

**Faculty Senate  
December 6, 2023**

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: All set? Good afternoon. I'm Jonathan Ochshorn, Senate speaker and professor emeritus, Department of Architecture. We start with a land acknowledgment. Cornell University is located on the traditional homelands of the Gayogohó:nq (the Cayuga Nation). The Gayogohó:nq are members of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, an alliance of six sovereign Nations with a historic and contemporary presence on this land. The Confederacy predates the establishment of Cornell University, New York State, and the United States of America. We acknowledge the painful history of Gayogohó:nq dispossession and honor the ongoing connection of Gayogohó:nq people, past and present, to these lands and waters. So, the meeting is called to order. The first order of business is approval the minutes. The minutes of the November 8th, 2023, meeting have been posted and distributed online in the form of a verbatim transcript. I ask are there any questions? Hearing none the minutes are approved and posted. This is a kind of passive-aggressive manner of asking for and receiving unanimous consent. Okay. Our first order of business is a series of resolution refreshers so Lisa Nishi, Industrial and Labor Relations and Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education will talk to the resolution to eliminate a transcript notation for a grade of incomplete and resolution to discontinue posting median grades. So, Lisa, if you are online, on mute--

>> Lisa Nishi: I am online.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Go ahead --

>> Lisa Nishi: I'm online. Good afternoon, everybody. Okay. Let's dive in, great. So, the first

of the two resolutions just as a refresher is about the -- the notation that remains on a transcript if -- after a student has an incomplete, even after they have completed that there's a notation left on the transcript so let me just briefly -- the original policy. According to that policy, a grade of incomplete, a student can only opt for that when two basic conditions are met. A student has substantial equity at a passing level and the student has been prevented by circumstances beyond their control. I just want to pause for a second. There was some questions that we got at the November -- no, October, I think it was, meeting when we discussed this. I think faculty and senators, you had questions about, you know, the criteria for awarding incompletes and that ended up generating some questions. I wanted you to know that in response to that there will be a survey going out to you later this week asking you for some input about some of those criteria. So, we'll -- you know potentially address that separately but just wanted you to alert -- alert you to that. Okay, next, please. So, according to the current policy, the fact that a student took an incomplete becomes a permanent part of their record even after they have completed it. Right? So, there's an asterisk that remains on their transcript. If they don't complete the coursework, what happens really depends on the college and some cases it becomes an F. In some cases, it becomes a permanent incomplete with no option to make up the work. Next, please. So here are some of the reasons for the proposal. By definition a student is not at fault for needing a temporary incomplete, recall the two conditions I just covered and, so, they shouldn't be punished for a setback out of their control with this permanent notation. The notation may pressure students to disclose private information about what may have led to the need for the incomplete. Another reason is even without the permanent notation a transcript reader has all the necessary information, right? Either it changed to a degree -- a grade because they completed it or there is some other penalty that is already part of this practice. Cornell is an outlier in this

practice. We're the only Ivy to do this and actual implementation of the required notation is inconsistent across colleges so, because it's an incredibly manual and tedious process. Next, please. so, for those reasons, the proposal in front of you is to eliminate that permanent transcript notation of an asterisk for a temporary incomplete when an instructor has received the completed material and submitted a grade. Next, please. So, in the words of the resolution this would mean that we would revise the wording and the grading policy. That by eliminating the clause that states the single incomplete becomes a permanent part of the student's transcript even when a grade is later submitted and will substitute with the symbol incomplete becomes a permanent part of the student's transcript only when another grade is not later submitted. Okay. Next, please. Okay. So, I know that was really quick, but we don't have a whole lot of time so that's the first resolution. The second one here is about the median grades that are currently posted on student's transcripts. Yes, sorry for the animation. This was a good idea when we went through it line by line in November but I'm not going to do that today. As a refresher, so, I'll just point out a few things on this slide. So, this resolution was initially passed in 1997 for median grades to be posted both on transcripts and the OUR website with two underlying goals. To encourage students to take courses with low median grades and to curb grade inflation. There were -- so one thing I should say is that the median grade started to be posted on the OUR website right away, starting in 1998 but not on the transcript until 2008 due to delays -- technology-related delays. Okay. In between there were two EPC resolutions that were not passed until in 2011 when there was a faculty senate resolution that was passed to remove one of the two types of postings. That is the posting of the median grades from the OUR website, and this was based on published research that really indicated that the underlying goals of this resolution in the first place -- the data suggests that the opposite effect was happening. The

problem is that the resolution didn't address the posting on transcripts, only the OUR website. Since then, there have been two SA resolutions, proposing that we do away with the postings on transcripts just like we are proposing in this resolution that I'm presenting to you right now.

Next, please. So here are some reasons to do away with posting median grades on the transcript.

Next, please. Great. So while the faculty senate initially sought to address the problem of strategic course selection by discontinuing the practice of posting median grades on the OUR website like I said in 2011 the continued posting on transcripts results in the same behavior which is antithetical to our fundamental principle of learning for the sake of learning cause it really drives strategic course selection and by promoting median grades Cornell focuses students on how they perform relative to peers which fuels unproductive stress and competitive culture. Cornell is quite anomalous in this practice which may disadvantage our students and research as I said showed that publicizing median grades actually promotes grade inflation instead of curbing it and it disproportionately impacts certain students. Next, please. Students -- we see from the articles that they've written in the Sun and the resolutions are really disheartened by this practice. They report that it's demoralizing, it devalues their academic performance in the classroom, detracts from learning and reinforces student competition and it inhibits academic risk-taking and exploration. Students also report that the practice results in inequities within courses with multiple sections where section instructors have different medians which are then aggregated to produce an overall median grade at the course level. And the other thing is that commercial websites provide some of this information for a fee which introduces another form of inequity. Next, please. There are four. The proposal is that the university discontinue posting median grades on transcripts. I think that's it. Great.

