

Kristen Glass Perez

S1 01:39

[music] Good morning, everyone. It's wonderful to see everyone here this morning. A special thanks to Rob Aaron and Alejandro Dominguez for hosting the Mix and Mingle event that was right before this. I am sure that many of you were able to enjoy that. My name is Kristen Glass Perez. My pronouns are she and her. And I started midway through the fall quarter as university chaplain and executive director of Religious and Spiritual Life. I haven't had a chance to meet all of you, so please know how grateful I am for this opportunity to be with you in this way this morning. During the month of May, in Religious and Spiritual Life, we are exploring something called spiritual ecology. What is that? Well, the Twitter version of spiritual ecology is that it is something that invites us to deepen our own reflection about our connections with the Earth and with each other.

S1 02:45

In an essay called *In the Time of the Sacred Places*, activist, environmentalist, economist, politician, and author Wenonah LaDuke of the Mississippi Band of the Ojibwe writes this: "The Anishinaabe people undulate between worlds. The parallel planes of spirit and material world coexist in perpetuity. All that is sacred remains despite the jackhammer of industrial civilization, the sound of combustion engines, and the sanitized white of a dioxin bleached day. Teaching as ancient as the people who have lived on a land for five millennia speak of a set of relationships to all that is around. Predicated on respect, recognition of the interdependency of all beings, an understanding of human's absolute need to be reverent, and to manage our behavior. And an understanding that this relationship must be reaffirmed through life ways and through acknowledgment of both the sacred and the flawed." One of our program options during the month of spiritual ecology is an approved in-person guided walk of the Evanston campus with Adam Kessell, urban ecologists, indigenous activist here in Chicago, and author of a book called *Zombie Gardening*. Adam will highlight how invasive species and native plants coexist in a historical and lived woven narrative of experience.

S1 04:46

As we begin this meeting, may we recognize the parallel plains of perpetuity. Northwestern University is a community of learners situated within a network of historical and contemporary relationships with Native American tribes, communities, parents, students, and alumni. It is also in close proximity to an urban Native American community in Chicago and near several tribes in the Midwest. The Northwestern campus sits on the traditional homelands of the people of the Council of Three Fires, the Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa, as well as the Menominee, Miami, and Ho-Chunk nations. It was also a site of trade, travel, gathering, and healing for more than a dozen other native tribes and is still home to over 100,000 tribal members in the state of Illinois. It is within Northwestern's responsibility as an academic institution to disseminate knowledge about native peoples and the institution's history with them. Consistent with the university's commitment to diversity and inclusion, Northwestern works towards building relationships with Native American communities through academic pursuits, partnerships, historical recognitions, community service, and enrollment efforts. As a division, we need to remember the strengths of our native and indigenous communities while also committing to the reconciliation and healing that needs to take place between Northwestern University and these communities.

S1 06:40

Closing with the words, once again, of Wenonah LaDuke: "Our past is our present. Our present is our future. And our future is seven generations past and present." I'm

now so pleased to introduce our Vice President of Student Affairs, Dr. Julie Payne-Kirchmeier.

Julie Payne Kirchmeier

S2 07:06

Thank you, Kristen. And I just need to take a moment and acknowledge and thank you for starting us off in such an important and meaningful way. That was moving, educational, grounding, and beautiful. And so when we talk about land acknowledgements and moving beyond that, you just gave us a very real example of how to do that for ourselves, for our teams, for our entire division. So thank you so much for that. I really appreciate it. I also want to add my welcome. And for those of us who are-- folks who are new here-- and I know we had some. We saw on our screens at the very beginning. My name is Julie Payne-Kirchmeier. As Kristen said, I'm the vice president for Student Affairs. And I use she/her pronouns. And it is my honor to walk alongside you and serve you all in the university in this role. We do have a full agenda today. And we just had our welcome and land acknowledgement. We've got some updates for you in some really important areas from strategic planning to our work on racial equity to what's happening with spring events. I know there's a lot of questions about that. And then there's summer and fall transition work. We had some questions submitted ahead of time that the presentations will address in part. And then we'll work those in in the Q&A. And then there'll be moments for folks to ask questions. And then we'll come to the end with a little bit of recognition and some closing. So thank you again so much for being with us so that we can dive into these together. I do want to start us off, though, with just some general thoughts. And I won't take too much time. No one needs to hear me talk the whole time. I know that that gets a little bit mundane at times.

S2 08:46

But Kris, if you could advance the slide. This is sort of what I'm feeling like right now. I don't know about the rest of y'all, but it is April in Student Affairs at Northwestern and we're well into the spring quarter. And I feel like this dog. I feel like if someone was going to move me, they were going to have to drag me. I am tired. Yeah. Dog pancake. Thank you, Ronnie. And I feel like this is mile 20 of a 26-mile marathon in a typical year. And this year, it's even harder. And we know that and we say it, but I think we're really, really feeling it right now. There's a lot of anxiety and fear and stress and the isolation has been mounting. And then we have all of the external impacts of world events, even as recent as last week, that really just continue to pile on and result in this level of exhaustion. Lucas, that's a great comment. He sent it to the panelists. This is an ultra 50-plus miles. So ultramarathons, if anybody runs a [inaudible], it just-- we're exhausted. And I feel this dog so hard. And this isn't just us. Right. This is our students. It's our families. It's our communities. And it's our world. And when I'm this tired, and I don't know if you all can feel this too, I just kind of go into brain freeze. Like when I saw the new Microsoft platform and kind of just stared at the screen for a while. SAIT, I don't blame you. I'm just going to navigate it, which is totally fine.

S2 10:20

Kris, if you could change it. This is sort of how my brain feels right now, all locked up when I get this screen on my iPhone. Like I can't make one more decision. Is it end or hold and what do the symbols mean? Should I decline it? There are too many choices and things coming at me. No matter which button I push, it'll be wrong because I'll either hang up on the president or I'll put a parent on hold and never be able to get back to it. And maybe it's just me. And I'm only talking to the folks that are maybe over the age of 50 like me. But it just all adds up and I can't do one more thing. And in the words of Jeremy Schenck, we end up in this space where we're all a little extra crispy. If you could advance, Kris. In those moments, and I have found myself in this place, I find myself looking for those pieces of joy or celebration. And last week,

Lesley-Ann offered a phrase that I've been reflecting on and using over the past few days. And that's, you're finding flickers of hope. And I thought about that. And I thought, when we think about flickers, we don't necessarily see them at first. And if you don't look for them, you can ignore them. Right. And you have to be intentional about finding them so they can be nurtured and they can grow. And so yesterday-- was it yesterday morning? Yeah. This is just Tuesday. Okay. Yesterday morning, I was meeting with a group of folks for Student Affairs and I made the decision to ask folks if they could identify that moment. Like if they've seen one. The moment of celebration or a flicker of hope. And we heard large and small things. Like somebody slept through the night for the first time because their two-year-old had been keeping them awake. And then finally, the night before, they got to sleep through the night. And the rest and relief on their face was palpable. One person talked about how their son made a realization about his life that was affirming and so important. And the joy on this parent's face and sound in their voice was just lovely to see and hear.

