

Student Affairs Town Hall
Tuesday, May 12
10:00-11:00am

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: Well, good morning, everyone, and welcome to our Student Affairs Town Hall.

Um, I know I can't see you all. But I can see that we have over 200 people with us today. So I am excited that we are all here and able to gather in some form of community, even though it's virtual and certainly not what we had expected. I do want to kick off with just an overview for us.

And I think maybe I'm going to need you, Nate. Nope. Looks like I can do it, so please bear with us as we are navigating our new Zoom Webinar platform.

And also want to send a big shout out to our Norris Technical Support Team behind the scenes for really helping us think through this and being there. Not if, but when we get stuck and I'll own that it will probably be me that will get stuck.

But, you know, this is a Town Hall format. And while it's not as interactive as we typically can be. I do appreciate people taking the time to send in some really thoughtful questions. Some questions that are concerning you all and things that hopefully we'll be able to address today.

So, we heard loud and clear in your questions people want to hear a little bit about vision and direction for our division today and I will do my best to cover that at the beginning.

And then we want to get into some specific question groupings. We have a lot of questions submitted and they really boiled down into several different areas that you can see here on your screen.

From financial information at the university level and also high-level division. Issues around staffing, I want to own right now that yesterday was hard, and the next couple days will be hard for our colleagues across campus.

And so, there are a lot of questions about staffing about retirement benefits also about what essential personnel means. And then things about staff and student's safety in this time of COVID and so we want to make sure that we're addressing that.

And then we need to look forward for fall a little bit, and we have colleagues on the call that will help us give you an overview on what's happening. So, you have a better idea about what's happening at the divisional level and at the university level.

And then a quick nod to commencement. It's going to look different this year. And we've got some folks on the call here to who can help us explain a little bit about what that will look like.

We'll have some announcements and then we really want to talk about remembering Patricia and an activity we're putting together for June 3 in her honor. And then, of course, as we end every one of these with gratitude. But I also want to start a little bit with an acknowledgement and that's this is hard.

And we in Student Affairs can do hard things. This is impacted our world in ways that we couldn't imagine. And when I say this, I mean the pandemic.

It has forced us to think differently in a number of ways. It has impacted *everyone*, it has changed our roles in our lives in fundamentally unsettling ways. And that seems small but it's not small because every minute, every day, something changes and I don't throw that we can do hard things up here, lightly. I don't mean it to be flippant.

What I mean, and I'll borrow a quote here from someone that Todd Adams actually introduced me to and that is Dr. Sarah Boatman who's a former Vice President of Nebraska Wesleyan, "In these hard times, these are the times when Student Affairs shines the brightest." This is what we do really well and it's a lot on top of people living their lives and having to now be teachers and coaches and sometimes academic advisors and chefs and all of the other life things that you're navigating.

But we are uniquely positioned in Student Affairs to tackle these on behalf of our students and it's a special gift. And it's hard but I also feel like it's an honor to do it in a number of different ways and you're doing it. I want to acknowledge what we've done here, and I won't read them all and I couldn't list them all because if I did, we would just be talking about all the things that we've done.

And so, I mean, you just think about everything from response protocols for COVID-19 positive folks, to flipping a dining program, flipping our health service, our CAPS service, career advancement, moving into virtual engagement spaces, focusing on our most vulnerable students, which is something that we consistently talk about and will need to continue to center in our work. So that over 800 graduate students who needed safe transit or a safe place to live, or taken care of in that moment.

We figured out new ways to connect and engage with our students – love the new name of the weekly student engagement piece which is the "Paw Print" and that was a contest or a recommendation from one of our readers that this is the new thing that we should call it. So I think it's fantastic that we're engaging our students and helping them shape what it is that we need to be doing.

Um, we've all flipped into a remote environment. And we've had a lot of support structures with our teams along the way, there's no way we could be here without SAIT. There's no way we could be here without marketing. There's no way that we would be as successful as we are without all of our colleagues in human resources and finance really helping us and stepping up so that we can make sure we had what we needed to be successful.

And we have turned programs around and make them easier for students. We have protected their health and safety. And so, and we've also been checking in with our students who are really the most vulnerable and that are of concern to us and that we know both undergraduate and graduate and professional students because we know that our students right now are afraid and we want to make sure that we are there for them in a number of different ways.

But just because we've done it, it doesn't mean it's not hard. And this, I love this statement. It is so obvious but sometimes we forget that when Student Affairs is called to do the hard stuff we just jump in and we go into go mode – “hard things are hard”, and we need to stop for a minute and remember that that we've been doing a lot of heavy lifting in this time.

And we've been making very quick decisions. We have been in a reactive mode, a little bit and have been doing some planning. But at times like this. I think when it's so unsettling. We need to return to what we know and we need to ground ourselves in the things that matter.

And we need to go back to what we know and what our “Why.” And in the questions that were submitted, there were several questions about, you know, Julie, What's your vision, What is the direction for Student Affairs in this time and I think about our vision and our mission. And I just want to reiterate that when people say, What's your vision, you know, I can tell you what I think, and I will, and my platform here in just a moment. But I need everybody to know it's so important that we understand that these documents, these two notices here, these statements – The vision, “We will be full partners in the student learning experience” and then our mission is “to educate students engage the community and enrich the Northwestern experience.” Those aren't mine. They're ours. We have developed those together and it's so critically important that we remember the power behind this collective approach because this helps define who we are and I look at these two things. And we've been living those quite well. We've also been living our grounding values of integrity and social justice and innovation and collaboration and stewardship in so many obvious ways.