>>Jonathan Ochshorn: I believe we have Rebecca Nelson, speaking for five minutes from Plant Microbiology, et cetera and also chair of the Educational Policies Committee. Is Rebecca here? Okay. There are a couple of microphones. Take one and following Rebecca we'll have about ten minutes for discussion.

>> Rebecca Nelson: Good afternoon, everybody. I think I have --

>>Jonathan Ochshorn: It's green. Yeah.

>> Rebecca Nelson: Oh, okay.

>>Jonathan Ochshorn: This one. Yeah.

>> Rebecca Nelson: Good afternoon, everyone and thank you for Soliciting our opinion on these matters. We have deliberated on both of them and fully support the recommendations. In the case of the incomplete, we considered, you know, what would be the impact if the student earned a good grade. What would be the impact if the student had a bad grade and in no case could we have a compelling -- we couldn't come up with our own compelling reason to maintain that -- that indication of an incomplete. And in the case of the median grade we wanted to at least acknowledge the fact that Cornell was perhaps anomalous in an innovative way by trying to put this up there to begin with, so -- I'm all for positive anomalies when, you know, we're trying to lead some new attempt to encourage students to take difficult classes or, you know, to beat grade inflation but it's very resoundingly clear from what seems to be very serious research that the

effort considerably backfired across the board and so we totally endorse the idea of removing that -- that -- that incomplete -- sorry -- the median grades from the transcripts. So, I'm afraid I don't have five minutes' worth to say but -- we endorse both resolutions.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Okay. Thank you. And we open the floor for discussion, either online, raise your digital hand or if you're here just come up and we will try to get the microphone (inaudible).

>> Tom Fox: Just a simple question

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Hold on a minute. We need you --

>> Unidentified Speaker: Check one, two, one, two.

>> Tom Fox: Just a simple question. Will this retrospectively affect transcripts that are already in processed in the previous manner

>>Jonathan Ochshorn: And identify yourself for the record.

>> Tom Fox: Oh, Tom Fox, Molecular Biology and Genetics, sorry.

>> Lisa Nishi: So, my understanding is that both of these could be implemented starting this semester, but we would not go back and change any prior transcript -- prior semester transcripts.

Did that answer the question?

>> Tom Fox: Yes.

>> Lisa Nishi: Okay.

>> Unidentified Speaker: Yes.

>>Jonathan Ochshorn: Are there any other comments or questions? We have one in house so identify yourself, please.

>> Chris Schaffer: Hi. Chris Schaffer, Biomedical Engineering. Lisa, just to clarify on the previous question, so if it's implemented in the spring semester that means any transcript printed from the spring semester forward would lack a notation, not that we're going to have students graduating in two years say -- who have half of their courses with a mean grade listed and half of them without.

>> Lisa Nishi: That's a very good question, Chris, thank you for that. Really important distinction and I will -- I will have to check to be totally honest about implementation. What I did hear was it could actually begin as early as this semester as in the fall semester given that grades have not yet been finalized. So, thanks for that. I will look into it.

>>Jonathan Ochshorn: Identify yourself, please.

>> Mike Thompson: Mike Thompson, Materials Science and Engineering. I'm going to speak again against the motion for the removal of the median grade. I have talked to a lot of colleagues over the past weeks about it and there seems to be a great dissent that we did the right experiment, we did the right thing, and we should just accept it and encourage others to do the same in providing a context in the grades that are presented on a transcript. It is a disservice to the courses whether it is an inconvenient truth or not there is a distribution of abilities in classes and a grade of a B, or a C may not necessarily be poor but without context it's hard to evaluate what that is without that median grade. And I think that it'll just further encourage the grade inflation. Most of the faculty are very concerned that this will then push grade inflation even further up not necessarily in the elective courses but in all the other courses that look at the same way, so I continue to be opposed to that portion of the motion. The removal the incomplete I think is a brilliant move.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Are there any other questions or comments? Seeing none, hearing none, I think we'll move onto the next agenda item which is an update on -- okay. We have one more comment.

>> Tara Holm: (inaudible) I'm Tara Holm from Math. I -- there was an article in the New York Times yesterday about the tremendous grade inflation that the average grade at Yale is 3.7 or something. Do we have more information about Cornell?

>> Unidentified Speaker: 80% As.



>> Tara Holm: At Cornell?

>> Multiple Unidentified Speakers: No, at Yale.

>> Tara Holm: Right. Do we have information about Cornell? Lisa? Do we have information about that? About Cornell.

>> Lisa Nishi: We do. I don't have it off the top of my head though, Tara. I'm sorry. But you know what -- I just do want to remind senators that in the -- the study that was published in 2009 by Cornell faculty and Cornell data, comparing pre and post -- kind of the implementation of this practice that they actually saw evidence of grade inflation rather than the other way around. I think the shared courses with the median in the A range increased by 16% when they compared the pre and post and the share of students enrolled in such courses increased by more than 42% and so that was the -- you know -- the data that was compelling enough to support the 2011, I'm getting -- there's so many dates in that timeline as you saw -- the resolution that was passed so -- that's what our data show.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Anyone else? Okay. Come up and you have a follow-up?

>> Tara Holm: Thanks Lisa for that. I appreciate that and I -- I certainly important the motion. I wasn't trying to speak against the motion, but I really just was putting in a plea that we maybe -- maybe -- maybe I'm putting the plea into Eve that maybe we should look at grade inflation at

Cornell and wonder whether there's anything to do.

>>Jonathan Ochshorn: Identity yourself.

>> Rebecca Nelson: Rebecca Nelson, School of Integrated Plant Science and Global Development. So just to -- to add to -- I think I gave a somewhat inadequate representation -- at first, I did want to commend the writers of the resolution for a very thoroughly argued case. I was just curious if the previous commentator had shown the full resolution to those people who were concerned that it was a bad idea. I thought it was really well researched and based on evidence as the previous speaker said -- you know -- analysis of evidence so I understood the evidence to say we were contributing to our, you know, valiant innovation to, in fact, the opposite outcomes that we had been intended so I just want to know if those people have read the evidence and I thought was very well argued from a whole bunch of different angles. I thought it was very compelling resolution. I wanted to just say that I appreciated that hard work -- that -- the group had put into that and also the academic evidence that was used to support the resolution so --

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Thank you.