S2 12:16

Somebody talked about a major purchase, right, and that it was a long time coming. And the pride and anticipation of that achievement was palpable. And then somebody talked about an earlier meeting that morning where they reframed, in the moment, a lot of questions that were coming toward them really were more about helping them think through a process more clearly and not about judgment or blame. And that was a wonderful pivot space for me. And then I shared the joy about being able to see a friend of mine in person, a friend that I've had for over 20 years, and actually being able to hug her. And so some of these are small, some of these are large, but they all represented moments of joy and celebration. And I see that throughout our division and things that you all continue to do. Whether it's all the vaccination clinics and the relief and joy that folks have when they're coming into those spaces and how they're being greeted up to and including the midnight vaccination that a whole team pulled off from Health Service and Norris and Risk Management and our athletic trainers and just really helping our students make progress in that space. We've got a crew that's supporting student government right now that are predominantly in Campus Life as they go through almost a rebirth of their organization and are really navigating some really difficult things. We have an entire team focusing on Sexual Assault Awareness Month. And I see the folks in CARE, Carrie Wachter and your team, and how you're stepping up and co-planning this with Office of Equity and AccessibleNU and some partners in CIC, and bringing that forward to students at such an important time. I see lots of work in Racial Equity and Social Justice in different units and focused on different things. Whether it's how would we really address possibly renaming spaces that we oversee on campus, right, in respectful and thoughtful and equitable and inclusive ways. And a great example of a group that's been doing that work is there's a subgroup in Norris that has been really looking at Norris spaces and the impact that has.

S2 14:18

Or I know the Dean of Students team, you all have a daylong work tomorrow that you're going to do as you dive into Racial Equity and Social Justice work together. And I still see people bringing comfort to each other. There was a small group of us that ended up in the source yesterday-- last week. Sorry. And it was unplanned, and yet the lightness and the community and the support that was felt in that space carried me through for days. And I hope it did the same for the folks that we saw up there when Kelly Schaefer and I were there with Brent and Tracy and Patrick and Keith and I'm blanking. Jake was up there too. And Rusty. And just really being together and then even popping in on Zoom when Kelly Bangert and Travis were there. And it was an energy level and it was one of those flickers of hope and moments of joy. And there's so much work that's happening that makes these moments occur. And I hope

that what you're able to see is that when those moments of hope happen, that it really is a foundation for critical help. And Kris, if you could advance. Thank you. When you have these moments of critical hope-- and there are so many more that I would be here for an hour and a half if I could name them all. And just like light, when they combine, they can light the way. And I also want to frame that critical hope doesn't mean that we're pretending that things aren't real. It's not delusional. It's not denial. It doesn't ignore real challenges or trouble or danger. It doesn't make excuses. It's acknowledging the truth and working to find the best way to both cope and show up and pull through. It's working through the hard stuff while still believing that something better and more meaningful is possible. And I share that with you not just as a personal moment of revelation, but really more about how we want to frame our conversation for the rest of our time together.

S2 16:18

We know we'll be talking about things that are hope filled. When we talk about strategic planning and we talk about leaning in and doing the intentional and deep work around Racial Equity, that is hope filled. When we talk about recovery. And that's what we're entering into, is phases of recovery for our community, for our state, for our university, for our students, for each other. The hope filled approach to what a collective future could look like for a division is there. And as Student Affairs, we have a fundamental role to play in that recovery. And I know we will do it well. In all honesty, I feel anxiety about it. I'm sitting here on campus right now. And we'll start going to in-person events that are happening or meeting with folks in person soon. But I also hold in combination with that anxiety, that sense of calm and hope and purpose. And know that I have faith in this team, in you, our students. And I hope that you can find purpose and do the same for yourselves as I've shared here and others have shared for your teams and your students. And just hold on to-- remember that yes, fear is contagious and we've seen that happen. And it's real, but so is hope. So I offer that up as a way to start our conversation today, to ground ourselves in this moment, in addition to the lovely grounding that Kristen gave us as well. And with that, we will begin our updates and conversations with the rest of you. So I'd like to invite in Rob Aaron, our executive director for Student Affairs Assessment and Planning, and Lesley-Ann Brown-Henderson, our assistant vice president for Inclusion and chief of staff, to talk about strategic planning. So Lesley-Ann and Rob.

Lesley-Ann Brown-Henderson

S3 18:05

Good morning, everyone. Nice to, not really see you, but to be with you this morning. Rob Aaron and I are leading our strategic planning process for the division and really wanted to give you all some updates as to what to expect. So on this next slide, you'll see that we are in the midst of the process. So we had a kickoff towards the end of March, which was just a message in the SA snapshot to tell you all we're kicking off this process. And the first step is really the practices survey. And that survey was open for about three weeks. And we asked the entire staff to take it and to give some feedback specifically on our current strategic plan in the division. There are also some additional modules that some folks also were encouraged to take to give some feedback in specific areas. We just closed up that survey on Friday. I know some people had some technical difficulties with that and wrote to myself and Rob and just appreciate your patience as we are engaging with NASPA Advisory Services throughout this entire process. So they are working alongside of us as we are trying to understand where we are heading as a division and how we want to articulate that in the strategic plan. So now, where we're heading is in a period of engagement, and Rob Aaron will kind of talk through what next steps look like. But we want to say that at every stage of this process, we certainly want to hear from staff across the division. And we're going to also hear from some stakeholders, external to Student Affairs, but there'll be multiple feedback loops. So the first part was trying to get as much

feedback broadly from the staff on our current strategic plan. And that was through the practices survey. We're going to go through a remote interview period, which Rob Aaron will talk more about the timing of that. And that will engage 100-plus staff in small group interviews with our reviewer team who NASPA Advisory Services put together for us.

S3 20:08

That will support the creation of a report. They'll be looking at some pre-existing data we have, the practices survey data, and then these remote interviews, and they'll come up with a report. From that report, that will then inform our process moving into a retreat of sorts. And the retreat is going to be a little bit smaller because we intend for it to be remote, but they're also going to be feedback loops for the staff throughout that process. There are going to be at least two or three, and one specifically with SA Council as well throughout that time. So again, we want to get your feedback. We want you all to be involved. And we certainly know that this plan will not be successful if you all don't see your work represented in it. So we are eager to hear from you. If you have feedback for us at any point, please feel free to email myself or Rob. And we will support, we will listen, and we'll integrate the feedback into the process. So with that, I'm going to pass to Rob so that he can share a little bit about next steps.

Robert Aaron

S4 21:11

Sure. Thanks, Lesley-Ann. And also, thanks, Julie. I think that your opening remarks about the fact that we are-- excuse me. Encountering some hope filled processes is really important when we're looking at the notion of strategic planning and really able to have some forward thought about where do we see things going. So to that end, as Lesley-Ann mentioned, we do want everyone to be involved in some way, shape, or form. I very much hope that you were able to complete the part of the survey that you were asked to complete. One of the things about strategic planning is that it involves so many of us in the division. We do want everyone's voice. Not everyone will be able to be involved in every step of the way. And that's okay because we do have these built-in feedback loops like Lesley-Ann just mentioned. So first and foremost, we'll be having remote interviews. There will be a total of 14 of these spread across many different stakeholders, many of us in the division. A lot of the groups are going to be drawn at random. We are in the process right now of collecting the names of folks who will participate in those smaller cluster meetings. These will be facilitated by our partners through NASPA. We're so grateful to be working with external folks who can be helping us as partners so that we all can participate in this process with you. So those will be occurring on May 11th and 12th. We'll be going into then a strategic planning retreat, mostly with members of Student Affairs Council and SALT July 8th and 9th. And that will then generate some of the first drafts of the plan that NASPA Advisory Services will be producing. And that's where everyone in the division comes in, is that we have these feedback loops set up in mid-July and then again-- well, July the 19th and then again July the 23rd. So we're going to have these opportunities in July for folks to provide feedback.

S4 23:12

So when you're asked to dig into that, I do hope that you can take the time to really reflect on what it is that you're seeing on the page. Is it reflective of where you envision the division going. And then give us honest feedback on what you think is going on. That's going to be a primary way for you to participate in this process. We'll have a first draft of this plan in August and we'll go through a small process of revision. But then we'll be launching this new strategic plan in the fall. So it's a quick process. It's designed to get multiple constituents involved. We're really excited to be looking ahead and seeing what the next few steps of our plan will end up being. So

that's our basic overview of the next steps. I'm happy to turn it back over to Julie or Lesley-Ann if you were going to say anything else. I don'the--

Lesley-Ann Brown-Henderson

S3 24:03

Yeah. Just really quickly, just wanted to mention that for the remote interviews, the number that we're looking for per interview slot is about 20 staff members or 20 people. And that is because we're doing these remote on Zoom. So we were advised by NASPA Advisory Services to try to keep the groups smaller, more manageable so that everyone can have a voice and also that we're not clicking through multiple screens to be able to see people or to hear voices. The last thing I'll just say about the remote interviews is that we want everyone's voice. So we will have a session for Spanish speakers. We will have a session that's really based on function and not necessarily content of your job. Right. So from every level, broad and deep, within student affairs, we want to hear from people and we will make sure that we are hearing from a broad breadth of our staff throughout the division.

