



INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Q&A from College and Area Meetings with Provost Olsen

- **How do you expect these major changes to impact morale in SCOB and how can we prevent negative impacts on faculty morale?**
 - *I suppose it depends on what the changes are, in the end, and how closely they conform to what the faculty wanted. Not everyone will agree with whatever changes do happen, but I hope everyone is willing to consider something “new.”*
- **I liked what was discussed about the disconnect between majors and intended careers - that we may not have communicated clearly what students can do with different majors. For example, a degree in Robotics is not called that, so students don't even know about it. My question/suggestion is: could we have something on our website asking "what is your intended career?" and then, when students pick one from an exhaustive list, they are directed to the major that can get them there? Seems like one small, concrete thing we could do to help with this. Maybe it would entice a student unsure about coming to ISU.**
 - *That's a great idea. There are various forms of a “career sorter” that I've tried on some college websites. They often feel a bit clunky but they can open a student's eyes to how they get from major X to career Y, Z, etc. From the ones I've seen they still struggle with a lot of majors that can lead to virtually unlimited choices—e.g. psychology. And of course, they can't anticipate what careers and jobs will be available in 8-10 years.*
- **During the pandemic, at colleges and universities which cut jobs, upper administration (President, Provost, VPs, etc.) took solidarity pay cuts of 10%-15% for 2-3 years. Will ISU's upper administration be willing to do the same?**
 - *We've discussed pay cuts, generally, and there is no support for that (certainly not for across the board) given that our salaries are lagging somewhat from the last 3-4 years. So I don't believe that will happen. In effect, of course, the “executive” level (Associate Deans to the president) took pay cuts for 2 years when they were exempted from across-the-board raises that everyone else received. That wasn't at the level you're suggesting but it was meaningful.*
- **I just feel that as long as I have been at ISU we are trying to find ourselves. We have an identity crisis or we know exactly whom we serve but don't like the answer. For every new President that comes in, we try a new tagline, marketing, etc. ISU needs to know its audience, which is first-generation students, and let's get about doing what we do very well.**
 - *I actually think we are in the best place we've been in my 25 years for understanding who we are and what we do well. The ISU Advantage emphasizes Pell-eligible students, experiential learning,*

community engagement, high-impact practices, etc. Its programs are geared to the students you mention and aimed at expanding opportunities for them to have the kinds of experiences that typically only our Honors students have gotten. I feel like this is the most comfortable we've ever been in our own skin.

- **Graduate programs should inventory students who did not complete and reach out with online completion offers as well as credit amnesty (unless there is a technology or industry cert change). In the humanities, it is my understanding that graduate courses must be repeated after a 7-year span of absence if the professor they took the course with is no longer at the university. They must also take a test per class (credit group) over the subject matter to "recertify" their knowledge. This seems obtuse and a hindrance to re-enrolling students and ensuring a simple pathway to graduate degree completion.**
 - *You're correct that the process of "certifying" graduate courses requires updating current knowledge or skills, however, the discipline defines that. I'm certainly not opposed to more flexibility in that process if that's what the faculty decides. This is squarely a faculty issue since it is the curriculum.*

- **I am concerned about the impact that our recent marketing has had on freshman enrollment and I think our institutional marketing and enrollment management areas would benefit from regular input from student focus groups and campus partners. In the past few years, most of our digital ads and billboards have been text-only, starting with a focus on job placement and social mobility statistics. While those are important supporting data, if they're used as the main message then we're really just saying that our graduates are accomplishing the basics of what you would expect from earning a college degree. Then, last year our ads featured a lot of negative loaded language like "horrendously expensive" and "broke" and we even had an ISU billboard near the mall in Terre Haute on which the focal point was the word "overlooked." I think it is unacceptable that these ads were approved for use. They do not represent who we are or reflect well on our brand. Now we have ads with the expression "real ___ wear blue," which is an antagonistic framing of our recruitment messaging. Our latest marketing materials have references to wearing blue and feature photos of students who are not all wearing blue. There has been a lot of focus on students from Indiana and graduates staying in Indiana, and in this enrollment climate we should be enthusiastically welcoming students from everywhere (and especially from Illinois) and celebrating the fact that we have alumni who are competitive for exciting opportunities in their fields all over the country. Overall, our external communication and marketing in the past few years have mostly felt like PR for an audience of state legislators. Indiana State University is truly a great community of people and we know that our students feel at home once they're here and have really meaningful academic experiences that they wouldn't get anywhere else. Text-only ads do not send that message and do not help high school seniors picture themselves living here for four years and having academic experiences that will make them excited about their majors and future careers. We are certainly having those conversations and providing major-specific examples when we actually talk with prospective students and our current students are always great ambassadors, but I think our general institutional marketing needs to return to a focus on experiential learning and community.**
 - *There's a lot to try and address here, and I'm more than happy to put you in touch with our marketing and enrollment folks. I think if you look at all of our marketing from the last two years you'll see a lot of what you're asking for: emphasis on experiential learning, a sense of community, the experience of living on a campus like ours, and so forth. We've also used student and campus*

