

Faculty Senate

Transcript

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MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

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

Tyler Silvestri
Secretary for Academic Governance



Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake The meeting is called to order at 3:15. The first order of business is to approve the agenda by general consent. Amending the agenda at the beginning of meetings is appropriate only for those urgent and very last-minute items that could not have been submitted to the Steering Committee in advance. With that, are there any amendments to the agenda? And I need you to raise your hand using the reactions button so that I can see it in the participants list. I'm scrolling through.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri So Chairperson Kelly-Blake, the member who had intended to amend the agenda is apparently not here yet. I guess if somebody else wants to move to amend it to discuss the COVID-19 related issues we talked about, it's fine. But otherwise we'll go on ahead.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Okay. Anyone else want to amend the agenda? I am not seeing any hands, so thank you. Oh, Senator Pegler-Gordon. Yes?

Senator Anna Pegler-Gordon (JMC) I just had a question. So we were talking about the Robert's Rules of Order. Is this sort of last-minute urgent thing, is that part of Robert's Rules of Order about amending the agenda?

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Secretary?

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri No, it's part of the Bylaws for Academic Governance. Issues are presumptively routed through the Steering Committee, but if there are urgent things, or for whatever reason, it couldn't go through Steering, it specifically says that members can move to amend the agenda at every meeting.

Senator Anna Pegler-Gordon (JMC) I understand the presumption, but it doesn't mention the sort of emergency, because I do think that it, it will be important for us to discuss the current COVID situation. As a representative, or senator, representing James Madison College, we didn't get any request for agenda items for this meeting before the Steering Committee, so it may have arrived, I think, after the Steering Committee, but I think it is important for us to discuss that. And it is urgent also.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake So yes, a senator was slated to amend the agenda. That senator apparently has not yet come.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Oh, she's arrived now.



Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake She's arrived now. Okay. Thank you, Secretary. So Senator Donahue, we are taking a call to ask if there are any amendments to the agenda. Senator Donahue?

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Looks like her audio's not working.

Senator Megan Donahue (At Large) Yes. Sorry about that. I can hear me now. I turned out my microphone. Alright. I had sent the language of [crosstalk].

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Please make sure you're muted when you join the meeting. Thank you.

Senator Megan Donahue (At Large) I sent the language of my suggested discussion topic and a possible just informal polling of the senators present for responses to provide the provost in regards to the announcement of the revised policy to stop notifying casual exposed people to COVID, and a couple other COVID-related opinions that the body might have in response to recent COVID policies. So the Secretary has the language of that and some of my suggested polling items.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri So I'm sorry, I'm taking that to mean, Senator Donahue, that you're moving to add the consideration of the three questions, "Shall Faculty Senate advise provost to restore the notification of instructors who are informal contacts known COVID-19 cases? Shall Faculty Senate strongly encourage the administration to maintain full masking policy, et cetera? And shall Faculty Senate urge the administration collect uploaded copies of vaccine cards as additional evidence of vaccination?" as the new 4.3.

Senator Megan Donahue (At Large) Right. There are three things, right? And so, it was definitely triggered by the announcement of the COVID notification policy, which happened well after the Steering Committee.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri And so you're making a motion to add this to the agenda as 4.3?

Senator Megan Donahue (At Large) Yes, I am.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Okay.



Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Alright. Thank you for that. Thank you, Senator Donahue. So Senator Logan, I see your hand raised. Is this in response to the amendment put before the Senate?

Senator Sandra Logan (CAL) No, my apologies. I was going to make the proposal, but I couldn't find my hand button in time.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake So if you could lower your hand for us. Thank you. So we now have an amendment to the agenda. Our first question, is there any objection to amending the agenda as proposed? Hearing none, the agenda is amended as proposed. Thank you. Our second question, is there any objection to adopting the agenda as amended? Hearing no objection, the agenda is adopted as amended. Thank you so much, Senator Donahue for that.

Our next item of business is to approve the minutes by general consent. The minutes of the previous meeting were distributed. Is there any objection to approving the minutes as distributed? Seeing no objection, the minutes are approved as distributed.

Our next item of business will be remarks. President Stanley.

President Samuel L. Stanley Jr. Thank you so much, Chairperson Kelly-Blake, and my greetings to all the faculty senators. And I want to thank you again for your engagement in academic governance. I also want to extend a special thank you to Dr. Jennifer Johnson for leadership last year during one of the most difficult periods Michigan State University has had to face. Her commitment to the university and to the concept of shared governance and how much we can accomplish together was critical in helping us move forward. So again, Dr. Johnson, thank you. And in that spirit, I'm looking forward to working with you all this year.

I'm going to begin with a very brief update on the start of the year. I've been incredibly excited about seeing our students back on campus, as I'm sure you have as well. It's been remarkable. Our preliminary enrollment count is about 49,800 plus counting undergraduate, graduate, and graduate professional students, which is an increase over last year.

We have more than 9,000 students in the entering class. And the entering class is also one of our most diverse with more than 2,300 students of color. And for those of you who had a chance to interact with the students already, and I'm sure that's most of you in this audience, they're incredibly engaged and excited about being back on campus. I went to Spartan Spectacular, for example, and had a chance to



President Stanley, cont. see all the interest and engagement students head and just their excitement of being with their colleagues on campus was really palpable. That extended to our Convocation as well, which was, again, standing room only in the Breslin Center.

And remarkably, I looked out on the audience and—I couldn't help myself as an infectious disease doc—I scanned those thousands of people looking for people not wearing their mask. And I found one person in the audience that wasn't wearing their mask out of the thousands that were there. An anecdote perhaps, but I think again, the commitment students have had to doing the right thing overall at the university.

Another important notification is about our new STEM teaching and learning facility. And I was pleased to help open that on September 10th. This impressive facility is going to be the center for MSU STEM instruction and innovation for many years to come and Dean for Undergraduate Education Mark Largent, I think, said it very well at the grand opening. He said, "This is the best and most state-of-the-art facility for teaching stem education in the world, and it's located right here in East Lansing, Michigan at Michigan State University." And I share that impression. And I think we're going to do great things there. So I thank all of you who joined us for that.

And of course this past weekend, we did commencement ceremonies for the class of 2020, and some 2021 graduates, and it was wonderful to see graduates and their families there in person, and to have a chance to share those moments with them. For those of you who haven't seen it, and that may be a number of you. And by the way, my thanks to faculty and, and others who participated in these three ceremonies, or one, two, or three of them. And that was the speeches we had. So the speech by Dan and Jennifer Gilbert was inspiring. We will be sending that out for students and others to take a look at, we will get a link to it on the website but was remarkable series of impressions about Michigan State University and how much it's meant to them, and how much it can mean to others. Interfaced with personal stories they have, both of their sons and Dan's stroke. And so for again, if you haven't seen it, it's inspiring. And again, we'll make you proud to be a Spartan.

And then our student speaker on Sunday was remarkable and gained a standing ovation from the people there for her story about how much Michigan State has meant to her coming from abroad, coming to Michigan State University. After the tragedy of a terrorist attack, which killed her sister in a mosque where they'd gone to worship, and how much her time at Michigan State meant to her and how it helped her get past, or through, a terrible time in her life, but also to look forward



President Stanley, cont. to doing things important in the future in honor of her sister. Very, very inspirational again, and I hope you'll have a chance to see that.

So we recently reached another major milestone for the university when we announced our new strategic plan. It comes following 20 months of inclusive engagement of all segments in the MSU community. The planning effort was led by [Senior Vice President] Vennie Gore and Library Dean Joe Salem and endorsed by the Board September 10th. I urge you to review it, but in short, the plan is focused on people, the source of Michigan State University's excellence, and on student, faculty, and staff success. I hope that colleges and units will now have a framework to help align to the university's strategic planning themes. And the plan will guide academic planning and other initiatives going forward.

Bill Beekman as the new Vice President for Strategic Initiatives will help with this organizational process. But this is something that really everybody will be engaged in as they were in forming the plan. Everybody will be engaged in implementing the plan. And I look forward again to working with shared governance as we push the university forward. And again, I thank everybody who participated either as members of the Steering Committee, as people who were brought in as experts in particular areas, or those just who participated in listening sessions and gave their opinion, all of you, you own this plan, we all own this plan. And I look forward to working with you to pushing it forward.

So I want to talk now briefly about COVID-19 and our safety protocols as we start the new academic year. We've got our dashboard back, we've updated the online dashboard now to clarify case numbers and better reflect our ongoing collaboration with the County Health Department. The update provides the vaccination rate at the MSU community, students, faculty, and staff, as well as data from the university's early detection program, and residential and hospitality services, quarantine and isolation housing. It also reflects the number of COVID-19 cases reported by Ingham County Health Department at the MSU University Physician's Office. And additionally, MSU's self-reported vaccination rate has been adjusted to exclude groups not required to complete the vaccine verification form, which would be no-pay clinical appointments or employees listed as not active.

