

A MEETING OF THE
UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE
Wednesday, May 8, 2019

Call-to-Order

THE SPEAKER: Hello. My name is Sam Nelson. I'm the speaker. I've just got a couple preliminary announcements, but one thing I would like to point out before I do those announcements is if you haven't signed one of the sheets that's going around or up here in the front, please do so because I think it's going to be close in terms of whether or not we're going to have a quorum. So it's important that we know whether or not we have a quorum as soon as possible. I think around 4:00 is when the voting issues would come up. If we don't have quorum, we have a measure where we can do it online; but it's always better to try to get it done here if we can.

So with the announcements, I want to remind everyone that senators have the priority in speaking and that only senators or their designated alternates may vote.

Also, when you do speak, please identify yourself and your department when you speak, and wait for a microphone to show up before you start speaking.

And then finally, I'd like to suggest that a maximum speaking time is two minutes. Our parliamentarian, Michael Gold, has a big iPad that has the time on it that will be running. And he won't throw it at you or anything if you go over, but if you could, just be cognizant of trying to keep it around two minutes or shorter.

Without further ado, I'd like to call Charlie Van Loan to come up, the dean of the faculty, and give some announcements.

Announcements

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Real quick and just, really, too, so I didn't realize until it was kind of too late that it was Slope Day. The general rule is every second -- the second Wednesday, but we delay in September because we just come back, we delay after fall break, also after spring break, so this will never happen again.

Okay. Any comments on the Slope Day conflict? Okay.

All right. We will have elections in about ten days. We have some pretty good slate shaping up for UFC and some are at large. We're still looking for more people to throw their hat in the ring for associate dean and, also, the whole RTE scene we're trying to ramp up.

Okay. That's it. Chris.

Sense of Senate Votes

CHRIS SCHAFFER: Great. So as you will recall, over the last year, there's sort of been a process of revising the 6.4 procedures or the Title IX procedures for cases when faculty or staff are the respondents. There was an initial presentation back in October on a plan that was drafted primarily by council, and there was some concerns that were raised.

And in response to that, a committee was put together that included employee, student, and faculty constituencies. So the faculty constituency included myself, Diane Burton, and Cynthia Bowman who chaired the committee. This committee met through the fall and into the beginning of this term and created the new policy, which has been posted for the last couple of months and which was briefly presented last week.

The primary thing this does is it creates an investigator and then hearing model. So there's an investigation that finds facts but does not pass judgment. That investigation then -- the report from that goes to a hearing panel, which holds a hearing, asks questions. They make a recommendation as to responsibility and the range of sanctions, which would go, in the case of a faculty member, to that faculty member's dean.

At this point, what we would like to do is just have a sense of the senate resolution as to whether or not the faculty or the senate supports these new procedures as they've been drafted in response to the concerns that were largely raised here last fall.

So I guess first we can see if there is any comments or issues for discussion or things along those lines.

Okay. So a show of hands, folks in support of the revised draft of the Policy 6.4 procedures. Any opposed? Abstentions?

Okay. Great. Done.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Great. And at this point, I'd like to call forward Rayna Kalas -- is that right -- financial policy committee report.

Financial Policy Committee Report

RAYNA KALAS: Thank you. Hello. I'm currently chair of the financial policies committee. My term is ending in July, though, and so I want to announce that Ravi Kanbur has agreed to be the next chair. And I've put up here the current members of the FPC. One of the -- this is also on the faculty senate site, so if you want to look this up, you can see it on the faculty senate site. And I encourage you to refer questions and concerns to any member of this committee.

I am going to propose a change to the composition of the committee. As it's now currently understood in the faculty senate or now written in the faculty senate, I'd like to increase the membership from 11 to 15. And I am also changing the language a little bit about the possibility of renewing terms on the FPC so that sort of those can be done by the chair of the FPC in consultation with the dean of the faculty.

So the increase -- I'll explain my reasons for increasing the numbers from its current 11 to 15. And, also, I think over the course of my presentation, you'll see the importance of being able to renew members on the FPC since it's a committee that has a bit of a learning curve when you get onto it.

I'm also proposing another revision, which is not a requirement but a recommendation in the composition of the committee, that the FPC chair may appoint representatives to handle specific duties. And I'm listing them here. I will read them out loud:

A representative to coordinate with the vice president for budget and planning on faculty salaries and compensation.

A representative to coordinate with the central administrator overseeing enrollments.

A representative to coordinate with the provost and the vice president for budget and planning on capital planning.

A representative to coordinate with the provost and vice president for budget and planning on administrative and support costs.

And finally, a member who would be appointed to record and circulate minutes and to archive FPC materials. And I should just say by FPC materials, I mean not only the minutes of our meetings but also any data that we collect that's not sensitive, but any data that we collect that might be useful for future chairs, so they can be kept in a repository with the dean of faculty as kind of a body of materials.

So let me talk a little bit about the reasons for proposing these changes, and then I'll say a little bit more about the work that the committee has been doing since I last presented. So I'm proposing these changes for one thing, to diversify the membership of the committee. One thing that's tricky about this -- about the composition of the committee, as I said a minute ago, it's really helpful to have people renew their membership and to serve more than one term because we learn a lot of stuff that most faculty don't know a lot about, budgetary planning and about financial policy; and by the time you have spent three -- right when you've figured things out, after your three-year term, you're out and then we have to start all over again.

So for the sake of consistency and continuity, it's really helpful to be able to renew membership. However, we also really want to diversify this committee. And so I'm hoping that we can do that while also, we can balance the need for continuity and the need for diversification by increasing the number of faculty.

We are also meeting more frequently. Many members felt that in order to get the work done that we need to get done, we needed to meet more frequently. And so we're averaging a meeting every three weeks during the academic year. What that means is that not every member of the committee can come to every meeting. So with 15 members, we have a little bit more consistency of a solid group there. It also helps us weather leaves a little bit better. And the other reasons are that it increases direct engagement -- I'm sorry, that's the change of the charges. But by expanding the committee, I'm also hoping that we can bring more people into the committee and learn what the work of the committee is before they might get charged with being a representative and then eventually becoming chair so that we actually have more faculty learning the work of the

committee, learning the charges of the committee, and getting involved in bringing issues to the committee, as well.

I think that the designation of representatives -- I'm going back up to my third point now -- will help increase direct engagement between the faculty and the administration and budget planning and financial policy. It's a little bit cumbersome for the whole committee. It's cumbersome for both the provost and the vice president for budget and planning to come to all of our committee meetings. We also want some committee meetings where they are not present so that we can talk on our own about what we've learned, and it's a little bit cumbersome to make that communication work.

And in my experience, I have found that directly working with specific administrators on a specific issue and then bringing it back to the FPC works best. But that is going to need to involve more people because the chair of the FPC can't really get that much done without sharing some of the duties. So that's -- my hope is that we can increase the direct engagement.

So let me say a little bit about why I proposed these representatives. When Mike Kotlikoff became provost and in response to some complaints that were raised about faculty governance, he appointed people to a series of committees that he had established. And two of those committees directly bear on the work of the financial policy committee; one is the capital planning committee and the other is the administrative and support costs committee. And he appointed two members of the FPC, one for each committee; I'm on the capital planning committee and Lawrence Blume, who is the former chair of the FPC, is on the administrative and support costs committee.