>> Lisa Nishi: Thank you.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Are we ready to move on? Yeah? Come on --

>> Chelsea Specht: Chelsea Specht, Associate Dean of Faculty and professor in Plant Biology. So, Lisa, This is a question -- so I haven't gone in and looked at those data, but I know you have and -- and brought that together to the resolution. Is it clear that the grade inflation or does it matter, I guess, is it clear that -- is it a causation or a correlation, right? Is the grade inflation that we saw because -- is it just because grade inflation is happening in 2009 and this was like a -- you know a -- a sign of the times? Or is it -- that was -- inextricably linked to and caused by the median reporting?

>> Lisa Nishi: I mean -- I think -- right, really ascertaining casualty is a tricky thing but they -- you know -- used a match sample of courses that were taught before and after with no other known change, right, except this event and so, we're inferring casualty.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Last chance. Come up. One more comment. Identity yourself.

>> Buz Barstow: Thank you very much. Buz Barstow, Biological and Environmental Engineering. I just want to follow up on that point. Lisa, have we been able to compare our grade inflation at Cornell with -- with other schools? That might sort of shed light open this sort of causation verses correlation issue.

>> Lisa Nishi: So, you're asking -- all of you good questions and I -- dug into this data when we had the honors -- the Latin honors proposal. I think it was last year and -- looked carefully at grade data and including I believe some of -- at least our Ivy peers and again I can't -- I can't -- you know recall the specifics but at the time remember thinking, wow, you know, that inflation is

not so high at Cornell relative to our peers for what that's worth. But, again, you know, I'm speaking off the cuff with that. I'm trying to pull up some of that data and not able to do it really quickly.

>> Rebecca Nelson: I wish I brought the document but another thing I think it's worth emphasizing is that the -- perhaps more striking and clearer consequence of the policy was that people were really going for the easy classes. That was -- I think the more striking finding. I mean -- and so clearly -- I mean grade inflation aside which is something that I think we should take seriously, that people Zooming over to the easy classes seemed like in itself a, you know, negative enough impact of the policy that alone would make me strongly reconsider it, as a direct backfire. Bingo, bullseye, backfire.

>> Lisa Nishi: And that we also know from conversations with students, right? Not just in the data, from the way that it's used.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Okay. Moving on, safely. We have an update on proposal toward establishing establishment of a teaching professor title. Our first speaker is Michael Ryan Clarkson, Computer Science, Senior Lecturer; and also, Charlie Van Loan, Computer Science. They will speak for ten minutes followed by Rebecca Nelson for five minutes.

>> Michael Clarkson: 1, 2, great. Hi. I'm Michael Clarkson, Computer Science. This is going to be just a brief update on what's happened in the last few months with respect to this. You might recall that in September, Charlie and I gave a presentation to the senate on the idea of

establishing a teaching professor track here at Cornell. It is not yet a proposal, just an exploration of some of the ideas that were involved. Throughout September and October these ideas got discussed by the academic Deans, the provost and other folks and in November as a result of all of that Eve asked the academic deans to identify a representative from their unit to seven on a new task force that she just created -- the teaching title -- what does it stand for? I forget. Teaching Track Title Task Force, T4. T4 is an easier name to remember. Okay. So, very recently, just recently, the makeup of that was announced and a website is set up so you can find out all about who is on it and it's going to be on the next slide to in a second. And, in the interim Eve had also asked three of the senate committees to review the exploration document that we had written. We just very recently received their responses, and they are going to talk with you a little bit when I'm done here about what they thought. Going forward, we have scheduled the first T 4 meeting for the week of December 18th and so we look forward, Charlie and I to begin working with the people that are going to be on it. And that's these people, thank you. So, this is the makeup of the committee. I will give you just a second to look over that rather than read everybody's names, but we have broad representation from many units on campus and we have four RTE faculty on it as well. Okay, next slide, please. The charge that the Dean of Faculty gave to T 4 is as follows. I'll read it. The Teaching-Track Title Taskforce will develop a proposal and Faculty Senate resolution to create a framework for Teaching Professor titles at all ranks, using the enabling legislation approach seen in titles like Clinical Professor and Research Professor. With broad representation from various colleges and schools, the composition of the committee ensures that each one can utilize this enabling legislation to customize the implementation of a Teaching Professor track based on their specific educational goals. And although this is not formally part of the charge the expectation that was established from the

Dean of Faculty was that this proposal should be September to the senate in time for debate at the April meeting and perhaps hopefully a vote at the May meeting. Next slide, please. So, the T 4 meetings, we do have web space on the senate website. We're going to be posting minutes and agendas on those and we're happy to accept comments and feedback from everybody through the website, through the comments that can be posted there or through contact with any member of the T 4 task force. Next slide, please. Final thing I will say for today, we would like to thank Eve very much for working with the Deans and setting up T 4. We appreciate the administrative support provided by ca and Jill and we're very grateful for the feedback we've received from colleagues and lots of one on one and individual discussions we've had as well as the feedback that we're all about to hear from these three committees. Okay. Thank you.

>>Jonathan Ochshorn: Okay, thank you. Charlie Van Loan I believe is online, followed by Mark Milstein and Tracy Stokol followed by senate discussion, so, Charlie, you're on.

>> Charlie Van Loan: I have nothing to add to what Michael said so we look forward to hearing the three committees.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Okay. That deserves some applause I think too. Mark Milstein, are you online or here? Oh -- right. Thank you. Sorry. Yep.