The news overall I think has been good. I think we've been doing very well overall in the number of cases. The dashboard today reports the numbers are headed in the right direction. There was a decline of approximately 30% of the number of reported cases the week of September 13th, compared to the week of September 6th. Test positivity numbers dropped from 3.27% two weeks ago to 1.95% last week. And again, these are all signs that all the measures we put in place are working and making a difference. And I'll return to that in a second, but these are very low numbers considering the number of people we have on campus overall.



President Stanley, cont. They compare very well with U of M and other schools in terms of number of cases. And I think what we're not seeing is outbreaks, and we certainly have not seen any outbreaks associated with the classroom experience and that's very important.

As was mentioned in the beginning when we talk about amendments to the agenda, for a couple of weeks at the beginning of the semester, the provost's office had notified instructors who confirmed COVID-19 cases in their classrooms. This was something that the provost was doing as a courtesy, particularly when the dashboard wasn't ready. This was not a university policy—I actually wasn't aware of it—nor a CDC recommendation. And now that the COVID-19 dashboard is available online, the provost has discontinued these notices, but importantly, and this seems to be lost in translation sometime, the university and County Health Department continue to notify people of close contact with those testing positive and to give advice for appropriate next steps as we have done all along. In other words, we'll continue our practice of doing notification and contact tracing for those who have had close contact. The kind of contact you have in classes, where people are all masked, where the majority of people, and I'll talk more about this in a second, are vaccinated, don't meet the current definitions of a close contact.

And the County Health Department, in fact, follows the same practice and actually encouraged us to not do this more of informal contact because it doesn't really serve any clear purpose. I think all of us need to continue to be under the assumption that within a classroom there's people who possibly could be infected, they could be asymptomatic, and could be infected with COVID-19. That's a strategy we all need to take and that's why being vaccinated and wearing masks during this time is the safest way to move forward. And that's been how we did research in the past, that's how we did the classrooms we did last year when we didn't have so many people vaccinated, and those method who are effective in reducing or eliminating transmission out of classrooms.

So vaccination levels make a huge difference. The dashboard today reports that student, faculty, and staff, if you take everybody, everybody who's had two doses of vaccine, and they're two weeks after their second dose, is about 87.16% of our population. Another 6.5% had had at one dose so that takes us up to about 93.6% of everyone vaccinated. And another 6.5% are not vaccinated. Faculty are actually at approximately 98% fully vaccinated. So, so that's remarkable and I congratulate faculty for hitting that mark. So we anticipate we'll hit about 93% at least fully vaccinated for our campus population by the time people complete their series. So with that high level of vaccination, as well as the precautions we've take being in terms of masking, the work we did on facilities in terms of air filtering and other improvements, all of those things, I think indicate that in person teaching with



President Stanley, cont. appropriate precautions is not a source generally of COVID-19 transmission.

Can I make an absolute assurance on that? No, I can't make absolute assurances on anything, but I think all the data that's come in is supporting of that. But we do know that in-person activity is vital on the student learning and mental wellbeing. It's important to be able to provide equitable opportunities for all, and MSU's experience, and I think the excitement of our students being back on campus back this up. So safety remains a concern. That's why we took the action of mandating vaccines. That's why we took the action of mandating masks. We believe these reliable precautionary measures allow us to safely support student success in the work with faculty and staff.

If there's more questions that come up during the discussion, I'm happy to return to this topic. And also I've asked Dave Weismantel to join us who could talk more about contact tracing and how we do it here. So I'm going to stop at this point in time. I'll have more to say at University Council later about what's happening at the university, but I ask you to continue to stay safe and I'm looking forward to a great year. Thank you.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, President Stanley. Provost Woodruff is not attending today due to a personal issue. My remarks. Good afternoon, and welcome to the first meeting of the Faculty Senate for the 2021–2022 term. Much thanks, gratitude, and appreciation to outgoing Chairperson Dr. Jennifer Johnson. I want to thank her personally for the transition that she enabled to go smoothly. And I thank her for her leadership and her mentorship.

A few items. Housekeeping reminder: make sure that you have the most up-to-date Zoom on your computer before each meeting. Doing so ensures that these working meetings are time efficient and productive. That will be key. Please make sure that you have the most up to date version of Zoom. Last year, following feedback from senators and in the interest of the most respectful meeting environment possible, we agreed to use titles in the Faculty Senate and the University Council meetings, faculty senators use "Senator and last name," students "Representative and last name," "Secretary Silvestri" or "the secretary" "Chair" or "Chairperson Kelly-Blake," administrators use your titles and last name. For example, President Stanley, Provost Woodruff, Associate Provost Largent. Be sure to rename yourselves when you join the meeting and do so now, if you have not done so.

UCAG, the University Committee for Academic Governance is expected to nominate the fifth at-large member at their meeting on Thursday, September 23rd. There are two extremely well qualified candidates being considered for the



Chairperson Kelly-Blake, cont. new deputy secretary for academic governance position. We look forward to hearing good news very soon from the secretary.

In your roles as faculty senators, I encourage you to read the university bylaws and to attend the Board of Trustees meetings. The chairperson of the Faculty Senate is also the university mace bearer. Who knew? I didn't know. As such, I was pleased to carry the mace at this weekend's graduation ceremonies. And I appreciate the fact that it is the Faculty Senate chairperson who gets to play that important role. Having said that, the mace is heavy. It is heavy, but it was an enjoyable weekend event.

So we are here to make decisions on whether to adopt or not adopt something. I will repeat that we are here to make decisions on whether to adopt or not adopt something. My role in these meetings is to protect the rights of the members and that means keeping us on track and on task. Thank you.

The next item of business is new business. The chair recognizes Senator Mechtel, the chairperson of the University Committee on Curriculum for a report. Senator Mechtel.

Senator Marci Mechtel (UCC) Oh, my video did not start. There, sorry. So from UCC at our last meeting, we approved the following program request. There were six new requests, 18 changes, and no deletions. Highlights on the new programs are Applied Behavioral Analysis and Autism Spectrum Disorder, Master of Arts that is effective fall 2021, a Criminal Justice Master of Arts effective fall 2021, an Education Policy and Social Science Graduate Specialization effective fall 2021, a Sports Leadership and Administration Graduate Certificate effective fall 2022, and finally Writing Minor effective fall 2021.

With that, we also processed 22 new course requests, 14 course changes and one deletion. And then we have the following moratoriums to report, agriculture and natural resources, education disciplinary teaching minor, UCUE, or University Committee on Undergraduate Education was consulted and provost approved and this is effective spring 2021. Applied Behavior Analysis and Special Education Graduate Certificate. Here the University Committee on Graduate Studies was consulted and provost approved and its effective summer 2021 through summer of 2022. Media and information Bachelor of arts, UCUE was consulted and provost approved. Its effective summer 2021 through spring of 2024. And finally Quantitative Biology, Dual Major PhD, UCGS was consulted and the provost approved. The extension is now effective through 2024. And we do have our chair and subs chairs for the academic year. And we presented our annual report at the June meeting. And that's my report.



Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Mechtel. The next item of business is consideration of regular faculty terminology. The chair recognizes the Secretary to give background on this item of business. Secretary.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Thanks. So the memo that I sent you as part of the agenda materials goes over it pretty in depth, at least as far as where this terminology comes up, but I got a couple questions from folks that I wanted to make sure we were all on the same page about before faculty does something about it. So to be clear, this term regular faculty has been around since at least I think the 1968 bylaws. So it's been around for a little while and what it refers to at least today refers to, in the Bylaws for Academic Governance context, all persons appointed under the rules of tenure and holding the rank of professor, associate professor, or assistant professor and all persons appointed as librarians. So tenure track faculty and librarians are regular faculty for the purposes of the Bylaws for Academic Governance.

Fixed-term faculty is that sort of non-tenure track faculty, right? That people holding the rank of professor, associate assistant, or instructor, but not appointed under the rules of tenure. And then there are other designations in the bylaws, as far as health professions faculty, which is different than regular faculty, FRIB faculty, academic specialists, there can be fixed-term academic specialists, but no matter how the individual academic specialist's employment is arranged, if they're an academic specialist, they're not regular faculty, they're an academic specialist.