And those appointments, though slightly cumbersome, have been really productive for the FPC because it allowed members of the FPC to bring back issues that come up in those committees back to the FPC, report on them and keep other members of the FPC abreast of those.

So I propose formalizing that, not that those committees will necessarily stay into perpetuity, but they're nonetheless important areas. So capital planning will always continue to be an important area and the administrative and support costs will always continue to be an important one.

Since the new budget model went into effect, we have the flow of monies across colleges based on -- based on enrollments and credit hours. There is currently -- I don't know -- was there now a final appointment? Somebody may tell me this. We've been waiting for -- there's been a search process for a permanent enrollment officer. There's a temporary one in place right now. I think it would be useful to have a designated member of the FPC in conversation with that enrollment officer to raise issues, programmatic issues that may arise from the budget model distribution of tuition dollars. So I think it would be helpful to have a faculty member who's in conversation with that person and then can alert the FPC when we need to have that enrollment officer come to the FPC or if there is an issue that has arisen.

The oversight of faculty salaries and compensation is one of the direct charges of the financial policies committee, and this is always a little bit of a sensitive issue because of the sensitivity of the information involved.

Again, I have found it productive to actually meet with Paul Streeter and William Searle individually to look at how they go about evaluating and comparing faculty salaries in determining whether or not there is -- there is any kind of parity or discrepancy in faculty salaries that needs to be addressed. And so I think it would be useful to have a member of the FPC who's directly looking into that, that single charge, so that issues can be brought to the FPC.

And the last thing is, as I already mentioned, I think we need to keep records and archives of the FPC so that we both have data on hand. It's very useful, for instance, in the analysis of the flow of dollars that are related to the distribution of students by enrollment and credit hours. It's very helpful to look at enrollments over time, and that's something that the FPC regularly does since the new budget model is to look at the fluctuations and credit hours and enrollments by college over time so that -- so that we see where there may be problems coming down the pike for different colleges and their budgeting and planning.

So those are why I added those particular ones. But they -- as I said, these are things that the FPC chair may appoint. I don't mean to make it -- I don't mean to make it proscriptive, I mean to make it a new way of sharing responsibility for the committee so that the committee can actually get more work done.

And now I'll just tell you a little bit about the ongoing work of the FPC in addition to some of our regular work, which is our regular work is to be -- is to get briefings on the way the budget planning is going. And we do that over the course of the year with both Provost Kotlikoff and Vice President Streeter.

And we -- so that's some of the primary work we do on a regular basis. As I mentioned, we are looking always at those undergraduate tuition distributions across college all the time.

But there are some other things that have come up more recently that I think are useful for you to know about. And one of the things we've learned is that since the new budget model went into place and deans have a much bigger role in managing budgets, it's been really useful for the FPC to talk to individual deans and understand what the problems and issues are in their college since every college has very, very different set of budgeting concerns. So we learn a lot that way. We've been doing -- we started to do that. We've had a lot of dean turnover recently, so we haven't talked to the deans of arts and sciences or AAP. They requested that they have time to get into their jobs before they came to talk to the FPC, so that will be scheduled for next year. But we have talked to the dean of CIS, and we have talked to the dean of CALS since I was last here presenting to you; and those were extremely interesting and helpful conversations. I think that's something the FPC should continue to do, to talk to deans to understand what the issues are.

We are looking in conjunction with Paul Streeter and Davina Desnoes at the distribution of graduate tuition. So the last time I presented to the faculty senate, we talked a lot about the distribution of undergraduate enrollment dollars; and now we're looking into the distribution of graduate tuition, professional -- especially professional Master's programs.

There is a very wide disparity in the tuition charged for graduate degrees. And if you go to the graduate school, there's a listing of them there. It's very informative to look at that listing and see the variety of tuitions. But that makes it really sticky when graduate students are moving across colleges to take classes, so the reimbursement of college based on teaching gets really tricky there. So the colleges and the administration would like to regularize that a little bit more, so that's something we'll be working on with Paul Streeter and Davina Desnoes.

Faculty salaries are just a regular charge of the committee, and we continue to look into them. We do get access to some sort of generalized information from the administration, but there is also some information that we just can't get from that internal -- from those -- that internal data. So the FPC will be circulating this summer a questionnaire to chairs and former chairs in the hopes that we can get a little bit more information about problem areas and faculty salaries. And the two things that I think of are the need to balance faculty salaries in competitive areas but also faculty salaries for underrepresented minorities and women with kind of a salary parity so we don't get too much salary compression. And that balance is a tricky thing to achieve, but I'm hopeful that the questionnaire will give us some sense of when we are losing faculty, whether we're unable to hire them or unable to retain them, which is not really information we can get from the internal data. So hopefully the anecdotal evidence from chairs and former chairs will help us to understand some of those faculty salary issues.

I've already mentioned that we're continuing to review enrollment distribution. But I want to give a heads up that CIS is a particularly unusual case because it's not an enrolling college, so it doesn't have 40 percent of enrollment tuition going to it; it gets the 60 percent teaching tuition -- the enrollment tuition, teaching tuition going to it. And Greg Morrisett has said in the long term, he doesn't know how sustainable that will be so that's something we need to keep our eyes on.

There are a lot of logistics involved in the move of Dyson from CALS to -- sorry, I left that out -- from CALS to the Johnson School of Business that we're trying to get clarity on; that's sort of an ongoing question. And an ongoing question is how the administration plans to allocate across college -- colleges the new student enrollments, that it will be a result of the north campus expansion or that are allowed by the north campus expansion.

So the FPC -- well, I have tried to get the FPC to collectively generate its agenda. And I also welcome any concerns from senators and from anywhere in the University, so my net ID is up there if anyone wants to raise those concerns.

And now I would like to open the floor to questions about -- just principally about the revised charge of the committee; although, if you want to ask questions about our ongoing work, that's fine, too. I will take it back here.

SPEAKER NELSON: Are there any questions? Right here.

PETE WOLCZANSKI: Pete Wolczanski, chemistry and chemical biology. I was on this committee about ten years ago, and it did absolutely nothing. So I applaud the fact that you're apparently trying to get the committee to actually do something, aside from learn about the University, which is effectively all the members of the committee do in the period of the three years that they're on.

So the question I have is: Do you have any real power? Because we had none back then. It's purely an advising committee that is not taken under advisement at all by the administration, at least back then.

RAYNA KALAS: Thank you for that question. It's actually -- it was an ongoing concern. We don't have any power, right? We don't have any veto power. We don't have any voting power. We are purely an advisory committee but -- so we don't have any formal power. But I actually think that the work of the committee is really -- I think it's a hugely important committee, and so part of my agenda in my chairship has been trying to reestablish some connection so that even if we don't have kind of formal power, we have communication and we can exert power that way.