>> Rebecca Nelson: Yes. Rebecca Nelson. Chair of the Education Policy Committee. So, Michael, I and others -- I know have appreciated the previous presentation to the faculty senate on the subject and the full Education Policy Committee did meet to consider the documents

prepared on the subject and we support the proposal. And prefer the co-exist option that was presented. We suggest that the distinction of whether a person is a lecturer, or a teaching professor be made on the basis of work status rather than some implication of intellectual status or something. The senior lecturer we suggest should be reserved for those with less than half time appointments, short-term or short-term appointments or that they're non-PhD hires. In favor of the resolution, we note that it's -- you know proposes challenges to recruit top -- top-notch teaching talent if our titling scheme is regarded as offering less than full support for that category -- a negative culture or other lack of support for the person that we're trying to recruit and that out of Cornell's peer institution, universities have implemented this teaching professor track. So, we made a bunch of summaries and observations, but I hope I'm not going to parse my comments out three times again, but I think that's our main thrust of our observations. Thank you.

>>Jonathan Ochshorn: Mark, are you here or online? There you are. Does this work? Okay.

>> Mark Milstein: Thank you. So, I am representing CAPP and if I can -- actually get my computer here to work well -- the committee comments look like have been posted but just to summarize those. The committee found that documentation did a great job outlining the issues and probable solutions, supporting moving the issue forward in the way that it seems to be moving forward. Just to review the committee reviewed the material from the perspective of whether or not there existed any omissions that ought to be addressed verses whether or not it is for or against any of the proposals or the subproposals with in the proposal itself and the only potential omission identified is related to process and it sounds like at least a piece of that is with

this T 4 committee but just to review what that was the idea of in general the idea of assistant teaching processor, associate teaching professor, full teaching professor, potentially replacing the lecturer positions was seen as an interesting way to help establish parity among the teaching staff but it was noted across the committee that professorial committee, even those that are very committed to knowing and understanding the employment conditions of lecturers at Cornell aren't always familiar with all the informal details of work arrangements and social pressures of verse responsibilities, of different roles and the hidden ways in which power is exerted over them due to the structural inequities that are unavoidable when some teachers have tenure line appointments and others don't. And it varies a lot across different units, so we saw a reorganization of existing titles along the lines that -- that are in the proposal, has the potential to be very divisive within the ranks of lecturer faculty. Any one of the proposed changes could create cleavages in status and position that don't currently exist in an institutionalized form and the desire to regulate the conditions and particulars of these titles can create a lot of anxiety among potentially affected faculty so all of that really summarizes to and it looks like at least part of that has been done that not only is this debate issued in full -- the issue is debated in full within the senate but the committee itself really dives into this from a lecturer position. It's great that there are two RTE faculty on there but two is a drop in the bucket compared to -- what's that? Four, sorry. But -- still, four, four is better than two, four is double, that's great, 40%, that's great but all efforts that can be made to try to draw lecturers in across the board and try to -- and it sounds like that's the direction it is going so it's consistent with what the committee had to say. Yes. RTE working group is also looking at this is what Eve's contribution is. Since I'm on the mic I get to parrot that, thank you.



>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Thank you. Tracy Stokel.

>> Tracy Stokol: Yeah. I'm online. I'll just wait for clapping to stop. I'm -- so I'm representing the views of the Committee for Academic Freedom and Professional Status of the Faculty. As a group we were also in support of the proposal primarily because it would create the situation to be more equitable considering that we had established other professorial titles in the RTE tracks. We did think some of the justifications were a little weak in the proposal and some of the -- to EPC we think that the two titles should co-exist, and that the enabling legislation should provide clear guidelines as to how they should be distinguished but we did not want to dictate what the task force's job shall be. One of the things that we are concerned about is the erosion of tenure of course and so that's still first and foremost in our minds and we would like the task force to think strongly about the percentages of teaching faculty that can be in the professorial title in relation to the tenure track faculty similar to the other titles. In addition, we are research institution, and we strongly believe that the teaching professor title should -- the expectations for people in that position should be for innovative and scholarly work and that they should publish in some format their efforts and advance their discipline and we felt fairly strongly about that. The other thing we were concerned about with the establishment of these titles is that specific units may delegate most of the teaching responsibility to teaching professors and relieving research-based tenure track or tenured faculty of teaching obligations that we felt what makes this institution a premiere institution is the fact that tenured and tenure track faculty bring their research expertise into their classroom and in part their knowledge to the students giving them real time information as they are discovering it. And I think that was everything we had to say but you can read the report if I left anything out.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Thank you. We now open up the floor for discussion. Questions, comments, if you're in the audience you can come up and grab a mic. If you're online raise your digital hand. We have a couple of people in house who are eager to speak so identify yourself and your affiliation.

>> Chris Schaffer: Hi, Chris Schaffer, Biomedical Engineering. Tracy, this question is for you. Given Cornell's recent hiring of a number of tenure track faculty members whose research is on education so these are disciplined based education researchers, how would you -- if there's an expectation for publishing on education scholarship and this teaching track, nontenured teaching track position how do you distinguish that from the discipline-based education researchers? I'm just wondering if we're mixing two things here.

>> Tracy Stokol: So -- so how -- I can't speak directly as to how each unit would adopt the enabling legislation because I think that the criteria by which they -- each unit defines a teaching professor versus a lecturer versus a tenure track professor's primary role -- I do think that needs to be defined in a unit specific way because we each have our own expectations for tenure. I do - - can just speak for my own experience with a clinical professor title so at -- at the vet school. At the vet school clinical professor titles are still expected to publish so the expectations for publication are not primarily -- necessarily a (inaudible) driven research but can be book chapters, case reports, just contributing to their field in some way and that's really what I think the committee was envisioning having each unit define its own expectations for scholarship and innovation. Then we do think there needs to be defined criteria for separating a research

professor from a lecturer and as you now point out also a tenured or tenure track faculty whose main research focus is teaching. On another note, I did want the task -- the committee -- I did for get one thing is that we did want to bring up that there's still one RTE title that does not have a professor track and we're hoping maybe the task force can consider this as well and that's the extension title. So, is that coming next? Should that be part of this task force?

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: We have one more comment from in house.