Julie Payne Kirchmeier

S2 25:02

Thanks, Lesley-Ann and Rob. And I'm going to pause here for just a moment. Two things. One, I just want to thank everybody who had the ability to take the survey. We understand that things being what they are, time being what it is, responsibilities being what they are, sometimes you just can't engage. But it doesn't mean, as you've heard Lesley-Ann and Rob both say, that there's not other points of engagement for you. Right. And also understand, Rob, as our assessment and planning human has access to a lot of data that we already have. And so you've answered many things before. And so this will also be utilized. So I don't want people to think that if you didn't get a chance to do that, for whatever reason, that you're not part of this, because you've heard me say before, when we talk about a vision and we talk about a strategic plan for the division, it's ours. It's not mine, it's not Lesley-Ann's, it's not Rob's, it's not SALT, it's ours. And so that's why we have so many of these touch points and engagement opportunities for you. And we want to make sure that you're able to take advantage of those. Second thing I want to do is just to pause here so that we can sort of connect questions to content. Are there questions that folks may have that you want to put in the chat to the panelists or through Q&A or however it makes the most sense to you about the strategic planning process or anything that Rob and Lesley-Ann and just shared? I'm pausing to check for little red bubbles when they pop up on chat [inaudible]. Okay. So if you think of something-- I know some folks, you're hearing it, you get to sit with it for a minute, we'll have time at the end as well so that if you think of something along the way or dots start connecting for you, we will absolutely take the time at the end to answer those questions. So, Rob, Lesley-Ann, I want to thank you both, not just for presenting here, but for your-- I think, Lesley-Ann, you called your duo the caretaker of the process, I think, in a meeting the other day. In your leadership in this space, we're going to have, I think, a really robust and good process and a great outcome because of what you do. So thank you.

S2 27:10

So with that, we'll transition into the next section, which is about Racial Equity. So Lesley-Ann will stay, given her new role. And again, congratulations and thank you for taking this on, Lesley-Ann. As the assistant vice president for Inclusion and chief of staff, one of the responsibilities that she holds is the strategic approach that we need to be taking as a division on Racial Equity. And that was very intentional when we talked about the role. And so she'll give you an update on where we are as a division. And Lesley-Ann, if you can also weave in maybe some things about how that connects to the university, that would be great. So, Lesley-Ann, back to you again.

Lesley-Ann Brown-Henderson

S3 27:49

Good morning, again. So as it relates to Racial Equity, when Julie assumed the role as vice president, she said we were going to take Racial Equity and Social Justice seriously as a division. And really at the time, there are two things really happening. There is a thought about these commitments towards Social Justice that the university had put forward in June of last year. And I was named as an action leader as well, along with Manuel, who's the vice president of Human Resources, and now Robin Means Coleman, who is our new chief diversity officer. And we have been-- our role is to try to see what the commitments are, to understand them, and to advance them. And we do reporting back to Julie and to Craig and Kathleen and our president about where we are, what resources are needed, and our best thoughts and expertise about how we are moving these things forward as an institution. That work is work that's happening. The division is named or has a role to play in multiple of the commitments. In addition to that, we are undergoing the strategic planning process and Racial Equity is going to be a central part of that process. So what we needed to try to do is to understand there's a university kind of response that's happening currently that we have some responsibility for Student Affairs. There is the strategic planning process that we are currently undergoing. And hopefully by the beginning of the academic year, it's our intention to have a plan that we will share broadly. So what happens in between? And my colleagues in SA Council, we had a meeting last quarter and we really kind of dove into some work around Racial Equity.

S3 29:45

SALT has been doing some work around this and really came to a place where we thought we could put forward some potential goals to SA Council for feedback, for reworking, for rethinking and for participation and collaboration. So we worked in SA Council. We had six groups meet around some proposed goals. And what came from that was three goals arose as goals that we want to move forward within the midst of what the university is doing and in the midst of us moving forward towards our strategic planning process or with our strategic planning process. So here are the three goals that we are working towards. One is develop and implement a curriculum, a foundational social justice competencies for all divisional staff. So that's across all of our division. The second is create a mentoring program for [inaudible] staff, specifically, around career advancement, around mentorship. And then the third is develop an inclusive racially just hiring guide. What we've done since is we invited SA Council members who wanted to continue the work outside of the SA Council space to volunteer. And we got about 15 volunteers. And each group or each goal has a SALT liaison who's working with our colleagues from SA Council to move forward each of these goals. There are two kind of guideposts of time that we've asked these groups to consider. The first is we'll have an SA Council meeting in the next couple of weeks and that they be prepared to share an update with the group to say, "Here's where we are. Here's where we're heading. Here's what we're thinking." And that meeting is scheduled for May, 19.

S3 31:36

The second kind of guidepost is really to say we want to think about implementation of these three goals for the 21/22 academic year. So it's this coming fall, winter, and spring. So what would be the recommendation about how we implement these goals for the next academic year? So that is what my colleagues in SA Council have been doing. That is what we've been doing on a university scale. And then also know that Racial Equity will be a central part of the strategic planning process. So we will all have an opportunity to give our feedback as well as our thoughts around how ideas around Racial Equity and Social Justice more generally should be informing our practice as well as our mission and vision as a division.

Julie Payne Kirchmeier

S2 32:27

Thank you, Lesley-Ann. Adding in, I appreciate there were some folks that asked questions about-- and I'll reframe it a little bit. How do we ensure that this work moves beyond the folks who are really leading the work? Whether that be you, whether that be the work working group leads, whether that be our colleagues who typically take on this work, whether embedded in a unit or in units like CIC. And I think about your example, Lesley-Ann, about expertise. And we'll use Lori Gordon as an example. I don't know if you want to share that or I'm happy to and how that connects.

Lesley-Ann Brown-Henderson

S3 33:12

Sure. I'm happy to. So the example that I used as I was talking to SALT about this is that I think sometimes there's a lot of concern around, well, the experts are the people who need to do this and I don't feel like I have expertise maybe. And there's some truth to that. But I do think that as a university, as a division, as folks who work in Student Affairs, we have some competencies, right, as staff from our national associations that kind of inform our practice. And there's some minimal competencies within Social Justice that our national associations have said are important for any practitioner in Student Affairs. So the example that I gave to my colleagues was we all need to know how to manage our budgets. That is a prerequisite to being able to do our work. It's an expectation of our work. We need to be good stewards of our funds. That doesn't mean that I know what to do. I can do what Laurie does. Laurie Gordon is our executive director of Business and Finance. Brilliant and can do lots of things that I have no idea how to do. I'm not expected to be able to have the same level of competence as Laurie, but I am expected to have a minimal competency that I can do my job. And I think when we're thinking about Racial Equity, there is a minimal competency that needs to be required. It should be an expectation of people who work in Student Affairs and certainly our national associations have affirmed that. So I think that's to just speak to what you are saying, Julie. I think to the broader question part of it as well. Right. So part of my role, I am assistant vice president for Inclusion. So this is a part of the work that I do. I think for the Campus Inclusion and Community team, this is a part of the work that they do with and for students.

