**Academic Senate Executive Committee Minutes**

**MONDAY, June 15, 2020**

**By Zoom**

**Approved**

***Call to Order***

Academic Senate Chairperson Susan Kalter called the meeting to order.

***Oral Communications:***

***Check in regarding coronavirus planning for fall 2020 (and spring 2021)
05.27.20.03 AAUP Guidance for Reopening Campuses***

Senator Kalter: What I was going to do, because our first communication is check in about the Coronavirus planning, I was going to ask us to go first to the faculty and students about what they’re hearing, and then go to Dr. Dietz and Dr. Murphy. So, I wonder who wants to begin with that, in terms of the faculty and students?

Senator Mainieri: I can go first, Susan, if you’d like me to.

Senator Kalter: Okay. Terrific. Thanks, Tracy.

Senator Mainieri: Things I’m hearing from the faculty are they were happy to have some clarity in terms of what the hoped for delivery model is for each of their classes so they can start planning. That they understand that decisions are not solidified yet, because things are changing so rapidly, and we’re waiting on guidance. One thing that I did hear specifically from a faculty member that they wanted me to pass along was they’re especially interested to hear about additional resources and support for student mental health, particularly given that Student Counseling Services, even before the pandemic, had long waiting times and, you know, tends to not be able to handle the demand. And so, we know that those types of services are even more crucial now and will be in the fall. And so, that was something that a faculty member wanted me to bring to this meeting to pass along as one of their primary concerns, and I also share that concern. So, those are the three, one specific thing from one faculty member, the other two are themes that I’ve heard from the faculty that I’ve spoken to over the past couple weeks.

Senator Horst: People are appreciating the town halls as more and more entities are receiving those. There’s still just general concern, not necessarily about the plan, but what’s going to happen once we’re three weeks into this plan, and just general concerns over the fall, and what’s going to happen with that. I think there’s also a desire to have, you know, the town halls are effective but they’re being run by… they’re not faculty driven discussions. So, there’s a desire to have faculty driven discussions.

Senator Nahm: I haven’t heard too much, just because, you know, I’m over here in Korea and my time zone is different. But I think in general, after we’ve kind of determined which classes in the curriculum we would teach online, and which we would try to teach face to face, and which we would try to teach as a hybrid course, I think that everyone was eager to share their thought about which courses would work best, and what we would need to adjust. I think everybody’s just wondering what the next step is, just in terms of what kind of support and what kind of resources there will be, to think about how to implement face to face teaching when the time comes. And I think there is a bit of concern about whether we have enough time to kind of, you know, make sure that all the boxes are checked for the first day of class.

Senator Evans-Winters: Good morning. So, basically, I think what’s going on in EAF is our faculty… So, I think the majority, I can’t think of one place where someone said they would do face to face. They preferred online or virtual. And most of our programs are already hybrid, so, I think as a program we’re comfortable with that method, but, of course, because we serve students from Peoria to, I think, Charleston, Illinois up to Chicago, so issues around travel is probably going to be a big issue for us, even if we brought our students to campus to say stay in hotels and things like that. So, I can’t think of not one person who wanted to be face, who was comfortable with face to face at this time.

Senator Nikolaou: A couple of questions I got was about the… so when we got the emails from the chairs, we were asked if we want to do it online, face to face, or hybrid but then there was also a comment that the classes are going to have a 30% upper limit, in terms of students that can be present. So, in the emails we were reassured that if you’re going to choose the face to face, we are going to find the classrooms so that we can have the six feet distance among the students. But then… and that was even from the College of Business and from CAST. Some faculty told me that, yes, we chose the face to face and we started preparing the class like that, but now our chairs emailed us and say that we do not have classrooms, so you need to figure out a way to either do a hybrid or split the students, on one day half of them are going to be doing face to face and half of them are going to be online, and then allocate them like that. So, that was the main question, are we going to have enough space, or should we all now just automatically move to online with a few face to face here and there.

Senator Harris: For the most part I’ve seen students just be excited that we got the official, you know, we’re going to be back on campus. So now it’s the next step, like what’s going to determine what method the student is gonna have their class whether it’s hybrid, you know, through Zoom, things like that. And then, students also want to know in terms of like extracurricular activities, what that’s going to look like because, you know, I’m pretty involved, I know a lot of students are involved, and I know it’s going to be different, but how different is kind of what I see a lot of people are looking at now.

Senator Kalter: All right. Thanks. And so, I’ll also go. So, as you all know, I hear a lot of concerns. I think I’ve heard over 100 people who have concerns. Some of my biggest concerns right now have to do with the staff. Apparently, the library is opening in two days, and I think a lot of librarians are quite concerned about having a totally open building rather than controls on that. So, I’m not understanding really why we’re doing it the way we’re doing it, when we could do things to de-densify that space. I think we already are doing some things to take out tables and stuff, but there’s apparently no plan to restrict the number of people in the building, and not really a face covering kind of enforcement mechanism that, I think, a lot of faculty/staff feel that comfortable with. And then, it’s also not clear why every single department office might need to open with every single member of that office in at the same time. So, for example, I talked to a next-door neighbor who works for a church and she said they’re being very careful at that church to bring in half the people and they’re in separate offices. So, they bring in staggered offices where they’re not next to each other, and then they clean in between, and they even have designated bathrooms, which is very interesting. So, you know, I have more, obviously, that I’ve been sending up to ya’ll (to the administrators) to bring to attention, so I’ll stop there. But that’s what I’m hearing. So, let’s go…I think we’ve got everybody who’s on Exec. So, let’s go to Dr. Dietz and then Dr. Murphy.