And I think we have made some progress in that direction, and that's why I would like to institutionalize these positions a little bit more because I think the way we're going to get that authority is by doing the work ourselves, right? That is, if we want faculty governance, we're going to have to learn -- we're going to have to take the initiative to learn what's going on. And it's too much for the chair of the FPC to do all of that work and have it be productive.

PETE WOLCZANSKI: It always struck me that we do have economists on campus and there could be some form of teaching relief to immerse these people directly into some of the budgetary problems the University has so we can get a realistic look at what's going on and we're not just patted on the head like good boys and girls on this committee as (indiscernible).

RAYNA KALAS: Yeah. We do have economists on the committee, and I will also say I think it's really important to have people other than economists on the committee. I'm in the English department. I don't have any special authority on economic policy, but I -- but it's actually really, really useful to have people who are not economists actually asking questions, as well; and I think having broad representation from across the University is really important.

I also think it's important to have economists on the committee. I mean, I will also say that we have had a lot of back and forth with members of the administration about whether or not we could just put up an FPC member on the budget and planning committee. There isn't really a budgetary planning committee, as such. It's mostly the provost and the vice president for budget and planning meeting. And I -- I really take them at their word that there's not a whole lot being decided in that meeting. It's very, very incremental kinds of adjustments about tuition increases, which the FPC hears about tuition increases. But those adjustments are made on a very, very small scale. So being a part of the planning process may not be the most important aspect of it; being able to ask questions about it along the way may be more productive. And so I'm really trying to establish relationships between members of the FPC, faculty on the FPC, and members of the administration in those areas where we might really be able to make some suggestions -- adjustments and make some contributions.

I have found the administration to be responsive to talking to us. They're willing to come to the FPC meetings and to meet. I meet individually with them regularly. And one of my interests is getting more faculty and more people in the FPC meeting with them regularly so that we have greater communication.

SPEAKER NELSON: We're running a little bit behind schedule. Bruce, I know you have a quick question.

BRUCE LEWENSTEIN: Quick question. The --

SPEAKER NELSON: First state your name.

BRUCE LEWENSTEIN: Oh, sorry. Bruce Lewenstein, communication. The suggestions that you've made for changing the charter and the structure, are those ones that the committee itself -- was that -- I'm not trying to challenge you, I'm just trying to understand whether it was a collective decision.

RAYNA KALAS: We have worked on this collectively all year this year, so we've had a little back and forth about whether or not we should increase and change the charges. And, you know, I think it's important to note that this also means more work for everyone on the committee. So the fact that the committee supported it and is going ahead with it, I think gives you a sign of the commitment to this committee even though it's a considerable amount of work for the members of the committee.

BRUCE LEWENSTEIN: Thank you.

SPEAKER NELSON: Thank you very much.

At this time, I would like to call Charlie Van Loan to come up and talk about the four resolutions.

Four Resolutions

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Okay. So there are four of these things; they all touch on sort of the classroom student issues. So one is on student accommodations. And I've been actually working on this all during the year. It's a real tough nut to crack. It's real easy to talk about what you should do for each of these cases, but to actually put things in words is tricky.

So this sort of sets a summary of where we are, and there will be work going on over the summer. This is not something we will vote on today. It's just a proposal. We'll talk about grade changes, we'll talk about the free-zone, and meeting-time patterns.

Everything here, if it's passed, eventually shows up in the Faculty Handbook. I think we need clearer channels. From when we decide something, it should go in the Faculty Handbook, which is still -- you know, it's being cleaned up as we go along. But all these things will culminate, hopefully, in some approved language in the Faculty Handbook.

Two things about the Faculty Handbook. It's not the Faculty's Handbook. There's a lot of stuff in there that's there by virtue of shared governance; you know, some corners of it are clearly say so, but other things in there are -- is group ownership, so that's an important point of view.

And, also, it's a handbook, which means it should be clear, consistent, easy to use. Okay. Just a little reminder about the Faculty Handbook.

Okay. Let's talk about student accommodations. Okay. So there is pros in the handbook right now on religious observance. There are quotes from New York state law that really imply that, you know, they have to be respectful of such accommodations. Then, it's much more brief and vague on the whole litany of other accommodations that we deal with: Disabilities, varsity athletics, job

interviews; you've seen them all, okay. This is not going to be a scene where you have your "yes" or "no," it's like, we need guidance. Okay? And I get lots of calls about how to handle these things.

Okay. So what's the solution? So you can check it online, there's a draft webpage. I think it's important to have them all in one place, okay, not religious observance here in some other corner of the handbook, athletics, and whatever. It's good to have them all there because they're gigantic common denominators, such as, you know, straighten things out with your students as early as possible in the semester. It also gives you a much broader appreciation. If you're particularly interested in this kind of accommodation, seeing how someone else deals with another accommodation is instructive.

In general, things are working well; but, again, there are instances where they're not working well. And also -- and I surveyed about two dozen instructors of large courses, who have been in those large courses for a number of years about what they see in this arena, and some of them are overwhelmed; and that's an issue we have to address.

Here's kind of a timeline. As I said, this is just heads up. There will be work sort of fairly soon with some groups, but then we'll come back in the fall and -- you know, maybe September is optimistic, but we will have a couple of weeks there at the front end of the semester to really engage all the different constituencies on campus about this topic.

Any questions about -- I think that's the -- any questions about that plan or whatever?

Okay. Next topic. So the next three things, if we have time and if it works out, voting would be great. We might do the electronic thing. But we'll see how we feel about these different things to see what is next.

Okay. So I get a continual stream of concerns, and one of them came in that -- concerning grades, okay. Let me ask you again, at the bottom there, we have this climate about, you know, the admissions scandal. And that sets us thinking that, oh, we have some really sacred processes that we have to pay attention to, and grading is right up there, okay, absolutely right up there. So when I heard that professors looked at some old grade sheets and discovered that some Ds and Fs were changed to Ws without being informed, that was a red flag. And so I've

actually spent the last two months looking into this in various ways. So in particular, there are about 50 of these a semester. Now, that doesn't mean -- I don't know right now what fraction of those 50 involved informing the instructor; this is just the volume of -- we call them retro Ws, approximately University wide, okay. The -- and there is no -- I'm going to work over the summer and maybe into the fall trying to find out more about those 50. Okay? But all I know is it does happen. It has happened. So grading is not -- grade changes is an -- it's complicated. Most of us just see maybe the top two things there, but they can happen in many ways. Okay?

So you can have a Title IX panel recommending such and such, or a college academic integrity board reaching some conclusion, you can have things coming through University council. There is zillions of different -- well, many different ways things come in the door. Okay?

But the person who pushes the button is in the registrar's office of the students college, okay, and that might not be your college as the instructor. Okay?

Anyway, what we're suggesting, the high point, the central thing in this resolution is this: That no matter what, no matter what happens over here, that it's -- an axiom is required that the instructor of record be informed. Okay.

Now, there's a lot of stuff that can be done over here. Every one of those arrows deserves attention. Every one of those boxes deserves attention. And we can work with the registrars, the associate deans, and whatever, as much as we want to make sure that what goes on over there is really bulletproof. Okay. But right now -- and what I'm asking -- proposing as a vote, just to hardwire in that blue stuff over there. Okay.