>> Elliot Shapiro: Thank you. Elliot Shapiro, Knight Institute, and arts and sciences. So, first of all, a response to Tracy's last comment. I -- if -- if this is implemented with some kind of research publishing expectation there would have to be consideration placed on what kinds of institutional support there is to conduct research as a senior lecturer, I'm supposed to be 100% a teacher so all the writing and publishing I do is on my own time with much smaller research budgets and no leave or course release for research. And so, if that becomes built in, I think the question of support for that research should be integrated into that. So that's really in response to what Tracy just said. The other thing I would say which I posted something online, so I won't repeat all of this is that I hope there's also due consideration which I see in what I've already read to recognizing the existing core of lecturers and senior lecturers already at Cornell When this is implemented. And -- and I do see the way that the professor of the practice title was implemented in my college in arts and sciences it effectively created like as a lecturer I already felt like a second-class citizen and now I felt like a third-class citizen because the nature of the way that professor of the practice title was written in arts and sciences explicitly excluded people like me. And so, I would want to be clear that part of the plan and I know this is the co-existence

verses merger and so forth is how do we transition the corrupt very substantial core of lecturers and senior lecturers into this process? And I think it's crucial that be a top priority, that it not be like it is just for new people and we'll bring these people in occasionally that like that -- that implementation should be really crucial or that's a real like -- if we're talking about concerns about divisiveness and morale that would just, we are brutal. I'm saying this as someone whose opinion a senior lecturer already for more than 20 (inaudible) thank you.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: We have some more comments. Come to the front. Okay. We have Risa Lieberwitz first online, and then we'll come back in house. Risa? Unmute.

>> Risa Lieberwitz: Thank you. I wanted to address some of the points that Tracy raised which I think are really important. One of -- one of them is -- well let me just say generally my approach has not changed since we've begun started talking about this sort of proliferation of titles which is that what we should do is -- my view is that we should move to creating greater equality among all our faculty colleagues towards actual equality and avoiding an increase in stratification of status and I think we should avoid an increase in bifurcating the kinds of work we do as faculty members and it's not just the United States that's had this issue. It is also -- I've studied some issues in the UK and that kind of bifurcation of research verses teaching has really had some -- some very negative outcomes that people have pointed to. So, in the spirit of moving toward actual equality, I wanted to raise a couple of points. One is the issue of job security. The written report says they view tenure as being outside the scope of the current discussion. If the current discussion is simply titles, well, then, it is but if the current discussion is how do we actually move towards equality of faculty positions then the issue of tenure and job

security is something that really needs to be dealt with within the confines of any kind of proposal and, as a reminder the reason why faculty have job security and need it so much whether you're teaching or research or whatever you're doing is to protect academic freedom and right at the moment I think we're all very sensitive to the reality of the need for academic freedom in our teaching, in our research, in our public speech. And so, I just don't think that it makes sense to simply increase our numbers of titles without actually improving employment conditions towards real equality of status. So, thanks a lot.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Thank you. We have another comment in house. Identity yourself.

>> Betsy Bihn in Department of Food Science, I agree with what she said but I also think not including extension in this is not a good idea. I think doing this stuff piece rate is just going to create more inequities so I think if we're going to change titles, we should change them across the board for all the areas.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Thank you. Other comments? Charlie. Go head.

>> Charlie Van Loan: Yeah. Yeah. Thanks. Like -- to comment on some interesting things that Tracy brought up. So, we're all inclined toward this enabling legislation approach and one of the items in there which is always attracted a lot of senate attention is the percent limitation and we certainly should talk about that in the committee but there's sort of a little bit situation here because unlike the -- the POP's and clinicals and research professors that started with no competition or no nearby titles that you had to deal with. We have over 300 lecturers on tap in

the university. Some departments, especially in the language area have relatively large numbers of lecturers and I think we have to be very careful about coming up with percent limitation. I'm not saying it's certainly on the table but it's going to be a tricky conversation. About the erosion of tenure, We gather some data back in the summer that hopefully will inform some of our discussions and there's a lot of increase in both numbers of students and we know about freshmen dorms, the professional student ranks have greatly swelled. A lot of increase across the board but the one place where there is not any kind of increase or trend is the number of -- of tenured faculty. That number is around 1600 plus or minus 20 over the last 20 or so years. I think we should pay attention to that. A little bit off to the side in terms of a committee but this gathering that data suggested that there are very definitely issues that way and then I also like this idea that Tracy brought up about the erosion of tenure track teaching, okay? And there's also data in there -- I don't want to talk about erosion of it but here all but we're all more and more busy and we all have intense research agendas, and this is something to pay attention to. I don't know if you can quantify it or measure it and hold departments and colleges to some kind of standard but again, it's certainly something that's very important to -- to bring up. And we also, you know, the interaction between tenured -- tenured track faculty and lecturers in the classroom, joint teaching and so forth is also something that is worthy of discussion. And, you know, and -- we know that retention and recruiting are very much drivers here but really in the end it's improving the quality of teaching, right? Through incentives, through structure that rewards, you know, quality teaching and so on and I think that really to me is the high-level item here which is to improve the huge number of undergraduates are exposed to RTE teaching and we have to pay attention to that and hopefully come up with something that will improve that situation. Thanks.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: We have another comment from inside.

>> Stijn Van Osselaer: Stijn Osselaer, from the Johnson School. I'm really worried about the idea of having these -- the lecturers and teaching professors co-exist. I -- I'm a department chair of department that has I think 12 lecturers and senior lecturers and we have situations where people do exactly the same work but one person might have a PhD and another doesn't and so for example, a criterion like you have to have a PhD to be a teaching professor if you do the same work but you're not a PhD you're not a teaching professor I think would create a lot of problems.

>> Eve De Rosa: Well, a constituent that you're not hearing from here that I can represent are the academic deans. And so, the academic deans were definitely in favor of co-existing titles because of it gave them the flexibility to engage the lecturers, senior lecturer titles independent of the teaching potentially -- teaching professor title and that was pretty unanimous and so I just wanted to represent their voice.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Thank you. I think we have some more comments from inside.