When you look at that list that we just developed or that I shared with you and you add to it the things that you're doing every day. I see integrity. I see us doing the work and doing it well and positioning our students at the center, for putting in the hours and quite frankly, we're showing up.

We, we see social justice show up in big and small ways. In the way that we have been advocating for and positioning our most vulnerable students in tangible and difficult ways, in difficult moments at senior levels in day to day conversations – We know the importance of that element of our work.

I see innovation in everything that we're doing – what we're doing right now is innovative. Coming together in this environment in a in a zoom webinar, we would not have imagined this seven weeks ago. We would have thought about maybe there's some technology solution that we can implement that would involve more people. This is different. This is innovative and there are other innovative things that have been happening with student engagement in a virtual space, this whole idea of being physically distant but socially connected. That's an innovative phrase, and we've adopted that for a lot of our work.

There's collaboration happening throughout the division. I see things between CAPS and CARE about wellness, and I see things with health promotion and wellness, and religious and spiritual life and student engagement. I see things happening collectively across Fraternity and Sorority Life with other organizations. I see trainings flipping to a virtual environment in partnership with others and that collaboration is really powerful.

And I see stewardship. I see us making smart choices. I also see us making hard choices. Some of which you were notified about yesterday and that will continue. We will need to continue to make difficult choices, but all grounded in the values that we profess and the vision and the mission that we collectively hold.

I think, though, when we really get into the question about what's next and direction. It's more about the how. And that's the thing that is more fundamentally difficult. And please, folks, forgive the use of the word normal. If I could I would go back and replace with typical, but I saw this yesterday and it resonated with me when I think about how we are now living in this world with COVID. I don't know that there will ever be post-COVID as if it never existed in the first place. And so when I think about this, and I think about the number of questions that we have collectively brought up in student affairs work – About how we need to do things differently. We have to do that now. And we have to figure out how we're going to do it together.

So this is where we get into process a little bit and again questions came up through the submission about how do we address this time. How do we need to shift what it is that we're doing and thinking and really bring it to life as we look to continue to serve our students and center them in our work.

And so I will share with you that process for me, but I will also say these are my thoughts. And one of the most important things to me that many of you know, having worked with me for a while, is I need your thoughts to make this better. So we'll be diving more deeply into process issues throughout the coming weeks.

But here's my thinking. And we start at the top with the student, we need to establish the shared framework and values together, some of which we already have that I just talked about.

We need to develop and empower our people, we cultivate and sustain key relationships. We need to advocate for and align resources with those priorities that come out of that shared framework and then we need to assess, learn from it, and evolve our thinking and continue that process.

So I'm going to share with you a few quotes here that cement those different elements of the process. And then I am excited through upcoming ways that we can connect to really engage you all in this thought process. And the first is, it's a quote from Larry Roper who is somebody that is revered in the field of Student Affairs. If you don't know him or haven't met him, I hope, I hope you are able to one day.

He said, a phrase at NASPA conference a couple years ago that said, “Our job is to believe in other people's children.” And I, I think about that often when it comes to us making decisions and when it comes to us thinking about what are why is for Student Affairs.

We have a vision and a mission but we're called student affairs for a reason we focus on our students and it is an honor to be with them at their most difficult moments and it is a joy to be with them when they are succeeding in a number of different ways and to show up for them at every space in between. And so one of the things I read when I read this quote from Larry is we never give up on them.

Even in these times, we as an example of that – We had a team and many of you on this call, were a part of that team that called 800 students who didn't have a place to go or said they were scared to travel and individually talked with them.

We didn't give up on them. We didn't just say, I'm sorry, you need to just go somewhere else, because we're trying de-densify the campus. We made it a point to reach out to them individually, because we believe in them. And that's important.

I also feel it's important for us to know and acknowledge that as we move into that space, and we think about the next evolution of that we started with the student, and now we're establishing a shared framework and values. Well, people care about what they help to create and this was from Penny Rue. She's the Vice President at Wake Forest. She's the former chair of the NASPA Board of Directors.

And she uses this very specifically when it comes to creating a direction. We have to do this, collectively, I know our Leadership and Community Engagement friends over in Campus Life talk a lot about collective impact. That's what a good strategic plan and strategic direction is it is created as a collective impact and we make it together.

And so when we think about things like our vision, our mission our values, our guiding principles, our priorities, they only work if we create it, not just me.

The next thing we have to do when we have those two things done is that we have – We always believe or hold on, we have to develop and empower our people and this quote by Diane Von Furstenberg (she's a designer I don't wear her but I like her designs on other people), “I have always believed that if you have a voice, you must use that voice to empower others.”

The way I see this showing up is when we develop and empower our staff. So, we have phenomenal stuff and an amazing team here in student affairs and we've seen that power over the previous years, and the things that we've been able to create together.

But we also continue to get better. We need to continue to learn, particularly in this environment and it can't just be a small group of people that make it happen. All of you have your roles for a reason. All of you are empowered to do those roles and we need to remember that.

