

Faculty Senate Meeting

When: Tuesday, March 1, 2022 – 3:30pm

Where: Zoom @ <https://fit.zoom.us/j/94892149337>

Minutes

Senators Present: Faculty Senate President Brian Lail (CES), Faculty Senate Secretary Aaron Welters (MTH), Julie Costopoulos (PSY), Gary Zarillo (OEMS), Ashley Alicea (Library), Mehmet Kaya (BCES), Pallav Ray (OEMS), Kim Sloman (Scott/BA), Abram Walton (Business), Marius Silaghi (CES), Angel Otero (Business Online), Tolga Turgut (Aeronautics), Margaret Wallace (Aeronautics), Steven Rivet (Business), Ersoy Subasi (Aeronautics), Patrick Converse (PSY), Nasri Nesnas (BCES), Nezamoddin Nezamoddini-Kachouie (MTH), Spencer Fire (OEMS), Don Platt (APSS), Nakin Suksawang (MCE), Jessica Wildman (PSY), Hamid Najafi (MCE), Vipuil Kishore (BCES), Gordan Patterson (SAC), Joo Young Park (MTH), David Wilder (BA), Suzanne Odom (Library), Luis Otero (CES), Debbie Lelekis (SAC), Angela Tenga (SAC), Razvan Rusovici (APSS), Amitabh Nag (APSS), Charles Bryant (Business), Nasheen Nur (CES), Kevin Burke (SAC), Csaba Palotai (APSS)

Senators Absent: Kenia Nunes (BCES)

Proxies: Nancy Garmer (Library) for Suzanne Kozaitis (Library), Nakin Suksawang (MCE) for Troy Nguyen (MCE)

Other Attendees: Roberto Peverati, Vicky Knerly, Mary Bonhomme, Gary Burns, Raymond Bonhomme, Rick Addante, Penny Vassar, Rudolf Wehmschulte, Nick Daher, Kastro Hamed, Vanessa Edkins, Heidi Hatfield Edwards

(Secretary's Note: The time stamps (xx:yy:zz) in these minutes refer to the xx hours, yy minutes, zz seconds into the zoom recording of the meeting the event occurred. The recording can be found on the faculty senate webpage. These time stamps are intended to help find a particular event in the recording.)

Call to Order

(00:00:00) Pres. Lail called the meeting to order at 3:30pm. The minutes from the Feb. 1 meeting were read and approved.

Old Business (00:01:39)

Committee Reports:

1. Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee: Senator Nasri Nesnas said nothing to report at this time.

2. Academic Policies Committee: Senator Vipuil Kishore said nothing to report.
3. Administrative Policies Committee: Senator Razvan Rusovici was not available at this time, but Pres. Lail said he was not aware of anything to report and if he joins us then we will come back to this. (Secretary's Note: I am not aware that anything was reported in this meeting in this regards.)
4. Excellence Awards Committee: Senator Julie Costopoulos said we received excellent dossiers and are in the process of reviewing them.
5. Scholarship Committee: Senator Nezamoddin Nezamoddini-Kachouie said nothing to report at this moment.
6. Technology, Resources, and Infrastructure (TRI) Committee: Senator Marius Silaghi said they are going to have a meeting in a couple weeks in case you have new suggestions, besides the old infrastructure problems and technology problems that are still persisting and that are being addressed, please let us know. We are suggesting for implementations in paws and softer suggestions to registrar and appropriate people. IT is helping us a lot so thanks to Eric, Jason, and all the others.
Pres. Lail said that it seems we haven't had any other recurring issues of late so that's good.
7. Welfare Committee: Senator Nakin Suksawang said nothing extra to report, other than the fact that we're going to discuss the COLA raise, equity, and related stuff later in the meeting. (Secretary's Note: This is the first item discussed in the meetings ``New Business'' under ``Faculty Compensation'' starting at 00:04:37 in the video recording.)

President's Report:

(00:3:10) Pres. Brian Lail reported that he wanted to follow-up on one item.

He knows there have been some concerns about campus safety again. It is my understanding that currently the Melbourne police department has not yet released any findings from their investigations.

One thing he said he believes he can share is that President McCay has shared that the university emergency notification system has been updated and there was training for the security staff associated with that system. Maybe it was recognized that some improvements can be made and those have been implemented. And I believe you've probably seen the email on that.

