

Illinois State University

ISU ReD: Research and eData

Academic Senate Minutes

Academic Senate

12-9-2020

Senate Meeting, December 9, 2020

Academic Senate, Illinois State University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/senateminutes>

Recommended Citation

Academic Senate, Illinois State University, "Senate Meeting, December 9, 2020" (2020). *Academic Senate Minutes*. 1275.

<https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/senateminutes/1275>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Academic Senate at ISU ReD: Research and eData. It has been accepted for inclusion in Academic Senate Minutes by an authorized administrator of ISU ReD: Research and eData. For more information, please contact ISUReD@ilstu.edu.

Academic Senate Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 9, 2020
Approved

Call to Order

Academic Senate Chairperson Susan Kalter called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Academic Senate Secretary Martha Horst called the roll and declared a quorum.

Chairperson's Remarks

Senator Kalter: Good evening. Happy finals week to everybody. We made it. Praise yourself and give yourself a pat on the back, and each other a virtual pat on the back, and if you're willing, a virtual hug for getting through one of the hardest semesters in ISU's history. We're going to begin tonight with Chairperson's Remarks.

This meeting is being held electronically due to the issued disaster declaration and because the President has determined that at this time in-person Senate meetings, and Senate Committee meetings are not prudent, practical, or feasible.

Just a reminder that if you would like to be recognized to speak, you should raise your hand through the participants function in Zoom, or click on either the yes or the no button, if the raise hand function is not available to you.

As we have no Information or Action Items tonight, I do want to take the opportunity to speak to two issues that are of concern at this time. And to make two requests as we head into spring 2021 and fall 2021.

I'd like to thank the Provost for a good discussion of the first issue this past Monday, as well as for the start of a discussion on a topic that's related to the second issue but larger in scope. Last Wednesday, the chairperson of my department announced to us that the Provost office is asking departments to prepare for fall 2021 as though we will all be back face to face on campus as we were in fall 2019. I pledge here that I will be one of the first to get in line to get vaccinated when my demographic's turn in line comes up. And I pray that that is going to be in January or February, rather than later. I will also be one of the first to joyfully and thankfully reenter my face-to-face classrooms and to revel in the opportunity to enjoy the comradery of face-to-face Senate meetings and generative hallway conversations again. However, I am asking the administration please not to let optimism and/or our concern with current enrollment numbers take the place of realism. Nobody wishes for summer 2021 to be a replay or even a faint echo of summer 2020 when it comes to relationships among faculty and administration.

We are still in a situation of uncertainty. We may be in a situation of uncertainty for many months to come. We may still be in that situation of uncertainty until August or September. We

do not know whether the vaccine will be taken widely by individuals. We do not have reliable information yet regarding whether there may be individuals—students, staff, or faculty—in our ISU community who may be unable due to health reasons to receive the vaccines, and facing a situations where herd immunity has not yet been achieved. We do not know if the Governor will issue an order that all persons working at or attending college in Illinois must be vaccinated in order to enjoy that privilege, barring any prohibitive health conditions. We do not actually know on a mass scale how effective the vaccines will be. We have only trial information. I believe that they will be a grand scale success, but I also know that it is wisest to hope for the best but plan for the worst.

I would ask that we plan in a dual way for fall 2021. Yes, please schedule our classroom spaces as though we will be face-to-face. Yes, please do all the other necessary things to facility a “normal” semester and a normal 2021-2022 year. But I would also ask you to require chairpersons and directors to again ask every instructor (whether faculty, graduate assistant, or staff) what their preferred modality is, and what their pedagogical argument for that modality is, and then to honor those preferences. Likewise, in the library among all the librarians, noting that our library faculty and some of our staff also have librarianship as their equivalent to teaching, and so their modalities must also be honored. I would be willing to bet that this time around, by July, we would have over 90% of our instructors choosing face-to-face.

However, there may be some who for very good reason may not be able or willing to risk themselves, or their students, or their families depending on what the conditions are on the ground by that time. There may be students who are unable to attend in person yet. Indeed, ask us what our preferred modalities might be under different conditions or ask now, and then ask again periodically leading up to fall semester. But please honor the fact that in all cases the workers on the ground, the workers who actually know the conditions of their own classroom, are best situated to decide upon and inform the class modality. Pedagogy is never effective if the teacher does not feel safe for any reason in their own classroom, and certainly not when students do not. I beg us to do this better this coming year than we did it last year.

