

Faculty Senate

Transcript

February 13, 2018



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

**This transcript was prepared by the
Secretary for Academic Governance and has not
been approved by the Faculty Senate.**

*Per Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised) (12th ed.), §§ 48:1 and 48:6,
only the approved minutes constitute the official record of
the Faculty Senate's proceedings.*

Please direct any questions or corrections to acadgov@msu.edu.

TA Silvestri

Tyler Silvestri
Secretary for Academic Governance



Chairperson
Laura McCabe

The meeting is called to order. And the first item up is to approve the agenda. Is there--

Shawnee Vickery

I have a motion to amend the agenda. My name is Shawnee Vickery. Good afternoon to everyone. And I want to make a motion to amend the agenda for the following reasons.

**Secretary for
Academic Governance**
Gary Hoppenstand

And we do-- We do need a second for that motion.

Unknown

Second.

Vickery

Thank you.

Hoppenstand

All in favor?

Various

Aye.

Vickery

Okay. I'm requesting that this agenda be amended to change the wording of 6.1 ["Open Discussions" on the agenda so 6.2 ["Discussion of No Confidence Vote in the Board of Trustees (BOT) (Information Item)"] does not occur, at least not in its current form, for the following reason.

The current motion on this agenda is a vote of no confidence in the Board of Trustees. But the devil is in the details. In their January 31st memo to the faculty, the at-large faculty members of the MSU Steering Committee stated, "Should the Board indeed appoint ex-Governor Engler," meaning as MSU president, "we will sadly be forced to bring a motion to hold a vote of no confidence in the Board of Trustees to Academic Congress via electronic ballot. The at-large members of The Steering Committee brought a no-confidence motion before the faculty on that same day. This email with the link for voting referred to the immediacy of recent events involving the selection and selection process of the interim president as the rationale for the vote of no confidence.

I am not sure if the at-large members of The Steering Committee realize how insensitive and tone deaf this motion makes us appear. For months, The Steering Committee and the faculty have been aware of the



Vickery, cont.

failure of MSU over the years to stop and prevent the rape and sexual molestation of young girls and little girls at the hands of Larry Nassar. During this time, both before and after the resignation of President Simon, there was no call for a vote of no confidence in the Board due to this egregious lapse of leadership and accountability. Casting a vote of no confidence because you object to the selection and selection process for the interim president sends the message that you did not have a problem with the Board of Trustees staying in place until the Board had the audacity to ignore your input and appoint former Governor John Engler as interim president. Then and only then did The Steering Committee call for a vote of no confidence in the Board.

This action by the at-large members of The Steering Committee is outrageous on several levels. First, the at-large members' promise at the beginning of their email to the faculty to change the culture of Michigan State University so that this--by which they meant the horrific sexual abuse of girls and young women by Larry Nassar--will never happen again made it seem to faculty reading the email that the vote of no confidence in the Board of Trustees was about MSU's failure to stop and prevent this criminal behavior. Only a careful reading of the email reveals that the vote of no confidence is not about these little girls and young women and what they suffered.

Instead, it is about the Board's process for appointing and its selection of former Governor Engler as interim president. In essence, the at-large numbers of The Steering Committee used these brave women to achieve political aims. There were several of us faculty who were very upset about this.

In their email, the at-large members of The Steering Committee stated that they demanded that the Board appoint a woman with extensive academic leadership experience and experience devising and implementing programs to mitigate sexual harassment and sexual abuse. If someone demanded that a man be appointed, the at-large members would no doubt call him or her a sexist. But make no mistake, those who blatantly call for gender discrimination are the real sexists.



Vickery, cont.

Furthermore, what happened to these women and children is not about sexual harassment. It is about sexual abuse, which includes rape and molestation. Let's not confuse sexual harassment and sexual abuse. Sexual abuse is a criminal offense. When there is an allegation of sexual abuse, the police need to be called and called immediately. Because of the deceptive email to the faculty, some faculty thought they were voting "yes" on a vote of no confidence in the Board of Trustees based on MSU's failure to stop and prevent Larry Nassar's criminal behavior.

But it is actually a vote no confidence in the Board because of their appointment of Governor Engler as interim president. This is exactly what the at-large members' emails state, and I have copies of both of them. It is laughable that the one action the Board of Trustees took that is truly in MSU's best interests--namely, the appointment of an external experienced administrator with sterling character--is the one action the at-large members of The Steering Committee are upset enough about to propose a vote of no confidence. President Engler has many talents, including the financial and budgeting experience to ensure that MSU will be able to meet the legitimate claims of these brave women and girls against the University so that their healing process can progress uninterrupted. But unfortunately, the vote of no confidence that was planned for today is not about the failure of MSU to prevent rape and child molestation. Rather, it is about the appointment and process of appointment of former Governor Engler. Shame on us if we vote for this.

To avoid public embarrassment for The Steering Committee and the Faculty Senate, I make a motion to amend the agenda to place a new vote of no confidence before the faculty, and then the Faculty Senate, that is based on MSU's failure--and ultimately the Board's failure--to prevent and stop the criminal behavior of Larry Nassar. This is a vote of no confidence that I and many others will support for the right reason. It's about these girls. It's about these young women.



Vickery, cont.

The new vote of no confidence that I propose reads as follows: "We vote no confidence in the Board of Trustees of MSU due to MSU's failure--and ultimately the Board's failure--to prevent and stop the criminal behavior of Larry Nassar." I make a motion that we amend the agenda to replace the current vote of no confidence with this new vote of no confidence. It is the least we can do to show our support for the brave women and girls who suffered so horrifically at the hands of Larry Nassar.

