



**Minutes of the Meeting
April 6, 2021**

The Boston University Faculty Council convened on April 6, 2021 from 3:30-5:00. via Zoom. Eileen O'Keefe, Chair of the Faculty Council, presided over the meeting.

Officers and Committee Chairs								
X	O’Keefe, Eileen	Chair	Sargent	X	Furman, Jeff	Faculty Policies	QST	
X	Leone, Cataldo	Past Chair	GSDM	X	Howard, Kimberly A.S.	Graduate Programs	WCEHD	
		Secretary-Treasurer				Media/Communication		
X	Barbone, Paul	Academic Freedom	ENG	X	Coleman, Fadie T.	Research	MED	
X	Will, Leslie	Administrative Policies	GSDM	X	Hughes, Jeffrey	Student Life and Policies	CAS	
X	Reed, Marnie	Awards	WCEHD	X	J. Robb Dixon	Sustainability	QST	
	Williams, Mark T.	Compensation and Benefits	QST	X	Leone, Cataldo	Teaching Resources	GSDM	
X	Hallstein, Lynn	Credentials and By-laws	CGS	X	Andres, Andy	Undergraduate Programs	CGS	
X	Chang, Charles	Equity and Inclusion	SPH					
Representatives (R) and Alternates (A)								
	Alosco, Michael (R)	MED	X	Iffland, James (A)	CAS	X	Myers, Samantha (R)	CAS
X	Ampountolas, Apostolos (R)	SHA		Jafarzadeh, S. Reza (R)	MED	X	Pani, Pinelopi (A)	GSDM
X	Austin, Judy (R)	COM		James, Breehan (A)	CFA	X	Park, Hee-Young (A)	MED
X	Barbone, Paul, (R)	ENG		Joyce, Kathleen (A)	LAW	X	Parla, Ayse (R)	CAS
	Bigio, Irving (A)	ENG	X	Kanno, Yasuko (R)	WCEHD	X	Perls, Thomas (R)	MED
X	Brown, Shelley (R)	Sargent	X	Karra, Mahesh (A)	Pardee	X	Powers, Gina (R)	QST
X	Byttebier, Stephanie (A)	CGS	X	Kealy, Sean (R)	LAW	X	Prince, Michael (A)	CAS
X	Coffman, Christopher (R)	CGS	X	Kinraide, Rebecca (R)	CAS	X	Quatromoni, Paula (A)	Sargent
X	Coleman, Fadie T. (R)	MED		Kirby Jones, Alison (A)	QST		Schon, Karin (R)	MED
	Coppock, Elizabeth (R)	CAS	X	Kong, Celeste (R)	GSDM		Semeter, Joshua (A)	ENG
			X	Lahkani, Afsheen (R)	GSDM		Seta, Francesca (R)	MED
	D’Amato, Laura (A)	LAW	X	Leahey, Kristin (R)	CFA		Shahbazian, Cameron (A)	GSDM
			X	Lee, Elaine (R)	MED	X	Slanetz, Priscilla (R)	MED
X	DeNatale, Doug (A)	MET	X	Legg, Mark (A)	SHA	X	Smith, Kevin (A)	CAS
	Desilets, Sean (A)	CAS	X	Leider, Christine (R)	WCEHD		Smith-Crowe, Kristin (A)	QST
X	DeVoe, Ellen (A)	SSW	X	Lindsey, Kate (R)	CFA	X	Straub, John (R)	CAS
X	Dobbs, Christina (A)	WCEHD	X	Liu, Chunyu (A)	SPH	X	Sullivan-Soydan, Anne (A)	Sargent
X	Dutta-Koehler, Madhu (R)	MET	X	Loechler, Edward (A)	CAS	X	Tallman, Sean (R)	MED
X	Fabian, Patricia (A)	SPH	X	Lumpkin, Williams (R)	CFA	X	Tripodis, Yorghos (R)	SPH
X	Feng, Hui (R)	MED		Lunze, Karsten (R)	MED	X	Ünlü, Selim (R)	ENG
X	Field, Thomas (R)	MED	X	Lynch, Shawn (A)	CGS		Villegas-Reimers, Eleonora (A)	WCEHD
X	Fincke, Mary Elizabeth	CELOP		Mako, Shamiran (R)	Pardee	X	Volk, Robert (R)	LAW
X	Furman, Jeff (R)	QST	X	Manglos-Weber, Nicolette (A)	STH	X	Walsh, Joyce (A)	QST
X	Gavornik, Jeffrey (R)	CAS		McKeen, Bill (A)	COM		Watts, Stephanie (A)	QSR
X	Genovese, Salvatore (A)	CGS	X	Merzbacher, Charles (R)	COM	X	Webster, Kathryn (R)	Sargent
X	Gopalan, Srikanth (R)	ENG	X	Metheny, Karen (A)	MET		White, Roberta (A)	SPH
X	Griffin, Sue (R)	CAS		Miller, Margo (A)	CELOP	X	Will, Leslie (R)	GSDM
X	Hopper, Clay (A)	CFA	X	Mochida, Yoshikyuki (A)	GSDM		Williams, Mark T. (R)	QST
	Huckle, Nicholas (A)	CAS	X	Muroff, Jordana (R)	SSW	X	Yang, Shi (R)	MED
X	Hughes, Jeffrey (R)	CAS	X	Mustafa-Kutana, Suleiman (R)	MED		Zlatev, Vladimir (R)	MET