So online, you can see the full resolution. This would add a paragraph or two, the paragraph to the section that already exists on grading. And the key line in there, again, is that regardless of how this comes about, okay, the instructor of record must be informed of the grade change. That does not mean that the instructor has the say-so. Okay. You can be overruled. If it's a Title IX thing and there's a grade retribution thing going on, you can be overruled. All we're saying is you have to be informed.

And then there's the small print. You know, if the instructor has left the University, then the director of the student's academic degree program would step in. Questions?

DAVID ZACKS: David Zacks, chemical biology. Can you go back to the page you were just on?

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: The --

DAVID ZACKS: The next page. I think you --

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Oh, the last one?

DAVID ZACKS: Yeah. In red, is that new language, as well?

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Oh, I wanted to point out that I posted this resolution last week, okay. And subsequent talk with the college registrars, okay, suggested that that be added. And here's why. You can't -- if you don't put that in there, routine -- you can't have it that every routine grade to W goes to the provost. For example, there are your sort of administrative settings where the college offices can handle it. So the key thing here is there are many -- we will discover how many, but there are many settings -- important settings where it does not have to go to the provost, so that's why that's added there. It has to do with all the stuff, all those different arrows. There's lots of stuff there. And, incidentally, there are lots of faculty over here. All those hearing boards, you know, those are faculty decisions. So that's why the red -- the red was there just to --

DAVID ZACKS: Because that seems to open up exactly the problem, which is that we have no knowledge of what, in fact, students' colleges are doing. It's unclear to me why that's an advantage over referring it back to the professor who gave the grade.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: If we have to -- I think it's legitimate to have concerns about every one of the procedures and protocols over there. And maybe if we feel it's necessary, maybe we could systematically, with the help of those who are in -- on that side of the picture to really look hard at that.

DAVID ZACKS: You're asking us to trust that the colleges are doing this appropriately. And I'm asking, why can't they trust us sufficiently to ask that we do it appropriately?

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: That's a -- grade changes are, you know -- there's offices, there's a system, there's people; so you're saying the faculty should be the ones that push the button?

DAVID ZACKS: I'm asking why we don't have the requirement that we authorize it, rather than simply be acknowledged.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: If this is a consensus thing, within next year, why don't we go through all that and actually see what the protocols are, see what's written down, see where stuff is made up, see where things have been formally authorized. That's what we'd have to do to track that down, and I'm up for doing that.

Let's get some more questions.

PETE WOLCZANSKI: Pete Wolczanski, chemistry and chemical biology. First of all, thank you for delving into this by request from Melissa Hines who first came across a number of these grade changes that occurred in freshman chemistry courses.

I think our concern is not with the bottom of the Title IX and the University council. My guess is that's a small fraction here. So we need to know what's going on in these registrars' offices of the various colleges, and we need to know historically what has happened. We have to hold those people's feet to the fire because, otherwise, they're just going to do it again without our knowledge; that's the fear here, as David has indicated.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: I don't want to make valiant judgments about the -- I think most of the people in the registrar office have high integrity. We just have to look at those protocols.

PETE WOLCZANSKI: You know, we have anecdotal evidence that parents are involved in these cases. I mean --

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Look, I'm in favor of getting to the bottom of it, but it will take some time. But I think the only thing we can do now is that blue box, okay. And if you feel that's a step backwards, then someone should say that.

Let's get some questions from a different department.

KEN BIRMAN: Charlie, Ken Birman, computer science. I support doing something like this, but I'd like it to be broader. First of all, it seems to me that changes of a graded course to audit might also be relevant here. And more broadly, I think any change of a grade that a faculty member assigned, whether it's to audit or to W, withdraw, or expunge completely, that the instructors should hear about it and the unit which -- you know, the department chair. Because if there were a broad pattern occurring, the individual professor might not realize it but the department chair, who has seen 25 of these, would realize it.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Okay. Good. I think we want to make that slide bulletproof. So let's hear some more suggestions.

RICHARD BENSEL: Richard Bense, department of government. I find this really appalling that University counsel can change a grade and we not know it. I really find it appalling. But I understand the narrowness of what you're recommending. I would just add to that, it shouldn't be just the instructors informed; there should be a faculty review board, to which, the instructor can appeal if they regard the grade change as unwarranted. We should control, as a faculty, our grades, not the University counsel, not the office of the provost. I didn't know this was going on. I find it really appalling. If the only thing we can do is this inform the instructor of record, we should also have faculty -- a faculty appeal board to which the instructor can appeal.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Okay. More suggestions?

STEVEN ALVARADO: Hi. Steven Alvarado, sociology. I'm just wondering if in this process it isn't already assumed that the instructor of record is being informed. Like for instance, if it's a Title IX action, doesn't the faculty member know that there's a Title IX action going on, that there's something -- some sort of accusation against them? I'm just wondering if this is changing anything.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: There is no -- there can be redundancy. All I'm saying is that if you put that there, we're making a statement that -- this is complicated. Okay.

You may think it's simple, but it's actually complicated. There are certain -- I've looked at certain things where A thinks that B did something, B thinks that A did something and neither of them did it. Stuff like that happens. All right. And you might say, Well, you would have to be informed if you were a part of a Title IX seen there. Yeah, you should but, you know, you just don't want stuff to fall through the cracks. So maybe there's some redundancy here.

STEVEN ALVARADO: And my other question: You said there was 50 of these cases? Just give me the sense of the context, 50 in forever, last year, last semester?

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: I looked back ten semesters. It was about that. But be clear, it may be very -- I don't know. The one slide there, I don't fully know all the details about those 50.

STEVEN ALVARADO: But there were 50 in the last ten semesters?

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Each semester.

STEVEN ALVARADO: Each semester there were 50?

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Don't forget, we give about 120,000 grades a semester. Okay. So about 50 of them -- there are about 50 occasions where a grade was changed to a W or expunged.

STEVEN ALVARADO: Yeah, very small fraction.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: It would be a mistake to assume that there is some unethical things behind all 50 of those. We don't know, so let's find out. And I'm just saying we'll do that, and we can spend as much time as you want cleaning up that. But right now, that's the best we can do. And we can proceed to get more -- get to the bottom of stuff better.

Yeah, Neil.

NEIL SACCAMANO: Hi. Neil Saccamano, the English department. As I understand it, basically this is better than what we have now?

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Yeah, because it's not -- it's sort of understood. Most of the comments say, Oh, the instructor is always informed. Most of the time you might be the initiator of the grade change, okay.

NEIL SACCAMANO: Okay. So the question before us is whether it's better to have the instructor informed or not informed because right now, the instructor is not informed.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Right.

NEIL SACCAMANO: Right. And, also, I think that -- obviously I would agree, there is a lot of questions here about who are the people, the agents, the institutions involved in making the grade changes with -- that we have not been informed about as instructors, and I think that that needs to be paid attention to next year.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Again, the University and all the universities have bragged about we're looking at our admissions process, making sure it's totally legit. We're just proposing that and then, as much as we want, the same thing over here. Let's get some clarity. Okay.