Beyond that I don't know anything more to share, but to let you know this is an item we will continue to update you as we learn more.

New Business (00:04:37)

Faculty Compensation – Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA).

Pres. Lail starts by saying we have a resolution that was shared earlier today related to faculty compensation and this effort has been led by Senator Nakin Suksawang and the welfare committee. He defers to Senator Suksawang to present on this.

Senator Nakin Suksawang begins by saying he thinks everybody got the resolution. He thinks overwhelmingly the faculty think we should have a salary adjustment due to the very high inflation rate and as such COLA in order to have an across the board type of salary adjustment. Also, a lot of us may not have received a lot in raised so far, so I think this is pretty much timely. He knows that some other universities are starting to give consideration of this as well and this is the reason why we have these new resolutions, which Pres. Lail has sent out I think already. The idea is to recommend from the Faculty to ask the provost to consider adding COLA for the next fiscal year budget for the Faculty. Any questions, comments, etc. that I can answer?

Pres. Lail opens the floor to discussion.

Senator Nezamoddin Nezamoddini-Kachouie responds. My first question is what is the procedure for this on what the Senate is proposing?

Senator Nakin Suksawang responds. The plan is to put it up to a vote to the Faculty Senate now to get the resolution approved today with the first step to have this discussion about the current letter.

Senator Nezamoddin Nezamoddini-Kachouie responds. The first thing is if we're going to vote on this then we as senators should first have a chance to discuss this with their departments, whether say their department strongly supports both requests (i.e. equity, COLA) and not just COLA. Thus, I think it is too early to vote in this meeting.

Second things is, I propose is the letter should have supporting facts, figures, data, statistics, etc. (he mentions that he thank people involved so far) as it doesn't currently. In order for the administration to take this seriously, it should be a complete proposal with some evidence/facts.

Earlier this week I emailed Senator Nakin Suksawang and CC'd Pres. Brian Lail and Senator Nasri Nesnas that I can be in charge to support this endeavor. For instance, we are not offering any statistics on the inflation rates over the last five-10 years, the COLA at FIT for the past five-10 years, and how our peer universities have been doing. If we do not support with facts, I don't think that this will be considered seriously.

Also, I don't think this should be a single letter. Basically, we should propose a complete document. And if it's a document off all facts, figures, and statistics then there is no matter of a single request or both, we can put both of them and can explain everything and then, of course, these two can have different timelines to be implemented. One is more immediate – COLA, whereas equity raise needs a longer time to be implemented.

Nevertheless, I think if we send up the proposal with everything, then we may hope for a better result. When we are applying for just a 50K grant, we need to put

together 5-10 pages with several figures/charts for what we are asking for. The letter should say that this is supported let's say by eight members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, 40 Faculty Senators, 400 (?) faculty. It should represent an effort and demonstrate that we have done our homework, this is the situation.

I think that its respectful to the other side to say that this is what we would like you to consider, this is where we are, this is where our peers are at. In this letter, we are not even requesting a percentage we are asking for even though it says there has been a 7.5% inflation rate. We need to be specific, are we are asking for to match it with inflation rates of 7.5% or are we requesting or offering a range? I think we should be very specific and we should support this with hard evidence.

I do not think that a single letter is going to cut it. I discussed with other members in my department, they have various opinion that if we are going to have a single shot for this, it should be a strong, it should be impactful, it should be supported with all possible evidence and statistics. That is my take.

Senator Nakin Suksawang responds (00:13:19). I do agree in that sense. I just want to say that the message sent out by Brian with attached document is just solely focused on COLA and that this was what we were going to focus on in this letter. I just wanted to report quickly that me and Brian just talked to the provost about equity and I think the equity plan is going forward so that's why it's not even mentioned here, because they are already implementing or they will be implementing it, regardless whether the COLA is successful or not – the equity plan is already in the pipeline.

Senator Nezamoddin Nezamoddini-Kachouie responds. OK, for the moment lets talk about this letter and just COLA, the proposal arrives on the desk of the Provost or President and there are other requests to spend money. If there is a proposal with 30-40 pages with lots of evidence and there is a single letter that doesn't even offer a specific range, then the latter isn't going to have a strong chance of getting it done.