President Dietz: Sure. I appreciate seeing all of you this morning in this setting. I appreciate the comments, as I was looking down, I was taking notes from each of you and what you were saying this morning. Obviously, the progress report that went out last week, we’re still getting feedback on that. I think over the weekend we were up to somewhere around 100 people had taken the time to respond. I’m not… I just got those literally about 30 minutes before this Zoom call, so I’ve not gone through those yet, but certainly will, you know, the rest of today and tomorrow. I think that I want to emphasize the report that went out represented a lot of good and hard work by groups that were really trying to focus their attention on, obviously, the return in the fall. And I really think they did a terrific job, but it’s a progress report, it’s not a this is it, you know, kind of thing. We try to report on things that we wanted to do, things that we thought we could do, other things that were in the mix.

Anytime I’m interviewed via the press, particularly the written press, you have really no control over what people are gonna say, you know, after you’ve had a conversation with them. It’s a little different whenever you’re having radio interviews and so forth. But there are some things that were reported that we were putting the final touches on, like the after-Thanksgiving thing, I really never said anything like that. I said that’s something that I think is being considered. After that went out there are a lot of folks that though it was a pretty good idea, but the reaction was, well, gosh, we didn’t know you were putting the final touches on this. Well, we’re not. We’re still gathering information and so forth. So, I really want to say that, you know, the report that went out I think was pretty thorough, we’ve got a lot more work to do, and it’s a progress report. We’re going to gather information hopefully and insight through that, and through calls like today, and there’s going to be another iteration of that. But that’s kind of where we are at this time. We had a lot of people involved.

The… you know I’m sure that some people were surprised at some things, the messages that I have personally received were supportive. There was a concern, I think, and that’s one of the other pushes to try to get something out because it had been a long time, and it took the groups a long time to get a product that people could react to. And so, I think there was concern, you know, all along, what are you working on, and who are on these groups, and when are we going to hear something. So, we put that out and now we’re hearing some things and it’s a work in progress. So, I appreciate everyone’s patience and frankness with all of this, and I wish I could have a clear crystal ball. I completely understand once decisions are made by course, and you know, Jan can talk about how that process went forward, and Ani and Amy, but I think that, you know, we involved as many folks as we could to get something out the door as quickly as we could because that was the push.

I would also say that we tried to do this within the context of other public universities in the state, and I’m on the conference call with all the presidents of the other universities once a week, and while we are probably a tad behind U of I, we are probably similar to Northern and some of the other campuses are in process, but some have released portions of plans, I would expect the others that haven’t released plans at this point will do so in the next week or so. And so, that’s kind of the other context that we were kind of operating in as well, so. Again, we’re still gathering information, a lot more work needs to be done, but, you know, I wish I knew what was going to happen, even the rest of this month and July, if they can, as we move through July hopefully things will be a little more clear on a lot of things. But, you know, I think it’s important that we all listen and are nimble on this, and we can turn things around fairly quickly, but I don’t think any of us really know where all this is really going in any particular time. But let me stop there and turn to Jan, and see if you, or Ani, or Amy want to fill in some information.

Provost Murphy: Sure. Thanks so much. I’ll go through maybe a few of the comments that were just made and try to do some clarification, and then I’m going to turn it over to Ani and Amy who can talk a bit about, for example, information on classroom assignment and kind of where those things are going. But, you know, one of the good questions was, you know, additional support for students with mental health issues, and I do know that Student Affairs, and particularly Student Counseling center are very aware that they need to kind of address a number of the issues that are coming up, not just COVID related, but this is a tough time right now for students, and trying to make sure that we are trying to provide the support that students need. So, Dr. Johnson (Vice President Johnson) could probably do a better job of providing the details of that than I would. And, Larry, maybe you know a little bit, but I know they’ve talked about that, I just don’t have that in my scope, so I’m not quite as familiar.

One of the questions, Martha, you talked about town halls are not faculty driven and maybe some guidance for us on what we could do differently so that you would feel that town hall meetings are faculty driven.

Senator Horst: Well, it’s just a question of are we going to have a Faculty Caucus discussion for instance.

Provost Murphy: Oh, okay.

Senator Horst: Where the faculty are the ones setting the agenda, and the faculty are the ones who are laying out the questions.

Provost Murphy: Got it.

Senator Horst: Like I said, I think people appreciate the town halls but it’s just what’s the role of the Faculty Caucus in this?

Provost Murphy: Right. Okay.

Senator Kalter: I had written down also, Jan, about the new working group on classroom logistics, that there was too much of a pre-set agenda and not enough faculty control of that agenda.