CHARLIE WALCOTT: One quick question or suggestion. Charlie Walcott, neurobiology and behavior. I suggest that the notification include not only the fact the grade was changed but why the grade was changed.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Okay. So suppose it's a med- -- you have to be a little bit careful here. Suppose a student takes a course, gets a bad grade, and maybe a month afterwards is diagnosed with an illness and they never should have taken that course -- been enrolled in that at all. You just have to know that at the high level. There is a privacy thing here. You don't have to -- you aren't owed a detailed medical report there, right? It's simply -- yeah, so some clue about -- yeah.

CHARLIE WALCOTT: Just on whose authority? I mean, you've got that list of people, and maybe if it just lists which one of those various enterprises that created the grade change. I'm just saying a little more detail than just "It was changed."

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Yeah.

DAVE PUTNAM: Dave Putnam, biomedical engineering. I just wanted to point out that this needs to be made consistent with Policy 6.1, which is under instruction from the faculty -- University faculty. It says: Only the instructor of the course has the responsibility and authority to judge quality of a student's work and assess the appropriate grade. No one can overrule instructors and require them to go against their judgment.

So I'm just saying that this needs to be made consistent.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Again, yeah, there's definitely something to look at there. But are you saying the blue is illegal for --

DAVE PUTNAM: No, I'm not saying anything is illegal. I'm saying if this resolution is to be looked at, it has to go in context with the existing policy.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Yes. Joanie.

JOANIE MACKOWSKI: Joanie Mackowski in English. We're seeing grade change, but it is -- I think going from a, you know, a D or an F to expunge or the W is -- the student has not -- it's not counting toward a major. So I think it's different if this is changing, you know, not informing -- or informing us that the grade was changed from a C to a B or something...

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: This is nothing -- this is all about lousy grades to Fs or --

JACKIE MACKOWSKI: Removing a shame from a student's record, which is not -- which is a different issue.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Okay. Should we --

SPEAKER NELSON: I don't think we have a quorum.

[Off mic]

SPEAKER NELSON: I actually counted the number of people in the room, and not everybody here is a voting senator so we don't have enough people.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Yeah. So let's get through this, and then we'll see -- I'd like to do the electronic vote so we can get start- -- so when we come back in the fall, we're ready to go; that's what I would like to do.

Meeting-time patterns. What is a meeting-time pattern? For example, it's 8:40 to 9:55 either on Monday, Wednesday, or Tuesday or Thursday is a legal standard meeting time. Problem -- and, again, I talked to zillions of people about this and whatever, there's a big concern out there. We need more 75-minute classes, so that's what the problem is. Okay?

And here's the solution. Okay. The resolution would make these things happen, okay. The idea is to open up the three middle 75-minute slots on Monday and Wednesday but with a caveat. And you need a caveat for this reason. We don't know, you know, whether there's going to be a stampede for that. We don't know about room availability. So let's just do a half-step. Let's pick courses 3000 and above, typically smaller, typically more elective, typically students who have more wiggle room about them. Open the door a bit and see how things unfold. Okay. So that's one part of this resolution.

Okay, increases flexibility. Now, right now you can go for those three red things but you'd have to make an exception; and there's, you know, a harder thing.

Another problem. I would like to teach a two-hour undergraduate seminar. The language right now says that you can only use those longer slots for labs or similar exercises. I don't know what a similar exercise is. What's the solution? Do away with that. Any single legal meeting-time pattern can be used for anything. Of course the processor and the professor's chair should pay attention to what makes academic sense. Okay. But -- yeah. But that's where the decisions should lie. We should not be blocked because of a rule like that from doing something creative in those slots. So it's now on the onus where it should be, on the academic unit and the professors to make sure that the chosen meeting-time pattern, the length especially, makes sense.

Exceptions. Okay. Exceptions. Now, exceptions can be during the regular part of the day. Like, I want to teach a quarter of 11:00 to 12:32, or something like that. So you have that kind of stuff. But the more important thing is when you start dipping into the free-time zone. Okay. And the free -- we will talk a little bit more about that in a second.

But people who are believers in the free-time zone -- my reading of after talking to zillions of people in groups, no one wants to do away with that or curtail it. However, there are some units that really need that. For example, some of the

ensemble courses in music or some of the units that have big studios, or whatever, there are legitimate exceptions to use that. Okay.

The question is: How can we make this whole exception thing sort of easier, the approval process easier so it's not a big burden or something that stunts creativity in certain units? How do we do that?

Okay. So that's what this resolution, a part of it is. We want to really look at how we can make that process better. Okay. And give course -- give units flexibility to go in there, if they want. So I talked to one department. They want to start an undergraduate seminar, outside speakers, 4:30 to 6:00, you want to make that kind of request routine or you want to encourage that kind of creativity. I think once you're given an exception, you should have it forever, unless things go bad. And there has to be a monitoring of the exception slot, okay. We should keep track, tabulate every year, here is the exceptions seen and if you see bad trends or bad situations, then you do something about them. But it's like -- anyway, so that's part of the deal here, to really look into that whole exception apparatus.

Clarity, as I mentioned. Here's the current way -- the 50-minute slots are -- I don't understand that notation. Okay. So part of this is to move this stuff into the Faculty Handbook where we can pay attention to it, tweak it as required and pay a lot of attention to the clarity. Okay. That's not clear. This comes out of the faculty legislation like 40 years ago, okay, and it's in -- I don't understand it. Okay. So we'll move all this stuff. There will be a new section in the Faculty Handbook on meeting-time patterns, and we'll all pay attention to it.

Okay. Yeah, I just said that.

So that's what this resolution is about, okay, more 75 minutes, you can teach whatever you want in any slot or any style, and pay more attention to the rules. Get this stuff in the Faculty Handbook so that we can monitor it. Because the next big message is we're changing how we teach, and we better have a structure there that can keep up with that.

Just a few comments on this. Okay. So the Faculty Handbook has legislation on that, but most of it is about how good it is and why it's important. There is a little bit on review sessions and whatever. But, again, it's a setting where it's vague. And we keep getting calls, you know, Can I do this, Can I do that? So let's, again, clean this up and get some real guidance in there for all of us to follow.

So, for example -- so getting back to the handbook idea, you should have examples, all right, of things that are pre-approved, things that you don't need special permission with. And, also, we really want to have a transparent process about how we're dealing with the free-time zone.

Here's a sample of pre-approved things. So for example, maybe you have to give an extra time exam or a makeup exam or an alternate exam and you'd like to use the free-time zone. Often if it's a small group, the students will all agree; no problem. But you have to always make sure that the students have the opportunity to do that outside of the free-time zone, that kind of thing. Okay.

And in terms of oversight, I think the players here would be my office, the vice provost for undergrad, education office, and the registrar. We need data, and once a year we look at the lineup of how that free-time zone is being used and we just pay attention. And things can come here to the senate, as required, if we need new legislation or want to close a loophole or open a loophole, whatever that means. Okay.

I think at the end, I think our --

SPEAKER NELSON: We are about out of time. We want to quickly introduce the last [off mic]

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Oh. I guess the question here is, maybe a show of hands, do people feel that for these three things, it would be okay to do an electronic vote over the next week? Or do you -- how many feel that is okay, that you understand those three issues or will within the next week? You can talk to your colleagues. Again, these things all open up opportunities. They don't forbid you from doing stuff.