I foresee that the Senate itself, while it may wish to return to all in-person may need to operate in a hybrid mode for a time, even after the Governor lifts his executive order, allowing open meetings to be held fully electronically. There is no way to predict the make up of the Senators and no one on the Senate reports to anyone else directly as a Senator. So, there is no way to know when or how many accommodation requests may come to us regarding an individual Senator’s need or desire to remain remote, even after many of us are able to come back into the room together. Given that the Faculty Caucus expects to be doing the heavy lifting of an ASPT revision year next year, we will need to be mindful to treat one another with compassion in all things in order to make it through our year efficiently. If we are, I pray, in the aftermath of a pandemic, rather than in one, we will need to stay creative and good-humored.

The second topic that I want to speak about is a new practice of identifying certain courses as so called DFW courses. I have also heard them called DWI courses. Some on the Senate may remember several years back (I mark it when Senator Winger of History was serving on the Senate because he had a very strong reaction to the event) that we received a report from an organization know as EAB, a private for-profit company specializing in enrollment management and institution-level strategies towards student success. This report contained comment about so called DFW courses. The theory that they promulgate—and I want to mark it very, very explicitly as a theory, not a truth—is that any course that has a certain percentage of students who receive a D or an F, or who withdraw from the course, or I suppose in the case of a so called DWI course who receive an Incomplete, must either be a bad course, or have a bad instructor, or both, and need to be redesigned. Sounds reasonable on the surface, right? Sounds like an easy causal relationship, a one-and-done. You blame the course or the instructor, you fix one or both, you wipe your hands, you move on.

But I for one am done with faculty blaming. There are times when faculty can improve what they do and those times are every day, and every hour, and every minute.

However, we are at a Research 2 university in the higher education system of the United States in the 21st century. We are in a university. Our main role here is to think critically and to promote critical thinking among ourselves, whether among fellow faculty and administrators, if we are faculty; or fellow students, if we are students; or among our students, if we teach; or among our faculty and administration, if we are students. Let us as a faculty and as a student body at ISU take the opportunity to think critically about the theory that I just articulated. Is it sound? Is it legitimate? Does it stand up to rigorous scrutiny and testing? Is it a scientifically, methodically sound approach to student success, or a package deal being sold to universities for profit or for influence?

Is it legitimate, for example, to lump together students who withdraw from a course, with students who receive an F or a D in the course? Is it legitimate to lump together students who receive a D (which is a passing grade) with students who receive an F? Is it legitimate to use that aggregated figure of DFW to analyze the performance of the course within the curriculum, or the instructor within the university? When we do so, are we looking at a course class by class, or over time as a course? With the same instructor, or with multiple ones? If over time as a course, how far back are we looking and who gets to decide how far back to look, and why? To what extent is there dialogue with the instructor prior to identifying the need for a course redesign? Or with the chair of the department prior to determining that program assessment through our Academic Planning Committee and University Assessment Services is not sufficiently promoting faculty discussions about curricular improvements?

Do instructors truly have control over how many students in a given semester withdraw from their course, particularly since the days long ago when we eliminated the requirement that an instructor sign off on a withdrawal after the student has discussed the wish to withdraw with

them, and perhaps have the chance to encourage grit and perseverance? To what extent are withdrawals about the course versus about events going on in the student's life that have nothing to do with the instructor or the course? Can the size of a course, or whether a course is required or elective, lower division or upper division, introductory and exploratory or specialized influence the number of students withdrawing? Can a system of course registration that doesn't always give full course descriptions, or that users might use while skipping those full descriptions? What if a number of students in a course receive an F or a D after repeatedly being asked by the instructor why they were not turning in work, and being encouraged to meet with the professor to talk things through, and the professor never got a response?

Contextually, it actually appears from EAB's presentations that the reason for targeting these courses by EAB is not primarily professional development for instructors or academically minded improvement of curriculum, but improvement of retention for the purpose of helping institutions not to lose tuition money. It is theorized to have the secondary effect of saving tuition for students but that is not its primary purpose. The primary purpose appears to be resource efficiency for the institution's fiscal benefit. If it has student success impacts, those are a secondary consideration.