Senator Nakin Suksawang responds. To your point on percentage, I just want to clarify one thing. There is a FIT policy about COLA adjustment already and usually that is the decision, like the percentage and all that stuff, is set by the CFO. So I didn't feel we should put a percentage. Now we can still recommend a percentage if you have that date. But I am not a financial person and I don't know how to come up with that number. And usually that number is tied in with the budget and the budget I don't have. If we have a backup to kind of justify a percentage we want to recommend, by all means do so. I just don't have enough information out there that would be the support and I don't have the time to do that, right now. If you want to do with and that's totally fine, but I just want to let you know my perspective, it just that's one of the reason why we don't have that there. As far as other data, the main thing was CPI rate is going to change and there is a website we can certainly link to that. I don't think we need to show how the CPI rate changes over time. I think the administration knows that is a problem. I am sure we can probably add more data. But we have to think about timing.

Senator Nezamoddin Nezamoddini-Kachouie responds (00:17:00). I don't think that we can sacrifice the quality just because we would like to have it quickly submitted. All of

those figures, they are going to help if we show the inflation in past few years, that peer universities have been compensating with COLA then it shows how far we are. Then we can come up with some estimates for what we are asking instead of leaving it blank for them to consider. The work we put in and the evidence we provide will help show we need to invest in the faculty and should be considered as if you were trying to submit a (grant) proposal to be convincing so as to get a chance to be funded.

Senator Nakin Suksawang responds. I understand your point, but also bear in mind that the COLA rate is going to be tied back to the budget that they have. We might say our peer is getting 10%, but administration could just say they are making more money though.

Senator Tolga Turgut responds (00:18:54). Just to inform everyone about the policy that we are talking about. There are a few separate issues that Senator Nazam went into, but we have to retract a little back and pass on the information of what was discussed at the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

This committee is comprised of Dr. Lail the Faculty Senate President, the President elect, the secretary, and all the committee chairs. So this is 10 people who discussed the recommended letters.

First, it began as suggesting things about merit raises and also equity, but then we decided to revise it and it was like the third version I think that you shared with us yesterday Dr. Lail. And then we come to this point and it's a resolution.

So there are a few things here. First, the HR policy writes, when conditions permit employees will normally be considered for COLA. The CFO will review the economic national averages of CPI and HEPI (for those who don't know, the HEPI stands for higher education price index) and other economic factors and make recommendations to the Univ. President. This process will be in September.

Thus, the discussion about COLA is timely to begin now because we still have time for this.

With respect to merit raises, there is a policy about that too. It begins to be discussed in October and is something under the purview of the College Deans and Department Heads, so that is a separate issue.

With respect to the equity raises, that's a long term process and that has already underway by the Provost office. They have already informed Dr. Lail and I, I think on that. They have already done staff equity. The next step will be the faculty equity. This is already in process.

So Nakin and his committee is charged with is dealing with how we could fit in COLA with respect to this.

As everyone knows I am a big advocate of the COLA, it should have been addressed since the last year if you ask me. But the key here is should we approach it with like a recommendation letter to the administration or passing a resolution. Either way, we have to refer to our faculty. This is very important, otherwise they are not informed about what we are doing. Because if we do not prioritize these in a timely manner, as a result we will create tensions with our administration and will not be participating in key decision making like this and achieve our goals.

I would like to remind everybody and all the senators here that our mission is to represent faculty concerns and interest to the administration and institutional agencies, to participate in institutional governance, and advocate for faculty rights and well being. So this falls right in that category.

I think we have to decide whether this should be a level of a resolution or a letter first. Either way, we have to give time to our faculty to see this and discuss within our departments and colleges, thank you.

Senator Razvan Rusovici responds. I would like to support Tolga's point. I think that the statistics presented are sufficient to start this effort. Because the summer is fast approaching and we are going to get one more meeting to discuss this before September. Now we may set up additional meetings, if the Faculty Senate President Elect and Faculty Senate President currently here, Dr. Lail, agrees to it, but the time to act is now. I understand the need for carefully worded proposals, but the inflation at this point is rampant so for the interest of faculty retention and faculty welfare, I agree that this is an effort that needs to start right away, thank you.

Senator Marius Silaghi responds. I think that one of the points that can be discussed at this moment, and it doesn't depend so much on the exact percentage that is requested, is the priorities. Do we want to have COLA prioritized over equity or over any other type of adjustment? This is something we can voice and have an opinion. If we want to change those priorities in any way or have an impact on those priorities, because as Nakin said, the exact amounts and final touches have to be from the financial department, but the priorities between the type of raises is something we can have a voice on.

