.3.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Oh, I'm sorry. We still have the-- Senator Mick Fulton.

**Senator Mick Fulton (CVM)** Thank you, Chairperson. I bring to you today a policy or a document that was brought to the University Committee on Faculty Affairs, probably the spring of last year, to look at faculty authored works and the perceived conflicts of interest as it relates to assigning faculty authored works to students. If I remember correctly, probably almost 40 or even 50 years ago when I was an undergrad, this was a concern at least as a student, but the head of the libraries and the committee on University Committee on Faculty Affairs developed **Senator Fulton, cont.** this document. I bring it forward to you as a motion for approval. So with that, I'll be quiet and listen.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Any discussion.



**Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri** I mean, ultimately, would people prefer to kind of bump this to the next meeting or do people want to vote on now, a motion, if it's the former?

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** So, Senator Donahue, has her hand up.

**Senator Megan Donahue (At Large)** I think it's a fairly simple thing. I felt the document was quite reasonable. I am a faculty author and I do know exactly what is recommended in this document, which is to donate royalties. In fact, a number, well and above the royalties I get from students back to the university that benefits student learning. So I think it's a great suggestion. It doesn't prohibit faculty members from writing books that actually sell for money. I think people should be paid for their labor, but so I think it's quite reasonable and I think it's short and sexy, easy.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** So Senator Donahue is that a motion?

**Senator Megan Donahue (At Large)** That's a motion to approve.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Alright, we have a motion. Do we have a second?

**Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri** Technically Senator Fulton made motions so--

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Oh, he did? Okay.

**Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri** Senator Donahue was the second.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you, Secretary.

**Senator Megan Donahue (At Large)** Then I will second that.

**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you, thank you. I just didn't hear the words I'm accustomed to hearing, thank you. Alright. So, we have a motion and a **Chairperson Kelly-Blake, cont.** second to accept this proposal. Any further discussion? Alright, it looks like we can vote secretary, is that correct?

**Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri** Give it five more seconds.

# Faculty Senate

Transcript  
January 18, 2022



MICHIGAN STATE  
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**Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake** Thank you all very much. So if there is no objection, I call this meeting adjourned. Have a good evening everybody.