>> Chris Schaffer: Hello. Chris Schaffer, Biomedical Engineering. I just wanted to respond to Eve's comment, I wonder did that discussion include the instructor title which I think is also remains active here at Cornell, and it seems like instructor, lecturer, senior lecturer and (inaudible) of teaching professor is a lot and so I hope the committee thinks through carefully which of those we can get rid of and maybe even push back on the academic deans a little bit about all three of these non-teaching titles. Yep.

>> Eve De Rosa: And I should mention that the Deans have selected the representation on the t4 and so their voices will be in the room, and we can consider all of those things that are coming up. Come on up, Buz.

>> Buz Barstow: I hope it's time for me to say something. Thank you very much. Buz Barstow, Biological and Environmental Engineering. I really want to echo what Charlie said about the number of faculty positions not having substantially increased in the past 20 or 30 years. I think in the Biomedical Sciences this is a very serious issue for us. In the early 2000's the National Institutes of Health budget was I think doubled and it produced an explosion in the number of graduate students. There was no (inaudible) increase in the number of faculty positions and so it's created a -- I would call it I think the word used is hyper competition between researchers for a dwindling relative number of faculty positions. At the same time, I think -- I think that competition has actually led to a lot of disfunction, right, and I think it leads to a lot of dissatisfaction among researchers much of which I think is being addressed to this calls for DEI efforts in our departments. It's something, you know, at my department (inaudible) I see a lot of. So -- an obvious solution is increasing the number of tenure track faculty positions. I hope I haven't over stepped. But I think we have to keep in mind, you know -- one of my post docs said have we passed peak college? You know, if you think about it right, our -- United States population is not increasing at the rate it once was, maybe the world population isn't -- and I think there's a case to be made that maybe we've alienated some of our potentially customer base. Students. So, what do we do? I don't know. One of our -- one of our action items is to increase opportunity for students outside of academia and I just want to encourage you all to be thinking



about that. How do we -- how do we make that; you know how do we make that a reality? How do we increase the number of sorts of purpose-driven jobs out there? I feel like I've overstayed my welcome so I'm going to hand it over to you, thank you so much, Eve.

>> Eve De Rosa: Of course, thank you. I also just want to let you know that every college dean has a number of -- an increase in the net of tenure track faculty and so the provost has put out a goal for 100 plus net tenure track positions and so every college dean at this time is looking at the melt so how many people are leaving Cornell and they have to have a net positive so that cumulatively it's a net of 100 tenure track positions across the university.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Thank you. Charlie Van Loan and then Risa Lieberwitz:

>> Charlie Van Loan: Yeah, just quick let me give you some stats from our report. This is over the last ten years and this -- these numbers have come off the university website. The -- undergraduates have increased 9%, this is over the last 10 years. Undergraduates up 9%, professional students up 28%, graduate students i.e. PhDs up 41%, RTE teaching track faculty up 43%, tenure track 0.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Thank you. Risa?

>> Risa Lieberwitz: Yeah, thanks. And I think that the discussion the way it's going is very, very important because we moved away from this idea of just simply talking about titles and actually talking about these questions about tenure track lines and as I would repeat again, you know, the

link between that and actually protecting academic freedom and so I think it's great that, you know, what Eve told us in terms of the increase in tenure track lines and I would also say that we need to be thinking about our colleagues our current colleagues in RTE positions and how to actually do a combination of improving, actually making job security real for our current colleagues in our key positions and also thinking about bridges so that people in RTE positions would have an opportunity to move into tenure track lines. I mean it seems to me that the ultimate goal should be that everybody should be in a tenure track line so that we can all have in the academic profession equal rights and equally beneficial kinds of employment conditions that actually enables us to do our work in an equal way and as an academic profession it seems to me that we are shooting ourselves in the foot when we support non-tenure-track lines. I mean one could say it's also like academic professional suicide, but I just chose a shot in the foot there. But I -- I do think as a profession through the senate we should really be taking positions that are actually strong positions for -- for us and our colleagues in this way.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Thank you. Any other comments? I think we're -- then ready to move onto senate announcements and updates by the Dean of Faculty and the associate Dean, Eve De Rosa and Chelsea Sphect, respectfully, followed by some opportunity for questions and answers. Chelsea goes first.

>> Chelsea Sphect: So, I just want to give a quick update, so the nominations and elections committee has been working very diligently and very effectively this -- this entire semester to get names for the different committees, academic senate committees. This is either names for people to be appointed or names for people to stand for election to elected positions. Tomorrow we are

meeting for our last meeting of the semester, and we will be discussing the final committees -- this is the Financial Policy Committees, ROTC Relations Committee, Committee on Music and then there is the University Assembly which has various positions within. There's several committees. The Campus Welfare Committee and the Campus Planning Committee within the university assembly and so we have names that we have put for all the other committees but -- and I will implore you again as members of the faculty senate you are as senators you are also able to welcome to, invite to and encourage to -- is that enough? A lot of verbs, to -- on the -- to serve on these committees. I would argue that if you pick a committee that you really enjoy serving on you learn so much more by serving on that committee. You figure out what is the workings of the senate. You become so much more engaged, and we all want everybody to be incredibly engaged with this process. So, what the exciting thing is today. You all know we have a little gathering after here. I'm sorry for you guys online but I -- I will offer an opportunity to you online to participate. Outside we have a list of all of the different committees that exist, and I have these little ballots here. They look like ballots. You can put your name on it and your contact information, check any of the committees that you are interested in serving on with whether it's running for election or appointment and then fold it nicely and put it into the basket and after we have enough of them as a critical mass -- at the end we then have a bunch of really cool swag. And each person who agrees to serve on a committee will then get to choose as I pull your names out of the hat which of these awesome swag items. They are -- they are some of the best that our campus store has to offer let me tell you. Jill in ca had such a great time shopping for you all. And, so we will have those out there so you can see what you might pick and if anyone online -- I'm sorry you can't be here but if you do want to put in the chat your name and which committees you would like to serve on Jill will -- and I will go through at the end of the

meeting, write those all down and add your name to the hat for swag. So, anyway, often times other people get opportunities for swag, and we don't so this is our chance to get the swag.