Senator Aaron Welters responds. From the comments made, maybe the best approach would be twofold. One, start by getting the support from the Faculty Senate to go forward sending this letter and getting that sent right away so that the administration can become aware of this for the budget. Then for next meeting, we get together the proposal with the facts that Nazam has said with an actual percentage suggestion to the administration so we can come to the table with something we think is reasonable.

President Lail responds (00:25:52). I chose not to provide in the President's report any comments on the meeting we had earlier today, but it was actually a fairly detailed and productive meeting focused on discussing the plans towards equity adjustments. Dr. Suksawang, the Chair of the Welfare committee, and I met with Provost Carvahlo. The good news is I came away feeling like this is moving forward in a positive way, I'll just say that that's my personal view. Specifically, talking about equity adjustment now I'm not trying to steer this conversation away from COLA at all just trying to frame the context we're talking about. There are plans right now being pushed forward regarding the details of how the equity adjustment will be implemented and carried out, you know you need a reference point, you need various baselines and sources of those baselines we discussed a lot of those things. And I don't think it's quite to a point of saying this is the answer right now and so I'm not going to do that, but it's certainly moving in, I believe, a very productive way. To be a thorough response to the equity

challenge as face here on campus, that will be a multiyear effort, three to five years is the range of years that that that seemed to be discussed. And we anticipate being given an opportunity to kind of learn more as this moves forward. Hopefully, it will yield a process that is a lot more transparent, so that we would have an ongoing sense of where we are as faculty at Florida tech in the equity context, relative to other institutions specifically. There's also the merit raise is in the budget that's moving forward, there is nothing new there that hasn't been reported before. But it was confirmed that still moving forward so the merit raises should be distributed retroactive, if i'm not mistaken, too early in the semester on typical schedule coming up with contract.

In the context of all that, in light of the recent very big consumer price index bump that we've all experienced, that is the origin of this resolution. I tend to prefer to frame these as a resolution because in my experience that how parliamentary bodies conduct business and that is the output that comes out.

It sounds like there's interest in looking at developing a much more through form of a proposal to support this. There has been discussion on whether or not putting a number to what we're requesting, as opposed to just requesting that a COLA implementation be conducted, which is better, and what are the pros and cons of that has actually been discussed, to some extent.

For us to offer a number might be presumptuous, in that we don't know the full details of the budget, which, as per the policy (the Florida tech human resources policy) certainly relies on the status of our current finances and that's outside of our purview so you know. The weight of a number, we would put in there certainly would be limited, I would say if for no other reason than that alone. I'm not saying we shouldn't put a number in there, there are various ways we could come up with a number, but I am not sure it's a slam dunk that we should, that's just my opinion.

Senator Nakin Suksawang responds (00:30:39). I just want to add to to Brian comment about the equity raise other equity plan. It's an external equity plan so that's a good thing, so he's thinking of us to be competitive with other university not just between us to make us match up. That is the future plan, that is what is in the pipeline.

Now going back, we certainly bring it back to our faculty to see if they supported. The question become whether or not we want to add more information and all that stuff and whatnot. The real need of COLA it's always driven by consumer price index right. There are things to debate about home prices and all that but that's a little bit tricky because it definitely impacts new faculty but it doesn't impact all faculty as a whole and that's the tricky part. We can certainly get more data and more information, but the question is the amount of effort for the reward.

President Lail responds. I see a question about the status of targeting merit increases. My understanding is that's on schedule for there to be merit increases coming up on the normal cycle that associated with the contract period. Thus that merit increase should show up in the next contract.