Provost Murphy: Okay. All right. Talk a little bit about the library. So, a couple things that you mentioned, Susan, there are no plans to restrict numbers in the building, but I don’t believe that’s the case. For one thing, the library, they decided…. really the library decided to be open, we didn’t go in and mandate the library open, but they are very much… it will only be open to the Illinois State University community, so there’ll be no public access to the library over the summer. We think the numbers will be very small coming in. And really this allows the library to start to determine ways that they can control access. They felt like… it was our understanding they felt like being open helps them start to think about how they can make sure that they’re controlling access. I know they’ve got plans, they’re working today and tomorrow on cleaning processes, and how to make sure that they’ve got, kind of, procedures that will allow them to clean. I do believe that face masks are required in the library. I’ve not heard that they aren’t, and I don’t know why they wouldn’t be, because I think that face masks are required to enter any Illinois State University building right now, and I think there are signs in all the buildings, so. I wasn’t aware that they wouldn’t be required, and I can check with the Dean on that to see if that’s the case.

Senator Kalter: Can I clarify?

Provost Murphy: Yep. Sure.

Senator Kalter: That’s very similar to the other things you’ve been hearing in the town halls. It’s not about the strong recommendation (is the way it’s been put at the town halls) to wear face masks, although that is also a concern, that there’s this, sort of, strong recommendation versus required language that’s going on. But that faculty/staff, you know, in the library and outside of the library are concerned about them being the enforcers and the police about that, because they know that that’s what’s about to happen and that there are some people out in the public sphere who’ve been very aggressive about not wearing masks, and that makes the faculty/staff feel like they can be put in various kinds of danger. I also want to ask about the library whether that was a shared governance decision to open the library or if it was just a decision by the dean and the associate deans?

Dr. Hurd: As far as their process I don’t know. I don’t know that, Jan may know that, but I had the message that went out to all the faculty and staff, and it says that face coverings are required and in bold “Milner staff is not responsible to escort people from the building.” Sheri gave them a compliance script that says that if this happens here’s how you respond. So, I think she did a very nice job in getting this set up, but how all of that came about I don’t know that.

President Dietz: I might also mention, if I can interject here, that this is going to be an ongoing topic with the presidents. I had an email over the weekend from one of the presidents wanting me to put this on the agenda for the presidents again on Wednesday about… so who’s the enforcer, you know, that kind of issue, and if you require it… and my sense is that most institutions are really leaning in that direction. Some have not clarified that yet, and we’re still working on some face mask policy, but it does beg the question that if they’re required and I think most places that… and people would prefer that, then what happens if a person doesn’t wear it, and who’s responsible, and all that kind of thing. That’s going to be on the agenda specifically with the presidents and chancellors on Wednesday, so maybe we can get some clarification about what some other places are thinking. But that’s the problem with all kind of enforcement issues, legal issues, freedom of expression issues, etc, etc. So, that’s still a work in progress.

Provost Murphy: The other thing, the last thing I think you said is every single office open with everybody back, and that is not my understanding of how we’re opening back up on campus. That, actually, I think the campus is still pretty empty, and it’s a very graduated move back on to campus. Larry, do you have… I mean, that’s my understanding and that’s… we’ve got lots and lots and lots of people working from home still.

President Dietz: That’s my understanding as well.

Provost Murphy: So.

Senator Kalter: My understanding with that one is that it’s ending on August 2, and that everybody will be asked to be back unless they have an accommodation, but the CDC is recommending for universities that they try to keep as many people working from home as possible.

President Dietz: That’s another bit of a work in progress as well. I’ve got a meeting on… actually, later this afternoon and then another one on Wednesday, you know, clarifying some of that. So, but it’s still pretty empty. I’m in the office today. Jan, I think you’re in the office today. But it’s a pretty empty place around here. And so, it’s a phased approach. I need to talk to… get into more specifics, I need to talk to Janice about, you know, the specifics of what offices are open and which ones are not, but there’s not very many people on campus today, and the idea is that it would be a phased approach.

One of the things that I want to talk about it (you know, with them) is also the, you know, the role of the supervisor in all of this. I think that’s an important issue and it’s complex, I know all of you can appreciate, in that we have roughly 3,600 full time employees, we have overall about 5,000 with 16 unions that we’re working with, and so it’s a complex deal across faculty/staff/student employee, grad assistants, etc. But the philosophy was to try to do a phased approach, but I also want to explore a little more clarity on the role the supervisor has in all of this. I think that’s a critical piece. We’ve got this value of individualized attention and we’re proud of that, and working with our students, and I think we also need to understand that the individualized attention also applies to all of us. We’re also, you know, each other’s constituent, if you will. So, again, more work can be done on that topic, but it’s a phased approach, and it’s pretty empty around this side of the campus today.