Does anyone -- I guess let me rephrase. Does anyone object to doing this electronically, these three resolutions? The last three, grade change, meeting times, free-time zone. There are three resolutions. They're all spelled out. You have these slides. You can review them. Does anyone feel that this is rushing the show?

Okay. How many feel it's okay to do this?

Okay. So we'll do this. Okay.

Okay. The -- the admissions --

[Off mic]

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Okay. So it's great that we have four individuals who are involved in admissions in a fundamental way. Shawn Felton is head of University admissions. Then we have three admissions officers from -- one each from ILR, CALS, and engineering. And we thought, Shawn, maybe you can give a general overview.

Discussion of Freshman Admissions

SHAWN FELTON: Sure.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: We have these so-called study questions; no one says you have to live off of these. Yeah, so would you like to say something to start?

SHAWN FELTON: Sure.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: And then just have Q&A. This was a very important topic, as you know. We actually talked a little bit about, in April, we realized how little we knew, and that's why you --

SHAWN FELTON: Sure, sure. Hi, you guys. Thanks for having us. This might be a little quick just because time is short. But -- Shawn Felton.

Just a little bit about admissions. Admissions at Cornell is highly selective. We are holistic in our review of applicants to the University, so we ask for a lot of information. Everything matters. Some things matter more than other things, depending upon the program of interest or the college that you've applied to. And we do read everything. We look at everything that we receive. So it's a very detailed-oriented process. Application review takes quite a bit of time for each candidate. We're not a numbers-based process. There is a lot more to it than just your grades, even though there are certain indicators that are really important to us from the start.

So how is that for an introduction?

[Off mic]

SHAWN FELTON: I'm going to ask my colleagues to just sort of jump in and sort of talk about this. You guys wanted to know a little bit about the components of the application. So there are certain things that we require: Transcripts, school context information, school report, school profile, details about the school, teacher recommendations. We also require essays to be written, two; one about the program or college at Cornell that you're interested in and the other is about you, it's the common application essay. So those are items that we consider in the process.

And I'm going to ask one of you guys, if you don't mind, to talk a little bit about how you read applications. By the way, these guys are actually responsible for reading applications and getting them read and getting them decisioned. I don't have to worry about that. I have to worry about everything else, but...

If one of you guys wants to come up and talk about your review process?

SCOTT CAMPBELL: I can. Can you guys hear me? Is this mic okay?

So we -- in the engineering admissions office, we have four total professional staff, and we bring in a team of about 25 temporary readers that work through it with us through the selections cycle. And we split the temporary readers up into teams, and they're charged with reviewing specific states, so applicants from specific states. Final decisions are always made by professional staff. Problem cases typically flow up through the director of admissions.

We work with -- in engineering we work with about 13,000 applications each year. We admit about 1,200 kids into the college of engineering each year. So Shawn's take on "highly selective" is exactly correct.

I think that's probably enough context for engineering, so...

ANGELA HERRERA: Hi, Angela Herrera, ILR. So we have a small team of about three professional staff. We also include faculty in our final decision-making process. Because of our size and volume, it's much smaller and there's fewer people involved. But, basically, about 1,300 applications for a freshman class of 160, which we could fill probably five times over with the remaining students; that's how qualified all of the students are. So for us, specifically, it's a fit with the major, and students really have to articulate that interest, have a passion for social sciences which we can see through their grades and activities. So it's a lot

more than just the grades. Because a student can be halfway decent in math and science but exceptional in history, government and economics, and that would fit our program very well. So we're looking at a little bit of a different side of things than Scott might be in engineering.

HEATHER MARCOTTE: Hi. My name is Heather Marcotte. I'm the director of admissions for the college of agriculture and life sciences. And we're kind of right in between both of you. So we have a professional staff of six individuals; four of which, including myself, read applications. We also have 12 outside readers, similar to engineering. But all decisions, as well, are made by our professional staff.

We're a little different in the fact that we admit by major. So we've got 22 programs, and we divide up applications by major. So each of our professional staff are considered major managers, aside from myself; and they're really in charge of managing their suite of programs.

In addition to what we look for, yes, grades are extremely important, and they're different depending on what program a student is applying to. So someone in biological sciences is going to have a very different profile than someone looking at communication and what we're looking for in terms of grades and coursework. A really important piece for us is fit to the program and fit to CALS but definitely fit to their major, as well. So the essay that comes in is extremely important in our review process. Our prompt is very specific for the students to articulate that what -- why they are looking at that program and why looking at that specific major.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Okay. Let's pause here. I suggested to Shawn, as we pause, like right now, you have questions about, number one, which is about the different parts of the folder or how the colleges handle the reading and whatever. So let's try to have a little bit of focus.

COURTNEY ROBY: Courtney Roby, classics. I'd just like to hear a little bit more about who the external readers are.

SCOTT CAMPBELL: So external readers represent just a range of folks, to be honest with you. We are blessed in this community, I think, to have a lot of overeducated, underemployed people that are looking for, I think interesting work. And so we hire external readers in the same way we would hire staff,

which is we advertise for them. We interview them. We check references. We look at resumes. We show them parts of the process so that they have an understanding of what they're getting into. And then we also let people go that -- you know, if someone is doing the process and we don't feel like they are doing it well, we have ways to let them go from the process.

And for me, I'm blessed. I have probably about 15 folks that just come back year after year after year and are really good at this process, really exceptional in terms of training and ability to do what we're asking them to do.

Does anybody want to add?

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Scott, if you have a job description to advertise, could you send it to me? It would be good to see what you look for in a reader.

SCOTT CAMPBELL: Sure. And one thing I'll mention with this, this is not uncommon. I ripped off my job description from Brown University's job description for these. But this is pretty standard practice across most high volume, high selective institutions.

JOHN CAWLEY: Hi there. John Cawley, policy analysis and management. First of all, just thanks very much for all your hard work. I know it's a ton of hours. Every year you seem to find better and better students to send to our classes, so thanks.

So my question about number one concerns the role of the coaches' requests. Right? That seems to be at the heart of the recent national scandal. And so if you are notified that a Cornell coach has sort of flagged this as a student-prized priority recruit, what kind of weight does that get in your college's admission process?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So the University has a structured process for athletics to connect to admissions, and this is a process that has been managed for many years. It's managed out of the department of athletics. The undergraduate admissions office has a staff member specifically devoted to managing that process and being the intermediary between the undergraduate admissions office. The college admissions office is in the department of athletics. This is a process that was vetted two years ago, most recently, by a committee at the

University level at the Provost's request to make sure that the process is working well.

And so essentially what will happen is coaches do have the opportunity to let the colleges know which of their students -- or which of their recruits they're interested in, and they're able to rate those recruits so that the admissions offices are essentially notified. We also have the opportunity to give information back to the coaches that is based on academic profiles within our own units. So essentially, a student that is interested in engineering and is also a recruited athlete has to fit within two standard deviations in terms of their grades and their test scores of what we would admit typically in college of engineering. And we're able to give feedback, including saying no, to recruited athletes that would not -- the student is not a good fit either academically or otherwise for our programs. That's typically where the buck will stop.