And I ask that my comments be entered in their entirety into the minutes. Thank you.

Chairperson McCabe

Okay, so we'll, um-- What we'll do is we'll defer this to discussion of the vote of no confidence. Once we get that motion in place, then we can discuss that. Is that fair?

Hoppenstand

Yes, it is. What you can do here is have a discussion of this amended motion. But this should be deferred until the next Faculty Senate meeting next week. In terms of what's on the agenda today is what has been approved by Academic Congress.

Chairperson McCabe

So, we--

Vickery

I want to vote on the amendment to the agenda! I wanted the agenda amended to consider the new vote of no confidence that is about these women and young girls.

Hoppenstand

The process should be on this--and this is in the Bylaws [for Academic Governance]--the process should be is that you should come to The Steering Committee to propose this amendment, and then The Steering Committee would direct this to this body here, Faculty Senate, and then they would vote at that particular time. There is the opportunity to discuss your amendment right now. But this is something that is, in a sense, violates university bylaws in terms of how motion action items are processed through the university. I know sometimes it's slow and cumbersome, but it's what we have, and hopefully we can work with the Bylaws to change that in terms of a crisis situation.



- Hoppenstand, cont.** So I would invite you to come to The Steering Committee meeting and propose exactly what you say and then have The Steering Committee redirect it to the Faculty Senate for a vote at that time.
- Vickery** I don't understand why the agenda can't be amended to consider this. I understand a couple weeks ago, people came forward with an agenda, with a motion to amend the agenda.
- Hoppenstand** Yes, I know. But that violates the process of academic governance. You can bring this as a motion, but you have to bring it first to The Steering Committee and then if Steering Committee approves of this, then it comes to Faculty Senate for a vote.
- Rand Spiro** It's not a revision of the agenda, it's an amendment to a motion, which I thought is permissible.
- Vickery** And this is a friendly amendment.
- Hoppenstand** That is permissible as a friendly amendment, yes.
- Vickery** Okay.
- Anna Pegler-Gordon** It's not a friendly amendment.
- Hoppenstand** Okay.
- Vickery** Why is it not a friendly amendment?
- Various** [Crosstalk]
- Hoppenstand** Right. It's, it's an amendment to the motion and not the agenda. So, Laura?
- Chairperson McCabe** So, I mean, the one thing that we wanted to do was maintain the vote of no confidence as the way it was brought forth to the Academic Congress, in-- There are no links about what is related to the vote of no confidence. We don't have a beginning, and we don't have it linked to consequences of a vote of no confidence. So we were trying to make it as simple as possible. That-- Is there a vote of no confidence in MSU's Board or not?



- Vickery** But it-- Yes, it might be for whatever reason, but that is not what the communications to the faculty stated. The communications to the faculty stated--
- Richard Miksicek** Point of order.
- Vickery** --a reason.
- Hoppenstand** Okay.
- Chairperson McCabe** Okay. Move-- Discussion. We'll open it.
- Miksicek** The, uh-- The motion was not made in its entirety before it was seconded and voted on, so I think we are not following regular order.
- Hoppenstand** Yes.
- Miksicek** There needs to be a vote on whether or not the amendment is acceptable to the Faculty Senate.
- Hoppenstand** That is correct. Is there a second to the motion?
- Unknown** Second.
- Hoppenstand** Discussion?
- Chairperson McCabe** Okay. Yeah.
- Pegler-Gordon** Can I make a point of discussion? So, you commented upon the motion that was made for a vote of no confidence in President Simon. That was a point of discussion. We did not vote on it at that meeting. It was sent, exactly as secretary is explaining, to The Steering Committee, and then it did not get through the process of the email vote or the vote in Faculty Senate. But it, it would have followed-- That motion would've followed exactly the process that the secretary is explaining this motion would follow. It's just as a point of clarification. [Upon realizing she did not identify herself before speaking] Sorry. Anna Pegler-Gordon, James Madison College.
- Hoppenstand** Any other discussion? Or call the vote?



Robert LaDuca

Robert LaDuca, at-large member of The Steering Committee, Lyman Briggs College. What I wanted to point out is that the motion, as it will go forward today, is to vote no confidence. Vote "yes" to no confidence or vote "no" to no confidence. There is one-- Members of the Faculty Senate can vote their conscience for why they are taking that vote. We're not specifying in the vote, in the motion, any reason for it? Okay? Of course, the MSU Board has let the survivors of the Nassar case down, in my opinion, speaking as myself. That is definitely part of why I will vote no confidence today. But that motion is a simple motion. The reasons are left up to our individual consciences as faculty members and stakeholders in the MSU community. Thank you.

Hoppenstand

Which is why I recommended that in terms of your concerns--which are obviously very legitimate concerns--that this goes through the academic governance process as defined by the university bylaws, where it is presented to The Steering Committee, approved at The Steering Committee, and brought back to Faculty Senate. That is typically the process in terms of making an action item of this nature.

John Verboncoeur

I'm not going to do my main thing now.

Hoppenstand

Okay.

Verboncoeur

I have a point of order. We-- The body was asked to entertain amendments to the agenda. One was made. I would suggest that, in fact, the, the amendment to the agenda is not a proper tool for this. I think it's actually an amendment to the motion that should be made. And so I think it should be revisited when the motion comes on the floor. It's not on the floor yet.

Hoppenstand

Correct.

Verboncoeur

When the motion's on the floor, I think that that should and could be entertained without violating university process because it's an amendment to something that was an agenda item, which was properly announced.