focus groups, a lot actually. And many of our ads are entirely visual and non-text. The whole focus of last year's campaign, in particular, was experiential learning and community.

- **The core mission of the university is teaching. It's not sports. It's not trying to replicate what IU and Purdue do. If we need money, why not sell the Condit House? Why not sell our real estate holdings?**
 - *I think the entire focus of the last two years has been distinguishing ourselves from IU and Purdue rather than trying to replicate what they're doing.*
- **After the upcoming budget cuts, will we still be able to pay for the \$3000 Indiana State Advantage experience grants that we are currently promising to all current first-year and incoming students?**
 - *Yes, those will be within the existing scholarship budget, funded with reductions in other programs (as discussed last year). The scholarship budget is outside the currently projected budget reduction.*
- **How do retirements factor in? Why is it that when cuts are necessary, they are always at the roots and never at the top? Has the university looked at cutting a percentage of the salaries of those making over \$200k/year? There's no need for those huge salaries in Terre Haute—for administrators, for all the various redundancies in deans, and especially not for athletic coaches or the President. Even if these are token gestures, they absolutely should be made before one single faculty member is fired.**
 - *Retirements are always factored into calculations, although of course, it's an estimate until someone actually signs their paperwork. In the last couple years we've had an unusually large number of retirements, which has affected how we dealt with pandemic budgets and faculty/staff searches.*
- **What expenses are being considered in athletic teams? Does a university aiming for 60 in 6 need to be losing millions per year on a football team and a stadium that is five miles from campus?**
 - *Yes, athletics is also reducing its expenses (and has in the previous years).*
- **Will the approach to budget reduction include retirement incentives for faculty at or beyond retirement age?**
 - *The retirement options were significantly revised last year so that many more employees are now eligible for retirement and benefits. HR can answer specific questions.*
- **I feel like our marketing is not doing enough to help us attract students. How about using our marketing students to help us get the word out about our amazing students? And faculty? How about a Tik Tok contest? Funniest student creation about life at ISU? Or students in our most attractive majors "A Day in the Life of..."?**
 - *Yes, all good ideas. We are actually doing those things now. Jason Trainer is teaching in the SCOB and using students in his class to help generate ideas and to market ISU.*
- **Where are we starting the cuts? What is our projected budget? How will you help to maintain current morale (which is already so low) while cutting staff and faculty? How will you help to maintain programs that need to meet accreditation standards- which require a certain number of faculty and staff?**
 - *I probably can't answer all these questions in this format, and I believe they were covered in the college meetings. In terms of morale at the university, I think that's something we're all responsible for. We have a great university now and we'll have a great university a year from now. It might*

look different, and the changes in organization or programs will likely be more significant than a typical year's worth of changes. Our students are excited to be here and they're getting a great education, and at some point, we're all responsible for our own morale. We also need to address salaries, which we started to do this year in terms of ATB raises and compression raises for staff and faculty. I anticipate those will continue, and we need to continue to address salaries.