Senator Tolga Turgut responds. To reiterate what we have been discussing, COLA should be understood accurately. Basically, its to counteract the negative impact of inflation by other consumer price index for everybody. That is not a raise, that is not to

mitigate merit raises or equity adjustment. They should all be tackled separately. That is the reason why in the Faculty Senate Executive Committee meeting we wanted to prioritize COLA. Thank you for all that feedback after your meeting with Dr. Carvahlo, that is good news with respect to equity raises. And with respect to merits, that is totally separate issue, its under the purview of the department heads and the college deans, and as the Senate, the key here is I agree that anything discussed according to parliamentary rules has to go through a motion and a resolution and then finalized. But this is a sensitive matter because resolution is like a statement and recommendation letter to an administration may be perceived in a more positive way that's the reason why I wanted to refer to it as a letter. And that's what we have been discussing within the executive committee meetings. And because at the end of today, we want to appear as constructive. Because it said to you know, according to the policies clear according to the discretion of the management per the budgeting plans, though they may just come and say we are unable to give any COLA raises. That is the reason why I suggested that we should keep it as a recommendation letter, and we should take it back to our faculty so that they're informed and their engagement and participation will be welcome too because at the end of day we will be all impacted. Thank you.

President Lail responds (00:34:30). Nazam I am trying to think about the data. I fully agree with the concept that we would want all the relevant data presented. But i'm also reflecting the Florida tech community sources (resources?) policy, and you know it's pretty precise there, we can bring it up and share it if we need to. It is accessing essentially the consumer price index, that's clearly the pivotal metric that would prompt this and balanced again by the CFO assessment of our current financial capability to adjust that. So its fairly focused in origin, in my opinion, so i'm not sure. I mean I am on board with a detailed lengthy proposal concept, but at the same time, more is not always better. It's more focused and hitting the precise items that affect this. And we're in a point in time where this price and the consumer price index stands out greatly in terms of recent past, and so that's the primary data point.

Senator Nasri Nesnas responds. Thank you everyone for your contribution input. I just wanted to ask Brian about this policy that you were referring to? And I noticed that the effective date is August 2016 so that's perhaps when it was entered into the handbook. And what i'm noticing that there's a date revised February 2022 which is as recent as last month, so, are you aware of what was revised in this document? In other words, it seems like the administration is on board with this and we just don't know exactly what was added in here, or what was revised so, are you aware of any recent additions? COLA might be already on their radar, so maybe we should at least understand what their vision and perspective, before we start investing enormous amount of time. We might be all on the same page for all I know. Do you have any information in this regards?

President Lail responds. I saw what you're referring to, the revised date, that did catch my attention. I do not know what was revised. I saw that recently and have not pursued it. But it is the relevant internal document or policy document for Florida Tech so that's

why I wanted to make sure that we're referencing that because you know ultimately that's what should steer the process internally here.

Senator Nezamoddin Nezamoddini-Kachouie responds. To answer your questions that you just asked me, I agree and understand that the COLA is very specific and targeted to compensate for the inflation and cost of living. The only thing is, a raise is a raise, and if in the letter we say like a past two years, three years, whatever number of years, the COLA has been zero, then it means that the base pay basically let's say the part that is part of the contribution of COLA has not been increasing for the past several years then how far are we behind and that's an cumulative effect. The only thing that I am saying is to be convincing and so we need to show the reason why we are strongly requesting COLA. For COLA to be considered we need to show how far we are from other peer universities with similar ranks, I think if they have those comparisons then it says something. But I understand and totally agree that this has to be a specific target. But I am saying that it also as an accumulative impact that should be considered.

President Lail responds (00:40:17). There is no one answer that is the answer, that's for sure. I think somewhere in the middle of what we're talking about is probably the best thing.

Senator Tolga Turgut responds. I fully agree with your point Pres. Lail that less is more, making it short and sweet, to the point with respect to COLA would be more welcome with the administration as far as I know from my experience. And if we detail it, and that is what Nakin and his team members are doing they're working to detail it, and that's what we discussed at the Executive Committee Meetings as well. And Dr. Nesnas made a good point you know that there was a revision made, I noticed that too, with the HR policy in February. I think it was with the addition of the HEPI index (higher education price index) because its not only us being negatively impacted as employees by CPI and inflation, its also our institution. So this is what this index (HEPI) measures and in the HR policy it clearly says the CFO will review, i'm reading from the policy exactly, the economic national averages of CPI and HEPI that is the reason why I think in our letter we discussed that we should use the US Bureau of Labor Statistics that's the most credible, the most followed source that you could ever attribute the CPI to there is nothing higher than that and 7.5% is the maximum. The HEPI is lower than that, its around 2.7% or 2.8% as I checked this morning. The average of both should be taken because we have to consider how the institution gets negatively impacted with inflation as well with respect to resources and their maintenance, thank you.