Guests: President Robert A. Brown, Prof. Theresa Ellis, Associate Provost for Graduate Affairs Daniel Kleinman, Dean Christopher More, Faculty of the MS in Athletic Training Program, Sargent College: Prof. Kimberly Mace, Prof. Chad Clemens, Prof. Mark Laursen

I. Chair's Report

Chair O'Keefe announced the next Faculty Council meeting will be on April 27. The Awards Committee will present its recommendations for the 2021 John S. Perkins Award recipients. The Council will also discuss strategic priorities for the 2021-2022 session. The Director will ask council members to send their suggestions before the meeting for discussion.

After the December 1 Faculty Council meeting, Provost Morrison issued a new timeline to review the proposal to discontinue to MS in Athletic Training Program, Sargent College ("The Proposal"). Chair O'Keefe introduced the guests: Dean Christopher Moore, Sargent College; Dr. Kimberly Mace, Director of the MS in Athletic Training Program, Sargent, College; Associate Provost of Graduate Affairs Daniel Kleinman; Prof. Theresa Ellis, Chair of the Department of Physical Therapy; and faculty of the Athletic Training Program Prof. Chad Clemens, Prof. Mark Laursen. Dean Moore, Dr. Mace, and the Co-Chairs of the University Council Committee on Graduate Programs and Policies were allotted fifteen minutes each for their presentation, followed by fifteen minutes of discussion. The Discontinuation Policy for Departments and Programs, and Consequent Faculty Terminations, is appended to the minutes.

II. Proposal to Discontinue the MS in Athletic Training Program, Sargent College.

Sargent College Dean Moore's Presentation

Dean Moore stated that the primary rationale to discontinue the MS in Athletic Training Program ("The Program") is the low demand for the degree. Relative to the other programs in the College, it has a low faculty-student ratio. The low student demand has resulted in unacceptable inefficiencies, in the context of current budget pressures and the needs of other programs. He stated that the Program has not met its enrollment goals in five years. He conducted a market analysis of the degree and concluded that the Program will not be able to meet the enrollment goals to meet the level of other programs in Sargent.

Dean Moore responded to concerns the Council raised during the December 1 meeting. At that meeting, the Council thought that the proposal presented contradictory rationales for closure, the decision to close admissions in Fall 2020 was unjust, and the affected faculty were not consulted, as required by the Faculty Handbook. Dean Moore acknowledged that the proposal was amended, but none of the rationales were contradictory, nor did it suggest a lack of transparency in the process. As discussions continued, Dean Moore did a deeper analysis of the College budget and the market analysis for the degree and the proposal was amended. The Council's concerns prompted a restart of the review process and more formal consultation with the faculty during the spring semester. He hoped that the Council concerns have been addressed. Dean Moore said the viability of the Program was a frequent topic of discussion during administrative meetings with the department chairs and the Program director.

With respect to the concern that closing admissions review was unjust, Dean Moore believed that this was mandated by the Faculty Handbook and his action was in compliance with the process. The Faculty Council thought that the process mandated by the Faculty Handbook is unclear. Dean Moore said that is a matter to address separately, but the current process cannot be modified in the middle of a review for discontinuation of a program.