Hoppenstand

You are correct.



Verboncoeur Thank you.

Chairperson McCabe So we can revisit this--

Hoppenstand Yes.

Chairperson McCabe --as we discuss after the motion. So, um, are there any other amendments? Yes?

Greg Swain Yeah, I'm Greg Swain. I'm a member of The Steering Committee, and I just would like to make a motion that we amend the agenda and allow the open discussion that normally takes place at the end of this meeting--move it up to the beginning of the meeting now.

Chairperson McCabe From the non-Senate members?

Swain From the non-Senate members.

Chairperson McCabe Okay.

Swain And comments that are germane to the action item today, which is the vote.

Chairperson McCabe Mm-hmm.

Unknown Can Senate members also talk, or--?

Andaluna Borcila Senate members can talk, or no?

Hoppenstand Always.

Chairperson McCabe Yes. Yes. Of course. So we have to have a second.

Various Second.

Chairperson McCabe And all in favor?

Various Aye.

Chairperson McCabe Opposed? Okay, so--

Hoppenstand And if I may make a recommendation of keeping comments to five minutes--



Chairperson McCabe Oh, yes.

Hoppenstand --so everyone might have an opportunity to speak on this issue.

Unknown Two minutes.

LaDuca Two.

Various Two minutes. Two minutes.

Chairperson McCabe Any other--

LaDuca Not five. Two minutes.

Unknown [inaudible] discuss.

Chairperson McCabe To the agenda?

Unknown No, [inaudible].

Chairperson McCabe Okay. Okay.

Hoppenstand Rob has recommended two minutes instead of five. Laura, what would your preference be?

Chairperson McCabe Three.

Various [Laughter and light applause]

Chairperson McCabe Okay. So if it's all right, we'll move forward. Okay. So the next item up is the Provost's remarks.

Provost June Youatt I will forgo remarks today.

Chairperson McCabe All right, then, my remarks. So before I begin, I also wanted to make sure that the faculty all have clickers. So, we're going to be voting by iClicker, and so all the Faculty Senate members should have an iClicker.

So, I also want to thank you for attending today's emergency Faculty Senate meeting and also thank those who have been sending comments, and that feedback's very important. The Steering Committee reads those. Sometimes it's difficult to reply to everybody, but they are being read and we incorporate those in the thinking of The Steering Committee and



McCabe, cont.

moving forward. And that the faculty voice--your voice--is very critical in the governance of higher education, and that getting this kind of input from a variety of stakeholders is very important. It allows for better decision-making. It helps institutions to make and meet their strategic goals. And so this is an important part, this voice that we have.

So, to remind you of the background of how we got here-- So, the at-large Steering Committee met with the Board on the twenty-ninth, and we had a discussion where we had provided feedback about the selection of the interim president. And it's-- We do note the process because it doesn't have to do with the selection. It has to do with-- As academic governance, we have a voice in these matters. We sometimes don't have the vote, but we want to provide input. And this is important in the outcomes that occur. So, the Board didn't listen to us. We asked them to take some time to do this selection, and they didn't listen to us. And we-- They made the selection the next day, and we found out about it in the media. So they chose without appropriate consultation from the MSU community. So The Steering Committee then spent time discussing this issue, and the at-large members made a statement to the Board of Trustees, and given the magnitude of this issue, we had sent out that email to all the Academic Congress asking if they would agree that a vote of no confidence in the Board of Trustees should be put on the Faculty Senate agenda here today.

So of the 2,776 voting faculty, 1,907 votes were received, and of those, the "yes" votes were 1,653. So this makes up 60% of the total voting faculty, which means we have to have a majority of that to move forward, and so we were able to have this special Faculty Senate meeting. Of those that voted "no," that was 7%, and 2% abstained.

So today we're devoting this entire meeting to discussion of this vote of no confidence, the motion, discussion, and vote. So I want to make clear that the vote, as we're seeing it, is on no confidence of the Board of Trustees and stands alone without additions, as we interpreted it being mandated by the Academic Congress. And we wanted to have separate the idea of,



McCabe, cont.

"If we don't have confidence in the Board of Trustees, how do we move forward?" with this. And so there is a variety of faculty views on this, ranging from changing bylaws, you know, resignation, or other consequences. And we felt this could be discussed after the vote. So there's two issues. And so with that, I think we can go ahead and move to the discussion and vote of no confidence.

And so before we do this, I'll-- This is where I'll take comments from the floor related to, specifically, the vote of no confidence in the Board. So, will-- Of those that have contacted the office?

Hoppenstand

Yeah, those who have contacted the office, and of course, the general public also have an opportunity to speak as well.

Chairperson McCabe

Okay. So we'll have them-- So, the idea is we're going to have them come forth first, then we're going to have the Faculty Senate focus members focus on the discussion of this, and then we'll move to a vote, maybe, and then we'll open up the floor for discussion after that as to ways to proceed, if it so goes through. Is that fair? Okay. Alright. So does anyone who's not a member of the Senate have comments?

Hoppenstand

Please identify your full name, too, as begin.

Glenn Stutzky

My name is Glenn Stutzky. I'm with the School of Social Work. There comes a time when what they have done is so onerous that the Board of Trustees has broken the sacred trust of governance. That time is now. The trust that has been broken with them cannot be repaired. It cannot be recovered. They must be removed. But before they resign, they must withdraw their contract from the new interim president before it becomes official this Friday. The leader that MSU desperately needs is an academic who is a healer, compassionate, and kind; one whose governing approach is transparent and nurturing. The Board's choice is none of these. We do not need a leader who will "fix us." We need a principled healer.