JOHN CAWLEY: So two standard deviations away from your average admit, that's a gigantic range.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It can be. But it's also -- you have to also understand that when you look at a normal distribution of who we're admitting, you know, on a national level, we admit way up on the right hand part of the tail. So two standard deviations within, you know, a tiny slice of the high-end of the tail is not really that big. And to be honest with you, this is a process that's distributed in the exact same way across all of the Ivy League institutions. All of the Ivy League institutions use a very similar way to look at --

JOHN CAWLEY: Well, Yale was part of the scandal that we're talking about, so I'm not reassured by what --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I completely agree with that. But there is also -- Yale, you know, where they got into trouble is not in the admissions part of that program, it's in the athletics part of that program where they had coaches, you know, bleak sports that are not under massive scrutiny, they were able to manipulate the system. And so that's...

JOHN CAWLEY: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have the mic. Am I allowed to --

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Let's take turns.

KEN BIRMAN: All right. Ken Birman, computer science. I once ran a company, and the company once had a million dollars embezzled by a person who we would have normally trusted, we just didn't know about her gambling habit and her problem with the people behind the gambling casino. What I learned after that was that if somebody is compromised for money or for some other very, very strong reason, and they're smart, it takes a certain type of protection to prevent them from breaking the system.

Now, in my case, we didn't actually have a guarantee of multiple independent people watching our books, and that -- I won't get into the story, but that was what we did wrong. So I'm wondering if you've given thought to whether there could be a situation where some individual or let's say two individuals would be capable of steering an applicant through overlooking fraudulent materials, things like that, and where they can even control who those two people were.

And I'm not suggesting that any of you are those kinds of people. I'm a person who -- I got lucky, I happened to have had insurance. But I got fooled once, and it left me understanding that we can sometimes be naive about the people around us, even the very smart people; in fact, especially the very smart people who happen to have a gambling problem that you weren't aware of.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Was that a question or a concern?

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Was that a question or a comment? With Professor Birman, you can't tell.

SHAWN FELTON: Can we say that what you described would not happen within our process?

[Off mic]

SHAWN FELTON: I think that with any situation, there will be bad actors and obviously bad actions, as well. I think there are no guarantees. And really, what Scott described earlier is that there's a structure in place here such that we trust and that we rely heavily on that structure to provide guide rails so that this kind of thing that you're describing, speculative thing, wouldn't happen here.

But is anything and everything 100 percent preventable? No.

SCOTT CAMPBELL: I agree with what Shawn says, there's no process -- I mean, there's no process that's going to be absolutely bulletproof. Do we monitor the movement of files and how these decisions are made? Absolutely.

One of the main reasons we do not have temporary readers making final admit decisions is because they are not full-time employees of the institution, and so they do not bear the responsibility of making these decisions. So it's professional staff that are in our offices and in our units that are making those final admit decisions.

What our temporary reader typically does is record information and then put a flag up to say the wind might be blowing this way. And it's up to the professional staff to do what we call second read, which is to go back into the file and look across the material and then make a decision, informed decision, based on what they know, what their professional experience is, and what's in the best interest of the student and the institution.

So bulletproof, I don't think that's possible. But, you know, pretty solid, yeah. And solid, yeah.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Chris?

CHRIS SCHAFFER: Yeah. Hi. Chris Schaffer, associate dean of the faculty. Kind of two quick questions. So it sounds like admissions are about 10 percent of applicants University wide. For recruited athletes, I'd be interested to know what that fraction was.

And then the second question, and maybe a little bit more in depth, how are other kinds of semi-targeted recruits like that treated? I have a specific case of this. I had a high school student who worked in my lab for two summers and one academic year. And I wrote a letter. I could quote it to you. It said: I really hope this person comes to Cornell. They will have a position in my research laboratory from day one.

Do they get a two standard deviation break with a statement like that coming from a faculty member? How is that information included? Why is athletics so unique in this?

Heather Marcotte: I honestly don't at this point know the percentage. I'm brand new to being director. I would say in terms of your question regarding a letter from a faculty member, we definitely do take those into account looking -- but across the entire application, as we do with athletes. So we get the note. We get the flag from a coach that they're interested in an athlete. But as Scott mentioned, they still do have to meet the bar in being successful. So with students that we receive letters from, we're going to look across that bar, too. Do they meet the priorities of our college? Are they a fit for the program? Just as we would with athletics. And there's not to say that we don't take students in that standard deviation that aren't athletes. If they have a compelling story, if they are obviously bringing something to Cornell and we feel that they're a solid fit for our program, we are going to reach for those students, as well. So I would say letters that we receive from faculty, we do take that into account; it's not the only thing. As well as -- I see on the list in terms of students that are (indiscernible) or any of those pieces, it's just a piece of that application. But they have to be meeting that bar for us really focusing on that fit. And can they do the work here? Can they be successful here? So I think there is some leeway across the board, no matter if you have a letter or not, if you're a solid applicant to the University and to the college.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'll say for athletes, you know, they are getting a lot of support from the athletic department, from their coaches, from the team that supports them with academic advising, so their success rate here is incredibly high. So we have to keep that in mind, too, that we are not risking everything on one student. The student can do the work with the support that the community is giving them. And they're highly involved in the community. They're still involved in other activities on campus. They're bringing a big part of campus spirit to our community, just like the band does, just like the debate team does, just like other teams on campus do. So we have to remember that and not put them in that silo where being special treatment because we do this for a lot of great students who end up being great alumni.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: I'm wondering if the coaches -- there's a form they send out, can you send that form to me so I can look at it and maybe we can fashion something for faculty, just out of curiosity?

SCOTT CAMPBELL: I will leave that to Shawn.

SHAWN FELTON: [Off mic] I don't know if that's possible, but we can talk about things.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: [Off mic] there would be a pink or yellow sheet or something. Does that exist?

SHAWN FELTON: Those days are gone.

SCOTT CAMPBELL: No, not a pink sheet in a file.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: I thought there would be something that said, I'm interested in this student, I'm the lacrosse coach, is there a sheet like that?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So I'll talk about what's called the early credential review process. So as Ivy League rules stipulate, across the Ivy, coaches can begin to get what's essentially a sense of a student's admissibility from July 1st going into their senior year, so between their junior and senior year. So what coaches will do with us is submit students' transcripts, test scores. In the past, they've submitted what students are interested in academically. And then what we're able to do in the college is take a look at that student and say, Yes, we think this student is admissible based on what we see in our applicant pools. What that does for the coaches is then allows them to know that they can continue to put energy and effort into that student in terms of recruiting them to that particular program at Cornell. That is called the early credential review. And it's a series of forms, it's a packet of information. And once that occurs and that information goes back to the coaches, they have the ability to then go and recruit the kid. And if the student comes through the admissions process, we'll know that they had what's called an approved ECR, so an approved early credential review, which then places us in a position of the information, that there's nothing really damaging or mitigating in the application and we would look to admit the student.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Joanie. Use the microphone.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't think there is a mic there.