Dean Moore said the Handbook requires the following considerations: The Program's impact on the academic mission, the Program's ability to generate and disseminate new knowledge, the financial impact, the impact on current faculty and current students. He said that the academic and financial impacts are low; the current faculty will have had two years notice of the closure; and the current students are projected to complete the program as planned. The Program proposed models to become financially viable. Dean Moore said the 3 plus 2 model has been discussed before; other models require further analysis and would take time to implement, but the market demand is unknown. Possible international partnerships take a long time to establish and continuing education programs are offered as service to the disciplines and are not significant sources of revenue. This concluded the Dean's allotted time for his presentation. He thanked the Council for their attention.

Program Director Dr. Kimberly Mace's Presentation

Dr. Mace discussed the unique professional skill set athletic trainers have, i.e., emergency care for fracture management, airway management, administer Covid tests, and place sutures. She disagreed with the Proposal's claim that the Program overlaps with physical therapy, personal training, and sports medicine.

Dr. Mace summarized the Program's primary concerns with the Proposal in December 2020: the rationale for closing the Program was unclear, and the faculty were not sufficiently consulted, as required by the Handbook. In December 2020, the Proposal's rationales for closing the Program were: budget cuts due to the pandemic; the Program generated insufficient revenue, did not meet its enrollment targets, and did not align with the college mission. Alternative budget cuts were proposed and, while the Program has projected a \$40,000 shortfall in FY 2022, it had not lost money before.

Under the current process, the Program faculty was told that eliminating their positions is required to meet the \$330,000 in budget reduction. Dr. Mace said the College did not consider surrendering new faculty hires and not staffing vacant positions. Three new faculty will be hired this year. Moreover, it was suggested that tenured faculty were considered "off limits" for personnel cuts. She said the Program maintains that it has not lost money and this has not been refuted. Admissions had been on an upward trajectory, before the pandemic. Dr. Mace presented data on applications and enrollment prior to and during the pandemic and said spring 2020 was an unusual admissions cycle.

Dr. Mace said during the current process some additional, or expanded, rationales have been offered: inefficiencies due to the faculty/student ratio, the viability of the profession, and program inadequacies (lack of undergraduate and Ph.D. programming, lack of grant funding, and lack of impactful research.) Dr. Mace said the Administration never discussed these inefficiencies and inadequacies with the

Program faculty prior to the start of the spring semester. She presented data about the faculty/student ratio prior to and during the pandemic and noted that the data presented by Dean Moore does not account for the students outside of the Program that the faculty mentor. With respect to the viability of the profession, Burning Glass recently reported a positive outlook, with an estimated 16% job growth. Dr. Mace responded to the program inadequacies. She said undergraduate and Ph.D. programming are feasible objectives that the Administration has never asked the Program to explore. With respect to the lack of grant funding, all of the Program's faculty are on clinical/non-tenure track lines. The Program faculty do impactful research commensurate with their rank, confirmed by the annual faculty review process.

Under the current process, the Program has been allowed to propose alternatives to closure, but none of those alternatives are being considered at the College level. While there have been more meetings under the current process, the consultation seems more like a formality. There has been less effort to discuss the merits of the rationale for closing, or to discuss alternative strategies.

Dr. Mace acknowledged that the Faculty Council is not in a position to evaluate the potential for the alternative strategies the Program has proposed. However, the Administration did not ask the Program to explore alternatives during the last five years, or make contingency plans if the enrollment numbers did not improve after the transition from the bachelor's to the master's degree. Dr. Mace shared the Program's strategies that could improve enrollment: direct admission from other institutions, to create a pipeline for international students who have an undergraduate degree; a hybrid model of instruction to reduce costs; a 3 plus 2 undergraduate/graduate model; and a dual degree model for students to get their degree in athletic training and physical therapy. Applications to all of Sargent's programs declined during the 2020 admissions cycle. During the 2021 cycle, all of Sargent's programs have experienced a surge in applicants, but the Program was not allowed to accept applications.

Dr. Mace shared strategies to target revenue: operate with 3.0 FTEs, which meets the requirements for accreditation; consider additional degree offerings; and explore clinical partnerships for faculty. She reported that the Program can reduce their FTEs without terminating anyone's employment, due to recent departures of faculty and staff.