S3 35:14

I think the parts in which we need to, one, be building confidence across the division within all units. Two, how do we give people agency. So at what point, if we're doing something for staff or something more broadly, do we not only count on the voices of CIC, the folks in CIC, or folks in other spaces within the division that have this expertise, but also give people the opportunity and the ability to say, you know what, I don't have capacity for this right now. And that's what we've tried to do with SA Council because they are tending to their every day work, which is really student facing. And also give people the opportunity to feel like they do have capacity to build their competency and to get engaged. So those are just a couple of thoughts related to the question you posed, Julie.

Julie Payne Kirchmeier

S2 36:06

Thank you, Lesley-Ann. And thanks for the context behind the question that one of our staff members was asking. I'll also [inaudible] at the beginning of this report about how this is something that the division is taking seriously. And I will, again, echo what I have said in other spaces, that this is something that we will do as a division. You heard Lesley-Ann talk about competencies. You can see that one of the first goals we have is what is that curriculum of Foundational Social Justice competencies need to look like for our divisional staff. What are those expectations that we have? And so I think it's important that we know that this is a full divisional effort. This is not leaning solely on individuals to do the work. It's all of us have work to do, whether it's individually, whether it's collectively, whether it's programmatically. So I see some questions that have come in too about are there folks involved in these working

groups who can provide expert perspective on Health Equity. And I think that's an interesting thing that we need to consider. So thank you for offering that. We've got some folks in there that are currently part of Health Service. But if we're really looking at all forms of equity, I think that's an important component to consider. I know when we look at equity, yes, we lean in heavily with Racial Equity, but there are other forms of equity that we've got to connect these dots on because these don't exist in isolation. And then I think there's a question too, Lesley-Ann, about how we see Student Affairs contributing and potentially leading ongoing university-wide Equity Inclusion and Social Justice charges, committees, task forces, and recommendations that haven't been met yet.

Lesley-Ann Brown-Henderson

S3 37:50

So I'll say that that has been one of the drivers of the work that myself, Manuel, and Cecilia, at the time, and now Robin have been doing. One of the commitments towards social justice is around reviewing and recommitting to previous recommendations. And they specifically speak to the GNBT Task Force report, the Black Student Experience Task Force report, and several other task force reports. So we are looking at those and trying to get things moving forward as best as we can. And I think Student Affairs certainly has a role to play, particularly as we look at what those recommendations have been and how we've been able-- and what role Student Affairs plays in some of them. So Julie spoke earlier a little bit about renaming of spaces, and that certainly has come up in the past as recommendations and it's work that Student Affairs has a part in. Right. We have spaces. We have some things that we have oversight over. So how can we do that? So that's a very general answer. I'm happy to have more specific conversations. You're always welcome to reach out to me, but I do think the division has a huge role to play and we certainly have been leading in this area even though we still have work to do.

Julie Payne Kirchmeier

S2 39:16

Thanks, Lesley-Ann. There's one more question that I'll answer very quickly and then there's a couple more that have come in that we will save toward the end so that we can make sure to get our next section in. Rob, thanks so much for your question about will promotion and advancement opportunities for BIPOC staff be included within our Racial Equity strategy. And my short answer to that is yes. That was heavily discussed. We talk about retention and recruitment of BIPOC staff. We talk about as part of the Racial Equity work, not just the Racially Just Hiring Guide, but that obviously that there's now a lifecycle component here to recruitment, hiring, onboarding, training, development, promotion. And so I think those are all of the things that we need to connect dots on. And it's also one of the things that as we are moving into these finalist interviews for our director of Human Resources, and thanks, Rob Aaron, for leading that search, we will be asking those types of questions to our potential candidates as the director of HR. So more to come on that. We really need them to join us so that we can get this moving. And also to Lesley-Ann's point about how we're connecting to university-wide initiatives, this is another university-wide initiative that is being leaned into as well. So there are more questions about that, please populate them and we'll do our best to get them answered at the end. Lesley-Ann, thank you, and we'll see you back here a little bit later. I'm feeling a little bit like a morning television show host right now, and I don't think I should quit my day job. So we'll go ahead and move into our next section here, which is about spring events. So Student Affairs spring events, but really student-focused spring events. And so I'd like to invite Kelly Schaefer, our assistant vice president for Student Engagement, and Mona Dugo, our interim dean of students to come in here and walk us through a few things. So, Kelly and Mona, I'll turn this over to you.

Kelly Schaefer

- S5 41:09 Thanks, Julie. I like the television show format, right, because I have someone to talk to when [inaudible]. So great. This is terrific. Hey, Mona. Good to see you too.
- S6 41:22 [inaudible].
- S5 41:22 Welcome to the morning show. I'll start us off by-- things keep changing. Our students are connecting. And we're thinking about how that happens in really significant ways. What are the engagement points? How students are evolving around those? I think Student Development 101, we meet students where they are. That's always been a tenet of our work. And it's been never more important as we really seek to understand what that looks like these days through COVID, through national and world events around racial justice. We know that we need to be our best listeners in response. We've, of course, moved from in person to fully virtual, then we're now at both in some ways. I think the other thing I'll note, we talk about this and we're documenting what the delayed stages look like for students in terms of that development, which we, I think, see for years to come that we'll be looking at. Specifically though, around this year, we know that with students not on campus, that periods of homesickness or periods of maybe alcohol and drug experimentation or things that we tend to see at particular times of the year have been shifting all year. And so we really had to respond around these delayed cycles. And we've been learning as students have been learning. So what a heavy lift. And thanks, Julie, for the dog pancake. I think where we are then with spring program, if we can advance that slide, please. Thank you. All this has led up to we've done virtual and in-person programming and we've got some tracking, as you can see, of that review of our programming totals, what those look like for fall, winter, and certainly spring is in person.
- S5 43:10 Shout out to Bianca in Campus Life for that 132 HERC requests. I got that just this morning. So I really appreciate their help with that. 121 have been approved. We've got a committee that looks at in-person events, event-by-event, to take a look at the harm and risk mitigation as it comes to all things COVID. HERC is our Hybrid Events Review Committee. Thanks for that, Julie. We'll chat behind the scenes. The great morning show host. So we take a look at everything that is hybrid as we look to see how we can start to-- and everybody's heard us say this. How we start to feather things in through spring quarter. We want to hit that balance of when we're managing Health and Safety first and foremost. We're also taking into consideration what students need in terms of breaking out of isolation and loneliness and getting back to socializing and making friends just at such a basic making friends piece. So I think also with spring, you see we've got some organizing principles around how the whole year has gone and then also that organizational structure. And you see, I've got some gratitude on there. We count these numbers, right, as a part of our use of tracking and services, which is one of our assessment buckets in Student Affairs assessment and planning. And for those folks, we're collecting those now, and I'm going to read a list because I want to be inclusive and I've got a lot of gratitude for folks. In terms of what's included in these numbers, with the fall and winter in particular, we've looked at the Wildcat Welcome programming. We looked at Wildcat Wellness programming. Also, Res Services and their work. The HERC, again, the Hybrid Events Review Committee that includes all RSOs and FSL programming.
- S5 45:00 We counted things that were in the Paw Print. Right. So this is a new initiative from this year where we send out a newsletter every Wednesday to all students. So we're sending it to like 21,000 students. It's really incredible. It's got a great reach. Kudos to Jill and Brent for really getting that out every week, and everybody populating

content. We also have programs that are in the Student Engagement Database. Religious and Spiritual Life engagement packs that have been dropped off to quarantine and isolation housing. HPaW and their work. Norris, CAPS, and also the Purple Pantry is in here as well. And so I just want to share some gratitude for all the folks that have submitted all that information. And also with the leadership of Amanda, Brad, Charles, Brent, and Josh really taking some significant leadership roles and getting the virtual engagement committee together, which then sort of morphed into a Hybrid, which now is going to think about what happens for fall. So that's a little place of where I'd start. Mona, I think, from you, as we look at our next slide around Dillo, that's a really big component of spring.