So the bylaws provide different committee eligibilities, voting rights on different things. For example, fixed-term faculty and academic specialists can vote in things like the at-large member elections after three consecutive full-time years of service in a position involved in the academic activities of the university. So what we have here is a request to essentially rethink that terminology, "regular faculty." Where things start to get a little complicated and maybe why the fix for this is not as easy as it seems at first glance, is librarians. There are regular librarians and temporary librarians, the equivalent of fixed-term librarians, but all are, "persons appointed as librarians." So whether it's a regular or a temporary librarian, they are still regular faculty. So that's why we can't just quite swap "regular" for "tenure track."

So in the memo, I detailed a concern we got from an assistant dean in the Graduate School that in this particular document, "Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities," that the term is used a few times. And essentially the assistant dean doesn't like that and thinks it should be something different. A lot of other people have brought this issue up as well, that the term "regular faculty" can be alienating, or othering, or something. Other people think it's a perfectly fine term.



Secretary Silvestri, cont. What I would just emphasize is that this is very widespread. So in addition to the Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities document and the Bylaws for Academic Governance, the term “regular faculty,” which essentially means tenure-track faculty, means, or it appears in the bylaws of all but five colleges, and the five that it doesn't, it's either “tenure-stream” or “tenure-track” faculty, excuse me, “tenure-stream” or “tenure-system” faculty. And it's also throughout the policies in the Faculty Handbook. So the Steering Committee got this request, thought it was actually bigger than just the question of the Graduate School and decided to send it to Faculty Senate for advice on whether the term should be replaced. So what we're looking for here and what sort of the next steps are-- I mean, I'm happy to answer any questions just to the degree I can, and I might need to turn it over somebody else, but I'm happy to answer any questions. After that though, what we're looking for is a motion to do something. It could be a motion to have Faculty Senate recommend that it be term X instead of “regular faculty.” It could be a motion to form an ad hoc committee and have them study this issue in more depth. It really could be whatever folks want, but what we're looking for is the motion to do something or not do something. There could also be a motion to say, "Nope, Faculty Senate thinks it's fine." And that's okay too. Whatever folks think. So I guess, are there any questions for me about the scope of question?

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Senator Logan, I see your hand. You have the floor.

Senator Sandra Logan (CAL) Thank you. I do have a question. I'm still trying to-- I had several email exchanges with the secretary about this and I'm still not clear on when it's necessary to use that term. In what way does that term encompass-- In what context does that term actually use to encompass tenure-stream faculty plus librarians? How frequently does that come up? And under what circumstances? I think it would help to understand that in order to know what to do about it. Thanks.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Logan. Secretary, do you want to reply?

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Happy to. So at least on my-- I can't speak to how it's implemented and used in the affairs of, I guess, most other departments, I can say how our office uses them, which is pretty frequently. It's things like if you have more than three faculty senators in a college, one of them has to be not regular faculty, basically. Things like certain ones have to-- If



Secretary Silvestri, cont. you're a fixed-term faculty member who's only been here two years, you can't vote in the at-large member election, for example. Certain committees have, like the University Committee on Faculty Tenure, have eligibility requirements that you to be a regular faculty member to be on it in certain contexts. And yeah, so essentially what we're dealing with is voting rights and committee eligibility.

And I'm sorry, I misspoke. It's not that you have to have one over three or more representatives. It's not that you have to have one non-regular, irregular, to use the phrase that is causing the problem. It's that it has to be non-tenured. An easy way to see, is this person non-tenured though is, are they fixed-term? Right? Then we get into very complicated distinctions of the different colleges have different voting rights, and indeed even different departments can have different voting rights for regular faculty and other kinds of faculty. So it comes up pretty frequently for me. My sense is that come up pretty frequently for others too.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Secretary. Senator Donahue, you have the floor.

Senator Megan Donahue (At Large) So as a point of clarity, we're not attempting to change the meanings of words, we're changing the words. So we're not revising what regular versus non-regular, the categories. We're not changing anything about the categories, we're just changing the words for those categories. That's what's on the table?

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri That's possibly what's on the table. It's up to Faculty Senate. If Faculty Senate thinks that the whole thing is stupid and to have been asked this question about, "Well, should it be regular?" Or this is a bigger point, the distinction is bad. That causes a much bigger sort of follow-up. Right?

Senator Megan Donahue (At Large) Yeah.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri But another option might be, "Oh, okay, well, let's pick a word other than regular." Even that still requires a lot of follow-up because it's used in so many places, but it's really what does faculty sense advice on this question? Faculty Senate isn't actually in control, has editing authority over any of this.



Senator Megan Donahue (At Large) Right. So to follow on, the change of meaning would be a much, much deeper change than changing just the words used.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Yes.

Senator Megan Donahue (At Large) Oh, I guess I wanted to make that distinction because the workload would be quite different. Okay.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Donahue. President Stanley, you were next.

President Samuel L. Stanley Jr. I think something I want to know is how is this used by the administration? And how are these terms used by the administration? And I will look forward to Associate Provost Lang or others, making sure that we're not changing something that then would have impact on contracts, whatever we've done in different ways that would change meaning. So I think I'm unaware and maybe we don't use that particular term or maybe we do, but I think if an ad hoc committee is formed, I would hope consultation with our Academic HR folks would be a component of that.

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

Senator Danielle DeVoss (CAL) Thank you all. I just pasted in chat what I'd like to suggest, and unless there are any other clarifying questions, I'd like to move that an ad hoc committee consisting of three Faculty Senate members who are or have served as directors of graduate programs and three additional faculty senators be formed to study the issues from two directions, the use of "regular" in the context of graduate education, and second, the use of "regular" beyond the context of graduate education, and as President Stanley just noted, including beyond programs, units, departments, and by the administration. And I'd asked those groups to consider whether graduate faculty is an appropriate replacement term and to survey programmatic approaches to vetting graduate faculty and to report findings back to Faculty Senate by our January 18th meeting. I will also quickly say that I am strongly in favor of us considering this terminology. Irregular and non-regular faculty has always-- A past grad director has always seemed odd, off-putting, and problematic.



Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Alright. Thank you, Senator DeVoss. So we do have a motion, a point of clarification, Secretary. We have a motion. Do we need to now seek a second for that motion?

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Correct.

Senator Ken Prouty (MUS) So moved.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake So moved. Thank you. So we now have a motion and it's been seconded. Now we will move on to discussion. So, Senator Alan.

Senator Jamie Alan (CHM) Thank you, Chairperson Kelly-Blake. I appreciate the motion that's on the table. I come from CHM where most of our faculty are indeed fixed-term faculty, and the use of the term regular faculty can be quite alienating because the faculty in CHM who are not, "regular faculty," do quite a bit of the work. And I think that hearing that term, especially the faculty that do the bulk of the work, can be quite hurtful in some circumstances. Perhaps, maybe the motion might be a little bit too prescriptive, although the guidance is quite good. So thank you for making that motion. And I yield the floor.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Alan. Senator Worden.

Senator Mark Worden (EGR) Thank you. I was wondering if anybody had done, what I would call a cost benefit analysis of this to see what the tangible harm or a problem that has been created by the use of this term over a long period of time and what the time and cost commitment would be in order to make the change at the university college in department levels. Thank you.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Worden. We have a motion. We have a second of that motion. Any further discussion? We've heard people who are very much interested in moving this forward. Any with a different or alternative point of view? Senator Aronoff.

Senator Eric Aronoff (RCAH) Thank you. I mean, in general, I'd be in favor of the motion, except that there were several kind of subheadings to the motion and I'm not sure how binding the vote would be on the specifics of the resolution. And there were enough of those subheadings where I'm like, I kind of would need to see specifically what all the conditions are that were just listed as beyond just kind of an ad hoc committee to study the issue. There were several more specific



Aronoff, cont. recommendations. I guess, just as a matter of procedure, I'm kind of curious about how specific the vote would be if it went for it and how--

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Aronoff. Secretary, can you reply?

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Happy to. So the motion on the floor, complicated as it may be, is the motion on the floor. And that is to create an ad hoc committee of three faculty senators who are or have served as directors of graduate programs and three additional faculty senators study the issue in both the context of graduate education and the context beyond graduate education, as well as to consider whether graduate faculty is an appropriate replacement term, and then to survey programmatic approaches to vet graduate faculty and report back by January 18. So one option would be, there's a procedural maneuver that doesn't come up very much, but in theory, you can move to sort of consider the questions separately, which I could pull together pretty quickly, I guess. Otherwise, the motion is in the chat. And a yes vote is to adopt everything in the motion. A no vote is to not adopt everything in the motion as it's been stated.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Secretary. And it is Senior Associate Provost and Dean Jeitschko. Is that correct?