Dr. Mace acknowledged the affected faculty and listed their years of service to Boston University. She noted that this is the first time the current policy for program discontinuation has been invoked since it was revised several years ago. This Program was put forth for closure after one bad recruitment cycle, during a pandemic. The Administrations concerns about the Program were never articulated prior to the discontinuation process, and the affected faculty were not consulted before the decision to begin the process was made. This concluded Dr. Mace's presentation. She thanked the Council for their attention.

University Council Graduate Academic Programs and Policies Presentation

Dr. Kimberly Howard, Co-Chair of the University Council Committee on Graduate Programs and Policies (GAPP), gave a report on behalf of the Committee. She outlined the second review process. Dr. Howard was copied on an email from Dean Moore to Sargent College faculty on February 15. The Sargent faculty were invited to send comments to Dr. Howard, to anonymize and share with Dean Moore prior to the College meetings. No comments were submitted prior to these meetings. After the meetings with Sargent faculty, they were invited to send questions, comments, or reactions to Dr. Howard for GAPP's consideration.

GAPP reviewed the revised Proposal submitted by Dean Moore, the response by the MSAT faculty to the Proposal and the Dean's response, five pages on anonymized feedback from Sargent faculty, and one jointly written letter. Dean Moore gave a presentation to GAPP on March 22. GAPP's role was to evaluate the rationale for the proposed discontinuation and to examine the process followed in relation to the Faculty Handbook and the new timeline set by the Provost.

Following their review of materials and discussion with Dean Moore, GAPP made the following motions:

- That the MSAT dissolution proposal presented by Dean Moore move forward as written with no objections, and
- That the appropriate bodies review the Faculty Handbook to clarify any ambiguities around the meaning of consultation in cases of proposed dissolution.

Dr. Howard thanked the Council for their attention and said both she and Dr. Kleinman would take questions for GAPP. Chair O'Keefe thanked all of the presenters and opened the floor to questions.

A Council member asked for further clarification on the motions made by GAPP. Dr. Howard said GAPP is a consultative body, not a decision-making body. The Committee recommends that the Proposal continue to move forward through the process mandated by the Faculty Handbook.

A Council member noted that both Dean Moore and Dr. Mace referred to an external source that evaluated the viability of future enrollment and job placement, but they had opposite interpretations of the conclusions. He asked for more information about the source and asked them to comment on their conclusions. Dean Moore explained that the data was provided by Burning Glass Technologies with their product Labor Insight. Burning Glass analyzed the future for the athletic training profession against data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and data about the student market. Dean Moore noted that Burning Glass predicts 16% growth in the healthcare sector. For athletic training profession, that amounts to 200 jobs per year over the next 10 years. Dean Moore said that the job market for athletic training is small, considering that there are over 200 competing programs in the field. Dr. Mace said the analysis was extremely favorable that the job market will grow, along with other healthcare fields. A Council member said, based on the data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the profession is going to grow much faster than other healthcare professions and it seems preferable to keep the program open. Dean Moore said the pipeline of students is very small and the job growth represents a small number of available jobs for over 200 programs. He noted that professional certification that will require a Master's degree for licensure as of 2026. Dean Moore thought that one objective for elevating the degree required for certification was to weed out a number of weak programs, there are already 163

accredited Master's programs and others that will be accredited by 2026. Prof. Laursen, a member of the MSAT faculty, reported that he was president of the accrediting body when it changed the degree requirement. He said the objective was not to limit the number of students entering the profession or to reduce the number of programs. This decision was made in consultation with the board of examiners and the professional organization. It would have been a violation of antitrust laws to have discussed reducing the number of students or programs.