President Lail responds. Yeah, I don't know how those are weighted, but I would point out the policy purpose statement near the top there. There are only two sentences there, the second says that COLAs are based on the standard increases in the cost of living is measured by the consumer price index (CPI). I think that one's the most considered it seems like, but I don't know and I don't want to speculate.

Senator Razvan Rusovici responds (00:42:58). I believe what Dr. Turgut is absolutely correct. We could launch a statistic effort here, but frankly we don't have the right

information. I mean how many universities are we going to survey ourselves? This is a significant effort. You know just to decide on how many universities and what type of universities to get data from and then this data may actually not be publicly available. And I think that Dr. Turgut and Dr. Nakin's approach are for the time being the best one, its not perfect, but its good enough for now. Thank you.

President Lail responds. So just to reiterate, where we are now, we have a resolution that's up for discussion. It is certainly feasible to have an amendment motion to amend or any other motion for that matter. We are simply in discussion at this point. Any other discussion on this matter?

(00:44:19) I think we need a motion regarding what we do next.

(00:44:25) Senator Tolga Turgut responds. Can I propose a motion to postpone this to next meeting, so that we could take it back to our faculty as is?

(00:44:36) President Lail responds. Ok there's a motion on the table to provide the opportunity for senators to have that discussion at the academic level. Is that correct?

(00:44:48) Senator Tolga Turgut responds. Yes postpone it to next meeting to be voted on, so that we can inform them and we can get their input.

(00:44:58) President Lail responds. Do we have a second?

(00:45:01) Senator Razvan Rusovici responds. Yes, second.

(00:45:04) President Lail responds. So we will take the document that we have in hand and distributed, or do what you need to do to share this with your constituents at the academic level, get feedback and then at the next meeting, we will have further discussion based on that and pending, we will open for discussion and then pending that potentially move to a vote depending on what the feedback leads us to. Any other last comments on that for now?

Senate Officer Elections – Call for Nominations. (00:45:52)

Pres. Lail begins this new business item saying we are at that time of the year, where we need to issue a call for nominations so that call for nominations will be distributed in writing. But this is currently a verbal call for nominations specifically for the Faculty Senate Officer elections and so every year we issue a call for nominations and then the Officer elections take place in the April meeting. Before I proceed with that, let me also mention that March is the timeframe in which the academic units elect senators. And so the Executive Committee is working, Faculty Senate Secretary Aaron Welters is helping a lot with this, to get the information back up to speed on what year terms you're all in as Senators and that would also affect committee chair. We need to get our cycles of elections sync'd back up as they kind of come and go out of sync it seems. Just mention to your academic units and might want to check around to see who should be up for

elections and suggest that your unit have those elections in March. The idea being that anyone who's a new Senator coming in, on the standard schedule would be calling you a Member in advance of the April meeting. And the April meeting would be where the election of Officers takes place. The Senate officers are basically a President or President Elect and a Secretary. So the President Elect position and the Secretary are up for nominations. Of course there is a tradition with our secretaries to nominate and continue with our secretaries, but i'm not trying to twist your arm Aaron, so I leave it at that.

So that is an open nomination and i'd like to have the deadline for nominations by March 25, 2022 so those nominees are known and declared prior to the Executive Committee meeting that precedes the Senate meeting by a week. I will put this in writing.

I would encourage you to think this through this is an opportunity to participate as an Officer. It's something that i'll just speak from my experience. You do get a preview on the way to university works and different perspective and it's a rewarding experience just in that alone. The senate's a very important role, part of the university, you know. How effective are we? Well, that's a good question and it comes down to all of us being participants and working together, forming some form of consensus and at the end of the day moving things forward. It also involves the concepts of shared governance. It takes a cohesive group to make that productive and effective. I appreciate everyone's participation, but I would also encourage you to give consideration to the Officer roles.

(00:50:32) Senator Tolga Turgut responds. Is it the same date for the nominations to be submitted to you for the committee chairs, March 25?

Pres. Lail responds. Yes, I would like to have all those in advance of the Executive Committee meeting that precedes the next Faculty Senate meeting.

Senator Tolga Turgut responds. That would mean the Senators, the outgoing Senators, and the replacing ones should be resolved by their departments, a few days before that. Because we want to give opportunity to incoming Senators to volunteer to be committee chairs and so forth.