Associate Provost Thomas Jeitschko Thank you. Yes, indeed. I just wanted to briefly comment for a little bit of context. The term, just for clarity, regular faculty and how that term is used in the graduate space maps exactly into the university space. There is no other definition. There is no special definition around that concept in the graduate space. In fact, it's derivative to the way it's defined at the university level. I also would like to mention, we actually do use the term graduate faculty in some context. So if this discussion were to happen, I would appreciate if the graduate school could be engaged with the senate in order to actually make sure that we can be as constructive a partner as possible.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you. Senator Pegler-Gordon.

Senator Anna Pegler-Gordon (JMC) I would like to propose an amendment to the motion from Senator DeVoss to remove the final paragraph, to consider whether graduate faculty is an appropriate replacement term. Many faculty, including in the three undergraduate residential teaching colleges, are both



Pegler-Gordon, cont. regular and as it's currently described non-regular faculty, but our work is not focused around graduate education. We also received, in relation to this, a response from one of our faculty members that they're not in favor of a vetting process, because they had an experience at another institution that had this system and it embedded additional hierarchies and gatekeeping that they found very problematic. And perhaps particularly for undergraduate faculty in James Madison College and other residential colleges who do primarily work with undergraduate students, but also with graduate students, I think people would be concerned that they would somehow be barred from working fully with graduate students. So my amendment to the motion, and I don't know if it can be considered now or what the procedural things are, is that we should-- I like the first two paragraphs, but I would take out the last paragraph.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Do we have a second to that amended motion?

Senator Megan Donahue (At Large) I'll second. This is Megan.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you. So now the question that we are considering is, is there any objection to approving the amended motion?

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Sorry, just to clarify, the question is whether to amend the motion as stated.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Amend the motion. Thank you, Secretary.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Is there any objection to removing that third paragraph?

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Secretary. Senator DeVoss.

Senator Danielle DeVoss (CAL) I would object to removing that last paragraph, in part because-- I would hope, and I would want to talk to residential college folks about this. Folks in residential college work with grad students, and in our graduate program, they are vetted through our normal process like any other faculty. So I would need more help understanding why this is potentially problematic.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator DeVoss. Senator Wong.

Senator Willie Wong (NatSci) Hi. Oh. Sorry, can you hear me? I just [crosstalk].



Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Yes.

Senator Willie Wong (NatSci) Okay, fine. Regarding the use of tenure graduate faculty, I would like to point out that in the College of Natural Sciences, at least, tenure decisions currently includes evaluation of whether a pre-tenure faculty has successfully supervised graduate students. This to have been a problematic vetting of qualification to supervise graduate students is necessarily going to have knock on effects on issues beyond simply the language.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Wong. Any others who are in opposition to the suggested amendment, to the motion? I'm not seeing any, so Senator Pegler-Gordon.

Senator Anna Pegler-Gordon (JMC) I was just going to follow up on Senator DeVoss. Graduate faculty does not accurately describe the work that we do. And therefore, I think that it would replace one problem with another problem.

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

Senator Jack Lipton (UCAG) I put it into the chat, but in the CHM, our fixed-term faculty can mentor graduate students, they can graduate with a PhD, they teach graduate courses. And so it is not a term that would distinguish between tenure system and fixed-term faculty. So I would not support keeping that third paragraph in.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Lipton. Senator Gasteyer.

Senator Stephen Gasteyer (SSC) I think what we're unearthing is the complexity of this issue, which leads me to believe that the crux of Senator DeVoss's motion, which is that we need a committee to study this, makes a great deal of sense.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Gasteyer. Any further discussion? Secretary, if you would clarify for us again our question.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Sure. So the question now, and I'll put up a poll, is whether it's going to be-- It's my generic one, so forgive me, but it's whether to essentially amend that motion to take out the third paragraph. So a yes vote means take out the third paragraph. A no vote means do not take out the third paragraph. And if non-voting members don't vote, I'll know.



Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Secretary,

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Give it 10 more seconds.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake So the results are, should the amendment be adopted? Yes, 89%. No, 11%. So the third paragraph will be removed. Is that correct, Secretary?

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri That's right. So now we're onto discussion of the motion as amended.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Now we're onto discussion of the motion as amended. Thank you. Senator DeVoss.

Senator Danielle DeVoss (CAL) May I offer a revision to the amendment. At this point in time, I've just pasted it into the chat. It removes the third paragraph and revises the first paragraph. I move that an ad hoc committee consisting of three Faculty Senate members who are or have served as directors of graduate programs and three additional faculty senators, one of which should be a senator representing a professional school, and one of which should be a senator representing a residential college. In coordination with a representative from the graduate school, be formed to study the issue from two directions and the two bullet points remain.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri So is there a second to it, I guess?

Senator Willie Wong (NatSci) Second.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri [Crosstalk] Go ahead.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Go on, Secretary.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri I was just going to ask, is there any objection to adopting that amendment?

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Alright, I see nothing in my participants list. Seeing and hearing no objection, that's-- How do I phrase this, Secretary?



Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri So the amendment's been adopted. So now the question is, is there any objection to adopting the motion as amended now twice?

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you. Any objection to adopting the motion as amended? I am not seeing any hands raised in opposition. So seeing and hearing no opposition, the motion is approved. Is that correct, Secretary?

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Yes.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Alright. Thank you very much. Thank you, Senator DeVoss. So our next item of business is the item that was added to today's agenda, COVID-19 contact tracing and messaging. Senator Donahue, you will have the floor first.

Senator Megan Donahue (At Large) Okay. I don't have much more to add, except that I did receive some concerned emails from faculty about the lesser transparency of the notification process. And they wanted to encourage us, as faculty senators, to give a message back to the administration that whether or not we're happy with less email or whether we would like a courtesy email-- It's one thing to respond to an email that doesn't have much content. We get plenty of those every day. It's another to be told, "Well, we're not going to send you that email anymore." And so there was concern, and I thought it would be a good idea to bring this to a broader forum for discussion.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Donahue. So the Secretary has placed the questions that we are considering in the chat. So we want to make sure that our discussion and our remarks are in alignment with what's under consideration. So I think you all can see those. And are there any-- I'm trying to check my participant's list. Any other comments? Yes, Senator DeVoss?

Senator Danielle DeVoss (CAL) Sorry, everybody. I would-- If y'all don't mind, I'm going to paste in a potential resolution, which I believe addresses perhaps some of these questions, and other questions might be transported here to further fill out the resolution, "that Faculty Senate encourages Provost Woodruff and President Stanley to allow or provide faculty to change their modality temporarily in discussion with their unit administrators if they receive student self reports of being COVID-positive, that faculty receive recommendations and guidance about and are allowed to switch modalities temporarily if 20%, 30% or more of their students in class are sick, isolating, or in quarantine, and that university



DeVoss, cont. processes are in place and shared to address end of semester complaints from students who don't do as well as they planned or expected and are challenging course grades because of absences and/or isolation and/or quarantine. It's my understanding that the S/NS [satisfactory/not satisfactory] grading policy will not apply this semester, and that would be a potential way to address that third.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake So Secretary, point of clarification. So we have three questions that are being considered. Senator DeVoss has now introduced a resolution, and I'm not quite clear on how the resolution aligns with the three questions under consideration.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Sure. So the motion, really, we have on the table, it was styled as informal polling, but the only way a body expresses an opinion is essentially through resolution. So really what's on the floor right now is the question of adopting these three sort of one-sentence resolutions and by answering the questions in the affirmative. Right? So "Faculty Senate advises the provost to restore the notification to instructors," et. cetera.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Okay.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri This is essentially an amendment to the three proposed resolutions. If I understand correctly, it's saying, "I move that we consider this question rather than the other three. So that is the motion on the table, which, again, require second, et cetera.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Alright. So thank you for that, Secretary. So we need a second for the resolution put forward by Senator DeVoss. Senator Donahue.

Senator Megan Donahue (At Large) This has sort of a feel of a "yes, and" kind of resolution. It doesn't address those specific opinions or questions, but it's a "yes, and." So as long as we're moving the resolutions about a bit, I would say, make this a fourth item on that list as a "yes, and."

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Okay. So am I understanding that that is a motion to amend?

Senator Megan Donahue (At Large) Yeah.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Okay. So now we have [crosstalk]



Senator Megan Donahue (At Large) The problem with it is if we place it, then we go back. I mean, it's not really in response to, it's an addition to. So I don't think Senator DeVoss was offering to replace the question, I think she was adding to. No?

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Okay. So point of clarification, Secretary. Do we now still need a second for Senator Donahue's request?

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri We do. I think it is-- Well, really, for Senator DeVoss' request. I guess we should clarify whether Senator DeVoss was intending to replace consideration of the three questions or add a fourth question, which is, should Faculty Senate adopt what she put in the chat?