And so how do we create strategies around that. What a staff development look like for all of us? How do we recruit folks to join our team? How do we reimagine our roles, even so that we are taking the most advantage of the skills and the talents that we have available to us in our team? How do we create conditions then, at every level in the division, for staff to lead and to lead from their roles. So that's another important component of creating this overall direction.

We also need to cultivate and sustain key relationships, both within the division and across the university and into the community. If you don't know what this picture is and Amy Huntington probably does (because she knows all things graphic anyway), this is a social network map. And it's actually one from Facebook from a couple of years ago. And I love this quote from Tom Rath from Gallup "At their core, organizations are giant networks and relationships. If you fail to build them your chances of success are not very high."

Student Affairs can't exist on our own. We can't succeed on our own. And if we are here to help our students succeed, we know we need partners across campus. Many of us that are in the division have these really powerful relationships. But how do we continue to cultivate them? Who else do we need to build relationships during this time, so that we can then turn around and leverage those in positive ways for the betterment of the students that we serve in the betterment of Northwestern?

How do we create shared goals with those partners? How do we create, win, win situations together so that it is mutually beneficial? Again, back to the idea of a collective impact on behalf of our students.

And we talked about advocating for and aligning resources with priorities. And there's never a more important time to do that then when we are facing adversity, like we are right now.

This quote from James Frick speaks to me, "Don't tell me what your priorities are. Show me where you spend your money, and I'll tell you what they are."

And I offer a corollary, it's not just where you spend your money. It's where do you align those resources and allocate them.

And when I say resources, I mean people, I mean finances, I mean facility, I mean intellectual resources, I mean technology, and I mean time.

In this time, we need to rethink this, we need to really seriously consider how we are aligning every resource we have for the betterment again of our students.

And then we need to assess, learn and evolve. And many of you have seen me and heard me use this quote – it is on a plaque on my wall in my office. It is something I come back to a lot from Nelson Mandela and it is, "I never lose. Either I win, or I learn." This is where we come into play when we started asking questions and we can try things out of a frame of curiosity that let us do things differently and embrace innovation and not be afraid to fail.

Somebody a couple of days ago offered up a phrase, and I know Lesley-Ann said it, and it may have been Dav or Kourtney and one of their meetings that said it so I apologize if I can't remember who it was... But it's the whole idea about, we need to learn how to fail quickly, and then I will add to it, we need to figure out what we're going to learn from that. Turnaround, adjust, and move forward. Thank you, Lesley-Ann has let me know is Kourtney. So, Kourtney - Thank you for that phrase. And so what we need here is permission to fail and permission to learn from that failure.

And as we move ahead through this environment and sort of re-commit and or adjust what our vision and direction needs to be, those are two things that we have to hold close.

And so we get back to the why, you heard me say center the students, but at the end of it all what we want is for people, organizations, Northwestern and most importantly for our students to thrive in this time. And that is hard in an environment of fear. That is hard when everything changes minute by minute

But I also know and I'm confident that this is the team that can help us do that hard work, because again, hard things are hard, but we can do hard things. And we want everyone to get to that space where we feel like we are making a difference in a contribution so that our students can thrive.

We know there are elements of organizational health that have to be managed in that time. That we need to take care of ourselves to take care of others. But again, we're all working toward the end goal of our students thriving in this environment.

And I do think there's an opportunity here – You heard me say it earlier when we talk about this time. How many times have we sat in spaces with each other, large, small or at professional conferences or even just over coffee and wanted to reimagine things? How many times have we said, Oh my gosh, if we only could do fill in the blank. If we would only, you know, dismantle X system. If we could only get the right players at the table, we could do so many great things for our students.

While everything about covid is hard and scary and difficult. It's also providing us with that opportunity. We have a chance now and I have no doubt that we can do it.

So all of that to say - Back to one of the original quotes from Larry Roper – I think that's the how, that we get to live believing and other people's children. That we get to live in embracing our own vision to be full partners in that student learning experience, even if it looks different.

So, I hope that these words and our seminal documents provide some sort of a foundation that when it gets scary, you can come back to this. Know that we won't stop living that vision or that mission. We won't stop circling back to those values and grounding those in the work that we do. We won't stop advocating for our students, particularly now when they need it the most, and advocating for our staff who are the ones that support those students in these moments.

And when I say “we” know that I am a big part of that. And I will absolutely do all of those things, to the best of my ability.

So with that, hopefully that helps address some of the questions about vision, direction. We'll get more clarity with this as we move forward. We will leverage our Student Affairs Council in these conversations, we'll come back to the full divisional team in the coming weeks and months so that we can gain clarity around that.

But I do want to make sure that we get to your questions, because that is a really important part of this Town Hall. And, so we will go ahead and shift now to our section on Q&A.

And again I want to thank everybody for submitting those thoughtful questions, questions of concern, questions of care, and even just some supportive words back to the full division. So with that, the first thing that we want to address here is this idea of what was the financial impact of covid-19. We know that there were a lot of questions that came up about this, whether it be at the university level, whether it be at the divisional level – And so we have a few things that we want to do and walk you through it. I am going to invite Lori Gordon, who is one of our panelists to unmute herself at this point so that she and I can walk you through a couple of things.