In my view, the theory of DFW courses is methodologically untested and often has behind it some deeply anti-faculty sentiments. It places the entire burden of student success in a course on the faculty. What was the methodology used to design this theory, and is that methodology transparently available from this private advisory council? If we are to analyze our curriculum here at ISU using DFW theory, we need faculty within their departments, first, to scrutinize that theory, to poke holes in it, and improve it. To customize it to ISU's unique situations and unique local instructional settings. I believe that there may be a certain element of truth to the idea that some DFW courses do need redesign. I can think of at least one or two that I know of that might be candidates.

On the other hand, if we are focused on student success, faculty excellence, and course excellence, we will also want to identify courses where students receive all As or all As and Bs, yet walk out of the course complaining to each other and to other faculty that they learned none of the skills promised by the course description, and needed by them in order to teach well in their own future classrooms, or perform well in their future careers, or to achieve highly in graduate or professional school. And I know some of those courses as well.

We need individuals in the upper administration to get to know our faculty better. To take them out to coffee, as the Provost is doing virtually. To visit their classes in person. To discuss with them what they do and who they are and how they design and conduct their courses, and what the main reasons are that they see when a student is not succeeding in their course, and what they do or do not try to do about it, and whether it is effective, and if not, why not. We need to have people who actually spend their entire careers teaching five or six or seven or eight or more sections every year diagnosing student success and student Ds, and student Fs, and student

withdrawals, and separating the issues and building theories about Ds, and theories about Fs, and theories about withdrawals from the ground up, rather than having them plunked onto them outside of any intimacy with the individuals involved. And most importantly we need students who receive Ds and Fs and Ws to tell us course by course what worked and what didn't and why. And whether their D or F or W had anything to do with course delivery or course design.

So, I am requesting that the administration begin a broader conversation among faculty and other instructors within their own departments and programs, and that is important—within their own departments and programs—as well as among students, both in student groups and within their programs, regarding the concept of so-called DFW courses before beginning to implement academic or budgetary changes of any kind based on this concept, whether by incentivizing or requiring course redesigns or otherwise.

We also immediately need to address student success by scrutinizing stipends and salaries and course loads and course sizes received by graduate teaching assistants and non-tenure-line faculty who are usually the first face of this University for most first and second year students. In fact, a less diverse first face, on the non-tenure-level at least, in part because of those low salaries and local last-minute searches. Where are we pouring our student success dollars? And have we assessed adequately whether those dollars—including the \$10,000+ annual subscription fee to EAB—might be better spent somewhere else, for example, on providing working conditions and monetary recognition for the individuals who are most directly in charge of student success in our classrooms. We know we need more advisors. We also know we need more tutors for our students, on par with the tutoring and advising provided to athletes, and I believe to TRIO participants. But what else might we see if we asked the faculty? If we asked the faculty what else we need, what else they need to better assist their students toward higher levels of academic achievement.

So, with that I will conclude and thank you for listening so carefully. And I'll be happy to take any questions. (Pause) Alright. Seeing none.

Student Body President's Remarks

Senator Harris: Thank you, Chairperson Kalter. I just wanted to say, same following you, that we made it. For me, it's one semester down, one more to go. I know we have quite a few seniors as well in SGA. So, just good luck on finals for everyone that still has to take them, and to our faculty, good luck on grading them as well. I hope you all have a restful break and a happy holiday season.

Administrators' Remarks

• *President Larry Dietz*

President Dietz: Thank you very much, Senator Kalter. I also want to say thanks to everyone for your resilience and your persistence in getting us through another semester, and a very tough one at that. But here we are, and a lot of effort went into that from both the faculty, support staff, and then also the students doing the work in the classrooms. So, it's much appreciated.

I also, maybe like Lauren on this, in that I may have one semester left as well. I won't be graduating but I'll be perhaps graduating into retirement at the end of June. And I think most of you have seen that announcement. Many of you have sent me emails of congratulations, and I appreciate that very much. Serving at the University since 2011 and in this role since 2014 has really been the pinnacle of my career, both professionally and personally. And this isn't a swan song tonight by any stretch. We've got another six months of tough sledding ahead of us, but I'm up for that. I plan to work hard every day until I'm not in this chair anymore. But I would be remiss if I didn't say it, a big thank you to everybody who has helped build a team that's advanced this University in many, many ways. So, I'll just say thank you for that.