Senator Danielle DeVoss (CAL) May I address that?

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Yes, Senator DeVoss, please do.

Senator Danielle DeVoss (CAL) Thank you. I thought that offering the three-point resolution would provide us a space for discussion on actions, whereas the questions are questions and these are actions. So what I was hoping is, if this is seconded, we can maybe return to the questions and someone may want to introduce them as action-oriented bullets to the resolution. Does that make sense?

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri I'll admit, I'm not quite with you. But the question is the action Faculty Senate advises, or it's in the answer to the question. So, if the resolution we're proposing answers those questions themselves and does more, fair enough, but what we're concerned about here is what actions is Faculty Senate taking? Is it saying yes to that first question, and that second question and that third question? If you're saying, "Let's ask Faculty Senate yes or no on this resolution, instead of yes or no on those other three," then it needs a second. And that would be an amendment. If you're just proposing a different resolution, it's not actually the time for that.

Senator Danielle DeVoss (CAL) May I speak?

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Sure, Senator DeVoss.

Senator Danielle DeVoss (CAL) May I withdraw the resolution to return the conversation to the three questions?



Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri You can because it's not been seconded, so that's fine.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator DeVoss. So, Senator Lipton.

Senator Jack Lipton (UCAG) My general concern is to make sure that when we have multiple questions like this, that people may not support one or more to really be parsimonious with the sub pieces of a resolution. So that if you want to get something passed, try not to have something in there that someone might not like. So, the simpler, the better. I would just like to keep it that way. I would suggest that.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Lipton. Senator Moore.

Senator Sharlissa Moore (JMC) So, we sent the three questions to our faculty and we got a very strong yes to all three. There was one person who was ambivalent about the third one. But we really got a record amount of feedback on this from our faculty. And I'm also on our Faculty Affairs Committee. And we got a strong yes from James Madison College's Faculty Affairs Committee on all of these points as well. So, given that, I would say there's really strong support for all of these from my college. And I would recommend that we move forward in endorsing them.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Moore. Senator Prouty, you had your hand up. Did you still want to speak? Can't hear you, Senator Prouty. Can't hear you. Okay, thank you. Senator Donahue, I saw your hand, as well.

Senator Megan Donahue (At Large) It was meant to be brief. I had proposed it as three different items, like a poll of three where you could vote yes, no on each one. So, that was the logistics that I envisioned for the collection of the results.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri And, that is what we had prepared.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Okay. Thank you, Secretary. Senator DeVoss.

Senator Danielle DeVoss (CAL) I'd like to move to give Dr. Kate Birdsall, the President of the Union of Non-Tenure Track Faculty voice, to speak on this issue, please.



Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Any objection to granting voice to Dr. Kate Birdsall? Senator Horner, is that an objection to giving voice with your hand raised?

Senator Pilar Horner (SOC) Oh, no. Sorry. [crosstalk].

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Okay. That's fine. So, any objections to giving voice to Dr. Kate Birdsall? Hearing none. Dr. Birdsall, welcome and please speak.

UNTF President Kate Birdsall Thank you, Chairperson Kelly-Blake and thank you, senators, for giving me voice today. I'll begin by saying that COVID-19 and our return to campus led to impact bargaining, which went very well. And, we continue to have a good relationship with the Office of Employee Relations and Academic Human Resources. UNTF and the Graduate Employees Union, which covers our TAs, each obtained MOUs [Memoranda of Understanding] that lets us discuss modality shifts in our immediate supervisors, should there be a COVID case in a class teach. We were pleased and proud of the MOU at the time. However, we want university leadership to prioritize our community's health rather than demanding face to face classes. We understand the university's desire to return to normal, and also wish the pandemic was over, yet with the virulent virus continuing to rage in Ingham County, we prioritize and value safety first.

We are dissatisfied that from the outset, the Office of the Provost has been monitoring shifts and modality, and by reports that some deans are denying requests with that in mind. We are highly educated professionals who are capable of making good decisions, as are our directors and chairs with whom our MOU says we will make such decisions. We're disappointed by the decision that faculty will no longer be notified about quote unquote informal contact in classrooms, especially given CDC guidance that suggests that a cumulative total of 15 minutes within a 24-hour period constitutes close contact, whether masked or not, closed classrooms, the Delta variant virulence, and the disproportionately negative effect of the virus on people in communities of color. And especially because receiving such notification opened up avenues to having such the modality conversations that I described. At this time, it's unclear whether MSU and Ingham County contact tracing [inaudible] considering this particular set of CDC guidance, or whether they're asking interview questions about sustained interaction instead.

Cases in Ingham County have increased recently to 79 per day, which is a 54% increase of the average two weeks ago. The numbers of hospitalized COVID patients and deaths in the Ingham County area have also risen. According to the New York Times on September 18th, the test positivity rate in Ingham County is



Birdsall, cont. high, suggesting that cases may be under counted. I was asked by a reporter from Fox 47 News whether MSU is in fact verifying people's self-reported vaccine declarations and have not received a clear answer beyond the office of employee relations, stating that they would look into it if a problem was reported, and that lying would result in disciplinary action. Ingham County residents are 49% vaccinated. In Michigan, in the 16 to 29 age demographic, only 41% has been fully vaccinated.

Yet, according to self reports, the number is greater than 90%. These self-reported numbers are highly suspicious. We have three points here where we believe the dashboard to be inaccurate. We believe the case has to be significantly understated, given the county and state data. Students are getting testing outside of Michigan State University and are not telling the university due to the long wait time at the hotline and due to the incentive to not be officially quarantined by MSU.

We are the ones in the classroom. We are the ones fulfilling MSU's land grant mission. We are risking our lives to educate our students. And we should be told whether we have been exposed to COVID-19, especially given the CDC's definition of "close contact group proximity and duration of exposure." UNTF therefore respectfully requests the Faculty Senate, President Stanley, Provost Woodruff et al revisit the blanket decision that classes should be held face to face, and that faculty will not be notified of informal contacts with positive cases. We are at a point where the positivity rate leads the New York Times to say that we have many cases uncounted. The integrity of our statistics regarding full vaccination is in question. MSU has been unable or unwilling to effectively communicate known exposures. And our community is not safe from the highly contagious Delta variant of COVID. We request continued notifications about informal contacts and the continued ability to temporarily shift to online modality, including when students self report positive tests. We also request the clarifying communication, including the details of our memorandum of understanding be sent once more to unit administrators. Thank you.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Dr. Birdsall. Senator Juzwik.

Senator Mary Juzwik (EDUC) Thank you. I don't believe I'm muted. I want to share a central concern that I haven't heard raise, forgive me if it has been, which- I suppose this would be in support of much of what Senator Birdsall--

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake No, that's "Dr. Birdsall" as a guest.



Senator Mary Juzwik (EDUC) Dr. Birdsall. I'm so sorry. I'm trying to get the naming conventions right here. But my concern is for people in classrooms who have children under age 12, who may not yet be vaccinated. Given my understanding, which may be incorrect, and President Stanley could perhaps correct me if I'm wrong, but that the Delta variant seems to be carried by the vaccinated and un-vaccinated alike, although for less time with vaccinated persons. So, the contingent of people in classrooms, not just faculty, but students with children under 12, that I would like to speak on behalf of here is those who run the risk of becoming carriers. And I think this issue of a high number of people in the classroom having COVID being able to transmit COVID would increase the risk of that. Thank you.

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

President Samuel L. Stanley Jr. So thank you, and I really appreciate the discussion and the points that have been raised. And I may ask permission at some point for Dr. Weismantel and perhaps Dr. Largent, to speak a little bit about these issues involving request for changing courses and changing modality of courses, because I think they're closer to that issue than I am. And I might ask permission to talk in a second, but I think returned to what I said in the beginning, we're in a very different environment than the community. We're in a very different environment than places around the country. I don't have any reason to doubt generally the accuracy of our vaccine counts. I don't think counting cards, by the way, improves that. Those cards, if someone really is interested in misleading, they will get a fake card somewhere and upload it.

Those I don't think are accurate ways in which to make a difference. I know no data that says that asking people to submit a card is more effective than asking them to attest. We do have the ability to spot check, crosscheck, and certainly again with the hotlines and other ways, testings of fraud are waived or raised with us, we have the ability to check that. So I think that, to me, is not a completely important issue. I do really want to emphasize, again, the data. And the data says from universities around the country, that where people are masked and again, institutions like UFM, institutions like others that have had vaccine mandates, there does not seem to be. And even before we had higher levels of vaccinations in our classrooms with the kinds of precautions we put in, we did not have evidence for transmission of COVID-19 in the classroom environment.