Hi Lori. Good morning.

Lori Gordon: Good morning, Julie. And good morning to the student affairs community.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: So I'll offer a couple of high level thoughts here and then I'll have Lori go through the divisional impact on revenue. We are focusing on the revenue because that's really where the pinch point is for the division. And that's where you're seeing some of the messaging coming out from the President, the provost and our senior vice president.

So here's Northwestern high level financial situation. As you know, as you've probably seen the markets are in flux and continue to be, even though they seem a little bit better in April than they were in March.

And our endowment, which many of you keep...you know you've heard that, you know, Northwestern has a \$10.8 billion dollar endowment...is subject to the fluctuations in the market. And we've had a drop in that endowment valuation. The other component of the endowment that's important for folks to know – and yes, those are gifts that are given to the university, those are assets that are put into this endowment situation – is that many of those are restricted. So there's not a lot of what it (and Lori can explain this better than I can) liquidity that is there for us to tap into, meaning it's not a giant pot of money, we can reach into and grab. There are parts of it that we can draw down and you'll see some of those mitigating actions here in just a moment.

But we've had a drop in that evaluation. We made the decision as a university and it was the right one to refund room, board and athletic fees. We also provided a fund that gave out over a million and a half dollars in bridge funding and aid for students – not financially but assistance

as they look to travel home, needed emergency assistance, to technology to be able to flip to a virtual academic and student environment. We also fully funded financial aid for the entire rest of the spring quarter for our students so that they didn't get impacted in negative ways. And we paid out federal work study grants for students who qualify for federal work study. So there was a lot that went into aid for students that far exceeded the \$1.5 million dollars for sure.

There are additional revenue generating sources were reduced due to having no events – no athletic events with any sales, whether it be ticket sales that bring dollars into the university. No catering, which also kicks back a commission a little bit for Student Affairs and other revenue generating activities have been cut back.

And so what you saw yesterday and the communication from the President and Provost and Senior VP is that's resulting in this current fiscal year – so through the end of August, in about a \$90 million shortfall on the operating budget for current fiscal year.

Lori, anything you like to add to that.

Lori Gordon: Yeah, I think that this is a nice slide Julie, because it really articulates that Student Affairs is not alone, this is the entire university that is, you know, kind of going to be challenged moving forward the rest of this year, and particularly into FY21. So it really is about having everyone kind of moving forward in the right direction and just being really mindful of, of the situation.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: Right. Thank you, Lori. So there have been some responses that you know about. One of the things in the message yesterday talked about that, you know, typically we have a percentage from the endowment that that we can use. The board approved to pull more which is really hard. Particularly since there's such a small window there, but they feel very strongly that they needed to invest more and where we are because of just how uncertain things can be

You know about our hiring freeze with control position approval process for essential staff vacancies. We also have approval processes for students staff, for temporary staff. So that we can as a university collectively get our arms around some of these things. There are also some slowdowns on faculty hiring. So it's not just staff.

Everything is being looked at very granular which can be frustrating. I know that. And it slows things down even more than maybe they were slow down before. But in this time with covid and things changing so quickly. I think it's important to know that our colleagues and other areas, while it may seem incredibly slow to us – And I'm saying this specifically for our colleagues in CAPS right now who we just got approval at the end of last week to move forward with the Executive Director for counseling search – that it can be very frustrating to not know and know that we continue to advocate, so we can get answers as quickly as we can.

And we know there'll be no merit increases at this point for next year as another way to help us control some of those expenditures. We have a freeze on non-essential spending, and asking people to think very critically about what we're spending money on right now as we navigate

toward the end of a fiscal year. We have no travel, which actually does help us save some dollars, but that was put in place, primarily due to restrictions from the government. And there's not a lot of places to travel to right now, and we want to make sure that we're protecting our staff on university business for sure.

And then the difficult news that was shared yesterday about furloughing about 250 staff campus wide and reducing our reliance on temporary staff. It's really hard. We know that we had to be intentional with those decisions and we had to be fast with it and confidential with it to protect those individuals primarily. And just know that it is never where we want to go. But we don't go there unless it's something that we feel is necessary for us to protect the workforce long term. And that they're furloughs and not layoffs is a more positive and hopeful sign of what's to come.

The other thing that is real difficult we know is the no retirement match for employees through the end of this calendar year. That that's a hit. That's an investment hit individually. And we know that, but the number of jobs that it saved was significant. I think (this is this is me talking, not the President or the Provost or the Senior VP)..I think the furlough numbers would have easily hit around the thousand mark had we not made that decision. The other thing is that it hits everyone, not just staff. And one of the things that we that senior leadership was really clear about is that we have to share this burden across faculty and staff. It can't just be staff.

And then the senior leadership took salary reductions, those were not imposed, those were things that collectively we decided to do together because it was the right thing to do.

We know that furloughing at that level typically, doesn't it can't happen because we're going to be expected to work. And so how do we then give...that we give back salary dollars immediately. And so those went anywhere from 10 to even more than 20% of salaries at those key high-level positions.

So those are some of the responses. There are other things happening behind the scenes, Lori if there's anything else you'd like to add to that to would love to call you in to that.