But here is the reality we face today. We have marched. We have protested. We have written letters. We have raised our voices and delivered our demands.



Stutzky, cont.

And not a single Board member has resigned. Not even the pain shared by hundreds of survivors of sexual abuse and assault, both past and present, under their watch, under their care, has convinced even one of them to step down. Today, if they truly had empathy and not just sympathy, the moral force of this vote would move them to leave. But they do not have empathy, and they will not leave voluntarily. We should proceed ahead with this historic vote and place the results on the record.

Then I call upon this body to ally itself with the Council of Graduate Students, the [Residence Halls Association], the College of Education, and with every other like-minded organization on campus that realizes it can no longer be business as usual to immediately call--to immediately file a recall petition with the State Board of Canvassers--that a special election be held whereby the people of the State of Michigan can remove these Board members, and they--the people of the State of Michigan, not the governor, not the interim president--can replace the Board members with better-qualified candidates. Over the last weeks, we have heard the voices of the survivors call for the resignation of the entire Board. Have we heard them yet? This is our community. This is our university. It is time to reclaim MSU.

Various

[Applause and cheers]

Rachel Alexander

Hi, my name's Rachel Alexander. I'm a junior. I am the vice president of the James Madison College Student Senate, and I promise I'm going to make this brief. But I've been hearing these thoughts that students don't care about this vote and they're against it. And I want to combat that idea that there are students that are not in favor of this vote of no confidence.

I'd like to call your attention to the vote that occurred last week between the first meeting ever of the residential bodies--the representative bodies of the residential colleges. The James Madison College Student Senate, Lyman Briggs Student Advisory Council, and Residential College in the Arts and Humanities Council got together to pass a statement regarding our dissatisfaction and open condemnation



Alexander, cont.

of the Board of Trustees and their actions and lack thereof towards students, staff, faculty and the MSU community at large. In this statement, we voiced our support for the faculty vote of no confidence as a necessary step moving forward for our university to heal, recover, and move forward.

The students do care. Conclusively, there are representative student bodies that aren't just not against this vote. They are actively advocating for and supporting this. The students care--the ones that are in this room, the ones standing outside that room, even though they can't come in, and the ones across campus. And we're imploring you to take action.

I'll end with one last thing. To those that say that this is pointless and that this vote is purely symbolic and that it has nothing or is unproductive, I'll leave you with a quote read at the residential college joint meeting that I believe is extremely pertinent to our current predicament. "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about the things that matter." - Martin Luther King, Jr. Thank you.

Various

[Applause]

Verboncoeur

John Verboncoeur. I'm a faculty in Electrical and Computer Engineering with a joint appointment in Computational Math, Science, and Engineering. I'm also the associate dean for research in the College of Engineering. However, I'm speaking on my own behalf here and not on behalf of the college. So I'm speaking as a faculty. We're bringing up some slides here.

So, um, I'm interjecting in this discussion with respect to an amendment to the motion, which I think is--we'll have some discussion about. But nevertheless, what I'd like to get across is a key point here, and that key point is we're all enraged. We all have to deal with this, and whether the vote of no confidence passes or not, remember that we have to take care of the current students and the future students, as well as the survivors. Those are all important. And that's all, you know, that's-- Our mission is to deliver a quality education. If we continue to dismantle the institution, we're going to harm that mission. So I'm not going to weigh in on whether you should vote no confidence or



Verboncoeur, cont.

not. I can assure you that I don't have confidence in the Board, but you have to decide for yourselves. Nevertheless, we shouldn't come-- We should focus our energy after this--after this vote--on what we can do to repair things, what we can do to rebuild things. So what I'd like to do is-- Next slide, please.

So what is our goal in this vote of no confidence? Well, remember, we have a lot of rage. We have a lot of repair to do with respect to the survivors. With respect to students, we have a lot to answer for. And we should do that. But we should also think about what we do after that. We can't just continue raging indefinitely. I'm very concerned at these attacks on the interim president. With respect to the interim president, it's a done deal. Think about what happens if we throw all of that out and start over again. So we're back setting ourselves back by several months to rebuilding. Is that what we really want to do? Shouldn't we want to move forward as fast as possible, do a proper search, make sure that we have some control and some say in that search, and make sure that we actually can guide the permanent president in the right direction? Those are really important things. Next slide, please.

So let's, let's focus on something that will have lasting impact. Our vote of no confidence, if that passes, will certainly do some good things in the near term, but it won't accomplish the long-term goal. And the long-term goal has to be that we design a system that we have a say in. When a future Board doesn't perform its duty, if it lacks independence, we need to be able to step in and say something. These are long-term things that I'm not going to propose a solution to today because they're incredibly complicated. But it's something that we have to make sure that our political parties nominate quality people, and we need to hold them accountable. Maybe that means shorter terms and what-not. I don't want to make this into a speech of what we should do with respect to the Board of Trustees, but what we should do, something. That's clear enough.

But before we do that, let's think about—this is okay; stay here—let's think about what we could do in terms of making the search for the new president something



Verboncoeur, cont.

that we can be proud of, something that all of our students can be proud of. And so I'm proposing a search which should include not just a briefing of these groups, but representatives of these groups in the search committee itself. Why do I propose that? As faculty, we do a lot of faculty searches. We've gotten really good at doing those faculty searches. We know the right questions to ask. We understand how academia works. The Board does not. Whether you have confidence in them or not--or maybe especially if you lack confidence in them--we need to be in the room with them to help guide them on what needs to be done, whether it's this Board or a new Board or whatever it is, we need to be in the room and guide them. If we don't do that, we will get more of the same. We will get an ill-informed decision on a president, a president who we have no say in, who we have no insight in, who they may not even ask the right questions of when they do the interview. I think that's a really crucial aspect.