Mona Dugo

Yeah. Thank you, Kelly.

S6 46:10

S5 46:13

[inaudible].

S6 46:13

[inaudible], everybody. Nice to be in this space with you all. If you could go ahead and advance the slide. I'm going to talk a little bit about Dillo Day, which is traditionally my favorite day of the year. I really look forward to Dillo because that's when we get to see our students really have some fun and enjoy a spring festival with a lot of history and tradition to it. This year, Dillo Day is Saturday, May 22nd. And we're attempting this year to strike a balance between honoring the traditions of Dillo Day and giving students the Dillo Day experience, particularly for our seniors who are graduating and for whom this will be their last Dillo Day. We're trying to balance that with the Health and Safety needs of our community. So COVID is still very real and though restrictions are lifting and we're seeing some relief, we know that we sit in a neighborhood, in a community that continues to be impacted by the pandemic. And so we're trying to strike a balance between those two things. And so there are a lot of staff members who have been hard at work trying to figure out how to provide that experience for our students in a way that ensures the safety of our students and our community. So Jake Fields and Tracey Gibson-Jackson have been doing their magic with Mayfest this year. Mayfest has created a digital virtual experience for our students. So there is a lineup of seven artists this year, including four from Mayfest and three for members only or FMO. In addition, they are going to be two student performers, one who won the Battle of the Bands and one who won the DJ competition. So we can look forward to seeing and hearing music. It won't be on the lakefront. It'll all be digital and online, but still, there's a lot of work that's gone into it and a lot of great music.

S6 48:12

The Northwestern community will receive a link to Dillo Day to be able to participate and listen to the bands. And the bands, as always, will be announced on social media as we get closer to the event. On-campus Mayfest is working on some in-person activities. And they are not timestamped activities like in the past. They are opportunities for students to engage with one another on the Lakefill or the lakefront possibly. And it's still a work in progress, but they're kicking around some ideas around some dining options on the lake, maybe some installations where students can go out and take photos with the large Dillo Day installation that we have had the past couple of years. And the dining halls will offer extended dining hours until 11:30 that night to give students an opportunity to gather and dine together in the safest way possible. We are busy thinking then about the plans for Health and Safety in the off-campus neighborhood. While on campus, we feel like we've got a great plan in place. The off-campus neighborhood, for those who have helped us to manage that in the past year, know that there can be some real shenanigans that go on out there. So we are putting together our normal plan and preparing that it's going to be maybe the

Dillo we've come to expect in the off-campus neighborhoods. So as we consider the safety of our students and our residents, we are going to staff up in the off-campus neighborhoods starting at 9:00 AM on Dillo Day and be in groups kind of walking through the neighborhoods like we usually do, engaging students who may be hosting social gatherings, and having conversations with them about Health and Safety, COVID regulations and, of course, alcohol, which is always a concern for us on Dillo Day.

S6 50:15

Given the dialogue and activism around policing right now, we're taking a little bit of a different approach this year. So we will have staff out and NUPD is hiring some contract safety who will be unarmed officers who will be working on that day to try to help us manage some of the Health and Safety concerns that can arise on Dillo Day. We're working with the local ER so that students who are maybe overserved on Dillo Day have a warm reception in the emergency room when they arrive there to receive some care and treatment and make sure they're able to safely return back to campus later. And Residential Life will be upholding their normal guest policies, which during COVID are more restrictive. So we will not be welcoming students from around the country to our campus for Dillo Day. We'll be keeping this a campus event and our resident assistants will be doing rounds starting at 10:00 AM in the morning and through the evening. I think there will be a lot of hands on deck and we will just expect that we will have some activity among our students and that we're going to manage it in the ways that we always do and try to encourage our students. Our biggest hope is that students will take the opportunity to gather safely with their pods and with their households and enjoy the musical lineup that Mayfest has created. And take the opportunity to be social, but safe. So we're hoping for good weather. And we are hoping for working golf carts. And we're looking forward to a great day. And as the day approaches, more information will come out, but that's kind of where we are in the planning right now. And it's been a great partnership between the Mayfest group, Student Engagement, some of the Dean of Students office staff, and Neighborhood and Community Relations as we work to help our Evanston residents feel comfortable with our plans for Dillo Day. So I'm happy to answer any questions or turn it back to Kelly Schaefer.

Julie Payne Kirchmeier

S2 52:27

Yeah. Mona, I'm just gonna say two things before Kelly leans in. And then at the end of her, we'll pause and see if folks have additional questions. I think that the golf cart comment was aimed at Kelly and I because our golf cart died almost in the middle of Sheridan Road a few years ago. And I'm going to consider it a win for the students if I know zero of the band names that are offered. Right. So no one needs to hear what my favorite bands are from the '90s. So with that, Kelly, it's yours.

Kelly Schaefer

S5 52:54

I love it. Thanks so much, Mona. I really just want to uplift the partnership piece. Right. There's no better time for us to work together in the ways that we are. And I really appreciate your team and our team coming together to really try to figure this out. Again, this is a part of that delayed reaction for students. Right. Things are changing and whether there's energy to do some things or not and how we're supporting the students in that is something I really appreciate from you and your team. So thank you. Thank you so much. And oh, just the other thing I'm trying to say. Oh, sorry. Yeah. Commencements coming. I have one more Dillo comment. We have really great messaging coming out with each pod and SAM. So I wanted to name that too as we talk about Smart Dillo. I just want to-- I want to say that you'll see that and we'll make sure that we are certainly asking our students to do all the things that Mona had mentioned. So with that, Julie, we can go to Commencement. Right. Here we are. We can advance the slide again. If we can, please. Commencement is that

piece where-- we have the opportunity this year to really find that flicker. Thanks, Julie, for that metaphor. And thanks, Lesley-Ann, for that as well. To find that flicker. We work from a set of guiding principles around Commencement. Jeremy and I do that as the co-chairs. And Julie is the former co-chair. We want to remember the why around the Commencement complications. And it's this ritualistic, traditional moment that we really yearn to plan for our students and let students find great meaning in terms of marking this moment. It's a milestone. And we come together to celebrate these moments in lots of our communities. We've got Affinity Group communities. We've got the larger everybody's invited for Commencement. Convocations by school for individual recognition. And that really solidifies our work together in the years that we've been together.

S5 54:52

We also want to balance the traditional ceremony components with the need to provide a safe environment. And certainly this year we've thought a lot about that, as we did last year as well. And that safety piece is paramount for us as we do a lot of this planning. And this is something that we do every year. We're always focused on improving the student guest experience. It's just such a key marker for us that when we talk to the 80 or so planners with the schools and with the planning team, when we come together, we're good about really remembering this and centering ourselves back into how we do this work. And then we get to yes where possible. What can make it a meaningful experience? Can't always get to get to yes, of course, because there's some things that we just can't do. And what we're hearing now throughout the quarter-- as you might know, that in January we said we were going to go remote. And then we got some different information from the state so we adjusted there. We got some different information from the state again so we've adjusted a little bit more. And I think we're at a place where we can say that we may get some more information from the state. We know from Governor Pritzker that phase five might be imminent. Jeremy will talk a little bit more about the phasing. But in relating to Commencement, if we can get to that bridge to phase five. We do so with 70% of 65 or older vaccinated, which we've reached that benchmark. The one we haven't reached, and it's a two pronged strategy, is positive cases and hospitalizations need to be on a steady decline. And we're on a decline at this point. We still have another five or six days where that does need to decline. And so as we forecast what that might look like for Commencement, we think we're going to be in a sweet spot. Where we are with our planning, we think that's going to hold and that we can deliver the maximum kind of experience for our students within the conditions that we have.