Lori Gordon: Yeah, no, not at the at this time.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: The other thing that I'll offer is I'm going to have Lori very quickly go through just sort of the revenue impact for Student Affairs so you know what that looks like. But Lori and I will do a more detailed budget presentation for the division later on in the spring quarter, where we can get into more detail about revenue and expense and you can see how the university is funded, or how..excuse me division is funded and how we are navigating what it would look like in a typical year and then what it looks like now. And then thinking through strategies for how we can manage moving forward. So Laurie, I'm going to put this over to the operating revenue.

Lori Gordon: Yeah, no thanks, Julie. So what we tried to do here was give everyone a little bit of an idea of why revenue is so important and the division and the university made some really

you know, ethical and right decisions by you know refunding athletic fees and room and board, but when you do that what happens is our revenue sources are like cash to us like it would be your own paycheck. And when we don't have enough revenue coming in, it is really difficult than to support the level of expenditures that we do have across the division.

So what then happens is (and this phenomenon will be seeing university wide), but when you don't have the cash to support the expense then what do you do? You use your savings or what we have here at the university, our fund balances and our carry forward balances. So there's some concern you know, financially at the highest levels of the university that not only has the endowment taken a hit that coupled with the very likely fact that more units will be pulling out of their savings accounts or their fund balance. Is probably taking the endowment down even a little bit lower. And like Morty's email said yesterday, we really want to try to conserve that as much as possible, just for the viability of the university going forward.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: Let me advance here for you Lori. Ok.

Lori Gordon: Thank you. So, the situation that we're in right now, and these numbers basically reflect on kind of a year to date comparison to this year to prior year. Residential Services is, you know, they did a wonderful job – helping students leave and move out. But at the same time issuing room refunds to our students. And while we have a very small population that remains on campus the vast majority of the students have gone. So what does that mean? That really means that we have about \$8 million less, give or take, compared to the same time prior year from room revenue.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: I've got to advance it again. This is why they should never give me technology to play with me. Nate.

Lori Gordon: No thanks, Julie. So, coupled with the room revenue, we also have done a lot of board refunds. And so what you can see is if you look at the food service commissions from prior year to this current year it there's about a \$2 million revenue shortfall into the Residential Services budget. So that kind of combined is a pretty significant hit on the Residential Services side of the house, of about \$10 million. Now, I think that there has to be a lot of credit given to Carlos, and his team and David, everyone is working really hard to look at scenarios going into FY21 to try to conserve revenue and or use our assets as efficiently as possible to keep our revenue in also to serve our students and keep them safe as they look at how do we bring students back into the residence halls.

So Student Affairs is in is in a little better shape from a revenue perspective. And the main reason why is that we are far more dependent on an appropriation or funding from central administration. We don't really have room revenue or board revenue at the significant levels that Residential Services has. So while our revenue is much softer this year, we still have some transfers in and funding that will help us overall. But I do want to give a shout out to the entire Student Affairs Staff, the entire division that not only with the good stewardship that's been going on, and the fact that we've had some naturally occurring savings, with fewer students in the residence halls our utilities are going down and with fewer students in the dining commons, then again, we're not using as much of the cleaning services and kitchen equipment as we

otherwise would. So we do have some natural ebbs in our expenses which are trying, which kind of soften the revenue shortfall. But again, collectively as we continue to look forward and try to be creative and have an understanding of time where we do want to spend money to our priorities that will be really helpful as we learn more about how the next fiscal year is going to settle out.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: And I'm going to add to that because you know, she'll..she'll never thank herself, but there's no way we would be where we are and have our arms around this, as well as we do, if it wasn't for Lori. And so we're thank you so much for your leadership on this and to your entire team. I know that Sheila and David Hartman and Vadal and Gigi and Brian Druley and a whole host of other folks, Michael over in Norris have just come together to really help us think these things through. And to be able to pivot so quickly. So thank you for that. And to all of those folks I mentioned and more that I am certain that I am not mentioning by name, and I apologize for that.

Lori Gordon: Yeah, absolutely. And again, we do appreciate everyone's help and support and just to ditto everything that Julie said the Student Affairs team. We're also here to answer your questions. If something comes to mind after the town hall, please email one of us, and then we'll do our best to get some type of response to you.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: Thank you Lori.

So moving to the next one. Questions about staffing. We talked a little earlier about furloughs, and I know the email that was sent from me yesterday talked a little bit about from our framework, and the email from the President talked about how decisions were made. We've had a lot of questions and I love that it's coming from a place of care. That people want to know. They want to know who, they want to know the departments that are impacted, they want to know, sort of campus wide which areas were impacted more than others, really from a place of wanting to support. What I will ask right now is please know, Student Affairs was able to do ours very quickly. Because there was a concerted effort to make sure it happened quickly and and I will also say this that others are also making concerted efforts. I don't mean that at all. What I mean is that we probably had fewer folks than others maybe to be able, that we needed to communicate with. So all those communications to other units are still happening. The other thing is, we will, we don't know other units outside of Student Affairs, we don't know who those folks are

And at the end of the day, it's important to also remember that the information about whether somebody is furloughed or not that is information that is shared – the employee needs agency to share. So our staff members need to be able to share that on their own.