And so, therefore, I propose a very-- I'm not going to read through the list, but you can see the diverse list up there on the screen of the stakeholders in the community. And by that, I define not just the university community, the broader community, the state. I propose having people who come from the economy of the state who should care a hell of a lot about this institution because this institution educates the people of this state. Our graduates stay here and work here and they build the future of this state. The parents of this state expect us to do a good job. We can't do a good job if we don't have control of our president and who is going to become president. So I think all of those stakeholders should have input, not just briefings, but input into the decision.

LaDuca

Time.

Verboncoeur

And so I would ask that this body consider an action--

Various

Time! Time!

Verboncoeur

Thank you.



Samuel Klahn

Hello, my name is Samuel Klahn. That's a little loud. I'm a junior in the James Madison College, and I have another degree in the College of Arts and Letters. I've also talked to the Honor's College and College of Osteopathic Medicine about bioethics. I just really like learning. And I said this when I spoke at my high school graduation: I've always found there to be something absolutely amazing, noble, and philanthropic about educators, about the ability to invest your entire lives, your livelihood, your careers, not into, not even necessarily into doing, although, of course, you research and you do, but also into teaching others how to do and how to do well. And that's always been something that's eluded me. I've never understood it, but I've always been able to appreciate it. And I've never thought that I've had to say to a room of educators that sexual assault isn't something that's acceptable.

And I, to some degree, don't understand some of the ramifications of this. Of course, pragmatically, I understand there are financial ramifications that happen to the university if it accepts any responsibility or liability. However, the university and the Board of Trustees can protect its revenue streams as much as possible. And if there aren't willing faculty members and students to use those money to do good work, what is the point of having all of that money?

Nextly [sic], I think that it's very important to just consider it a little bit more holistically. Again, going off Rachel Alexander's comments, I've heard people say that they believe that the student body is split on this. And my residents [as part of his job as a resident assistant]? I haven't heard anything from them. My friends? I haven't heard anything of the sort from them. The only thing that I have heard is that John Engler, regardless of his politics and of his history and of his platform, is not an educator, and he is not qualified on that alone to lead this institution. And I believe that a lot of the people I've talked to that may not be Republicans would say the same thing if we had asked former Governor Granholm to come back as well.

Various

Mm-hmm.



LaDuca

Hear, hear.

Samuel Klahn

So I really just don't see the point of contention that is here. I've-- Every educator I've ever had has inspired me. They've said various things that all go along the lines of progress, human progress, innovation. It is about pushing the peanut forward. It is about doing all of the good that you can, everywhere you can, whenever you can. Teddy Roosevelt said the same thing. He said that the best thing to do is the right thing and the worst thing to do isn't the wrong thing. The worst thing to do is nothing.

And so I, on behalf of every student that I've heard-- because I can say confidently, I've not heard a student say to the contrary--would implore you to do something rather than nothing. I know that this vote isn't perfect, and I know that there doesn't seem to be a solution in the here and now on how to fix this university and to keep us from shattering into a million little pieces. I know that there are lots of different groups that want different things to happen at different times. And I accept that. That is absolutely fine. And that's intimidating. There's a lot of work to be done.

I am not dressed in a tie, nor do I have a super well-prepared statement because I came here from class and work on a Tuesday, because, believe it or not, while all this is happening, I still have to attend your classes and do your homework.

Various

[Laughter]

Klahn

It's just-- You know? "Thank you for your understanding" is what I mean to say there. And knowing that this isn't perfect, and knowing that it's a lot of work, and that is intimidating, I think that the best time to start is months ago, and the second-best time to start is today. Thank you.

Various

[Applause]

Lisa Lapidus

Hi. Lisa Lapidus, College of Natural Science. I'm also a member of Faculty Senate. Is it okay if I make my statement?



Chairperson McCabe

Sure.

Lapidus

Okay. So I want to redirect the conversation a little bit towards what we as the Faculty Senate should be saying with our no confidence vote. I realize that there's no specific statement, but I want to, I want to focus the proposal a little bit that we need to be making a statement not just about victims, but about how it is a symptom. The scandal--the tragedy--is a symptom of a larger problem at this university, which is the gradual centralization of power that has been happening for years.

Various

[Applause]

Lapidus

President Simon was responsible for a lot of it. And it has naturally created a lack of transparency. And then that's, of course, a natural problem. But what we have on top of that is a Board of Trustees that has been complacent and compliant. And we can't let that happen as we move forward to elect a new president--to select a new president.

You know, the case in point of how the Board of Trustees have let us down is that, you know, they, they-- Maybe they could have done something to stop Nassar from that horrible abuse. But what they certainly could have done had been planning for the past seventeen months for a presidential transition. We knew this was going to come eventually, and they apparently had no plan whatsoever. And I don't believe that in the future they're going to be any less compliant or complacent. So I say that we need to be making the statement that in our vote of no confidence, we would like a board that is actually going to act as a check on a president and that we want a president who is going to devolve power back to the colleges and the departments. Thank you.

Various

[Applause]

Kevin Foley

Good afternoon. I'm Kevin Foley from the College of Human Medicine, and I'm a Faculty Senate member. I've been asked to read the comments of one of our faculty members who could not attend who is not a Faculty Senate member. And it echoes, I think, on



Foley, cont.

some of the other statements that have been made thus far.