- **Why can't we use funds from a building remodel to help promote change while keeping as many staff and faculty as possible?**
 - *The state does not allow us to move money between an allocation for academic building renovations and our general appropriation, or for any other purpose. And the state does not fund athletic or administrative buildings or renovations.*
- **It was mentioned during the meeting that there are not any peer institutions around the state. I can see that. But what marketing opportunities are we using to share that, diverse students can find a place (HOME) here? Then highlight our AACC and Multicultural Programs.**
 - *That's a good point. We discuss with students and families when they visit all the resources we have and offer, including AACC and MP. That's relatively easy to do when families visit. We also feature those digitally as part of our online "tours." We've also discussed how to take advantage of our diversity as a more realistic approximation of the world, as compared to many other institutions.*
- **I wondered what peer institutions the Provost reviewed to find that our peer institutions have fewer Colleges (3-4) and 50% fewer programs than we have. The Provost also mentioned specifically the absence of Grad Colleges among the peers he checked. I looked at several institutions from our peer list and others I thought interesting to check (Cleveland State, Idaho State, East Tennessee State, UNC-Greensboro, Eastern Illinois, USI, Northern Illinois). I found one institution with fewer colleges than ISU claims--we claim 7 colleges on our website, including the UC (which others exclude) and excluding Honors (which others include) and Library (also sometimes included). The norm seems to be to exclude UC and Library so, for comparison, ISU has 7 (includes Honors). USI claims 5 colleges (with Grad School). The remaining 6 claim 7-12 colleges (average 8.8). None of the seven report than fewer than 100+ programs. (I didn't try to count majors in a list, I looked at the number institutions report to prospective students.) ISU claims "100+" programs. One of our peers from the IR list claims "250+". Others claim 100+ - 175. If we are to look for peer best practices, it would be helpful to have some direction. Perhaps the peers that the Provost found with 3-4 colleges and 50% fewer programs than ISU offers will offer other ideas for the changes we should be considering as well. I'm happy to look--if I know which institutions they are. From my skim of the list and the look I took at these 7, those numbers don't appear to be the norm.**
 - *The numbers for programs are (as I recall) an HLC comparison of like institutions, although that would be national. I'll try to confirm and post another update. In terms of organization, I looked at USI, among the institutions on your list. The others aren't really comparable in terms of enrollment and therefore don't match up as well. EIU is similar in enrollment, although their unionized status also affects many of the comparisons to ISU.*

- **Could the Provost be specific about the two Associate VP positions that have been eliminated from AA? Also, it would help to identify additional positions in the Executive Administration--e.g. at least three of the staff of the University Communications Office; Associate Provost, et al?**
 - *AVP for Budget (last occupied by Mark Green)*
 - *AVP for Student Success (Josh Powers)*
 - *Neither were replaced and responsibilities were distributed to other people.*
- **Does the promise that positions will be eliminated include positions in the Executive Administration? If so, will these be announced in the same window that the Provost indicated faculty position eliminations will (may) be (i.e. Late Jan/early Feb)?**
 - *Yes*
- **This revisits a question from the floor. Someone asked if pay reductions for Executive Administration were planned as one means of reaching the 12M cut. The Provost replied that Executive Admin had gone without pay increases for three years (at a different point, the provost also noted that faculty and staff essentially received no pay increase last year as well). Is pay reduction a tactic being considered and, if so, whose pay will be reduced?**
 - *At this point, we are not considering cuts in pay or benefits for anyone on campus.*
- **The Provost mentioned having two faculty fellows in admissions to be available to educate admissions counselors about majors-giving them better words to translate names of programs to professional prospects or to the actual content of the programs. This seems both deficient and inefficient. Why not include a yearly (pre-travel) series of conversations with departments (or colleges where programs are fewer and more alike) and let the actual faculty help the counselors develop their vocabulary and their knowledge base? No doubt admissions counselors go into the recruiting field with biases about what they believe with "sell" and what students want; if they are not also reviewing current data about high school students gleaned from those students (rather than assuming current enrollment reflects future interests), that also should change.**
 - *The faculty fellows would be working more directly with prospective students and families when they visit campus, and occasionally on the road at high schools or recruitment fairs. I agree completely that it would be better to have admissions counselors make more regular visits to colleges and departments to get a chance to speak directly with faculty. I will certainly pass that along to Enrollment Management and work on a way to build that into a regular schedule.*
- **Why in the world are we spending a fortune overhauling the Tech building? We aren't known for our Tech program. Do students go elsewhere for that? And please don't say that it's a different funding source. If the people in power care about our students, they should be doing everything they can to keep good teachers here. It's hard to be enthusiastic about our jobs when our livelihoods are always at risk. It's hard to teach when the President drops a bombshell that folks will be fired when we are struggling to buy groceries and gas and the holidays are fast approaching. I doubt my questions and statements will elicit a response. I hope they linger and that you and the others with power put yourselves in the shoes of those of us in the trenches, struggling and yet still showing up for our students, before you decide that we are not essential to the mission of the university, that those who**

aren't in the classroom are worthy of their bloated salaries and packages, are more important than those of us educating our students.