This is new. This is difficult. We and we still want to support them. So what we can do is think through some scenarios on maybe how we can support them without necessarily knowing specifically who it would be.

I'll invite Selena LeSure, our Director of Human Resources to pop on with me now, and Selena, is there anything else you want to say to that.

Selena LeSure (she/her): Yeah. Good morning Student Affairs. In terms of support of our staff, there are a few things that you can do to help our colleagues through this situation.

The first I want to call to mind is NU Cares which many of you are already familiar with. However, it is a fund that staff can contribute to that allows our furloughed impacted staff to apply for a one time grant to help support them.

Also, I want to encourage you to reach out to staff – continue those relationships and also where you see the opportunity to provide resources through our employee assistance program remind them that that program is available for them as well as anyone in their households.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: Thank you Selena. And then you know if you have personal relationships with folks, as I said in the email, relationships don't end – They don't just because a furlough happens and we have every intention of calling folks back once you know we make it through this time. So as more questions come up, please keep them coming. I don't know if we're gonna be able to know where furloughs happened across campus or not. Selena, I'm not aware of any process yet, but we're still in the middle of notifying right now. So, things could shift.

Selena LeSure (she/her): Correct.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: Yeah. So as we know more, we will absolutely share more with you because we do know that partnerships are important for our work so.

We also had a question or several after yesterday's announcement about retirement benefits. And as I said earlier that decision by the university was it..was it...saved a tremendous number of jobs across the campus because of the...the dollars that were saved from that. And that it shared the burden across the university. Which I think is also important in these times that we collectively do this together, um, Selena, I know there are resources available that people can find that were in I think the email from Manuel, our Vice President from Human Resources.

Selena LeSure (she/her): Yes, it is advised for any questions around retirement benefit that you reach out directly to the administrator of the benefits. So for some that is TIAA, and for others that is Fidelity. We have staff and central human resources, who are experts on benefits. However, as you can imagine, there will probably be a rush. So just remember that in addition to those staff, you have the folks over at the agencies available as well.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: Thank you. Selena Oh, something else?

Selena LeSure (she/her): No not at this time.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: It's that fun zoom thing – It looks like someone's about to talk and then they don't.

So we also got a questions about essential personnel and what that means. And the one thing I'll preface with before I turn it to Selena is, essential personnel right now continues to shift and how we define essential personnel continues to change. In part because we're in a global pandemic and we've never had to do this before. And so I think we've got some basic definitions and Selena can talk through, but this will continue to evolve, I have no doubt so Selena.

Selena LeSure (she/her): Yes. So during the time of pandemic the university has a policy that focuses on essential positions and essential functions. The University defines that as anyone who is necessary to get us through a campus emergency. So any position, any function, (function being the department or area of the university) to get us through that emergency so that designation can happen at the beginning of an emergency in the middle or at the end.

Some places that people tend to get confused when they hear essential, is in terms of an a essential position for an emergency versus an essential job function. Essential job functions are things that we do every day whether an emergency is in place or not. And when you think about your duties or your job description, those things listed as accountabilities on your job description are your essential functions -- those usually carry higher percentages on the job description. Those are the reasons that the job exists. Those are essential job functions and that's different than a position designation during an emergency. We also during this time have folks referring to being an essential worker and needing to be on campus. Those two don't necessarily go hand in hand. You can have an essential position and not have to be physically present on campus to do it. And we've seen that with many folks in Student Affairs continuing the work that you're doing from home or other locations.

Also there's a talk about essential spending and this is very specific to your particular areas and really driven by your work during this pandemic. So for us, and Student Affairs, essential spending is anything that is necessary to get us through this pandemic and continue our mission.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: Great, thank you Selena. We'll also make sure that some of those definitions we can link to those in an upcoming snapshot for folks if that's helpful, so you can refer back to this. Anything else Selena you want to talk about when it comes to staff right now?

Selena LeSure (she/her): I want to encourage everyone to check out the FAQs that are available on the Northwestern website. You can access those through the the main homepage through the Covid-19 Update, there's an FAQ drop down in the menu and there's work related topics. Over there, you'll see information related to the staff furloughs, information related to retirement benefits and then also there's an additional document behind the single...single sign on feature that gives further details.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: All right, thank you so much, Selena and I also want to thank you and Irene – I know for a lot of the work that you all are doing with the partners across the division to help our staff feel supported and answer a lot of questions. And any of the folks that

got an essential personnel letter early on, know that Selena and Irene basically did all of those to send to you. So thank you for those papers, that's very helpful.

All right – We also got questions about staff and students safety. Really focused on things like, How are we going to ensure that our staff are safe when we start returning to campus? And, what are the things that we need to be concerned about? And, so what I'd like to do is invite Todd and Jeremy and then we'll pull in Bob Palinkas, so you're going to see four of us now. Hi Jeremy. Hi, Todd.

Todd Adams: Hello.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: Is Bob there to? I see his box – So we'll start with Todd and Jeremy. And so when we...these two folks (and several folks that are on this call quite frankly) are involved with a lot of planning and we'll get to return to fall planning here in just a moment...But the questions really talking about staffing student safety are about once we return or as we're returning, what are some of the things that we are doing. And so whether Todd or Jeremy, you want to start, I will turn it over to you.