"To the members of the Faculty Senate: I am writing to express my strong opposition to the vote of no confidence, which is being entertained at the February 13th meeting. As a faculty member at MSU for thirty-one years, as well as a graduate of our university, we have never before faced such trying times as those in which we are now embroiled. Our faculty are discredited by the behavior of an individual who hid amongst us for too long. As a result, countless lives of survivors and their families are damaged forever. As faculty, our lives are damaged as well. The time has come to work towards solutions to ensure that such heinous acts never occur again on our campus. As part of the solution, all of us as faculty play important roles in the process. This is no time for divisiveness. We must lead by example and not by criticism. If we believe that our Board of Trustees has acted improperly, the State Constitution provides us with the means as citizens to remove members through either the election or recall process. I implore the Faculty Senate to consider a resolution expressing our commitment to lead our university to a place where our students feel safe and our patients also feel protected. Thank you, and sincerely yours, Randolph L. Pierson, M.D., Professor, Department of Family Medicine, College of Human Medicine."

Thank you.

Borcila

Hello. I'm Andaluna Borcila from James Madison College. I'm on Faculty Senate. Can you hear me? Yeah. Kay. There's a problem with faculty voice. So, I read [sic] a statement, so I keep my thoughts and my affects together here so I don't appear to be irrational, because, as women, we don't want to look like we're irrational.

Various

[Scattered, overwhelmingly feminine laughter]

Borcila

We faculty have been silent for far too long. In the face of the tragedy uncovered by brave survivors who testified to their abuse and to our institution's lack of accountability, this silence became unbearable to me. Did it not become unbearable to you?



Borcila, cont.

As the abuse which spanned many years was uncovered in front of the whole nation--the world, in fact--the Board of Trustees at this university decided to close ranks around Lou Anna Simon. They offered her a raise. As the survivors stories broke our hearts, they stood firmly with Simon. Some of them made terrible comments, dug in their heels to prove their loyalty to Simon, not to our community. They positioned themselves firmly on the wrong side of history.

And then came the meeting in which they accepted Simon's resignation. I listened to the statements--in some cases, teary statements--of each of those members, one after another. In what should have been as resignation letters, in my opinion, they each acknowledged that they had failed our institution. They had been wrong. They had shown a lack of leadership. They had been tone deaf. They said they were sorry. They promised to consult academic governance and students in electing [sic] the interim president. And they did what they very well pleased, which is what they've done all along. They did not listen, and they betrayed our trust. This board is morally compromised. They have failed us.

We have the responsibility to take a stand. Our faculty representatives on The Steering Committee took a stand. In an unprecedented vote, over 86% of those who voted in Academic Congress took a stand, and they gave us a mandate. It is difficult to imagine a stronger mandate. It is our turn now. We cannot throw this mandate away.

I have heard some voices attempt to undermine the significance of this vote. They say it doesn't count, that it is all symbolic. Since when does it not count to take a stand? Since when is symbolic not important? We have a responsibility to use our voice. We have been complacent for far too long. We have a responsibility to vote no confidence. This vote has lots of consequences, and throwing away our mandate has consequences as well.

I have heard some others say that should the Board step down, we will all be headless, somehow running



Borcila, cont.

around without the ability to continue to function. So, fear should guide our decision, then? Fear disguised as pragmatism? There are a few different and quite specific things that can happen once we vote no confidence. None of them is scary. None of them is worse than having the failed leadership we have now. None of them is worse than being complacent and complicit.

Voting no confidence reclaims our voice. We can begin today to finally set a precedent and send this strong message: Any Board of this institution, as well as the upper administration of this institution, have to engage with and respect students; have to engage with and respect faculty; have to be accountable and transparent. We will hold them accountable from now on. Let's reclaim MSU. Thank you, MSU faculty, for standing up and for giving us this mandate.

Various

[Applause]

Robert Ofoli

My name is Robert Ofoli from Engineering. I want to thank our students for taking this time. I want to thank you for working through ASMSU and actually declaring the way you feel about things. You've shown leadership to your faculty. I can tell you from my point of view, we are enjoying the same leadership. So, thank you.

There are a lot of games that go on on this campus. We've called things different names. We said this is an emergency meeting. We're trying to say this is an emergency meeting. The problem is that the emergency happened quite some time ago. Either we didn't see it or we chose not to do anything.

We are faculty, we-- This institution, next to the students. Without students, you don't have a university. But along with the university, we are the faculty, and we are the ones who are supposed to provide leadership and to provide impetus for change when change is necessary. And yet many times we are very willing to just sit and say nothing. We are given tenure for exactly that purpose--to speak out. To speak out. And we take that tenure-- We take it for granted. And we see things happening around us but we don't do anything. We need to just get out. We need to get



Ofoli, cont.

out of our comfort zone. We need to become human again. We need to give a damn. And we need to stop seeing things and not reacting. We're doing a lot talking. How many times have you heard at the football games, at basketball games, or other sports games? "If you see something, say something." And we see things, and we don't see a thing because we want to protect ourselves. From what? From what? I don't know. I think we need to decrease the talking and increase the action. Because this university is running away from us.

I mean, you've probably talked to some of your colleagues. I've had lots of emails from colleagues from other universities who are wondering what the heck happened in this place. Although I respect that we're trying to protect, it's gone out like smoke out of your chimney. The rebuilding is going to be huge. We need to change the culture.