Senator Kalter: Yeah. Thank you for that, Larry. I think that because I’m a supervisor I received what supervisors receive, and I think that may be potentially causing some confusion, especially because back in March we were doing a certain thing and people may be following that more than the more current CDC guidelines. And so, the phased approach by August is supposed to essentially bring all of the staff at least back, but it’s not really clear why we wouldn’t have a more blanket, if you can work from home you we should be trying to do that. Like, with advisors, for example, who I guess some of them have found that Zoom calls are actually helping with advisement, you know, and are more effective than in person. So, the original Redbird Return Plan that supervisors got implied that you do it based on your operational needs, or it said to do it on your operational needs, rather than on trying to keep as many people, sort of, out of the workplace as was possible until phase 5. And so, I think that’s where some of the, sort of, individual supervisors may be making certain choices that may not be best for the whole, but it’s hard to tell, because I don’t know how many supervisors there are, but I think it’s hundreds probably.

President Dietz: Sure. Well, yeah, it would be. Okay.

Provost Murphy: So, I could turn it over if this is the right time, if this makes sense, to have Amy and Ani talk a little bit about the Academic Continuity, and I know some of the questions and comments were about classrooms, but this is up to you, if this is the time you’d want that now, that’d be great, or we can wait.

Senator Kalter: We also have that on the Faculty Caucus agenda, but we can do some of that here while everybody’s here.

Provost Murphy: Sure. Okay. I’ll turn it over to either Ani or Amy, you want to talk a little bit about some of the, kind of, where we’re at about classroom modality assignments and support, and professional development, those kinds of things.

Dr. Yazedjian: Sure.

Dr. Hurd: We’ll tag team this one. Where we are with the classroom, we read what other universities are doing, and we were initially following what U of I was doing with the 40 square feet, and we started looking at some rooms. We started with Turner, and we were going to move into McCormick just to see what was going on because they have very different spaces in those buildings. And we found that following the 40 square feet was not gonna… it’s not really gonna work for us. So, what we came up with is Facilities… they’re going to have to go into every room, one-by-one, and do measuring, look to see how the furniture is set up. We have diagrams of that furniture, but sometimes it’s not always accurate, there are other cabinets put in there. Sometimes desks can’t be moved because of the way that things are wired. So, every room is going to be different. For example, there’s a room with drafting tables in FCS, I think it holds 23, with the six-foot social distancing, that takes us down to 20, that’s great, but there are also rooms that have fixed desks and things like that, so we go from 85 down to 15. So, they’re going to have to go room by room to figure out what this is going to look like. They’re hoping too, that over in Stevenson that there’ll be several rooms that are all the same size so they can move a little bit faster. College of Business, they started doing their own, and so they met with Facilities to make sure that everyone was all on the same page. So, they’re hoping to have that done by July 1. And so, then we can talk with chairs and directors, because chairs and directors control most of the rooms on campus. There are about 33 rooms that are larger, that are controlled by the Registrar’s office, so we’ll keep an eye on those and figure out how we’re going to deal with that. Martha, do you have a question?

Senator Horst: Oh, yeah. I just wanted to comment that one thing the School of Music is talking about is our dilapidated air filtration in Centennial East, i.e. it’s from the 50s. So, I hope that as they’re doing these assessments of the rooms, they’re considering the ventilation as well.

Dr. Hurd: Okay.

Dr. Yazedjian: The Facilities folks have been working on that, that’s not really part of our group, although we do continue to communicate to them because it does come up in our town halls. So, I know that they are taking some steps with the filters and the ventilation. And then I also know that they (Sara Semonis) have been working with facilities folks to actually get them over to the buildings. I’m not sure if that’s happened yet, but we’ve had some meetings specifically with CFA folks, and Facilities, and with us as well. So, I think that is something that they’re looking into. I don’t know what they can do about it, but they are taking it into consideration.

Senator Horst: New building. Yeah.

Senator Kalter: There is a comment in the progress report about those filters that says something about “where possible.” And I think that the campus, you know, the employees and students should have some transparency about where it’s not possible to change out from a 10% replacement to a 40%, and also what the standard is for a really healthy building. So, was 10% air exchange rate really bad, or was that the standard and they’re upping it? So, if people had some transparency about when they walk into a building are those filters, you know, what is the filtration in the building? I think that would be somewhat… I don’t know if I want to use the word comforting, but it would probably be a good idea for people to know what they’re getting when they walk in. Ani and Amy, did you have other things that you wanted to share with us?

Dr. Yazedjian: Well, I just wanted to say one thing, Susan, actually going back to the faculty logistics committee, the Classroom Logistics Committee, and, you know, we’ve only met once, and really part of the reason that we did put those two options (the face coverings and the Thanksgiving option) on the agenda for the discussion was because those were the things we’ve been hearing a lot of. And the face coverings group is in the middle of, you know, looking at fall and making their recommendations. And then, the cabinet has asked for a recommendation for Thanksgiving, so that’s why we put that on there. But I think, hopefully, you also saw that’s why we put the homework, you know, because we do want to hear what the faculty issues are. And so, we asked what the three primary concerns that people have, three questions about communication, but then also focusing on three areas of things we did well in the spring so that we can continue to capitalize on our strengths. So, that’s how we really envision that faculty input coming in. We had people volunteering for that committee up until the day before, so we do certainly hope to have the faculty on that advisory group providing those suggestions for things we discuss.