Couple of other announcements: the calendar and the Spring Break issue has been something that hopefully we're getting to a conclusion on. There was a survey, as many of you know, went out that was, collected lots of information, particularly from students and faculty about a Spring Break. We had planned on having a Spring Break until some conversations with some state officials who were encouraging all public universities of the state not to have a Spring Break. And so, what at one time had been mostly institutions having Spring Breaks, quickly turned into most institutions are not having a Spring Break. And so, we have wrestled with, how do we keep some of the tenets around the Spring Break that would provide some personal well being and other days that would potentially give everybody a little bit of a break, with the same token, trying to stay away from weekend days off to discourage the potential travel that the Governor and other folks have really been trying to discourage for quite some time. So, this issue came before one of the sub-committees of the Academic Continuity work group and I think they came forward with some really good recommendations that preserved some of the tenets of having a little bit of a breather, if you will, for everybody during the spring semester, but not having a Spring Break per se.

So, the direction that we're heading would be to implement the changes that have been recommended for the spring Academic Calendar, and those fall into two different kinds of categories. One is called Personal Well Being days, and the plan would be that March 9-10 would be designated as Personal Well Being days with no face to face, hybrid, or online classes or exams being held on those days, and no assignments given or due. But rather a variety of health and wellness activities would be available for students in particular, but also faculty and staff. The second category would be Reading Days and the dates on that would be April 29-30, designated again as Reading Days, with no classes or exams being held on those days, and no assignments being due, providing additional time for students to prepare for final exams. And then the last day of spring classes would be April 28. So, the spring 2021 semester would begin as scheduled on January 11 and it would end on the same day we had planned, May 7, 2021. And except for the cancellation of those classes, the University will operate normally on March 9-10 and April 29-30, with residence halls and dining centers remaining open, as well as other student service areas. So, one of the things that we're trying to do is to let people know this as soon as possible because we know that some families and students are trying to make it... and faculty

and staff for that matter, have traditionally tried to make plans for Spring Break and do some traveling, and so we're trying to get out ahead of that and let people know what is being planned.

So, what we would hope to do is to release something on this tomorrow, but tomorrow afternoon also at 1:00 p.m. there's a meeting that the Deputy Governor has called related to some testing, and I expect that that will be more discussion about the University of Illinois' saliva-based testing program that is being offered to institutions, but we still have not been able to stand that program up on the campus. Our laboratories are ready to go. But the technology (the medical records systems) are not really talking to each other and that's an issue predominantly at the University of Illinois. So, we're waiting until that meeting happens tomorrow at 1:00 p.m. to see if there's anything else that might impact, you know, the calendar for the spring semester. But that's our plan tomorrow in trying to keep some of the ideas in mind that came to us from the survey, but also respecting the strong encouragement that we're getting from state officials to not have a Spring Break, but also to have some days that would be spread out really throughout the week, so we don't have either Monday, Wednesday, Friday classes or only Tuesday, Thursday classes effected. So, this would spread those out considerably, and we hope that we'll get clarification on anything else that might change related to testing after that 1:00 p.m. meeting tomorrow. And we hope to have something out yet perhaps later tomorrow afternoon.

A couple of other updates that I would give, one is an update on the Athletic Director search. The search committee's been working very hard on that. They've narrowed a sizable pool down to 12 candidates. They had semi-finalist interviews last Friday and this last Monday, and they've narrowed that list down to four. And those four are being notified and scheduled for some interviews, hopefully this next week, if we can get all that done.

And then, there's a Board meeting on Saturday. It's been called by the President of the Board. It'll begin at 10:00 a.m. and the items that will be on that, one is about the Presidential Search. There's a resolution that would give authorization to hire a search firm to help with the Presidential Search. There's a resolution also about my contract extension through the end of June. There's also a resolution on Reditus contract extension. Our contract with Reditus is to provide us with the testing instrument ends at the end of December, and the U of I system is not going to be ready by the start of school, and so we want to be able to continue that. And then there is a... well, I think those are the three. And with that, I'll wish everybody a happy and safe holiday season, and yield for any questions.

Senator Kalter: All right. Do we have any questions for Senator Dietz? (Pause) Alright. If not, I'll just say Senator Dietz and I have worked together since he first became President, and as I said in Executive Committee, we've enjoyed every minute of it except for since March.

President Dietz: Right.

Senator Kalter: And some minutes of it after March, but many of them were not pleasant. Going through a pandemic is unpleasant. So, we honor your service and we're really glad that you're

going to be here until June, and we'll have more to say. And I think I said in Exec also, that we're hoping for a face-to-face send off. Hopefully by then we'll be able to gather in larger groups.