S5 56:52

So I think if you could just advance the slide, please, that would be great. Thank you. And so June 12 through 14 is graduation weekend. So expect to see graduates and their loved ones. We will do a 2020 celebration. So this is where we invite the class of 2020 back to do an in-person type of event. It's not a conferring of the degree. They've already earned their degrees. What it is, is something where they can be recognized and they can spend some time with that celebration piece that they missed last year because it was a virtual piece. We will still have Commencement as virtual. That gets us into sizes. They're just too big in terms of what's allowable from a safety standpoint. And so we'll still do that virtual because what we know from our assessment from our students is that the most important piece is to walk across the stage and have that name recognition. Right. It's that moment of just such pride and joy for themselves and for their loved ones. And so that's what we've certainly foregrounded. We also have congratulatory and celebrations and receptions throughout the weekend, virtual and planned for in person. And so we're juggling a lot of things as we try to put the puzzle pieces together. I talked already about the Illinois phases a little bit. And then I want to address staffing. We're so pleased with

the number of people that are willing to help. We've got some really creative ideas this year. We are really casting a much wider net and we're asking across the institution and we have easily 70 people that we know that we can tap into without even having asked much more broadly. And so we've teed up a lot of those asks both here and throughout the institution. And so we're really excited to see that we can get the staffing that we need for Commencement and Convocations.

S5 58:50

And the two that are leading that charge, that's Tracey and Anne. Right. No better people than to put them in charge of staffing and the guest experience because that is a critical piece of how we are just lauded for our event. And so I just want to name that too around staffing. The other thing I'll mention, and this is a little off-- I mean, it's still Commencement, so it's not totally off topic. But student auditions took place last week. Ronnie hosted those. Gratitude to Ronnie for that. We heard auditions for the Commencement speaker. It's a group of students that comes together, they audition their peers, and they select-- one of the most moving parts of the work that we do is to hear where our students are these years later. And so with that, just a couple of logistics around Commencement. Regalia, May 2nd is that deadline for ordering. Tickets, we're sending out a message this week that captures things a little bit differently this year. We're going to ask folks, "Are you coming?" Because we need to know our numbers because we've got pod seating that's socially distanced and we need to make sure we can run that smoothly. And we're limiting to two tickets for guests right now. And with that, we're asking folks to to submit back to us if they're coming, who their guests are, how many tickets they need, what [inaudible] accommodations might be needed. And that's all separate by school. Because what we're doing this year is that we've got Ryan Field and Ryan Fieldhouse as the two locations where we'll run through all the Convocations. And so we'll have two production teams throughout the three days. It's really nicely organized. And big thanks to Jeremy, my co-conspirator, or my brother from a former life, as Mona mentioned earlier this morning. So thank you. That's it about Commencement. And if there's questions, I look forward to those in the Q&A.

Julie Payne Kirchmeier

S2 01:00:49

Great. Thank you, Kelly. Thank you, Mona. I will say that some of the questions that were pre-submitted, Kelly, Mona, in your respective updates, I think you answered them well. So thank you for weaving those into your comments. I think we're just checking here to see if there are any specific questions. There's a lot. I'm going to own it and name it in the space. There's a lot of anxiety around showing up for in-person events. And in particular, Commencement. And I understand it. We've got folks that are coming from outside of the community. It's not just our students. It's not just our staff. Maybe staffing events. There may be concern that we're facing some external pressure to do this. And Kelly, you grounded it well, I think, in what our intentions are, but I don't know if you want to speak to that at all. Because I know that, as I said at the very beginning, there's going to be anxiety and fear as we move through these next phases with the state and even in our own university activity.

Kelly Schaefer

S5 01:01:43

Yeah. I appreciate that. Thanks, Julie. That is absolutely a piece that we have keyed in throughout this whole process as we've taken step-by-step. And that safety and wellness piece extends to any of the community members that are coming. So one of the things that we did is we had to get out ahead of a request that if people could work Commencement, if they could staff Commencement, there was the opportunity to be vaccinated. And so we saw several folks across the institution take us up on that as a part of their work with Convocations and Commencement. The timing was pretty quick on that because we were up against what that vaccine timeline looked like based on availability, eligibility, and when Commencement is. And so we were glad to

see that. And I think the other piece mentioning that we've cast this wide net and that we've got quite a bit of interest, I think, for me takes the pressure off of where-- we don't want anybody staffing this that doesn't want to be there. We don't want this to impact anyone's anxiety, anyone's health, or anyone's well-being in any kind of way. And so I think from my optimism around how we've cast this broader net and how we've heard some feedback from those who do want to participate has been really reassuring. And that's why I offer it in the space this way so that we know that our division is not going to be solely relied upon as we have been for many years.

Julie Payne Kirchmeier

S2 01:03:14

Right. Thank you, Kelly, for that framing. I also appreciate now I can say it in space that our schools, our staffing, their events in one component and we're navigating another. We have athletics that's there. We have facilities there. And then this branching out of asking all the other VPs to send it throughout the university to get-- not volunteer staff. I think it's a different approach and one that we'll probably keep because this is a university celebratory event. As Kelly crosses her fingers again. Thank you, Kelly. All right. We will go ahead then. And, Mona and Kelly, thanks so much for the information. And we'll move into our next section, which is about summer and fall planning and return to work. And I'd like to invite Jeremy, who's already here, because he's always quick. Hi, Jeremy. And I'll join him--

S7 01:04:04

[inaudible].

S4 01:04:05

--for parts of this. But to walk us through a couple of things about vaccinations, we know we have a couple of questions about vaccinations. We know there's some questions about transition in summer and then potentially what those expectations for fall will look like. So, Jeremy, why don't you kick us off? And we'll start with vaccinations.

Jeremy Schenk

S7 01:04:22

Thanks, Julie. Great. So as we look at vaccinations, I really want to begin with just acknowledging we've been doing vaccination clinics on campus since the beginning of March and really recognize the staff at NUHS, the Northwestern University Center Risk Management, for their work coordinating our on-campus vaccination clinics. We started from our first clinic being 33 doses and trying to navigate, okay, how are we going to get 33 people in to be vaccinated? To quickly getting to a clinic being around 333 doses. And that team has-- in partnership with Evanston-- and a lot of how we were able to work through our list was in partnership with Evanston guiding that. We were going to start with faculty and staff who were oldest and then work our way down by age. And that was the guidance given by Evanston. That was who we partnered with to get the vaccination. And as such, at this point, we can proudly say that all of our Northwestern University faculty and staff have been invited to an on-campus vaccination clinic. Many have already been vaccinated off campus. But we have gotten through our entire faculty and staff list. I think Luke sent an email about that last week or the week before. We last week reached out and we've now begun inviting all Northwestern undergraduate students. We have made it through that list and are now doing kind of a final follow-up with those students. But once again, like our faculty and staff, many of our students figured out through the large college vaccination event that the state did, as well as just locally found ways to get their first doses. So really happy about that. We have seen vaccine supply increase across the state.

S7 01:06:21

I joke that Dr. Bob Palinkas said-- probably at the end of February, he said, "Really by the end of April, we're going to have plenty of vaccine and it's going to be probably about how do we fill those spots." And Bob was pretty much spot on. So I just say, if Bob gives you a good recommendation, it's probably going to be correct. But once

again, huge kudos to Dr. Bob and Kristin Abbott, Anita Opdyke, and others who have been working so hard to make these vaccination clinics possible for our faculty, staff, and students. As Kelly mentioned, we were able to look at how we were going to get faculty and staff who were working commencement in a little sooner. And that was based off of the fact that we needed to get through the second dose and the two-week period after that prior to the commencement date starting. And so at that point, we did put that out as an invitation. With that said, simultaneously to us bringing those faculty and staff in, we ran through our entire faculty and staff list of invites anyway. So many people had found those vaccinations off campus. Students, faculty, and staff are being encouraged but not required to disclose their vaccination status through an online form that the university has. So that's been in an email from Luke. And so we're not requiring that at this point. The supervisors are not getting a list of who's vaccinated, who's not. That is private information being handled through that form. But we do know that both the CDC and IDPH guidance, they've been starting to issue-- [inaudible] well, if the person's vaccinated, there's ability to do this and this versus unvaccinated people.