Senator Kalter: Thanks. Yeah, I think my sense, and I think maybe Martha’s sense was that faculty and staff want to be more involved in setting the agendas, rather than having the agendas set before the meeting. And so, appreciate that, sort of, you know, if you can switch that around a little bit and have it… I saw actually over the weekend Villanova, I think it was, had… apparently they put out a full campus survey about, you know, what things do you need, which is a little bit different from a progress report, right, because that’s sort of responding to things that have already happened. So, you know, finding ways to get as much input as possible, and then have that set the agenda. But I understood why you were doing, you know, those two things, personally I understood that, but I think the people in the group might not have… they might have wanted to set the agenda more.

Dr. Yazedjian: Sure. A couple of other things that I would add is that the technology group, we do have a technology sub-group, and they are gonna be ready to send an email to the faculty that is specific to technology needs, because they have some things that they’ve already worked on that are about increasing the number of document cameras in classrooms, looking at microphones, looking at webcams. And some of the things that they’ve already done are based on feedback that we’ve heard from the town halls, but then they’re going to be sending a survey that’s very specific to each individual faculty’s individual needs for classrooms, and I looked that over this weekend, so that’ll be coming out.

And then I think it’s going back to Dimitrios’ point about the classrooms and the messaging regarding the 30% and then potentially changing. You know, I think Amy has talked a little bit about some of the challenges we’ve run into as we look at the space, so while facilities planning is doing their work, and we’ve had several conversations with a group from Facilities, while they’re doing their work about the specific classrooms we are going to be asking department chairs and school directors to go back to the faculty. Now that we have the course modalities about online, face-to-face, and hybrid we’re going to ask for the face-to-face classes and the hybrid classes what is the true max, so the chairs and directors are going to work with the faculty to identify the true maxes in each class. Then for hybrid, what is hybrid going to look like? Is it a faculty member that is going to meet with their students once a month, but they were envisioning that they would bring the whole class together, or is it that they’re going to teach half their class on Tuesday, half their class on Thursday? So, we’re going to ask for a little bit more information from faculty about how they were envisioning that. We hope to do that over the next two weeks as well, and then bring all that together because if we know that, for example, a faculty member wanted to meet with their classes every Tuesday and Thursday, you know, half the class on Tuesday, half the class on Thursday, then we’re gonna have to go and see what we find from facilities to see if we can map out those classroom spaces. So, there may be some changes, but I would say now… and I recognize as a faculty member, I mean, I know I’d want to know this in order to plan, but a little bit more time so that we can plan more intentionally, you know, I think will benefit everybody. Right. Because otherwise we can start making some changes now, which then creates other changes that have to be made down the road, but I think waiting another week or two so that we have as much data as possible would hopefully help everybody.

Provost Murphy: We also, the other things too, is with the town halls we have, for example, I mean, we’ve probably done 15 or 16 of them, three or four of them have been with chairs or directors, but the rest are all primarily attended by faculty, and we do capture all those questions. And those are giving us a sense too, so, thinking about the logistics group grabbing on to the issue of face masks to begin with, that’s because without exception we hear that over and over again in the questions that we’re getting from faculty and know that that’s an issue we have got to get settled in the next week or two. I mean, we just have to be able to provide that assurance. So, you know that’s another way, we really are getting a pretty good sense of what are some recurring themes of questions that we’re getting. You know, safety in the classroom is a huge issue for faculty, and those are the areas we’ve really got to start to nail down, and be able to provide some specifics back to those folks who are going to be doing any of the hybrid or face-to-face teaching. So, we do kind of capture those questions too, and think about those.

Senator Harris: I was just wondering, I know there’s like a lot on the back end with facilities and faculty, but when are students looking to get their final assignments on how their class is going to be given?

Provost Murphy: And that’s a great question, because, Lauren, we absolutely do let… will need to let students know what is their schedule gonna look like, which classes could be online. So, maybe, Amy, kind of go back to the timing of that. That’s a great question.

Dr. Hurd: Right now, we have all of the courses based on what the chairs, the directors, and the faculty have requested. So, the schedule that you have right now is quite… I anticipate it will be fairly close. We may have to flip some more classes based on space, and that’s going to be a moving target depending on when we get the space, when we get the space outlined, how it’s going July 1, and then getting some classes moved around. We’re hoping that if at all possible, to keep all those classes in the same time slot, but that might not be 100% accurate. We may have to move some classes to maybe later in the day, because we have less traffic there in the day, but we’re hoping to have a pretty good idea what your schedules will look like right around July 1.

Provost Murphy: And then, how would a student access that? Will there be an active message out to students to tell them what their… you know, that this is what it looks like, or a message out to say this is a good time to check on Campus Solutions, or. I mean, how would a student know what that schedule will look like?

Dr. Hurd: I mean, we would need to communicate with the students, and send out another message once we know that, but we really… I anticipate still making changes throughout most of the summer, especially as faculty if they have reoccurring health issues, and things like that, that we may need to make some changes. We put a message on MY, so when students click on, we’re saying this is a work in progress, keep checking back.