President Dietz: I appreciate that, Senator Kalter. I might also add that my wife and I, our plan in retirement is to stay in the community, and my goal in helping the University is that I will do everything that I can to make sure that there's a smooth transition from my presidency to the next person's presidency, and I've told the Board that if they don't have the person that they really want in this role by July 1, first of all they ought not to hire them. And I'm not going anywhere, so if they want me to continue, I'd be happy to do that, hopefully not for a long period of time. But also, if they have the person that they do want, but they can't be here by July 1, again, I'd be happy to extend a little bit. So, I'm concerned that we have a smooth transition and I will do everything I can to try to help with that. Thank you.

Senator Kalter: Yes. Well, as we have genuinely enjoyed working with you, we want to genuinely enjoy working with the next person. I'll just let everybody know, nobody has asked, but I spoke to Jay Groves this afternoon. He used to be, I think, what was called the Assistant to the President. I sort of thought of him as your Chief of Staff when he was in that role. He's helping with the Presidential Search, with the communication between the University and the Board. And just reminding everybody that this search is a Board of Trustees search. It's not a University search, It's not a Senate search. So we're going to await further word from Jay and from the Board chair regarding the shape of the search, the make up of the search committee, and, you know, as the President said, the Board's voting on Saturday morning regarding a resolution to hire a search firm.

So, questions on that? I've already had one person ask me a question on the search, but we'll have to wait until the Board makes decisions about that.

So, we're going to go next to... unless Dr. Dietz had anything else to add, we'll go next to Senator Tarhule for Provost Remarks.

- ***Provost Aondover Tarhule***

Senator Tarhule: Thank you so much, Chairperson Kalter. I will begin by echoing the comments that others have made congratulating all of us, really, for getting through what is a very difficult semester. I hope we never see another one like it, and I hope that we catch our breath and recharge our batteries over the break. I want to share some numbers that I'm really excited about. I hope you'll be excited as well. And then update you on a number of upcoming events and activities.

So, as I said, this is a very difficult semester, but we're still able to graduate students for the Winter Commencement which will happen this Saturday. And we will be graduating 1,070 baccalaureate degrees, and also awarding 220 graduate degrees for the Winter Commencement. I mean if you really think about what everyone has experienced going back to the beginning of the

pandemic, and the students who were in their last year, having to go through all those uncertainties, I know faculty, staff, everyone has really had a tough time, but if you view this from the perspective of the students, I think this is really terrific news for them, for their parents and for the institution. So, I'm hoping that you'll join me in congratulating these students whenever you see them. So, I think that's a really exciting number, at least from my perspective.

With respect to faculty, we also have I think some exciting number updates. Today several letters of teaching awards for excellence, outstanding teaching awards in different categories of teaching, went out to faculty. Again, I think this was a very, very difficult semester and so many of you really stepped up way over and above your responsibilities and still delivered outstanding teaching for our students, which is what has allowed them to graduate. So, I think it makes a... it's kind of exciting that we honor those, especially distinguished themselves, even though I think everyone is a winner.

Other letters of awards that went out, I believe today or yesterday, were the University Professors award. These are very distinguished professors that have been nominated by the URC. So, those award letters have done out. And I'm hoping that tonight at the Faculty Caucus, we will also have some resolution about the Distinguished Professor. So, really exciting times to send out award letters, especially given the semester that we've had.

One more number to report. We've had 850 faculty members participate in microaggressions training. Actually today, the Provost office went through that training. I participated myself, and I would strongly recommend this to anyone, even if you've already done it. But the exciting thing is 850 unique faculty members, you know, decided to go through that training. So, I think our messaging about trying to understand and advance our diversity and inclusion is working. So, I'm really excited about that and glad to be able to share those numbers with you.

Some professional development opportunities. A number of faculty have struggled with issues related to what they can or cannot say that is constitutionally protected or which falls under academic freedom in this very polarizing and very difficult times that we live in. And so, I'm excited that Lisa Huson (who is our General Counsel) has teamed up with Diane Zosky (who is Dean of the College of Arts and Science) to offer a professional development session to help clarify this challenging issues, and to provide guidance for faculty. So, this is going to happen on Friday, December 11 from 9:30-10:30 a.m. So, I encourage you to spread the word to other faculty members who may wish to attend.