Again, I don't want to ever say that couldn't happen because I can't say that, and I can never give you an absolute guarantee on anything, but it just hasn't been what



President Stanley, cont. we're seeing. The cases we're seeing are seeming to be cases in students, primarily. Although we have had some faculty and staff as well, but they seem to be acquired outside the university based on the context that we're aware of. And again, Dr. Weismantel could comment on that to more degree. There aren't classes I'm aware of where there've been multiple, large numbers of people, other than in very large camp classes where the percentages may end up with two or three people in the class based on the percentages of diseases in the community.

But I don't think we're seeing transmission here. So the question becomes then, what do we do as a campus to continue to educate in person knowing how important that is to student mental health and knowing how important it is for students to have this opportunity to be with fellow students in the classroom environment and knowing that many students learn better in these small classroom environments.

So, I think, to me, we're not asking people to take on undue risk because you as faculty and our students as a whole have done such a good job of reaching the vaccine levels that make it much safer essentially to be on this campus. And it's safer to be on this campus than it is in the community. As to the important issue that was raised about transmission from vaccinated individuals to non-vaccinated individuals, and the question at the home, that's where the mask wearing is important. That's why we went to the mask mandate. Masks again are very effective in preventing transmission. They are an added barrier here, and I think they make the difference.

And that's why we went to it because of this concern about transmission, potentially to un-vaccinated levels. Luckily, asymptomatic infection is still relatively lower for vaccinated people than it is for unvaccinated people, but it can occur. And that's why the mask mandate is in place and will stay in place as long as we think that risk is an important one. So is it now okay if I ask for a quick comment by Dave Weismantel, who's our university physician and a quick comment perhaps by Mark Largent on the teaching modalities issues.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Secretary?

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Is there any objection to that happening?

President Samuel L. Stanley Jr. Thank you. Dave, do you want to go first?



University Physician David Weismantel Sure. Quick comment. Just going to that how we are conducting the contact tracing, we've been doing it pretty much the exact same way for the last year and a half, actually talking to each individual case, talking to them about who it is that they have spent greater than 15 minutes cumulative time over 24 hours, but within six feet, not just within a room or a large room, but within six feet of another person, that's one of the phrases within that definition of close contact I just would like to point out. As President Stanley was saying, we have yet through our contact tracing throughout this year found any evidence of transmission within the classrooms. And what we did find was that at the start of the year, when we were doing the informal-- We'll call them informal. But those notifications of classrooms that there was a case of COVID-19 in that class, we were finding that many people in that class would then be calling the triage line.

And actually, even though there were instructions that there really was nothing specific to do, they were still calling, asking for specific instructions or wanting us to particularly describe which person it was so that they could assess their risk at that time, which is something that we just can't do by public health law. And so, that was not an insignificant number of people to call into the triage line with that, which, as all of us, many of us experienced, made that much more difficult at the start of the year, sorting that out from the cases and the true close contacts that needed notification and specific instructions.

Otherwise, the cases right now on campus, I can speak to this right up to the minute. We adjust these a little bit with information from our county health department that reach back a bit. So, about 200 cases, two weeks ago, about 140 cases last week, and this week already experiencing some decrease in the number of cases right now. As of the moment, there are 16 cases reported over Monday and Tuesday of this week at MSU. I expect that number to go up, of course, but that's another improvement over the prior week. And I'll remain with this and take any questions or clarification. And I think I will turn this to Dr. Largent, if that's allowed. Thank you.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Dr. Weismantel. I think we agree that both you and Dr. Largent could speak. Associate Provost Largent.

Associate Provost Mark Largent Thank you, Chairperson Kelly-Blake. And thank you for this conversation. I very much appreciate it. President Stanley and Dr. Weismantel's facts and data that they've provided about the safety of the classroom environment are really important. There's no question that we have



Associate Provost Mark Largent, cont. followed the science and the public health recommendations from the start. And we have been extraordinarily conservative leaning towards safety all the way through when we were one of the first universities to go remote in March last year, when we decided to stay largely online last fall, when we only very slowly opened in the spring. So we've followed the conservative path, really protecting individual health and public safety all the way along and the facts and data have guided us in that. But facts and data are part of what we have to do. And there are, of course, a lot of other factors and values at play in this.

So when the discussion about classroom notifications emerged, there were several issues and values at play that were confronted. And the questions that would remain on the table for us were we to begin notifying potential contacts when a case is identified, these are the kinds of questions that would need to be addressed if we wanted to do that. First, what is the actionable information from these casual reports? So if I was in a location last week and I was told yesterday that I was in the same room as someone who later tested positive, what does that tell me for my actions this week? What it should tell me is that I always wear a mask and that I watch for symptoms, which is exactly what I should be doing all the time anyway. So the actionable data, it doesn't really induce any different actions than we really ought to be doing.

An infected student in last week's class tells us nothing about the presence of students in this week's class. We clearly can't directly infer from last week to this week in that way. It's difficult for us to differentiate classrooms from other casual places. For example, we know that classrooms are safer than almost any other public space, but none of the other public spaces do this kind of casual notification. So when you go to a restaurant, you don't get told that somebody's there at the same time as you, who was not a direct contact tested positive. So in those restaurant spaces would be far more likely to be communicable spaces than a classroom would. So how do we evaluate classrooms on a fundamentally different way? The information that we would provide is inherently incomplete, which is really deeply problematic because it creates a false sense of security. That is, we don't know with absolute confidence because there are both asymptomatic cases and potentially unreported cases in classrooms that we are telling every instructor every time when there's ever a case in their classroom.

So it creates a false sense of security when you don't hear that there are cases in your classroom, which ultimately is counterproductive to keeping us safe, because ultimately what will keep us is hygienic activities. And all of us should be behaving like we all have the virus and we are all around people who have the virus. And so we need to protect ourselves through masking and other hygienic



Associate Provost Largent, cont. activities. To some degree there's a resource issue at hand because it will draw resources away from the work that will actually keep us safe, which is confirmed close contact tracing. There's an ethical issue buried in this that's really problematic. If a student comes to you and says, "I need to be gone for the next 10 days because I have a medical issue. And here's my doctor's note." And the doctor's note will say, "This student should be excused from class for the next 10 days."

It does not say that the student has COVID-19. It may be a myriad of different reasons why the student needs to be out for a medically induced reason. But if we tell you there was a student in your class yesterday, we have just outed that student to you, and the reason why it is that they need a medical absence. That's a problem. That's information we don't have the ethical basis to provide you, to provide to another person. If we were to do that, we would be out of alignment with CDC guidance, with state health guidance and the local public health officials' guidance, very much out of it. We would also be out of alignment with our peers who are not doing this either. One big concern that I have is that we worked hard last spring to engineer processes that prevented faculty members from being deputized as public health administrators and public health frontline workers, because that's not what you should be doing.

You should be serving the role as instructor, not public health enforcer. And last year, when we began having more in-person classes, there was a lot of angst and concern about faculty members having to serve, as they said, as wardens for their classroom, they didn't want to do that. And I can certainly understand why that's problematic. Masking alone is a significant enforcement expectation for faculty. And so, deputizing them as part of the contact tracing became quite problematic. There's also a large amount of discussion in the student success literature about how widespread notifications create cultures of fear and distrust between faculty and students.

And so, there's an angst about whether or not, and how you notify these kinds of things. So these are all on the table for discussion when the provost made the decision to no longer make notifications about casual contact, potentially in classrooms, and ones that we would have to figure out how we would grapple with to either mitigate or overcome if we were to restart it. Senior Associate Provost Jeitschko very much was involved in all these conversations. And so, if I can ask that he be recognized to see if what I have missed in some of that conversation.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake So thank you, Associate Provost Largent. So, what I would like to do, and we can loop back around to Dean Jeitschko-- We have several other senators waiting to be heard, so I would like to get through their



Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake, cont. comments because we're at 4:33, and we still have to get through to the work of the actual motions. So, Senator Guzzetta.

Senator Juliet Guzzetta (CAL) Thank you, Chairperson Kelly-Blake. I appreciate that. I want to say first, just I meant to write to President Stanley personally, but the sigh of relief that people felt when you did decide to require vaccines and the masks. And I read this suggestion to let the professors know what's going on in their classrooms really is just an extension of that. This is just about furthering the safety for that. And I'm a little bit confused about your earlier remarks, President Stanley, that Ingham County's recommending the close proximity doesn't warrant disclosure. And I'll share in the chat in a moment the two documents I've been looking at from Ingham County.