And while I support John [Verboncoeur]'s presentation, I'm very worried about the way MSU functions. You set up a search committee, and that search committee works really, really, really hard, interviews a bunch of people, and then the administrators say, "Look, don't rank order the candidates. Just give us five of them. We'll choose whom we want." What the heck do you know about the candidates? You spent thirty minutes with them. Maybe you spent an hour with them. Most administrators don't know anything about the candidates, and yet they are the final decision-maker. So even if we get involved in this search for the president, all we are going to be allowed to do is "Give me your top five." And sometimes they don't even choose from your top five. Okay? So we need to reclaim this university. We need to reclaim our role as faculty.

The Board of Trustees, they are called "Honorable this" and "Honorable that." What I can tell you is that if I found myself in the same position, I would have resigned by now. So where is the honor? How do they earn the honorable term when they are not fit to even make the right decisions on their own? So, we are faculty, we are students. We need to take this university back.



Various

[Applause]

**Vice Chairperson
Deborah Moriarty**

Deborah Moriarty, at-large member from the College of Music. Based on the mandate received to the Faculty Senate from the Academic Congress, I move to have a vote of no confidence in the Board of Trustees.

Ashley Sanders-Jackson

Can I-- Can I add a couple of comments from my college, because a bunch of people to my college asked me to read some things? And then we could do the vote.

Vice Chairperson Moriarty

We have to have a second, and then we have discussion.

Various

Second.

Hoppenstand

Discussion, then.

Chairperson McCabe

Okay. Go ahead.

Sanders-Jackson

Sorry. So, my name's Ashley Sanders-Jackson. I'm from Communication Arts and Sciences. When the possibility of a vote of no confidence came up, I sent out a survey and an opportunity for our faculty to give me input and what they thought we should do. And, boy, did they have a lot of thoughts, which I tried to summarize in one page. So, of the 53 people who responded, 81% had no confidence in our Board of Trustees. But there was a significant range in what they felt should happen.

A small number felt that President Engler was a good choice for political and economic reasons, and so the trustees made a good decision. A lot of-- Some people-- three or four--felt that the Board as a whole wasn't the problem, that only particular, members were a problem. However, if we retain the current board, the people who did agree with retaining it wanted sensitivity training, faculty governance to be more involved, and a process for them to respond to our proposal. So it's a lot like what everybody's been saying.

But most of our faculty unequivocally wanted the Board of Trustees to resign, Engler to be replaced or his term limited, and a process created to ensure that



Sanders-Jackson, cont.

faculty have a say in the process going forward. This included junior faculty who said that they were concerned that they had jeopardized their careers by coming here, [and] senior faculty who were concerned about how this could possibly happen under their watch. Faculty were concerned not only about issues of sexual assault, but a larger campus culture of disinformation, of inequality, of difficulty with, sort of, larger cultural issues. There was-- Numerous faculty were concerned about larger systemic issues about voice and who is listen to, how we make decisions about who gets say in what, which is, I think, a lot of what people in the Faculty Senate and from the public have been saying today.

One of the concerns that came up iteratively was the notion that a woman should be the president or that we should be concerned that there was a woman going forward. A number of our faculty, including at least one male faculty who had been sexually assaulted, pointed out that women don't always protect you from sexual assault, and so the notion that our new president should be a woman was problematic in many ways. I think that is in keeping with things that other people have suggested.

Our-- We have a committee on inclusion, and they asked me to read a very brief, one-paragraph statement for them: "Dear colleagues: The words "shocked" and "broken-hearted" only skim the surface and description to our reality in the last few weeks as we've heard voices dormant or dismissed by a broken system. As the newly revived ComArtSci Inclusiveness Committee, we are listening, and we are profoundly committed to everyone in our community being heard. We will no longer act as bystanders. We call on each college in the university to work with us across university lines to lead from within. Our committee represents voices from each of our units, staff, faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates." And they also suggested that we might consider having institutional meetings or other structures where committees like this throughout campus could coordinate things and do, you know, move forward in-, and sort of, in a sense, to increase inclusiveness.



Sanders-Jackson, cont.

So, the other thing that happened was that at least 10% of our faculty called for a full faculty walkout if faculty voice was not heard in a more effective fashion. I'm just, you know, I'm-- I'm an assistant professor. I don't have tenure.

Various

[Laughter]

Sanders-Jackson

I'm not actually proposing anything, but I did want to give you the information that our faculty gave me. And so, thank you.

Various

[Applause]

Vickery

I just want to make one final comment that I think it's really important that this vote of no confidence be about the women and the young girls and that we don't play politics with this. I think if that email would have gone out stating clearly that it was about what happened and what was allowed to happen on this campus and the Board's ultimate responsibility, I think you would have gotten much higher than 60%. Some of us wanted to vote for the vote of no confidence, but not for those reasons, because it makes us appear extraordinarily tone deaf and insensitive that we don't call for a vote of no confidence until the Board appoints someone we don't like with a process we weren't involved enough in. That pales in comparison to their failure with respect to what happened to the women and the girls. So I would urge us that we take a little time to get this motion right and maybe go back to the faculty and let them vote for the right reason--that what happened on this campus was unacceptable, and it's because of that we don't have confidence in the Board. Thank you.

Hoppenstand

Yes, this is something that can be done. And again, there is a process in place that this can be done, and I fully concur with your comments in terms of the importance of this decision. This is something that can be brought to The Steering Committee and then brought back to the Faculty Senate to make an official vote on that issue.

Chairperson McCabe

Alright, is--There's no other comments?

Hoppenstand

Call the question.



Various Call the question!

Chairperson McCabe Call the question? Okay.

Pegler-Gordon You still haven't explained how to use the microphone.