Early in the new spring semester next year, on January 6th, the University-wide Teaching and Learning Symposium will take place. So, the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology is partnering this year with the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (I think that's going to become the Center for Civic Engagement soon) to give that training. And the theme for this year will be civic engagement in extraordinary times. And the goal is to provide an informative and interactive experience for the campus community as we prepare to resume

teaching in the spring semester. So, that registration will be Friday, December 18. So, I think that's something to look forward to as well.

And then later in the semester, you'll probably hear this again, the CRCC spring institute, that's going to be on March 19th. CRCC stands for Culturally Responsive Campus Community. Last year's, or this semester's workshop was outstanding. We had nearly 1,000 people who registered for that, and the theme was equity within me. So, we're looking forward to replicating that success in the spring, which I think will be quite exciting.

And then finally, as Chairperson Kalter mentioned, one of the things that I really regret, starting my role in the time that I did, has been the lack of opportunity to connect meaningfully and individually with faculty members. So, about a month or so ago, I started having what I called virtual coffee hours. Those have been some of my best meetings ever, on this campus, from a personal perspective. And so, I'm looking forward to continuing those engagement in the spring, and maybe if you can spread the word, I'd like to be able to meet people in small settings as much as possible.

I had a meeting with Grant Chassy this evening. He's one of the student Senators. And I'm using Grant to just round up here, I think we met by 4:00 p.m., I believe Grant is on this call. It was amazing to me to learn that he's going to have an exam tomorrow. And so, I was thinking about, my goodness, the things that our students go through especially at this time, you know, Grant is just an illustration for, you know, the commitment, the engagement that our students put in. And they have to do all of that within the challenges that... the very difficult circumstance that we're facing. So, to me, you know, I lower my hat to people like Grant, and to the students, Lauren Harris and your team. Congratulations again. And I hope everyone has just an outstanding Winter Break, and a very safe one. Thank you so much.

Senator Kalter: All right. Wonderful. Do we have any questions for Senator Tarhule? (Pause) Alright. I'll just add to Senator Tarhule's remark about the microaggressions training, that I do know that there are some departments that had to delay what they had intended to do, so the number would have been over 850 had it not been for the pandemic. Let's move to Dan Stephens for Vice President of Finance and Planning Remarks.

- ***Vice President of Finance and Planning Dan Stephens***

Senator Stephens: Thank you, Senator Kalter. I'll keep my remarks brief. Even though there has already been some University-wide communication sent on these topics, I'd like to repeat some of these key issues for this important audience. These center mostly around payroll and HR matters as we close out this calendar year. First of all, W2s are expected to be released the third week in January, possibly as early as Tuesday, January 19th. We have, obviously, a requirement to issue them by the end of January, but our goal is to distribute them as early as we can. We do need to wait on some benefit information that comes from CMS that has to be finalized on the document before we can distribute those.

Last payroll payment cycle for employees in December will be on Wednesday, December 23. That is the last day the University will be open. So, everybody should be looking for, you know, compensation around those dates, or earlier, depending on if you're on a different payment cycle than once a month. The university is... we're doing this early because we're closed on Thursday the 24th through the following week, into early January.

As a courtesy reminder, as we enter into a new calendar year, from a personal tax point of view, it is wise—you'll see this mentioned probably in a number of venues on the internet—it's wise to always review your current deductions that you've got currently in place (payroll withholding deductions) and decide if the current levels that you've got today are still helpful in your tax planning in a calendar year. And so, this time of the year is usually when people need to be reminded to revisit that calculation as they start to prepare their tax returns. We do have an online access to make those changes on a W4, and there's instructions on our myillinoisstate.edu website if you'd like to make some changes there.

There is still time to select, from a W2 point of view, an electronic selection rather than wait for a paper copy to be sent in the mail. If you do elect an electronic that'll allow you to have continual access to not only your current year W2 information but also historical information, and you can print it essentially from any location, whether it's home or work. So, we'd like to encourage that. Our preference is to have as many employees doing things electronically, so that we don't have to share that type of information from a mailing point of view.

From an HR perspective, a couple of reminders again that happen this time of the year, during the calendar year. From a retirement saving point of view, the University has a 403b plan that is available to all employees whether they're even eligible for benefits or not. We try to encourage people to save through those. Contribution limits coming this calendar year 2021 end up staying the same as 2020. It's \$19,500 for employees below the age of 50, and it's stayed the same at \$26,000 of potential savings in a given year for employees above the age of 50.