[Off mic]

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I would like to return to the first question. Would you be able to comment, the relative weight across these various criteria in your separate colleges? That's one question.

The second question is: This model you are talking about, that you have a permanent staff plus external reviewers, since when -- what's the history of this and when has that been adopted?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just quickly the first part -- second part first. So when I started admissions in engineering in 1997, we had about 3,500 applications and we had about a 43 percent admit rate. Pretty reasonable if you say to a family, We had about 4,500 applications in engineering and we had about a 43 percent admit rate. So pretty reasonable, you say to a family, you know, You have a 43 percent chance of being admitted to the college, those are good odds. Now, it's about a 10 percent admit rate; and you say that to a family. And I've got 13,000 applications, you know, you probably get to a place where they're looking for oblique angles to get into the institutions, just as a framework around that.

When you look at the full application that we look at, there's anywhere from 25 to 35 pages of material that come into one application. Multiply that times 13,000, and you get a sense of the scope of what we're looking at.

Somewhere in between when Cornell went to the common application, which is about 2003, 2004, that's when this began to go upwards. That's when we needed to put systems -- if you're not going to increase staff, permanent staff, which I have the same or smaller staff than I had in '97, you have to figure out another way to do this. That's when temporary readers came into being, not just at Cornell but across the country.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So back to the first question, which is the basic question that we have here that is the relative -- if they're able to provide a general guideline to all the reviewers about the relative ratio to transcript essays and extracurricular activities.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So this year I had about -- yeah, for engineering, this year we had about 3,000 of our applicants that had an 800 on the mathematics exam, so that just assumes -- it's exactly what Angela said. I can admit the class five times over and really have no dents in quality anywhere. So context wise, we look at all of these factors in concert, and there is no formula. You know, you can

-- we're in a very luxurious position at Cornell that you can take this factor off the table if you want to amplify that factor. Maybe you want a student who is incredibly active and a great student in the classroom but has more moderate SATs, we can do that. So that's what we do in engineering.

In terms of temporary readers, we train them, and we have a guide. We have a reader manual that we help them understand the process with in terms of how they evaluate those things.

Angela Herrera: So, yeah, so similar to what Scott said, we look across the board so I wouldn't say that we can rate one of these areas higher. We definitely want to make sure that students are able to do the work here. That's kind of our bar, is that we want to make sure we're setting up students for success; and academics is a key piece in that, but in terms of scores, like Scott said, we could fill our class five times over with excellent students in terms of scores. We're really looking for that sweet spot of have the academics and also have the personalities and the traits and the qualities and the desire to be here across the board, and using that in tangent with the academics to be able to support those pieces. So I can't say -- I can't say that we rate them one way or the other because it's completely different as we look across our applicants.

In terms of our readers, we too have a reader guideline of very robust finders. And our readers go through a two- to three-week training process where we sit with them, go through multiple applications, talk about why we do what we do, how each of our areas -- these areas play into the application and really what we look for in our students, which, again, is different across our majors, as well. So there is no cookie cutter formula, which all our students are looking for, but there isn't one. It's really a combination of factors.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: My question is because that issue came up and how much weight do you assign to the essay the students write?

Angela Herrera: So our Cornell -- the Cornell supplemental essay for our process is important. But, again, if a student isn't showing that they're not academically prepared, it's not going to pull them up out of that piece. It's really, again, looking at are they able to articulate they are a fit here. It's a piece of that puzzle. Do we have students that are able to articulate they're fit in other ways, whether it's through extracurriculars and through what courses they're taking in classes that

may not have the resources to write an application essay that is extremely savvy and been rewritten five times? Yeah, we do. So we're trying to really look into the application and make sure we're giving everyone a fair shot regardless of their background, regardless of their resources. So while it's important, again, we're looking across the application materials to ensure that we're giving everyone that fair shot and making sure that we're considering all those pieces.

BUZZ BARSTOW: Thank you. I think the question I -- first of all, I will introduce myself. Buzz Barstow, biological and environmental engineering. Actually, the question I wanted to ask was already asked a little bit about the weighting of the essay. Something I think that was a particular concern to the faculty in our last meeting is how do you weight it to the handicap students from, say, less socioeconomic advantaged background who maybe don't have the resources to write a great essay?

And do you think it would be effective to add some sort of attestation, too, that says, I wrote this myself? Could you even validate that?

Angela Herrera: Yes, the attestation is there. The students have to sign electronically that everything that they've written is their own work. And we check those, of course. And they have to disclose disciplinary issues. All sorts of things happen in this application that allow us to go back and say, if we find out that you lied, you signed, and we can, you know, withdraw your letter of admission. And it has happened before, of course, because -- it happened this year, Shawn said. Not for us.

But back to the essay. I really love that question because I think our offices have been really good at coming up with questions that fit our particular school. They get at the heart of what we're trying to understand about why the student, out of all the amazing colleges at Cornell, chose my school. Like, what about you and who you are fits with us?

And even for the students who are not savvy, who don't understand industrial and labor relations, it's what they do in their life experiences and how they've articulated that that shows me you're going to love my major; you're going to come here and you're going to take advantage of every opportunity whether you're a low income student who -- their entire life has been about social justice, they don't understand the terminology. They'll learn that when they get here.

But they've put it in writing. And we can see it because they're doing it in their everyday lives. We know that they're going to come here and do extremely well with us, on top of managing hard academics, getting great grades, their teachers love them, their counselor loves them, they're great kids; we'll teach you the rest when you get here.

So I think the great thing about all of our essay prompt is it allows them to not have to know exactly the terminology or the exact Cornell words. It allows them to just show themselves, and we can figure it out for them. And that's why we have such great retention rates. In ILR specifically, students don't leave our major; they actually come in our major. So all of these things are factors that show we're doing a pretty good job of deciphering fit from their essays and the rest of the applications.

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: We're going to have to -- I'm sorry. We have a two minute good and welfare thing.

But first, let's thank them for coming because it's been very interesting. And you'll hear from us again.

[Applause]

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We can come back. Thank you for having us.

Good and Welfare

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Yeah, don't -- you may know that Chris is dropping out of the associate team of business. And as -- like a resolution, you know what, I don't care if there's a quota at all. Okay?

First of all, Chris is just a great colleague. You can read all that. He's in the dorms. He understands students. He's a great researcher. He really follows the shared governancing. He's forthright, honest, out of the box. And he's fun to be around, especially if he's on your side; if he's not on your side, then you got to watch out. Okay.

So just to be resolved here, we really appreciate, Chris, all that you've done here in the Senate in these three years. Chris told me that he may come back as a

senator, which I said is like the John Quincy Adams thing, you come back to the house, whatever.

Anyway, Chris, here's a little -- it's Slope Day. And there's open container rules and stuff, but that's okay. Thanks a lot.

[Applause]

CHARLIE VAN LOAN: Okay. That's it. Chris will be happy to share with you on your way out. I mean, I know where you're going.

SPEAKER NELSON: Okay. That adjourns the meeting. Thank you very much. See you next fall.