>> Eve De Rosa: I love that Chelsea gets to offer gifts and I go to the business. One, it's really lovely to have so many people in the room and I'm going to say it's because of the tantalizing agenda, not the bar outside. I'm -- it's really nice and it just has a palpable sense of engagement just having all of us in the room, so we'll keep our hybrid format of course but I have noticed that more and more people are showing up in person and I just wanted to comment on how lovely that is. Feels good. I wanted to remind you or for some of you who have never voted we have new senators here -- so the way that we do votes on resolutions, so we have two resolutions. We have one trying to -- or proposing to remove the median grade off of the student transcripts and the other one to remove the incomplete if a professor has up loaded a grade off the student transcripts so those are the two resolutions that we're going to vote on and so you'll receive a personalized, anonymized qualtrix link and so you will just fill out the qualtrix with a yes, no or abstain and abstaining is engagement. People have many reasons for why they might abstain, and I just want you to know that that's just as meaningful as a yes or a no and so if you are -- for whatever reason don't feel comfortable with a yes or a no please abstain because that really does mean something to us. And so, you'll have until Friday the 15th at noon to submit your vote and you'll just -- we get feedback for who submitted their vote and then we will just remind those of you who haven't voted probably by next Wednesday. And the other thing I wanted to share with everybody is that the executive committee of the AAUP led by our chapter president, Risa Lieberwitz -- is this about the vote? It is the American Association of University Professors. It's a union. And they -- their executive committee came to the University Faculty Committee with a

proposal to organize a series of events on academic freedom. The University Faculty Committee decided that we're going to do a both and. The AAUP will create events and the faculty senate will create events and so we've asked Senator Lieberwitz to sort of serve as a bridge between the two entities so we're going to have a senator driven initiative to bring an event or more to the -- to the -- to the campus and we need a volunteer -- volunteers in terms of our senators here or anyone who wants to contribute. We'll get together in January and start to think through events for the spring. And there's a budget so we can invite outside speakers and that is actually the preference of the university faculty committee is to bring experts from outside to the campus to educate our faculty. This is a fraught time and there are some who feel like their academic freedom is under pressure let's say and so this just might be a really important exercise and -- by both entities to really educate the faculty and so this is how I was thinking of the charge, and I would love feedback from everybody, but I thought there were four critical components. Obviously, the definition of academic freedom, the significance -- why it's important and why it's a value for universities. Obviously, what comes with rights, responsibilities, I think that's just as important for us to communicate and share and then lastly how do we foster the culture at Cornell to maintain this very important protection for the faculty? And with that Chelsea and I are open to questions.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: We have --

>> Eve De Rosa: Risa -- Risa's online. Go head, Risa.

>> Risa Lieberwitz: Yeah, thank you. Risa Lieberwitz, ILR. Yeah, so, following up on Eve's

description of this project, as Eve said this -- this was a proposal that a number of faculty started talking about with, you know, the very, very tense and, you know, highly charged situation on campus. To say what can we do to -- to actually talk about academic freedom in a deep way because the -- the concept or the term gets tossed around a lot but to really think about its scope and, you know, in terms of research and teaching and what one would call extramural speech, public speech as well as governance all being part of academic freedom in a way that really enables us to get the whole campus community involved in thinking about academic freedom and what it means to us as principles and how to put those principles in to practice which is of course tested in times when we have a lot of tension. And so, we were really pleased that both the provost and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences thought that this was a good idea and that was the reason why the AAUP chapter came up with the idea of -- of going to the faculty senate specifically to going to Eve as Dean of Faculty to propose that we do this jointly because of course as you know I'm sure the AAUP chapter -- it's an advocacy chapter, we don't engage in collective bargaining on campus, that we're all colleagues, right, so everybody in the AAUP is a colleague and some of us are in the senate and some of us aren't but we're all colleagues and so we certainly want to join forces and strengthen our ability to engage in these kinds of really important campus wide discussions. So, I welcome the fact that we're going to launch open this and I think it'll really be a positive thing for us to do on campus and I think the planning process itself can be very, very participatory so that we understand what it is that people are interested in and so I also just wanted to mention that if people are interested in joining the AAUP chapter -- I'm actually in my office now I couldn't make it to the room in time but I'm going to be coming over for -- you know -- of course I'll come for reception, right? And so if people would like to talk about the AAUP chapter and learn more about it that would be great but

we're really looking forward to launching on this -- this venture of really having a raw discussion on academic freedom and of course we should bring in people from outside but I would also point out that we have a lot of expertise on this campus on those issues and so I think that everybody who has knowledge and expertise in this area should join in so thanks a lot.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Thank you. Are there other comments or questions?

>> Eve De Rosa: And it could be on any topic. We have other resolutions that will be coming to the senate in the spring and there are other issues that might come to mind, so this is an open forum. And if not then (inaudible) move to the good --

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: -- see a hand.

>> Eve De Rosa: Oh, hi Robin.

>>Jonathan Ochshorn: -- I can't read you there.

>> Robin Dando: This is Robin Dando, associate professor for Food Science. Can you hear me, okay?

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Yes.

>> Eve De Rosa: Yes, perfectly.