One other reminder that Janice thought was helpful for the audience is each year the calendar year is one more thing to always look at is your beneficiaries that you have listed in your retirement plans, as well as your insurance plans. So, HR has benefit counselors if you have for any reason want to visit to make sure that you have your benefactors identified accurately within either our life insurance plans or any of our retirement plans. You can reach out to our benefits counselors in HR to get some help there.

And then lastly, our HSA and FSA savings plans are actually on a fiscal year cycle, not a calendar year cycle. So, if you've got those deductions going on on your paycheck, the receipts that you can submit actually go through June 30, and not end at December 31, like typically occurs in a corporate environment. So, if anybody... a lot of people get confused by that and think they've got to extinguish all of their expenditures for reimbursement in the calendar year,

but actually ours operates in a fiscal year environment. So, that's my comments. I'll be happy to answer any questions.

Senator Kalter: Wonderful. Do we have questions for Senator Stephens? (Pause) All right, it looks like not. Almost all, or maybe all of the announcements that Senator Stephens made came up through Human Resources and I want to give congratulations to Janice Bonneville who has just been... we just got word a day or two ago, maybe it was even this morning, that she has been named as the permanent, I think it is, Associate Vice President for Human Resources. She was acting as interim before that.

I also just want to let everybody know, one person in my department was one of the victims of our unemployment fraud that has also gone around on the websites and email listservs and that kind of thing. So, just watch your credit reports and report to, I think it is Colette Homan who works for Janice in the HR office, if somebody tries to impersonate you and claim unemployment benefits in your name. So, I just wanted to remind everybody about that.

All right. With no questions from Senator Stephens, we'll move to Senator Nikolaou for Academic Affairs' committee report.

Academic Affairs Committee: Senator Nikolaou

Senator Nikolaou: The Academic Affairs Committee met this evening. And we finalized the Textbook policy based on some comments that we got from a few meetings ago. So, we're going to be seeing it next year when we meet again. And we also continued our discussion on the IDEAS graduation requirement.

Administrative Affairs and Budget Committee: Senator Marx

Senator Marx: Okay. Thank you very much. Tonight, at the Administrative Affairs and Budget Committee, we continued our discussion of the Sound Amplification policy, trying to take into account the comments that had been made at the last two Senate meetings, and hopefully sometime early in 2021 we'll be bringing that back to the Senate. Thank you.

Faculty Affairs Committee: Senator Hollywood

Senator Hollywood: The Faculty Affairs Committee met tonight. And we discussed the changes that were suggested for the policies of the 1.8 Integrity document, taking into account a meeting that Senator Kalter and I attended with the Legal Counsel to make sure that any change we made were in compliance with Legal as well as other departments. Hopefully, it looks like we're in good shape and we should be able to get those in to the committee in January.

Planning and Finance Committee: Senator Avogo

Senator Avogo: So, we saw our first guest today to talk about our priority on improving the quality of online learning at ISU. We were lucky to have Dr. Cuenca-Carlino and Jennifer Friberg and Linda Summers from CTLT to talk to us about the challenges, you know, limitations associated with online learning. We are looking forward to having about three or four other

guests in our committee, and then we'll proceed to compile our report that we hope to present to the Academic Senate this spring.

Senator Kalter: Wonderful, Senator Avogo. I'll just say as somebody who sometimes sits on that committee, one of the most exciting parts of the year is when you start inviting guests and get to have exchanges back and forth. So, I congratulate you on that.

Rules Committee: Senator Horst

Senator Horst: The Rules committee met. And we finalized our discussion on the Reinstatement Committees charge. We'll be forwarding that to the Executive Committee. And we also had two visitors, Craig Jackson and Carla Birckelbaw and they led us through the proposed changes for the Campus Mass Electronics Communication Policies and Procedures. And we will continue working with them on that in the spring.

Communications

Senator Horst: I wanted to let everybody know about a talk that's happening in Music before next Senate meeting. It's on January 19 at 7:30 p.m. And we are bringing in Phil Yule who is getting a lot of national and international recognition for his work on Music and its white racial frame. So, we will have an engaging Zoom talk with him. We're still working out the details as to how to handle that, but we're quite excited that he will come.