Provost Murphy: But at some point, you know, I feel like we need to message out to students to say, “hey, this would be a good time to check on MY to see what your schedule looks like,” and, you know, some kind of active messaging out to students so that they know that this would be a good time to look.

Dr. Hurd: I think we need a message to students to tell them what hybrid is.

Provost Murphy: Yeah.

Senator Kalter: I was just gonna say that, Amy, that one of the things that I’m noticing in my department, and I think in other departments probably is that different professors and instructors have different definitions of what they mean by online, and so it would help the students and faculty, I think, for there to be two questions on the all faculty surveys that you’re gonna do through the chairs, one is are you doing it synchronous or asynchronous, and the other is are you doing Zoom or not Zoom. And when they say, like when I say synchronous, what I mean is I’m going to do Zoom but I’m also going to have the asynchronous recording of the class session on my office 365 channel. So, it will actually be synchronous and asynchronous at the same time. But I’m not going to be doing, like the… I don’t have to do the “extra work” of asynchronous because the recording does it automatically for me, right. So, sort of nailing down for the students and the faculty, exactly what do you mean by the texture of your courses? That’s going to help a lot, I think.

Senator Mainieri: Just to clarify, because I had a couple of our students ask me, and then I was at Ace Hardware and the cashier asked me, so, like right now my classes, my KNR 171 classes have been assigned as hybrid. So, the students who are registered for that class, when they look in their MY right now, does it say hybrid since those assignments have been made?

Dr. Hurd: It does.

Senator Mainieri: Okay.

Dr. Hurd. Yeah.

Senator Mainieri: Okay. I just wanted to clarify that because I’ve had students say, you know, where do I find this, how do I know, I heard that decisions were made. So, that’s helpful for me to know.

Dr. Hurd: Yeah. The fastest way, because if they just look at MY they have to click a little bit into it to get to it. Their best way is to go through course finder.

Senator Mainieri: Yeah.

Dr. Hurd: Because they see it right there.

Senator Mainieri: Okay. Thank you.

Dr. Hurd: It was buried but then we fixed it.

Dr. Yazedjian: And as part of our messaging, those are great points, Susan. So, those are the questions that we’re going to be asking to get that information from faculty and then reiterating the point that if somebody is doing synchronous (and we have sent messaging about this, but we’ll continue to do that) if a faculty member is gonna use synchronous course meetings, they have to do it during the scheduled original time of the course, both for hybrid, for online, for any of those, because students have other courses that they’re taking as well.

Senator Kalter: I think it would also be helpful to say also, we’re not in spring anymore, so the students should make the best effort that they possibly can to not schedule things during their scheduled class as well, right.

Dr. Hurd: Yep.

Senator Kalter: Because that puts a ton of work on the faculty members and that means stress for the whole class because they’re trying to scramble to do their childcare and their elder care and that kind of thing.

Dr. Yazedjian: Yeah, sorry, if I can interrupt. That brings up another point or another group of folks that we’re going to be bringing together is looking at the question of student absences. So, we have met with the Dean of Students to talk about what absences would look like for those who are confirmed positive, or who have been told to quarantine, and in many ways that’s from the student’s side, from the decision side, that’s the easiest one, right, because the student has some documentation, they would send it to Dean of Students, the Dean of Students sends it to the faculty that is excused. Obviously, there are the challenges of then the student is not in the class, right, but then the other group that we have is really looking at all the rest of those student absences, you know. If a student is not feeling well and they stay home. What are the implications for that? How do they do that? How many days? How do they work with the professors? So, we’re going to have… Diane Zosky’s gonna be heading up that group with a couple of department chairs, a couple faculty from our faculty logistics group, and then going back, our goal is that the chairs and directors will go back to the faculty and get the concerns that are unique to their particular area. You know, what are the concerns with attendance and working with students? So, that is another group that’s gonna be working, and then we’ll provide recommendation and guidance to faculty.

Senator Kalter: So, I want to now call attention to the fact that we’ve got several other things on our agenda and we’re at ten to eleven right now. For Kee-Yoon that’s ten to one in the morning. And so, we have a subject on here about activating a faculty staff ad hoc committee to look at the financial situation throughout the next year. An item about when and whether there should be either Academic Senate or Faculty Caucus representation on the Emergency Operations Team. The Panel of Ten search, I think we should actually, even though David has been sort of on the line because of that, I think we should put that one off. I apologize for the title mix up, that was my fault. I absentmindedly took something from a title from an email and it was the AVP thing rather than the Director of International Pathways, but because we don’t have a job description I think we ought to probably defer that discussion until the July Exec meeting at the earliest, because Dr. Tarhule will be involved, I’m sure, in that. And then we’ve got the check in regarding the Engineering programs, and the Athletics Council question, which actually that one can also wait, I think, it’s not an urgent one. So, is there anything else we need to say about coronavirus planning for the fall, before we talk about the budget stuff, and the financial stuff?