S7 01:08:24

But that doesn't really say how do you enforce that or monitor that? So as we continue to expect that the state and the federal government are going to continue to release guidance and we're going to continue to navigate what that means and how we respond to that. With the final bullet on this slide, which Julie may want to speak to a little bit, because many of you have probably seen that many of our peers and schools are starting to roll out whether or not we're going to require vaccinations for our students in the fall. And I know we have not officially come out with an announcement on that, but I know senior leaders are talking about that. Julie, I don't know if you want to add anything on that slide.

Julie Payne Kirchmeier

S2 01:09:02

Totally happy to. And I see that we've had two or three questions that have come up just in the Q&A section about this very issue. And yes, to Jeremy's point, many of our peers, particularly our private university peers in multiple states have come out saying they are going to require that for their students. And we've now seen a few that say, oh, we're going to require for students, faculty, and staff. Right. So there are even different iterations here. A couple of things. One, we've talked about this at the senior leadership level. There's a smaller executive committee that works with the strategy group for planning and also within president's senior staff. And there are a lot of factors to consider here for us. One is that the vaccine is emergency approved. Right. It has not gone through the full FDA approval yet. So that's a factor. Another factor, our international students who have different kinds of vaccines potentially available to them in different countries. And is that something that would also qualify? That's where the guidance to Jeremy's point about federal guidance, state guidance is coming in because we do have to adhere to that. And so those are all the things that are going into it. We do anticipate a decision being made soon as these factors are gathered. The other thing to remember is we have a lot of these campuses that are announcing. They're on a semester system. And this is where I feel like flat dog again or pancake dog again. Right. They're all in Commencement mode and they're ending their semesters right now and they gear up again to start in August. So we have a little bit of runway so that we can see how this plays out. So as soon as we know, you will obviously know. In fact, we'll probably all get an announcement together, but that's where we're sitting.

Jeremy Schenk

S7 01:10:40

Thanks, Julie. Yeah. I did see a question come up regarding what about second doses. The clinics that are happening on campus through Norris, faculty, staff, and students who are getting vaccinated there who are receiving their first dose are getting an

invite back for their second dose. So we are doing second-dose clinics as well. Those are obviously by invite only. But if you've received your first dose through this on-campus clinic, you get invited back for your second dose, so. All right. We can go and move to the next slide, which looks at summer. And as Julie mentioned earlier, as we're entering kind of phases of recovery, the summer and looking at our summer transition is beginning to transition back to what the fall is going to look like. We know there are a lot of questions about the COVID alternative work arrangements document, the AWA. And we know right now that it's in place through June 20th. We anticipate an announcement later this week regarding both AWA and summer planning as we begin to transition back to that in-person experience for the fall. With receiving additional guidance and likely additional processes that we as a division and individual departments will work through in navigating and preparing for that transition. Really, a lot of that's being driven also by the Restore Illinois plan and in particular, bridge to phase five and phase five. And Kelly referenced that a little bit earlier. It was probably about five weeks ago where the governor announced the bridge to phase five plan. Where once we as a state hit 70% of our residents, 65 and older were vaccinated, and we saw a decrease in hospitalizations and deaths that the state would enter into bridge to phase five.

S7 01:12:38

And under bridge to phase five, we would increase capacities for both indoor and outdoor settings. So then that plan also created the metric for what it would take to shift into phase five. And in phase five, we needed 50% of residents, 16 and older to have received their first dose of vaccine, as well as stable or declining hospitalizations and deaths over a 28-day period. And once we move into phase five, the state will remove all capacity limits for indoor and outdoor spaces. So those two phases are what's next for the state. And different from phases one through four, where we entered by zones across the state. For bridge to phase five and phase five, we enter as an entire state. They also have created metrics that would pull the entire state out of bridge to phase five or phase five if the metrics started to decline. We do know that we hit the metric for moving into bridge to phase five back over a month ago in terms of the population being vaccinated of 65 and older. But we did see an increase in hospitalizations and positivity and deaths, especially around the spring holidays and spring break and other major events. Now, over the last 28 days, we've started to see a steady decline in-- the governor did announce, I think, just recently that we're looking at maybe four or five days before we may be in bridge to phase five. We also know that in terms of phase five, it's at least 28 days from after we enter the bridge phase until we can get into phase five. And we need to see 50% of those 16 and older vaccinated. And I do believe that according to the governor's office in an interview earlier this week, they shared that they think we'll be in phase five by early summer.

S7 01:14:37

Now, what does early summer mean? We'll see. But we do know that these transitions are beginning to happen. And with each of those, we have to look at what does that impact have for our operations and how we were navigating the campus and planning for the fall. All right. We can go and move on to the next slide. So as we talk about expectations for the fall, we do know that we're going to need-- that the institution's developing an institutional framework that will establish more of a university-wide norms and expectations around staffing while maintaining flexibility for school and units to apply strategies that are consistent with local needs. And so many of you probably remember that the division of Student Affairs actually came out with a Flexible Work Arrangements document even prior to COVID. And as we look at the new institutional framework, we will revisit that document and make sure that our process and policies are aligning with the institutional process. Schools and units are going to be asked to develop their post-pandemic workforce plans consistent with

the guidelines that the university is putting out. But we are planning for a more traditional in-person fall experience. We know it's still going to be different, that we're going to be navigating a lot of changing guidance, but the planning right now is moving towards that more traditional in-person fall experience. Right now, the tentative or proposed fall move in dates are September 13th and 14th. And the proposed Wildcat Welcome days are September 15th, with us then pausing for Yom Kippur, September 16th, and resuming September 17th through the 20th. So we're starting to think about the fall, some updates. And we know everyone is looking for more information. And we will continue to see things coming out both from the university as well as additional guidance from both the CDC and the Illinois Department of Public Health that will obviously be communicated out across the campus and impact as we make those changes going forward.

Julie Payne Kirchmeier

S2 01:16:52

Thanks, Jeremy. And there's a few questions that have popped up that you actually answered as you were updating. So thank you for that. It's really helpful. We got a couple of questions about specifics around Wildcat Welcome and how will that look and how are we going to navigate what happens if we're-- how are we anticipating in-person limits changing for spaces on campus? And I think from my lens - and Jeremy, if you disagree, please step in here - is that that's the guidance that we're working on now. Because as the state shifts and the city shifts and we start getting into potentially this bridge, then those are the things that we have to work through. Someone just asked a question about fall Wildcat Wellness. All of this has to go into that planning. At this point, I don't think we will, but that's just me talking out loud right now because we don't know what may happen in the next few weeks. So we're trying to anticipate as many things as we can right now. There is a question right now, it says, "Can you clarify again if we are or are not moving towards bridge phase right now?" And they're looking at the metrics and they put the post in there. So thanks for asking that question. Do you want to re-clarify that real quick, Jeremy?

Jeremy Schenk

S7 01:18:00

Yeah, yeah. According to the governor, I think in a press conference even yesterday, shared that the metrics have been leveled off comparatively to where they were 28 days ago. Declined and leveled off. And where that is, is that he anticipates that we will be in the bridge phase within four to five days. That was in a press conference he gave yesterday. So does that mean that there can't be a change with that? No. If we start to see a significant spike, the governor could pull that back. There are metrics in place to say that will stop us from shifting into bridge or to phase five. But as of what was shared at least yesterday, is that we should be anticipating the potential of moving into the bridge phase within a week.