A Council member noted this discussion is about the revised proposal and asked for clarification about the second process. She also asked GAPP how they came to make a different recommendation this time. Dean Moore said he withdrew the proposal and re-started the process in consultation with the University Provost. Provost Morrison set the timeline for the second review, after the Faculty Council reported their concerns to her in December. Dean Moore said some fundamental misperceptions led the Faculty Council to find the rationales contradictory and the closure of the program unjust. Dean Moore took issue with the Faculty Council's view and was troubled by their conclusions. The Council's objections about adequate consultation and fairness to the affected faculty prompted a restart of the process with the Sargent faculty, with new rounds of consultation. Dean Moore held multiple meetings with Sargent faculty, with lower attendance at each meeting, and believed that the concern about consultation has been addressed. Dr. Howard explained GAPP did not conclude that the rationales for closing the Program were contradictory; many of the Sargent faculty made this claim during the first comment period. Secondly, while GAPP discussed the decision to close admissions during the discontinuation process, it did not assert that the closure was unjust; this was likely said during the discussion period at the Faculty Council meeting on December 1. When GAPP met with Dean Moore during the second process, they discussed the consultation with Sargent faculty and how their feedback was taken into consideration in the second proposal. They also discussed MSAT in relation to other programs in the College. Dr. Kleinman said, during the first process, GAPP was unsure about the consultation with the faculty and the transparency of the process; they did not feel it could move the proposal forward. Under the second process, while it is regrettable that some faculty will lose their jobs, GAPP thought that the proposal should move forward. He informed the Council that he abstained from voting on GAPP the second time, as he was involved with the discussions with Provost Morrison, Associate Provost O'Rourke, and Dean Moore to re-submit the Proposal.

A Council member asked if the discontinuation was considered before the pandemic or as a result of it. The Administration asked the schools and colleges to reduce their budgets by 5-15%. The Council member asked if closing the Program attains a 5% budget reduction. Dean Moore said the Program was under close scrutiny back in December 2019 because of its enrollment challenges and competing programs. He asked the former program director for data about admissions and enrollment. The pandemic brought additional scrutiny to the Program. The College made other budget reductions first, i.e., cut operating expenses and left vacant positions unfilled. The College needed to make cuts to permanent faculty. Other Sargent programs have high faculty/student ratios which precluded cutting those faculty. The Program's low enrollment and low faculty/student ratio made it an outlier compare to the rest of the College. Dean Moore said the prospect of the Program meeting the same efficiency as the rest of Sargent was unlikely.

A Council member noted that the Program was under scrutiny for closure prior to the pandemic and was concerned that about the transparency of the process. It seemed that the consultation met a minimal standard and asked Dean Moore whether he talked to the faculty about alternative strategies for the Program. Dean Moore clarified his earlier remark and said the faculty's attendance at the consultation meetings during the second process gradually became minimal. He said that all of Sargent's programs have been under intense scrutiny for a number of years and discussing ways to increase revenue; the attention paid to the Program was not unique. Dr. Kleinman said the program discontinuation policy does not define "adequate consultation" or set priorities for a dean with respect to preserving faculty jobs or considering alternate strategies. Dr. Kleinman said he was not supportive of the process the first time around because of the lack of clarity in the policy.

Chair O'Keefe thanked the invitees for their presentations and the discussion. The guests left the meeting.

A Council member asked how the review will proceed. Chair O'Keefe said the University Council will hear a presentation from Dean Moore on May 11. The matter will be put to the University Council for a vote at the June 15 meeting.

III. Campus Planning for Fall 2021 & The Role of Vaccination: President Robert A. Brown

President Brown joined the meeting. He shared the University's current plans for the fall semester and discussed the role of vaccination. Based on the modeling the Covid recovery committees have done and similar work around the country, a return to in-person instruction in the fall is feasible, even with some increased transmission caused by new variants of Covid. If a high proportion of the University community is vaccinated, it is possible to occupy classrooms at nearly full capacity, most likely with people wearing masks. It is also possible to return to close to normal operations for dining, housing, and hosting visitors on campus. President Brown defined "high proportion" as greater than 80% or 90%. A percentage of compliance is needed to offset the lower efficacy of the vaccines, which range from 70%-95%. The University will continue with an asymptomatic testing protocol to monitor for new variants or a resurgence of infections. He told the Council that the University will launch a campaign to encourage everyone to be vaccinated and to announce that the Healthway portal will allow users to upload their vaccination cards.

President Brown said there are discussions about whether to mandate the vaccination for students and how to drive high levels of compliance for faculty and staff to be vaccinated before the start of the fall semester. He asked for the Faculty Council's input before decisions are made. It is not unusual for an institution to require students to provide vaccination records as a condition to attendance. It is not common to require vaccination records for employees. Some other institutions have announced a vaccine mandate for fall, but what that actually means varies.