Dr. Yazedjian: I was just going to say if there isn’t, I have an 11:00 meeting, so, I might jump off.

Senator Kalter: Okay.

Dr. Yazedjian: No questions?

Mr. Kosberg: I do have a question, but…

Senator Kalter: So, Ethan, I did indicate that I’m a little bit concerned about having people on the Exec part of SGA be part of the meeting. But go ahead and ask your question.

Mr. Kosberg: Okay. It just pertains to the dorms, because I’m just really concerned. Like a student… in my head, as soon as one student in the dorms gets it then you’ve got to count on at least 10-15 other students getting it, just from the amount of contact that goes into living in the dorms. Like, just to get into Hewitt Hall you have to open four different doors, you have to swipe your card twice. If you’re going to get on an elevator, you have to touch that button. If you’re going to open the stairs, like, you’re going to touch the railings. I just have major concerns for students going back into dorms right now.

Senator Kalter: And I think those are echoed by a very large number of the faculty, and some of the town halls (I think, I think this where I heard it but it may be somewhere else) we’ve been hearing that there may not be contact tracing through the classrooms. That the dorms were not able to be de-densified to the point of singles (there are three people in a quadruple). And so that contract tracing and the testing is a really big concern given that’s one of the, sort of, the conditions of moving into Phase 4 for the state was supposed to be 90% ability to contact trace, but it doesn’t look as though it’s moving very quickly in that direction.

Mr. Kosberg: Okay. Yeah. I mean, I’m just very concerned by that.

Senator Kalter: Yeah.

President Dietz: Ethan, if I could just say something. That’s something that I know Housing is working on, and, again, there’ll be more information forthcoming about that, as well as the testing and the tracing piece.

Mr. Kosberg: Cool.

President Dietz: I also have a time limit. I’ve got a legislative call coming in at 11:00, so can I weigh in just briefly on a couple of these items and then I’m going to have to hop off here.

Senator Kalter: Yeah. Thank you.

President Dietz: In terms of the, you know, the financial situation going into the fall semester and during 2021, the best news that we’ve heard in a long time is that the legislature has passed, and the Governor just signed recently the flat budget for 2020-2021. The Governor will also reserve the right to rescind some of that budget at a given point in time and that may happen, but I know this Governor doesn’t want to do that. Anyway, I know having a flat budget going into this next year was really terrific news for us because we thought that that might be reduced anywhere between 20-30%. So, that’s really terrific.

Enrollment is another major piece of the budget obviously. The deposits are coming in better than they have previously. We still anticipate that we’ll be down some in the fall, but that’s a moving target. But at one time I’d talked to the Vice Presidents and they had talked to financial officers about a possible budget reduction planning process of 10-20% which is still where some of the other institutions are, but some of the other institutions have had major enrollment problems, really, prior to the pandemic. I feel good enough, I guess, about the flat budget, and about us making some progress, that I’ve reduced those numbers from 10-20% to a 5-10% budget reduction planning scenario. So, we’re going to send out a budget letter, probably latter part of this week with some more specifics in it. So, I think that may answer some questions that are brought up about this. But again, that’s going to be a work in progress as well. I will say that as with any budget planning process that I’ve been involved with since I’ve been President, even during the times where we didn’t have a budget in 2015 and 2016, that we didn’t have any furloughs and we didn’t have any layoffs, and one of the guiding principles of the progress report is that we want to try to continue to maintain employment for as many people as possible. So, our goal would be to try to avoid layoffs and furloughs for this, you know, to get us through this current year as well. So, but having said that, I think that if we don’t have a plan, we’re foolish to not have a plan. So, that’s where the 5% and 10% is coming from. I will also say though that in 2015 and 2016 one of the other priorities that we had is that we wanted to the extent that we could to protect the academic enterprise and all the academic programs, and while there was about 120 people that retired, we still didn’t have layoffs or furloughs but we did have a number of people that left the institution and retired, and of the number that we didn’t fill they were all staff, and that would be our highest priority is to maintain, you know, the faculty lines, even during this 5% and 10%, even if it came to a reduction situation where we had to do something. So, you know, hopefully we’ll have more information coming out this week on that. So, perhaps, I guess, my recommendation is that, you know, if you want to do that fine, but maybe some additional information will help inform folks, and you might want to see if you want to put that off for another meeting of this group to digest what should be coming out latter part of this week.

Senator Kalter: I think what I’m planning, what I want to recommend, Larry, to this group and to the Senate is to have a committee that looks at this all year that would have five faculty Senators, a student, a civil service representative, an AP representative, and the Provost, and Dan Stephens, because we’re in a pretty unprecedented place where we don’t have necessarily the federal government to back up the state’s budget and we may have significant melt depending on what happens, you know, if the virus resurges in October, for example, and we’re sending people home again to finish the semester online, there’s a possibility of melt again. And so, the AAUP, you know, as you see in the materials, recommends that we get basically regular reports on enrollments, revenue, hiring, and renewals.

President Dietz: Yeah.

Senator Kalter: And I think it might need to be a little bit more than that but if we can start getting that information regularly, that would be helpful because people, I think, are not understanding the balance that’s being struck between the economic situation and the pedagogical situation.