Hoppenstand Don't touch your clickers yet.

Various [Laughter]

Hoppenstand Do not touch your clickers yet! Okay.

Vice Chairperson Moriarty Does everyone have their power button on?

Various No!

Vice Chairperson Moriarty The bottom button.

Hoppenstand Make sure that you turn the power on at the bottom!
You need to understand—

Various [Crosstalk and clamor]

Chairperson McCabe The on/off.

Hoppenstand You need to understand that once you make a vote, you cannot change it. Okay? So think before you vote, okay? Here is the choice: A.) No confidence, B.) Confidence. We will give you five minutes to make this vote. Okay? So now that we are ready to digitally collect--

Spiro Can we have a reading of the motion please?

Unknown Can we have the motion up there? 'Cause I've heard different interpretations.

Hoppenstand Good. Excellent point. Laura--

Unknown Write the entire thing down so we know what we're voting on.

Hoppenstand Laura, as chair, will read it.

Chairperson McCabe So, the motion--

Faculty Senate

Transcript

February 13, 2018



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

- Vice Chairperson Moriarty** The motion was, "Based on"--
- Chairperson McCabe** The email sent out, which is--
- Vice Chairperson Moriarty** No.
- LaDuca** No.
- Vice Chairperson Moriarty** No. No. That's not the motion.
- Chairperson McCabe** Oh. Oh. Oh.
- Vice Chairperson Moriarty** The motion was, "Based on the mandate given to Faculty Senate by the Academic Congress," the motion was to move to a vote of no confidence.
- LaDuca** In the Board of Trustees.
- Chairperson McCabe** In the MSU Board of Trustees.
- Unknown** Listen, does it mention a reason?
- Various** No!
- Chairperson McCabe** No. It doesn't.
- Vice Chairperson Moriarty** There is no reason.
- Hoppenstand** Professor Carmichael, could you come and speak that into the--?
- Vickery** It did in the email though. It did in the email that accompanied the link.
- Unknown** That's not the motion.
- Vice Chairperson Moriarty** Let me repeat the motion. "Based on the mandate given to the Faculty Senate by the Academic Congress, I move a vote of no confidence in the Board of Trustees at MSU."
- Various** [Crosstalk] Do we vote?
- Hoppenstand** Go ahead and vote now. Five minutes.
- [Several minutes elapse]



- Chairperson McCabe** So, to clarify, there are actually 75--
- LaDuca** 70.
- Chairperson McCabe** There are 70 here, but there's 75. 70 voting faculty for here, which left five non-voting faculty.
- Hoppenstand** Five non-voting faculty, yes.
- Chairperson McCabe** And of this there's 70 that checked in, but that includes five that weren't voting. So 65 is the full number.
- Hoppenstand** All 65 voting members are here. We are closing the vote at this point, and we will show you what the results are.
- [The results are revealed: 61 voting no confidence, 4 opposed]
- LaDuca** Oh. Oh.
- Various** [Nineteen seconds of exclamations, cheering, and applause]
- Chairperson McCabe** So, the motion passes. Yeah. Do we have additional comments from the floor?
- Unknown** I have a question. What happens to this now? What do you do with this information?
- Chairperson McCabe** So what we want to do now is-- The next steps for the Faculty Senate next week will be to look at some of the points that we brought up here as far as making the changes to get faculty voice.
- Unknown** But my question is: What do you do with this information now?
- Provost Youatt** Yes, governance needs to communicate this to the Board of Trustees and the President's office.
- Sen. LaDuca** We will.
- Provost Youatt** So there needs to be a letter that goes from Faculty Senate to the Board of Trustees.



- Hoppenstand** And this will also be communicated to all MSU faculty and the President.
- Unknown** Is the timing important given Friday's meeting [of the Board of Trustees]?
- Hoppenstand** We will get it out as soon as we possibly can.
- Chairperson McCabe** Lorenzo?
- Lorenzo Santavicca** Hi. Lorenzo Santavicca, President of [the Associated Students of Michigan State University, the undergraduate student government]. I wanted to clarify where we are at as an organization on this. There's been a lot of misinformation, miscommunication from us as a body regarding this. I first want to commend the faculty for doing this.
- I'd also like to correct the fact that ASMSU was, in fact, the first governing organization to make a statement of no confidence with the administration and condemn the administration and Board of Trustees as far as its handling of sexual assault on our campus, and especially to own the case of Larry Nassar on our campus. So one--just to clarify here--is that our undergraduate student body has pushed--and in fact, the faculty members of this body would remember me for, it seemed like about a month ago now, as fast as time has been moving--we urged at that last University Council meeting for faculty to take that stand with us at that moment. And so I just wanted to add that we have been at the forefront of this, and we commend our student peers for doing that. Some of them spoke up today. We commend you for standing with us on this.
- And everyone's nuance is going to be different. But we, as an undergraduate student body government, have taken that stance, and I don't want to make that any more confusing as it is. We have took that stance to say that there is no confidence with our administration, and so we can hold them accountable going forward with the issues that our undergraduate students have pushed forward. That will still stand ASMSU. So, thank you.
- Various** [Applause]

Faculty Senate

Transcript

February 13, 2018



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

- Chairperson McCabe** Since this is a one-item agenda--
- Hoppenstand** Yes, you can call a motion to adjourn.
- Chairperson McCabe** Is there a motion to adjourn?
- Various** So moved.
- Chairperson McCabe** All in favor?
- Various** Aye.
- Chairperson McCabe** All opposed? Okay.

[The meeting adjourned at 4:21 p.m.]