The Council discussed the question of whether to mandate the vaccine for students. A Council member said it seems sensible to require this of students and asked if there are legal barriers to doing so. President Brown said there does not appear to be a legal problem, but it is still a complex issue because

none of the current vaccines in the United States have been fully approved by the Food and Drug Administration. All of the vaccines are under Emergency Use Authorization (“EUA”). Also, unlike vaccines for measles, mumps, etc., the Covid vaccines are not sterilizing vaccines. The University has not required a vaccine of this kind before. The FDA might issue full approval to the Covid vaccines before September, but the University has to decide now what it will require of the members of the community.

A Council member acknowledged the complexity of the issue but agreed that students should be required to get the vaccine by fall. She said she has college-age children. Anecdotally, a lot of students want the vaccine and can’t have it yet. They are eager for campus life to return to normal, or as close to normal as possible. President Brown thanked the Council member for her remarks and said that parents are an important constituency to consider as well.

A Council member agreed with a vaccine mandate on general principle and asked if there will be an exception for those who cannot get it for medical or religious reasons. President Brown said the current thinking is to allow exceptions in the same way we currently do for other vaccines.

A Council member said she is a parent of a high school senior who has been admitted to a few universities. A vaccine mandate is an important factor in decision-making; her family is inclined to choose a school that has a vaccine mandate over one that does not.

A Council member supported a vaccine mandate for students and asked if there will be some way to address the inequities of access to the vaccine, so those who have not been able to get it at home will not be barred from joining the University community. President Brown agreed that access is a problem. The Commonwealth continues to control the supply of vaccines, so he is not sure what the University can promise. One thought is to have an early move-in period in August so those who have not been vaccinated can come to campus and get the vaccine before classes begin. The University is talking to the state government about this. It is also talking to vendors who may be authorized to sell the vaccine by summer.

President Brown said international students might not be able to be vaccinated before coming to campus. There will also be international students who have received a non-U.S. approved vaccine and a protocol will have to be in place for them. It may be that they will be asked to return to campus early in order to be re-vaccinated for the start of class.

A Council member disagreed with the differentiation between Covid vaccines with sterilizing vaccines. As a faculty member teaching in a classroom, he would want everyone to be vaccinated for the maximum amount of protection. President Brown agreed but noted that the counterargument to a vaccine mandate is that it is not sterilizing. The University does not require everyone to get the flu vaccine for this reason. The Covid vaccine might require an annual booster. This would be a new type of requirement for the community.

A Council member assumed that a significant number of people will have been infected by Covid already and asked if the vaccine will be required for them, too. President Brown said they most likely will. Those who were infected and asymptomatic won’t know if they had the virus without serology testing.

Last fall, over 60% of the Covid infections on campus were asymptomatic. While we know who had the virus last year, we won't know who among the freshman class has had it.

A Council member asked if there are any similar models of the fall plan, i.e., urban institutions with an open campus, that can be studied to estimate the transmission rate and establish the permissible parameters. President Brown said there are no such models right now. The K-12 schools returned to in-person instruction with reduced social distancing and without vaccination. Based on the University's data from last fall, it is clear that community behavior drove the infection rate. There was no transmission of the disease between faculty and students in the classrooms, studios, or laboratories. Student gatherings were the main locus of transmission. With a high vaccination rate, if people still wear masks in the classroom, there will be a low rate of the transmission on campus. At the beginning of the fall semester, there will be some sort of mask mandate in the classroom. Some of the classrooms will be de-densified, but not all of them. There will be some level of surveillance testing as well. The testing protocol has not been determined yet; it will be after the vaccine policy is complete. If a high percentage of the students are vaccinated, then they will likely be among other vaccinated students at off-campus gatherings.

A Council member asked what the rationale is for not having a vaccination policy for faculty and staff. President Brown said that historically a large number of employers have not required proof of vaccination from employees because the assumption has been that either people have been vaccinated or they had mumps, measles, etc. during childhood.

A Council member asked when the decision for the student vaccine mandate will be made. He noted that other schools are announcing their plans for opening in the fall. If the University does not announce its decision soon, that could put it at a disadvantage for fall enrollment. President Brown agreed and said that the decision about the student policy will be made no later than next week, followed by the faculty/staff policy. He had hoped for more clarity from the Commonwealth about the availability of the vaccine by now because once the policy is announced, the University has to be prepared to implement it. There is also a question of whether the University will require the vaccine while it is still under EUA. The Council member asked if there will be an announcement of a return to near normal activity in the fall. President Brown said he has already made that announcement, but the remaining questions are about the vaccine requirement and the next testing protocol.