The one is about if you do test positive for COVID-19, the second bullet point is notify your close contacts. And then another one in order, this is from September 2nd of this year, that's specifically for education environments says, "If strict mitigation measures, including universal masking are in place--" As we're doing, "Persons who are close contacts and have maintained a distance between three and six feet can remain in school, but must be notified of the potential exposure, must wear a mask and monitor for symptoms."

So it seems like just letting professors know what's going on, we don't have to disclose personal information, who it was, but just so we can let our class know to make informed decisions. And to Senator Juzwik's point about folks that have young kids or other vulnerable people, I saw Senator Pegler-Gordon had a comment. In my class, besides the fact that I have two kids that can't be vaccinated, so there's that, I have a student who has two kids who can't be vaccinated and is expecting a third. And I feel unethical if there is somebody in my class, that small seminar who tested positive, and here's someone who's expecting a newborn in November and I can't let him know to make his own decision. So I think this idea of just letting people know really, I think, through the professors, I don't think it deputizes that someone's tested positive. This is following that order, that Ingham County order to inform the students, and then we can make collective decisions with our students and ourselves.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Guzzetta. Senator Ewoldsen.

Senator Dave Ewoldsen (ComArtSci) Yeah. I was asked again by many colleagues to talk about, again, their discomfort with what's going on. For example, we were told before we came back, that our classes would be in larger rooms, so we could do social distancing. I have a colleague right now, who's



Ewoldsen, cont. teaching a class with 31 students; the room is designed for 35. How do you do social distancing in that context? In addition, one of the students was coughing in front of the class last week, next day, or two days later calls and said, in fact, I have COVID. The professor, besides himself, knows of at least 800 other students who for 90 minutes was sitting within eight feet of that student who was coughing the entire time. So I don't understand how we can say that this is a safe environment. I also don't understand how Associate Provost Largent can say, well, we know of no cases, and yet we don't want to inform people because we don't want to give a false sense of security because we don't know everything.

You can't have it both ways. You can't say, "well, there's no cases, so everything's safe," and at the same time say, "we don't know everything that's going on." Just, by the way, the New York Times reported that the new cases in Ingham county yesterday was 270. That's what they just reported on that. On Friday, I was talking with colleagues at universities across the country. And for example, the UC Davis there they're actually contacting the public health departments to confirm that PE students have been vaccinated. Washington State is doing the same thing. I know several other universities that are doing that, not just taking students' words on whether they've been vaccinated or not. And finally, I keep getting all this stuff from the provost about how the ventilation has been improved and yet every morning---and when I ask my dean, he has no clue that anything's been done in our building---and every morning, like I've had to do for four years, when the first thing I have to do when I get into my office is clean off the debris from the ventilation that spews out every night. And I'm sorry if I don't believe I'm particularly safe because of the new ventilation system, when it spews crap on my desk every day. And so I think part of the problem is for example, with the space and the classroom, with the discussion about ventilation, there's just a lot of doubt and a lot of skepticism about whether the university really has our best interest in heart.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Ewoldsen. Senator Alan.

Senator Jamie Alan (CHM) Thank you, Chairperson Kelly-Blake. I take a little bit of issue when it is said that, well, what would you really do differently if you were to know. I think there's a lot that we could really do differently if we knew and if we could flip modalities, if I knew that there was someone in my class that tested positive for COVID-19, I would do a lot differently. I would mask at home; I would separate from my children as much as possible. I have two young children, one of them cannot even wear a mask; he's under two years old and both of them cannot be vaccinated. You know, I would switch modalities. I would go to Zoom for a few days to protect everyone. We would stay away from grandma because



Alan, cont. grandma is vaccinated, but you know, there are a lot of breakthrough cases.

We would do a lot differently. And we talk about, you have a greater exposure in restaurants. We do not go to restaurants right now. We, this is the only risk that I take coming to work. And I take this risk. It's my job, sure, but I care about my students. I want to give them an in-person learning experience. And I really do want to do that for them. I don't want to make my children sick. And I

would really hope that you are doing the best job that you can for me and my children and for everyone else on campus, because literally this is the only risk that I am taking. So I do thank you. I thank you very much for the wonderful job that you have done thus far. And thank you for hearing us today and without a yield before.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Alan. Senator Bunnell. You're muted, Senator Bunnell.

Senator Jane Bunnell (MUS) I'm going to share my screen. I hope. Am I sharing, Tyler? Ah, that's your campus right here. That is your campus with hundreds of unmasked girls. Okay. It shocked me. One of my colleagues entered that space for a rehearsal and was quite taken aback to be entering that space, after seeing that. I'm shaking kind of. All the points that have been made I think are really critical. One of the points that I've experienced is the fear my students have. I mean, faculty have fear, but when one of the tables at the dorm cafeteria had cases, my students came to me. Absolutely, they didn't know what to do. They called they were going to stay home. They're not going to come in. There's no way they can get tested and have a result quickly. We used to have something at the stadium where you could go and get the tests.

That would be pretty quick. I don't think we have that anymore, but science is one thing and I love it. And I appreciate the data, but fear is something else. And we're having to deal with the fear that the kids have, the fear the faculty have. And as the senator, just before me said, if we know things and if we see things, we would like to know that we can do other things and that there is something shown to us. When I have somebody come in and say, "I'm not going to come back," or "what do I do?" These are 18-year-olds. They don't know what to do. If they get on the hotline and have to sit for a half hour or an hour or an hour and a half, they're going to hang up. So I think there's more that we can do. And I think everybody wants us and our students to be safe, but we're looking for just something more and we have to address fear.



Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator Bunnell. And if you can stop sharing. Thank you. Is there any objection to giving University Council Representative Agarwal of ASMSU voice, the student rep? All right.
Representative Agarwal.

Representative Nikunj Agarwal (ASMSU) Thank you. Chairperson Kelly and everybody. Firstly, I'd like to start by thanking each one of you, for everything you're doing and raising concerns at this forum regarding COVID-19 and how it's been treated. I just want to give a personal student perspective that was even discussed at the University Committee on Student Affairs just last week. I think it's essential. And there are two perspectives of receiving notifications from MSU about somebody testing positive in the same class, as you were. One is anxiety about you knowing whether you have COVID-19 too. And second is good information about you being more cautious about the next steps you want to take. As a president for the International Students Association, I meet tens of students each days, and it just makes me more cautious about masking up, even in the outdoors, when I meet somebody, when I know somebody tested in my close proximity. I think that just gave us more information on how to better take care of ourselves and people around us.

And I would definitely encourage for the university to make the decision of getting that back on and running to keep the community more safe and running. In terms of people vaccinated, I definitely don't agree with people who mention that MSU is not getting data to the right, because I know that they're trying their best and we serve on different committees. We work day and night just to make sure that everybody else is safe and questioning our credibility to the point where we are false reporting is not okay because there's a lot of hard work that every administrator, faculty member, students, staff out here on this committee and everybody behind the shadows is working to make sure each one of us are safe. So I just want to put that out there and thank you to everybody serving in this committee and elsewhere, raise concerns, and how to keep each other safe.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Representative Agarwal. President Stanley.

President Samuel L. Stanley Jr. Just wanted to give Thomas Jeitschko a chance to answer some of the questions particularly about classroom space, I think is something that was raised. And I think we wanted to talk about the flexibility there that we have.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Alright, any objections? Dean Jeitschko.



Associate Provost Thomas Jeitschko Thank you very much. There's, I think two points that I'd like to make. One is perhaps as a practical matter, at least for some faculty, which is that we have unoccupied classroom space at any given time and it might be worth for some of them, if they're not comfortable in their particular surroundings to see what other classroom space is available. I sent out an email yesterday jointly with the university registrar reaching out, and you can work through your colleges through the space allocation mechanism to see what other spaces might be available.

The other thing I wanted to make sure that is aware is that the notification was not part of the contact tracing program, and that is still fully in place. That's not been abolished or anything like that. And the contracts that we have with the GEU and with the UNTF, we were pleased that both unions were happy with them and we are as well. And both the letter and the spirit of those that remain unaffected by this and that it says specifically we, when we work with the contact tracing, when something is discovered and we'll work in the context also of the local officials, that courses will be notified and we'll see what kind of adjustments should be made.

And when it comes to the aspect of working with local officials, the important thing here is that the Ingham County Health Commissioner actually is advising against the classroom notification outside of the context of contact tracing and has actually supported that we no longer do this, they find it counterproductive. And so we are actually in close collaboration and that I think was also what we had originally negotiated and was also our understanding that we made sure that we adhere to these policies.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Dean Jeitschko. Yes, President Stanley?