President Dietz: Right. Right. So, that’s basically all I have on that. The EOC issue, I don’t know. We’re in unprecedented times. You know, the most important thing they used to do was decide when to close school if it was too hot or too cold. And so, here we are in a whole new deal, and I guess I have some opinions about that but not terribly noteworthy, so in the interest of time, I think I just won’t say anything about that.

The Engineering programs, we’ve had some conversations but frankly we’ve been focused on so many other things over the course of the last few months, there have been a couple of meetings, I don’t know if Jan had to go as well, but I can update that a little bit later, but not a lot has been done during the last couple of months.

Provost Murphy: I’m sorry, Larry, did you say Engineering on that one?

President Dietz: Yes.

Provost Murphy: Okay. I do have a little bit of an update on Engineering.

President Dietz: I’m sorry but I have to go. Thank you, folks. Appreciate it.

Senator Kalter: Thanks, Larry. Go for it, Jan. Give us the update.

Provost Murphy: Sorry about that. So, the Engineering consultants have started to have some meetings. They’ve established…we’ve had two meetings, and they’ve asked primarily at this point in time it’s been, you know, Facilities Planning folks, I’m sitting on that group, Dan Elkins, two of the deans, and three of the chairs, and they’re at this point in time just trying to get some sense of the institution. They’re asking questions about what’s the mission of the university, you know, what’s the culture of the institution. And so, what we’ve asked them is when we will start to see faculty engagement in this process. And so, we have a meeting set for Friday to start to talk about what does the working group, now as we move forward, what will the working group need to look like. They’re thinking about having two working groups: one on technology, one on education. And Rosie Hauck is there on the technology. But I think on Friday the 19th we’re going to meet to start to plan for, you know, they’re going to come in with their first recommendations on focus group planning, who, what faculty do they need to meet with, what do these committees need to look like? So, this point in time they’ve started their work, but mostly it’s just for getting a feel for kind of what the institution is, again, the mission of the institution, and I think they’re understanding that really the work has to begin when faculty are back on campus or faculty are available starting the fall. So, you know, they’re here, they’re starting to try to think—no there—but they’re starting to work together, but really no, haven’t done anything specific in terms of, you know, making a decision on what kinds of Engineering, or anything like that. They know that they’ve really got to start with their faculty focus groups to move in that direction. So, they’re started but not much movement done yet.

Senator Kalter: You or Larry might have said this but in other words their work has been delayed because of the COVID.

Provost Murphy: Very much so. They did not start this spring. I think originally once they were approved (the Board of Trustees approved in February) they were thinking, they’d even be to the point of starting to have meetings with faculty, but we did not get to that in the spring, so they know then there’s a limit to what they can do over the summer, but they’ll start really planning of fall. You know, they’re trying to think about what are all the groups, you know, what kinds of models might they present to start to engage faculty in conversations. They’ll also have to have focus groups with, you know, community, some of the industry. They’ll want to meet with Rivian or Caterpillar or Farnsworth and some of those groups. At this point, they’re just trying to get a sense of on this campus what should those meetings all look like and then move forward from there. So, that’s where we’re at.

Senator Kalter: Great. All right. Anything else on that for anybody.

Provost Murphy: Questions I can answer? (Pause) Okay.

Senator Kalter: Terrific. Okay. I think we’ve check off two things. Do we want to have… so it’s 11:03 right now, or 11:04. We can talk about this now, or we can talk about it again at the July Exec, the committee to look at the finances over the next year, and then the EOC question, which I really kind of feel like Dr. Dietz ought to be involved in that discussion, so we might want to put that one off. So, I guess, where do we want to go? Do we want to stop this part of the meeting here, and then have the faculty Caucus Exec or do we want to have further discussion on any of the things that are on the agenda?

Senator Mainieri: I would advocate moving those two topics to our next meeting, particularly since, I agree that President Dietz would be helpful to have in on both of those conversations, and it sounds like we might get some more information in the next couple weeks about the financial piece, that could be helpful as we have that conversation.

Senator Kalter: I see Venus came on visually to nod her head. I will say that it’s kind of clear, but back in March I said to one of the chairs that I happen to see over Spring Break that I think that a lot of the stuff that was going on in March was really, needed to happen in the executive branch of our shared governance system, but I think I’ve heard enough faculty complaints about not having enough input into the decisions going into fall that that’s why the EOC question is up there. Because certainly Senate representation on the EOC sort of on a permanent basis for every single issue is not what would be wanted. You know, there are so many issues that get discussed and a lot of them are fairly confidential, but in something that is so unprecedented we might want to have a discussion about what would trigger having Senate representation and then how that would work. So, that’s all I will say about that. But other than that, it sounds like we want to close this part of the meeting and move on to the Faculty Caucus part of the meeting. Is that right? (Pause) All right. We’ll move everything we didn’t get to to the July agenda.

***Adjournment***

Motion by Senator Mainieri, seconded by Senator Horst, to adjourn. The motion was unanimously approved.