Jeremy Schenk: Well, Todd, I'm happy to maybe start with the university principles for planning and then I'll turn it over and you can add to that piece, but as we've looked at the planning framework for the fall, one of the...some of the overarching principles that have been in place for how we look to reopen – our top principle is safety first...first and operation second.

That we need to stay in alignment with both state and federal guidelines, we need to consider and center the student experience, and that is something that the division is really helped center across the entire campus and has advocated for that piece. We need to connect to the decisions being made by other the other work groups that are happening across campus. We have to look at how to avoid taxing other campus operations.

We're going to work in phases. We're not going to just the stay home orders lifted and all of us return. There's gonna be a phased approach as we look at re..reopening the campus.

We need to look in be fiscally fiscally fiscally responsible as we're going through this process, and we need to have a plan that is flexible and adaptable. I think those two words have defined the last two months and will define the next several as we go forward.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: Thanks, Jeremy.

Todd Adams: Ya, thank you Jeremy. I want to just echo that the guiding principle here is the health and safety of everyone from students to staff to faculty to visitors, contracted employees, so everybody is is being considered.

And centrally Luke Figura, who's the Senior Associate Vice President for Risk and Compliance is kind of an overarching way leading these efforts to make sure that we're aligned with everything that Jeremy just said and I think importantly, things like what will PPE look like for us? What will the setup of spaces be and how will, will they be functioning? And speaking of

function we're probably going to be in a period of dual modality where we're doing some things using technology and remote and some things in person. And so we only expect that to continue, particularly as we meet state and and CDC guidelines for for health and safety.

Bob, do you have some things you'd like to offer here?

Robert Palinkas: No, only that I've been able to join almost all of the critical campus planning operations around safety and and we look at all kinds of opportunities that there are for us to envision and create a space where essentially most or all students can be back on campus, and yet we can do what we need to do in a safe way.

Todd Adams: Thank you, Bob. And I also offer that no one will be brought back to campus until we have some guidelines and expectations that we will have implemented in order to protect everybody's health and well being when they are on campus.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: Absolutely. Thank you to the three of you for your work there and for answering those questions. And this is also another area that continues to evolve. But it does set us up to do cool things like planning for Fall and you heard, Todd, say, you know, the intention about bringing folks back. And so I'm going to a couple of things to know and then I'm going to turn it over to Todd – Todd has really been a good operational lead for us in a number of different ways. And so, Todd thank you so much for your work there. You and Bob in particular.

We've got several committees that are happening, but you also need to know that we're going to be looking at Student Affairs at the student experience within the context of all of this. It is what we are called to do we. We...SALT had a retreat last Thursday, virtually we did not all show up in the same space, and talked through some big buckets for planning and we will leverage the Student Affairs Council meeting next week to really dive into that more deeply and figure out yes we can bring people back if we get to that point, we have the guidelines in place and safety is there, and what on earth does it look like for our students?

What does it mean for folks who have been experiencing something that isn't just unsettling, but that is traumatic at some level and how do we provide them those supports? And I think about, you know, our most vulnerable and marginalized student populations in this time. And so it really calls us to need to center them in anything that we do.

But when we talk about planning for Fall, I want to turn this over to Todd, there's a couple things that he'll go through with you. So, Todd...

Todd Adams: Thanks, Julie. Jeremy fairly well covered these as we centered this also in kind of the health and safety of the community, but you can see as we re-enter and there's a runway for that – I mean, right now we're still shelter in place and we're staying at home. And even if that is lifted there will likely be some time before some operations would open on the campus. And then before we would even have a return, whether that's in the fall, or at some other point with in-person instruction and more full campus operation. So, Jeremy covered these and we're happy to send this back out and share them but Julie, if we can advance to the next slide I think

it shows folks what the structure is to get to a point where we might have a more full operation on campus, albeit in maybe a dual modality as we've already mentioned.

You can see at the top with our planning, it's going to be led by the Provost and our Senior Vice President but to that end, three groups have emerged to look at this from distinct lenses. One in particular is around structure and process – how we're organized – What things do we need to be aware of in the new environment to allow us to function, knowing that that may change just a bit.

The middle one, and this is a place where a lot of us in Student Affairs are involved, and I think we're many of you (and we mentioned Council next week), but I would suggest a large number of us will be involved over the next many months and that's a return to campus and safety work group and Julie is a part of this that's being led by Luke Figura again. And it's really at a high level, to make sure that 30,000 foot view we're connecting the dots. we're making sure that all of our areas are covered as we bring back campus operations. And the last piece is financial, what are we doing to ensure fiscal understandings and operations and obviously capital expenditures so the financial workgroup is sitting out there.

You can see under the return to campus and safety workgroup there are six, and I can tell you that will be iterations of these six, and I wish there were arrows connecting among them. Those six actually meet weekly at least the...the leads to make sure we're on the same page with each other and we have folks from the Provost Office looking at instruction and academic spaces, to administrative elements and office features and spaces and what those needs to look like.

Athletics meaning varsity athletics – Some of you have heard that the Big 10 is sort of punted at least until June 1 but the NCAA has made some announcements. So more to come there but also our large events, we think of A&O Blow-Out, we can think about Dance Marathon, we can think about Dillo since that's on the mind of some folks. Other events that we host, a lot of them in Norris or in places like Parkes or in our cultural centers, all the places that we hold events.