Senator Chassy: Alright. Thank you, Chairperson Kalter. As Senator Tarhule mentioned, I was happy to meet with him this afternoon to discuss an issue that had attracted some attention around campus and that is how do we ensure the integrity of course work and exams in this online setting. And as many know, the student opposition to Proctortrack prompted the Student Government to pass a resolution which condemned the use of the service and recommended that less invasive methods be pursued. The administration, obviously, has decided that every student can seek reasonable accommodations to get different ways of ensuring they are honest with their work, if they are assigned using Proctortrack, but I have found, and many others have found that students are not aware of this right.

While the numbers using this service currently is low, as Chairperson Kalter mentioned in her opening statements, we are approaching another virtual semester if things continue as they are right now. And I think some improvements can be made, especially when we talk about communication. I think to balance the privacy concerns student groups have and just students generally may have, I think it would be in the best interest to try to explicitly inform students that they have the right to pursue an accommodation.

So, after meeting with the Provost, I'm going to prompt members of the Student Government, and anyone else that would like to be interested in trying to draft an email that would, if approved by the appropriate leaders, would be sent to the entire student body, briefly (hopefully) and clearly informing students of their right to pursue different forms of exam monitoring. The idea here is that, if you're assigned Proctortrack, there might be concerns that this may not suit

you, but we need to ensure that academic integrity is preserved. I think it would also cool down the temperature of groups, or students, that may feel that this service threatens their security.

I plan on submitting this prospective mass email to the Provost office and the Chief Technology Officer's office. And doing this would allow both offices, if they found this issue to be of merit to contribute, hopefully with their support, draft a more finalized email that could be sent to the Dean of Students office for review, and would be sent at a later appropriate time, in preparation for use next semester.

So, to anyone who's interested in this, my email is always open. I'd love to talk with anyone who has ideas. The Student Government, I hope, will take on this task with me. I'm sure they will. And I think this communication will ease a lot of concerns on the student side, and make sure that faculty and leadership know that rules are being followed to the best that we can ensure. So, I really appreciate the time to speak. And I hope all of you stay safe and recharge those batteries as we come back to online learning next semester.

Senator Kalter: All right. Wonderful, Senator Chassy. And I just want to give you a friendly amendment to what you're proposing, because I know that people don't always read their mass emails, and so I would suggest if there... I don't know how this would work exactly in practice, but if the Provost office and Mr. Edamala's office can help to identify the faculty who are, and the courses where Proctortrack is being used, it probably would be a good idea for those messages to also go out as messages from the instructor or as part of the Reggienet shell of that course. Because sometimes people are more likely to be attentive to stuff coming from their faculty members, and it seems as though the faculty members also really do—although they may not be required to—they kind of have the responsibility to let their students know, to inform them that they do have the right to get accommodations, just as we would do for other types of accommodations. So, I just wanted to add that to the possible list of things to be talked through as that's going into process. And we'll go next to Senator Harris for Communications.

Senator Harris: Yeah. I just wanted to follow up with that, kind of similar to what you said, Chairperson Kalter. Some of the students that initially raised the concerns, as well as myself, did make the recommendation to the Provost and Mr. Edamala to... like what you said when the faculty notifies Charley's office to also notify the students that they now have proctored exams so that they can be informed on what that looks like. But there could be more conversations to be had with Grant to see what other communication could look like.

Senator Kalter: Wonderful. Do we have any further Communications for the Senate? (Pause) All right. Seeing none. Here's mine. We made it through. We supported one another. We carried one another through. We should praise ourselves. We should look to the hope of the vaccines. Remember that there is going to be an end to this Eisenhower Tunnel-like tunnel, that the day is bright on the other side, on the outside.

In my poetry class this semester, I had as a student an individual, Kelly Graeber, who had started her bachelor's degree 38 years ago, and is graduating this December. It's been a hard year for her, for her family, but she brought joy to the class and to the other students every single day. And on the final day, we had a dance party for Kelly and the other seniors, and we had a number of incredible dancers, including two cats named Salem and Toby. So, it was super fun to play the DJ, so that's what I'm going to do here again. Are you ready? I'm going to take you out on an upbeat note. Reminding you to dance, dance, dance once your finals are done, once your finals are graded. And to remind yourself that, despite all of the death and the tragedy that has occurred this year, that Life Is Dynamite, and we should never ever lose touch with that wonderful fact. This is not a dance off, but if you want to dance, dance as we're going out of the Senate meeting. Everybody, cameras on if you're going to dance, get down and party.

Adjournment tonight is going to be by acclamation. But faculty, remember to stay for the Faculty Caucus.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.