President Samuel L. Stanley Jr. One point to that. I do hear the concerns. I do. Again, we'll raise the question. And I know it hasn't been necessarily well-received, but I think all of us need to be doing the things that we know work. And that's mask wearing, that's making sure the individuals in our class are wearing masks, and that's getting everybody vaccinated. Those are the things we know work and are effective. And I think with those measures in mind, I think, again, what we're seeing is that we're not seeing outbreaks taking place in classes. So anecdote aside, I haven't seen data to suggest that that's happening, if that was happening. Then if we saw an outbreak in class, obviously every measure would be made in terms of contact tracing in terms of switching to a mode, if we thought that was helpful.



President Stanley, cont. But I do think the problem is there's anxiety associated with this. There's potentially exposures of people's ID associated with it. And I just am not sure, again, that it makes a difference in how you would manage. And I do accept the idea that one might change what they're doing at home, mask wearing and so on. But I would just argue, again, there's other exposures you may have in your life that put you at the same type of risk or an increased risk to think about. So I'm listening very carefully to this. I'm understanding the need, people's concern about this. And I think it's difficult, because this is something that was started and then taken away. So it takes on an added concern because of that. And I recognize that, but I do want you to know that the administration is very much committed, at least speaking for me, is very much committed to your safety. We are doing things that are very much in line with our peers across the country. We're so fortunate that we're able to take these kinds of measures. So I have colleagues and I'm sure you do, who might teach at UT Austin or might teach at University of Florida where they're not even allowed to have mask mandates and they're not allowed have vaccine bandage yet they're expected to teach in person. And that's something that would never happen at MSU while we're running it. And we've met resistance with this, as you may be aware in the legislature and so on, we're not going to let that stop us. So, I think I hope people recognize our commitment. And I think we may have a disagreement on the effectiveness of notifying and what should constitute a change in class delivery.

I think that areas where we may differ somewhat, but I think our overall commitment to people's health, I think remains very strong. So whatever the outcome of these resolutions are, I think you're making a very strong case for some of the concerns you have. And I think I appreciate the opportunity to listen to them and respond as, as best we can in ways we think would be most effective to keep people safe yet can maintain to the extent we can, our mission of trying to, of continuing in person class instruction with the concept that is not putting people at increased risk, overall.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, President Stanley. So it's 4:50. We've had quite a bit of discussion. There are three questions for us to consider. Secretary, how do you want us to proceed?

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri I'll put it up as a poll. We'll say, if it's all right with you, one minute for voting and the poll will show you three questions. All styled, "Should Faculty Senate adopt a resolution reading," and then the verb-tense-changed versions of each questions that's been posed. You



Secretary Silvestri, cont. can vote on each individually, but you're doing it all at once. One poll will go up and it goes up now.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Secretary.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri 10 seconds.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Secretary. So for question one, "Should the Faculty Senate adopt a resolution reading, Faculty Senate advises the provost to restore the notification of instructors who are informal contacts of known COVID-19 cases." Yes: 76%. No: 24%. Question two, "Should the Faculty Senate adopt a resolution reading, Faculty Senate strongly encourages the administration to maintain a full masking policy for work inside by in-person students, faculty, staff, and visitors." Yes: 93%. No: 7%. Third question, "Should the Faculty Senate adopt a resolution reading, Faculty Senate urges the administration to collect uploaded copies of COVID-19 vaccination cards as additional evidence of vaccination." Yes: 66%. No: 34%. Thank you all for participating. So our next item of business, in seven minutes is to discuss the venue for Spring Semester Faculty Senate meetings. The idea is if there is interest in perhaps trying to hold the meetings in person in the spring. I'm seeing heads shaking. So help me out, Secretary. I'm perhaps not phrasing this correctly. I know it's going to be just a discussion.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Sure. We have a poll. The question here is basically if you want me to start planning for in-person, I need to book the rooms and, I don't want to book them if there's no point, right? So the way the poll options are phrased is begin planning to hold Spring Semester '22 meetings in person by authorizing the Secretary to book space for the meetings, with a decision on modality, to be made later this semester, if of course, the circumstances change. This wouldn't bind us to doing in-person. And then the second option is commit to holding Spring Semester '22 Faculty Senate meetings remotely today.

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

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri I guess, is there any discussion before we move on?

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake I don't see any hands raised.



Senator Sandra Logan (CAL) Can I raise a point about this poll? It seems like there's no option, as many people in the chat are saying, to just say we sort of don't want, is that, I mean--

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Well, that's the second item. It says agree to just hold remotely.

Senator Anna Pegler-Gordon (JMC) I'm so sorry. I read that as commit to holding them in person. I misread it. My apologies.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake That's okay. Alright. So commit to holding Spring Semester 2022 Faculty Senate meetings remotely today, 83%, 17% for begin planning to hold in person. So we will continue to have these meetings via Zoom. And I want to ask in the last five minutes if there are any other comments from the floor.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Chairperson, if I can briefly--

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake I'm sorry, Secretary, yes.

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Thank you. It is actually a comment from the floor. I realized that although we voted to form this ad hoc committee, we didn't specify how we were going to fill it. My proposal, and feel free anyone to object to it, but my proposal would be sending out an application form essentially saying, "have you," whatever the qualification was, "are you, or have you been a graduate director?" And then just sort of a brief "why are you interested in being on this committee?" or something. If we get three and three and everything's perfect, we'll have a composition. If we don't, I can circulate it for an email, I guess, an electronic vote of that, the applicants to fill it. Does anyone have an issue with that?

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Senator Ewoldsen.

Senator Dave Ewoldsen (ComArtSci) I'm sorry, I didn't have an issue with that. I think that's great. I had a different comment from the floor. I was just getting in line.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Alright. So I think, Secretary, we are good to go with your plan. Senator Ewoldsen, your comment from the floor.



Senator Dave Ewoldsen (ComArtSci) On our agenda from the summer meeting, there were four issues at the end of it that were postponed. And as we understood at the time, or at least as I understood at the time, those were supposed to be postponed from those meeting to this meeting. How do we get those on the-- I mean, do we need to formally go through the process to get those on the agenda or should they have been on this agenda? And how do we get this to be on the next agenda?

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Secretary?

Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri Sure. Yeah. So a couple of them, I have them, they're in the minutes, but I will make sure that they're on the next agenda. The reason they aren't on this one is they're sort of brought about at Steering and we did not-- Thank you for putting those in the chat. So the first one, I can certainly, we can bring up again. The second one, I believe she sent an email to you, but I will loop back and that sort of rendered the presentation unneeded, but I can make sure that goes to you.

The third one we've sort of discussed at, at a number of meetings. We talked about it at Steering, and nothing was referred here. And the fourth one we postponed because there were still, no-- Literally the item is just DEI discussion and there wasn't any sort of actionable or even structured thing with it. And we were going to develop on Steering, but we ran way out of time and we knew this was coming. So it sort of got a pin put in it, but they will all appear on the next Steering agenda to be routed here.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Secretary. Thank you, Senator Ewoldsen. Senator Logan.

Senator Sandra Logan (CAL) Yes, thank you. I'm also wondering about a measure that we discussed and I believe voted on in May concerning bringing folks here to discuss transformative justice practices and policies. And I believe that passed as a measure and that we were going to do that at the beginning of the semester. So if not, we'll go through the process again, of getting that on the agenda and getting it in front of the Senate again. But I believe we did actually vote on that once or agree to do that.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake So thank you, Senator Logan. Secretary, do you have any record of that?



Secretary for Academic Governance Tyler Silvestri I'm looking for one. I don't see one, but Senator Logan, I will reach out to you afterward and make sure we're on the same page about that.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you. So we are at 4:59. If I'm not hearing any other comments from the floor, I would love it if we could end at 5:00 PM as scheduled. Senator LaDuca.

Senator Rob LaDuca (LBC) Yes, thank you. I put it in the chat. I've been hearing from a lot of my constituents that it is of paramount importance to restore the retirement match to pre pandemic levels. Yes, salary cuts have been reversed for many, but this is tantamount to another salary cut. And unfortunately, one that propagates forward into our retirement through the loss of compound interest, we are also lower than other Big 10 institutions in terms of salary. And this retirement match did help mitigate that somewhat in a way. I would like Faculty Senate to go on a record rather than just having a long discussion about reversal of cuts, to benefits, to specifically request an immediate restoration of the retirement match to pre-pandemic levels.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you, Senator LaDuca. We actually have a resolution that will be going to the Steering Committee for just what you described. So that is on the Steering Committee agenda.

Senator Rob LaDuca (LBC) Excellent.

Chairperson Karen Kelly-Blake Thank you. So it is 5:01. If there is no further business and no objection, the meeting is adjourned. Thank you all so very much for your time. Have a good day. Bye bye.