Julie Payne Kirchmeier

S2 01:18:53

So we'll see what happens within a week. Because as we know, this is the time where we're consistently pivoting left, right, and sideways all the time. So there are a couple other questions. And so if Mona and Kelly and Lesley-Ann and Rob can pop back on for a moment. [inaudible] look a little crowded, that's okay. That we may just want to answer together. And one of them was specifically directed to me. And so I'm just going to ask it in the way that it was offered. Please. And I'll just go ahead and pull the data out of the beginning. But how can we keep racial equity in mind and address the legitimate concerns of the Northwestern staff versus labeling as unfounded fear as we return to campus in person while the virus is still circulating and we've got communities spread and we've got variants that are out there as well? So I offer that up to this group if there are thoughts you have on that. I'll start. Which to me is that these are things that we have been talking about in a number of different spaces. And I will say that the folks that are here that are leaning into this summer and fall work have been bringing this up in every single space. That there is a disproportionate

impact in particular for our BIPOC staff or BIPOC students, our [inaudible] low-income students, faculty, staff, when it comes to the impact this pandemic has had on individuals, on communities, on access to different resources, including vaccinations, testing since we started this response first and then trying to get ahead of it in a planning mode in the fall. So it is centered from our perspective. I think we continue to try and center it in the university's frame. But Kelly, Jeremy, in particular, given that you all are leaning pretty heavily in that work, anything you want to offer?

Kelly Schaefer

S6 01:20:39

Yeah. I'll offer something that's actually not related to that specifically around the summer and fall planning. But one of the things that I'm in conversation about that I will offer is I was sharing some articles back and forth with Kristen this weekend as we talk about grief and loss and how significant that has been for over half a million people who have died from COVID and [inaudible] complications from and how that has a ripple effect for loved ones and families and friends, and it's a huge multiplier. And so as Kristen and I have those conversations, I know that she and our partners at [inaudible] are keen on how to address that. And we've got some ideas that we're noodling around. But to be able to recognize how this has impacted our community and what this means for our communities conversation and how to help us move through in ways that we can if we can. So that's one piece that we're thinking about for fall.

Julie Payne Kirchmeier

S2 01:21:45

Thanks, Kelly. Jeremy?

Jeremy Schenk

S7 01:21:47

Yeah. And I agree with Kelly, I think that's such an important program that we're going to look at and have. I will say once again to Julie, to your point, that is something we put into this space pretty regularly. And I think when we start to see the guidelines coming out to the university, looking at how we make this transition into the summer and fall, that ability to think about this in a more flexible approach, because we know the impact that the pandemic has had disproportionately on faculty and staff is real. And so I think we'll see more of an encouragement to think about that and think through that lens as we're working through our plans.

Julie Payne Kirchmeier

S2 01:22:43

Thank you. Thank you, both. We've got another question here, and Christina, thanks for asking the question about how is the division addressing the intersections between race and class. And so when I think about our work around Racial Equity and I think about just [inaudible] large, how we're focusing in on intersections-- race, and class, and. Right. You heard a question earlier about Health Equity and Medical Equity and other forms of equity. And so I think that there is work that we do really well, this is my opinion, for our students and there is work that we absolutely need to be doing as a division of the university around intersections of identity and how that plays out in a number of different areas, whether it be return to campus, summer, fall, whether that be racial equity strategy, programs, events, compensation. We got a message to the panelists just a moment ago about it's hard to really hear some of this stuff when we don't see the progress. And so I think that's an important thing to name. So I would just offer up if there are thoughts about that, Lesley-Ann, given your work with the Racial Equity strategy, I don't know if you want to start. If not, totally good.

Lesley-Ann Brown-Henderson

S3 01:24:01

Yeah. I think the only thing that I would say is that when we think about the work through an intersectional lens, then we're more likely to be able to come up with resolutions or goals or initiatives or solutions that meet the needs of our most marginalized folks. And I think where we are as a university, certainly even as a division, is we are really starting to grapple with what even Racial Equity looks like. And we are quite at a foundational level around even that. Yet I will say. So that's just

being honest. I think as we continue to have conversations, as we explore the intersections of our own identities, as we become more vulnerable and courageous, as we think about our students and how our students become grad students and how those grad students become staff members and still hold those identities, then I think we can start to really think through what an intersectional approach looks like to Social Justice within the division within a workplace. So that's not a great answer. I think it's a work in progress. I think we certainly make lots of attempts at thinking intersectionality, and I think there's a lot of nuance in intersectionality that you have to have a good foundation and at least Racial Equity or at least the basis of social justice, and we're just getting there. So it's on my mind. It's something that I'm thinking about as we're moving forward and we'll invite those in the division who have that lens and have those lived experiences to continue to raise your voice. And I'll be seeking input as to how we can articulate that not only through our plans, but through our behavior and policies.

Julie Payne Kirchmeier

S2 01:26:02

Thank you, Lesley-Ann. I appreciate the honesty about where we are. And I think that's well known. And it's coming up in other ways and other questions that people are asking. And so progress on the foundational level, university wide in particular, is going to be critical for us. I do want to answer another question that came up in the chat and then I need to move us forward. So other panelists, if you want to silence your cameras, thank you all so much for offering your perspective and the information and answering questions in the moment. We got a question in about the health service transition and will it result in more trans-inclusive care on campus. I'm going to expand that question a little bit and talk about one of our guiding principles in that space, which is access to barrier-free care. We know that the partnership will connect us with far more resources and potentially we would have in a self-contained program, self-run program. And so that is one of the pieces that will form the core of this integration process. And we met, I think, about two weeks ago with the NU Health Service staff now that the partnership agreement has been signed onto how we're going to approach integration in that space and that this still has to be maintained as a core principle of our work. So what that ultimately looks like we will continue to update folks on. That certainly is one of our goals, because we know from the Gender Queer Non-Binary Task Force report that that was something that was called out very specifically and we hear that from our students as well. So with that, any questions we didn't get answered, we will certainly reach back out or post the responses so that people can find those. I do want to advance the slide, if you wouldn't mind, Kris, and acknowledge a couple of folks who are going to be leaving here very shortly. And that's Laurie Gordon and Dr. Bob Palinkas.

S4 01:27:51

Laurie Gordon, as you saw on a recent announcement, is moving to Duke University through a larger program and in a space that is closer to where both of her children are going to school, undergrad and master's degree. It's also a space that I can say confidently she can ride her motorcycle probably more throughout the year. And Laurie, I want to share with this full division just how grateful we are for you and your leadership. You came in and you helped create an infrastructure that I know will serve us well. You've provided us not just with resources, but as you heard Lesley-Ann say earlier, expertise in this space. And you didn't just offer it yourself, you taught many others the skills needed so that we can effectively not just manage, but leverage our resources in really important ways. And you've left us a lot better than you found us. So thank you so much for that. And Dr. Bob, your 44-year career that started in one pandemic, the AIDS pandemic, and is concluding in another. And the difference that you have made for so many students, for so many programs, and in the world of medicine, it's life changing and life saving. And so thank you so much for your steady

hand and guidance in this process. And we know you're still with us in some way for the duration of this transition, and we're grateful for that. But I just appreciate so much what you do. With that, I will say thank you to all the folks who helped make this possible. We have Jill and Tori from Student Affairs Marketing. Our Norris Event Management team with Jason and Kris and Nate and Emily. The vice president's staff, that, again, make us all look good every day. And we know that there's a lot of hard work involved in that. So Regan and Ronnie and Lesley-Ann. Thanks again to Rob and Alejandro for the mix and mingle and hosting that before we started.

S4 01:29:48

Kristen again, your lovely and educational and grounding moment with our land acknowledgment. And then the support from the folks who were here that are leading different key initiatives on behalf of our division, Kelly, Lesley-Ann, Rob, Jeremy, Mona, and did I miss anybody? Kelly, Lesley-Ann, Rob-- no. I did not. For your participation this morning as well. And finally, thanks to all of you for everything that you do to support our students, to support each other. And please make sure that you take care of yourselves as you are doing that work. So with that, I'll conclude our spring gathering and I will see you all next time. Bye. [music]