Pres. Lail responds. That's true. So if that deadline is not late enough, it's just more out of convenience. Moving forward towards this election we're still conducting meetings via zoom that kind of complicates elections, a little bit, and so we will be requesting a short statement from candidates from nominees. Then making sure that we have the process organized in a way that is a little prescribed in terms of the timeline that it will take during the meeting. And so we will have to designate an amount of time that we can have questions, answers, and discussion with each candidate to avoid it from getting out of hand. Because we can't allow the meeting to go too long, we must help everyone have an opportunity to cast their vote so we'll probably have the elections early in the meeting as one key element that.

Senator Tolga Turgut responds. Sounds great, thank you. So the department's should inform you about their Senators to incoming Senators, a few days before March 25, correct?

Pres. Lail responds. I would say the nominees can go up to March 25 with the nomination information would suffice for both.

Senator Tolga Turgut responds. Because I think normally by this meeting by the March meeting, we would know the names of the incoming Senators and outgoing ones, that's why i'm trying to get that clarified. Usually by this meeting, you would know the Senators, to be replaced and pass on this information to the Senate President, because we should have elections for each Senator every three years in their departments, in their college. Is this correct?

Pres. Lail responds. Yes, so what's happening behind the scenes as we speak, is the Faculty Senate Secretary (Aaron Welters) and the Executive committee, but Aaron is given credit for leading and assembling this set of information that you're referring to. This is happening now to ensure that we are putting the election process of Senators back on schedule as best we can. Again sometime these processes just slip inadvertently, but we are going department by department to get it. We just talked about it a few days ago at the Faculty Senate Executive Committee meeting. It's underway and its important that it be done as timely as possible to make sure the units are informed in time to have the elections. And then have all that information in place in the timeline that works with this nomination process.

All right any comments or concerns about that, like I said I will send that call for nominations out and we will we are working with individual departments to make sure as best we can we get the Senate term stages known and then similarly it's my understanding we have probably three of the committee's that have chairs, that we will also be seeking nominees on. I'm going to put all that in the call for nomination, when I send it out in the next few days as soon as I can, because we need to make sure we've got the right information in that document.

Senator Nezamoddin Nezamoddini-Kachouie responds (00:55:26). It seems the infection status now is getting better and CDC has lifted some of those mass mandates. I am wondering if we can consider meeting in person for the next meeting?

Pres. Lail responds. That's not a bad idea. And in the context of it certainly makes more sense for voting, a lot more straightforward. But it would need to be something that everyone felt was appropriate and that we have a place. That is certainly something we can look into. Is there any other comment on that? Would there be concern if we entertain the possibility of meeting in person?

All right, there's several things that have to come together for that to work, I mean just to be feasible logistically so you know we can look into that and see if it's if it's feasible, for example, I don't know if the space we used to use is available, a lot of basic questions. We can look into that and follow up and if anyone has questions or concerns you can always reach out to anyone on the Executive Committee to me or anyone else

and share that will certainly account for that if there's any concern about doing that or considering it, let us know certainly account for that.

(00:57:22) Pres. Lail responds about still being some new business to discuss regarding Webex accounts and asks Julie if she wanted to comment on that.

(00:57:30) Senator Julie Costopoulos responds. Yeah, I just wanted to give a friendly helpful reminder. I don't know if you guys all noticed it but it's kind of a big deal, so I wanted to be sure you saw it. Usually our healthcare spending accounts and flexing accounts they end March 31 and you can file claims, all the way into June to get reimbursed for them. But because we're switching services, there was an email from HR that the card can no longer be used after March 13 and claims cannot be placed after March 31. This entire year has to be submitted by March 31 and there's going to be a two week window March 13 or April 1, where you will not have a working healthcare spending account. You'll get a new card by April 1, I just wanted to give you guys a heads up if you want to let your faculty.

(00:59:28) Pres. Lail responds. Anything that anyone would like to have discussed if there is such, the floor is open. If not, then we have reached the end of the agenda.

(00:59:44) Do we have a motion to adjourn.

(00:59:48) Senator Tolga Turgut responds. Motion to adjourn.

(00:59:51) Pres. Lail responds. So moved.

Adjournment

(00:59:51) The meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm.

Respectively submitted,

Aaron Welters, Faculty Senate Secretary