>> Robin Dando: Great, so, I was requested by other members of my faculty to discuss an issue that several of us are experiencing to elicit some further information from members of the senate and hopefully some support for further action on this in the future. So, our department does a lot of work through both research and extension with companies that require coverage from non-disclosure agreements or NDA's. So, historically, these have taken a couple of weeks to process but since about 2020, when lots of things on campus changed it's been pretty clear that these times have extended by five, maybe ten times? And in discussion with research services, they stress that there are more than 200 NDAs in the queue before the ones that we're talking to them about and they are working as fast as they can, so, in the case of our department this research or extension work can be critical for ensuring the safety of the food supply and might also work on a very demanding timeline. So, we're also having frequent problems with travel reimbursements which can be an equity issue when you have a staff or a student that is holding thousands of dollars of credit card debt waiting for it and then also reports of wait times for student services for benefits and for IT services. I personally had eight computers sitting in my lab for about six months waiting to be set up. Now this is not meant as a statement that these folks respect working hard and in fact it's likely quite the opposite and that their offices are overburdened, overworked and need more support from the university. So, we would like to discuss the possibility that there's some sort of mandate for the publication of stats for how long these relatively simple, relatively common tasks that these offices are doing all the time take so that problems can at least be identified and not just dismissed as an anecdotal so I would love to hear today if there are similar experiences across campus and if there is support for this as a policy going forward. So, I have time to talk but I'm also happy to just post my email in the chat now if



people have a longer follow up.

>> Eve De Rosa: Robin, I would love-- thank you for bringing this forward, and it would be wonderful if you could send a letter or note to the Dean of Faculty office with all of these things articulated and I will make sure that these get to the appropriate offices. This does remind me and the chief officer, risk officer, I -- I'm sorry if I'm misrepresenting his title but Aditya Misra came to the University Faculty Committee to talk about places where there is perceived risk for the faculty and this to me is an example of what the exercise should be about. The fact that you have a computer, or someone has a piece of research infrastructure, and they are just waiting in a queue, waiting for someone else to come plug this -- plug it in for them -- (inaudible) able to do so for themselves. And this idea of the NDA not allowing the research in your extension work to move forward and progress in a -- in a reasonable time frame so these are the kinds of issues that we would really love to solicit so, Robin you're not alone. I think this would be a healthy exercise for our faculty and so to go back to your departments and look for these kinds of things and then we will document them and the idea of this exercise is not only to document these kinds of risks to faculty making their academic progress and teaching progress and whatever it is -- it's also to think through mitigation plans, data so, you know, how long is the queue for these kinds of things and understanding sort of the ecosystem in which faculty are expected to work and so thank you for that reminder. I think that we -- we will be doing this work in May. We're doing -- (inaudible) faculty committee so if we use the spring semester to -- for faculty senators and there -- their faculty and units to send forward these kinds of issues that would be incredibly helpful. So, thank you for bringing that up, Robin. Buz, did you want to come back up?

>> Buz Barstow: Yes, I did. (inaudible) Robin, I actually wanted to second what you said. My department is experiencing a similar issue. I would say actually there's a large degree of anger among my fellow faculty regarding this. I would say it's almost to the point of boiling over. I think the issues with NDA's, with material transfer agreements has been a constant issue since I came to Cornell. One of my new faculty colleagues was hired a year ago, her lab is still not functional. It takes six months to put up a coat hanger in my lab. All of these I think pose a significant challenge to retention of faculty I would say, and they pose a significant challenge to our university's mission. I -- I -- I'm befuddled as to why it's an issue. I simply can't understand it and I think it's something that the -- the faculty senate should take extremely seriously. I think this is -- this is probably the biggest thing that impacts on our -- certainly on my daily career. I think about this every day in fact, and I would say every morning when I wake up, I wake up a little angry about it. I hate to say it. I probably said enough, thank you very much.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Any other comments or questions? Okay. We have a final order of business before the reception. The good of the order. A portion of the program again we have Yuval Grossman who is going to speak for five minutes and then we will break.

>> Yuval Grossman: Thank you very much. So, today I like to talk about making Cornell more welcoming and let me start with the quote from an alum who is a very close friend of mine. And, he said we don't feel that we are as attached to Cornell as we once were which saddens me greatly. And let me say another quote from a student and she wrote to me after an event a few days ago, she wrote, after weeks of high tension on campus it was the first time, I truly felt safe as an Israeli student since October 7th. We all want people to be welcomed here and let me

quote the first line of section 6.4 of the line of the code of conduct and it reads, Cornell University is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful learning, living, and working environment for its students, faculty and staff. At times there is a tension between this commitment and another important one, the freedom of political activity. The university set rules to enable both to co-exist. The guiding principle is as following. Participation in political activity is a choice. That is, activity has to be done in a way that enables people who -- in the choice to participate and get exposed to it. I think this is a very good principle and I feel that we should keep following it. It is particularly important in times of very high-tension open campus as we are experiencing those days. I would like to talk about violation to this principle in two aspects. The first one should make sure that there's no activity in the classroom. Let me quote the American Associate of University Professor, the AAUP that we just talked about in their statement of the principle of academic freedom and tenure status they are quoting, that they -- that is the instructors should be careful not to introduce into the teaching controversial matter which has no relation to the subject. Unfortunately, we heard about violation of this principle. I not here to discuss the past, nor to argue about the severity of the violation but to point out things that we should avoid. We heard of a class that turn into a discussion on Palestine. In a health class an unrelated video was shown. A professor said in another class something like I will be in the rally tonight and I hope to see you all there. These are examples of things that are not okay. The second point that I like to discuss is that -- die ins and building occupations. The code of conduct states that -- I quote only part of it. I don't quote everything, that it is forbidden to obstruct the use and access to university premises. The expectation is that political activity will be done either outside or in a designated room in a way that those who would like to go on with their routine will be able to do so. Unfortunately, we see cases that violate this rule. In May,

students occupied the hall because of Starbucks, okay? In the last few weeks, we saw two die ins, this weekend we saw a takeover of (inaudible) hall. When students complain they were told that this event were -- and I quote, minimally disturbing and thus they were okay. Cornell should be very clear about what is a violation of the code and what is not. Keeping the rule based on subjective assessment of how disturbing they are is unhealthy. While the punishment can take it into account, the decision if there was a violation or not should have a clear interpretation. I feel that in order to keep Cornell the place we all want it to be we should keep activity done in a civil way. Thank you.

>> Jonathan Ochshorn: Thank you. That being the final agenda item, and this being the final meeting of the semester -- this meeting is adjourned and don't forget there is a reception with swag outside, right?