There is business recovery, and that's really kind of behind the scenes, but one that is going to be very important. And Gwen Butler who works with Lucas leading that.

Housing, dining and health – And this is, this is where the res services team, the health services team and our dining ops – the work that has been done here to begin to model ways in which we can return safely, but also create experiences that Julie is mentioning and that we need to turn our attention to. The work here is is monumental but I'm very proud of the group that's involved here and then research and support. And that's such a huge function. We have over \$700 million annually and sponsored research, how do we continue those functions, some of which are around health and covid so they're critically important now.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: Thank you so much Todd. So you can see there's a lot that's going on. We'll start to hear, I think I said earlier, a change in the tone a little bit from communications from the Provost, the President and Senior VP about what this planning starts to look like. And as frameworks are adopted and and principles are adopted for return to campus and return to Fall, we will share those with you as quickly as we know. Because we are

a fundamental part of the of this entire process, and as Todd said there are folks on this call, and I don't just mean the folks that are on the panel, but in the division that are scattered throughout a number of these different committees, so we're leveraging our talent and we'll do that even more with the student experience. So thank you, Todd, for that.

We also got a question about commencement. So Jeremy and Kelly have been working really hard to shift from an in-person to a virtual environment as has their entire collective team and a number of people in the Division of Student Affairs that support this. So, Jeremy in like 15 seconds or less, the question really was about, are we really going to bring all those people into a space to be in the same location with each other? I think that's what I saw – like isn't that putting all your eggs in one basket if you put all the senior leaders in one room?

Jeremy Schenk: Yeah, that that will not be happening. We will be...the virtual ceremony, we're aligning our planning with state and federal guidelines. There will be a mix of pre-recorded and live segments. There's a safety plan in development with Risk and the Department of Safety and Security and Commencement. And the final number of the people in the room and on the stage is still to be determined, but it'll be governed by both public health guidelines and personal choice. It will be a much smaller segment of the overall university leadership.

Julie A. Payne-Kirchmeier: Yea. Thank-You Jeremy. And I really do appreciate the question, though, because the question was one coming straight out of care and concern and so thank you for that, as somebody who is typically on the dais up there, I appreciate the care and concern, not just for me but of the entire leadership. It's a kind thing to do and to ask.

Um, so we are actually now at the announcement portion and we're ending right on time. I do want to urge you all, as many of you may be reflectors, and you're thinking about these things that we've said there are other questions you have, please feel free to send those to me at the VPSA at Northwestern account. There are a couple of opportunities for a virtual lunch with the VP coming up, May 27 from 12 to 1pm and June 10 from 1 to 2pm.

We will also be scheduling some office hours that you can reserve a portion of that time with Ronnie and so we'll announce those through the snapshot when they are available and how to sign up. And we also virtual commencement will happen on June 19. We will also be sharing more information with you all about a tradition that's important to us, which is our Student Affairs Staff awards and how we can realize that in a virtual environment here soon. And then we are going to have our Student Affairs Assessment Conference on June 23, virtually from 8:30 to noon and Rob Aaron and Amy Huntington have been doing great work along with that group that's been doing these different research and assessment projects to be able to provide a really rich and robust experience for you all.

I do want to thank Jill Norton and Jessica Toro-Pacheco for all of the graphics that you see, except for the ones I did, I won't make Jessica take credit for things that I did that she probably could do a lot better but I just appreciate that level of support. To Chris and Anthony and Nate from Norris Event Management who've been making this thing run so smoothly and to Regan Lindsey and Ronnie Toca and Lesley-Ann Brown-Henderson, who have also been navigating things behind the scenes and answering some questions as they pop up.

I'd like to thank the SALT members who were here and helping us think through and answer some of these questions and you are free to reach out to any of them in this process.

And then I do want to close with remembering Patricia. We sent home a card and a little dragon fly pin to everybody's home address that was on record for the division. I'll say if you didn't get one, the mail has been a little slow in places of please let Ronnie know and we will make sure to get you one – We'll do a supplemental mailing or figure out a way to get it to you quickly.

But June 3 it will be one year since Patricia has passed, and we want to make sure that we are remembering her. And so we're inviting all of you, and the entire Northwestern community, the community of Student Affairs and other universities and people that knew her to either wear something that reminds you or inspires you about Patricia, post a picture of yourself on June 3, tag social media accounts. But use the remembering PTI hashtag or if it's better for you to just sit and remember her on that day in a way that's meaningful for you we encourage you to do so.

She's made such a difference for all of us. She's made such a difference for our field, and most importantly, our students that we want to make sure the day does not go by without her being recognized.

And, and finally, thank you for everything that you've been doing, for everything that you will continue to do to help us move forward through this time together. I can say that this webinar is being recorded and it will be transcribed and translated into Spanish. So that, and then we will post that and let you know in the snapshot when it's available so that folks can revisit it and just grab onto more information or if you need to go back to a certain spot you can do that and reflect a little bit more.

But please don't hesitate to reach out to any of us, any of the SALT members please connect with each other. Please keep taking care of each other. And thank you again for everything that you're doing to help our students during this time.

Have a phenomenal day.