A Council member endorsed a vaccine mandate for students, faculty and staff. She asked if the improvements to classroom ventilation and air purifiers will remain in place. President Brown said he thought they would. Some of the sanitation measures that were implemented last summer have turned out not to be required to contain the virus, but the ventilation measures are important to everyone.

A Council member asked if President Brown has met with other local universities to plan a coordinated effort for students to be vaccinated before returning to Boston. President Brown said he is a member of the higher education testing group for the Commonwealth. The group meets weekly and will probably make recommendations about vaccines, social distancing, and testing protocols.

A Council member asked what non-U.S. vaccines the University would accept for international students. President Brown said the medical group is studying this now and will approve a group of vaccines. They

are still working on this, but he expects that the AstraZeneca vaccine will be allowed. The current data about the Sinovac vaccine indicates it is not very effective. A number of our international students will have gotten it and the question will be whether it is safe for them to get another vaccine when they come to campus.

A Council member asked for an update on classroom density protocols for fall classes, as the “fall semester” on the MED campus begins in July. President Brown said the University is operating under the guidelines set by the Commonwealth. MED Provost Karen Antman and he are scheduled to meet with the Secretary of Education in the next few days to discuss this.

President Brown thanked the Council for the discussion about students and asked for their input on a vaccine mandate for faculty and staff. Two Council members said the vaccine should be required for all members of the community. Another Council member said that faculty and staff should be role models for students to get the vaccine.

A Council member agreed that faculty and staff should also be required to get the vaccine. However, the mandate is not fair if people do not have equal access to the vaccine. President Brown agreed and said that is why there has been no campaign yet for people to get the vaccine. In January, the Commonwealth had said it would supply vaccines to the University. There was a plan in place to vaccinate employees. The Commonwealth re-routed the supply to mass vaccination sites.

A Council member said a vaccine mandate for employees will reassure the parents of incoming freshmen that they will be safe on campus. Parents will want to know that faculty, instructional staff, housing and dining staff, etc. have been vaccinated. President Brown agreed, but said a vaccine mandate for staff has some complications. There are nine different union contracts to renegotiate to implement a mandate. The workers in dining services are employed by Aramark and they have already agreed to a vaccine policy.

A Council member asked if there are legal constraints to mandating the vaccine for employees, since Boston University is a private institution. President Brown said the legal advisors have said that the University can do so, but this is a power that the University has not used before. Currently the University does not have any vaccination records for employees, so this would be a new requirement. However, most people will feel safer on campus if most of the community is vaccinated. The University know whom it has vaccinated so far, but most people will not get their vaccine at BU. The University will ask employees to upload their CDC vaccination cards on Healthway. The same Council member said that the pandemic is a public health crisis and a crisis required taking measures that have not taken before.

A Council member supported requiring vaccination for all employees and asked if failure to comply will result in termination of employment. President Brown said this is a difficult issue. Without a vaccine mandate, it is unlikely that we will get the high rate of vaccination needed for the campus to return to near-normal operations. This past year, most employees followed the testing and mask-wearing protocols. There were only one or two disciplinary cases against employees who would not follow the protocols.

A Council member noted resistance to the vaccine mandate at Cornell due to the EUA status of the vaccines. The same Council member asked about testing protocols for the fall and if non-vaccinated people will be tested more often. Currently there are not separate protocols for vaccinated and non-vaccinated people. President Brown said that the plan is for people to remain in their testing protocols, but for the schedule for tests will change. The BU labs will continue to process tests.

A Council member referenced a discussion in the zoom chat about double-masking. There will be some classes where double-making will be difficult, i.e., language instruction, but he hoped that the University policy would encourage the practice. President Brown reported that thus far, without requiring double-masking, there have been no cases of transmission between faculty and students in the classroom under current safety protocols. He acknowledged that when the classroom density increases, double-masking could be an effective measure to adopt.

President Brown thanked the Council for the discussion and for their input.

Chair O'Keefe thanked President Brown and the Council. The Council appears to be in agreement that vaccines should be required of students, faculty and staff. She invited President Brown to return if there is a role for Faculty Council to play to support the vaccine campaign.

IV. New business and adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Khosla

Director