- *The programs in COT remain very popular, with several of them (aviation, engineering, construction management, etc.) generating some of the most applications on campus.*
- **Suggestion: Cut the football program. Sell the stadium to the city**
 - *I'm sharing all suggestions outside of Academic Affairs with the President and/or appropriate Vice President.*
- **If hosting recruitment events be intentional. For example, health professions majors and invite faculty to engage with parents and students.**
 - *I agree, great idea. We do that in various departments and programs (I'm most familiar with Criminology from my days in CAS), but certainly, we could do more. I know Admissions has worked on this in the past but I will pass it along again.*
- **The Provost suggested we might address the decline in the retention of FY students who were in good academic standing with no financial or other woes by changing the first-semester schedule to avoid "offering students 5 courses that look a lot like classes they took in high school." This was a thoughtful and, potentially, generative observation. I remember we re-envisioned the first semester schedule at Pres. Bradley's urging, based on the data of the DFW report. For instance, Comm 101 was mandated in the first term because it was the opposite of a high-failure course and other courses (e.g. History) were mandated out of the first year because of the failure rate. The concern was also one of retention. I think many departments would love to consider innovating the "basic" courses. We should move this idea forward. I'm concerned at the challenges this offers to University College advising, which follows a formula. However, one of the other concerns about the formula is that it fails the increasing number of first-year students who arrive with more than 20 college credit hours from dual credit work in high school--advisors struggle with where to put those students and there is no extra guidance in degree maps or plans from departments. For years the FYE community has begged colleges (especially AASCU colleges) to put their best profs in first-year classes, to create seminar like experiences, to offer topics courses that nonetheless meet Gen Ed requirements, to give first-year students an opportunity to experience the difference college offers. Let's do this. Maybe begin by asking every program to examine their degree maps to see if they are frontloading one of the "magic happens" major courses or one of the plodding ones that is needed, but not very inspiring.**
 - *These are terrific suggestions. I agree that all majors should design at least one course for first-semester students so they get a chance to experience the most engaging faculty and content. It also helps students make a good choice if they discover that major X isn't for them, which makes it easier to change majors and still stay on track for four-year graduation. Another possibility is to do a version of the Honors College curriculum for all students: topics courses in the first semester that engage students in ways that are again different from high school (would need to be part of FS so we don't add credit hours). The move to topics courses in several FS categories has been mostly successful and I believe at least one other category is moving in that direction. You're also correct that scheduling for first-year students is increasingly difficult in FS due to dual credit, which also offers opportunities for majors to reconsider their sequencing.*

- **Some analysts are suggesting that there will be a fall-out from the PU and IU decisions to increase their first year cohort. Specifically, IU and PU may see higher than usual numbers of first-years needing or wanting to transfer. The Associate Provost said in one of his updates that poaching students is not prohibited anymore (apparently). Perhaps ISU should be reaching out to PU and IU first years who have the profile of students who might otherwise have come to ISU and let them know they are still welcome to be a Sycamore and emphasize the ease of transfer.**
 - Yes, absolutely agree with you, and we are already doing that with students who formerly applied to ISU (showing interest in us).
- **A few responses to assertions: the climate has been hostile to Higher Ed for more than a decade; some of the research during the pandemic clarified that hostility a bit and showed that public trust and recognition of the need for college education were not linked. The hostile climate isn't new and our response to it needs to exploit what we learned during the pandemic--including what students tell us they appreciated. We should retain some of the pedagogical and administrative changes we made to accommodate the pandemic instead of being told to leave all that behind.**
 - *I agree, and I don't think we're leaving them all behind. We've got more flexibility in teaching, for instance, and I suspect some of the administrative changes we'll see will be the result of how some functions changed during the pandemic.*
- **I think protecting what is closest to the student is a great principle; however, I'm less confident that our administration actually knows what is closest to the student. Faculty and classes, absolutely, but with what attributes? Some services, absolutely (and especially mental wellness services--especially for first-gen, lower SES, and LGBTQ students according to recent research). Extra-curriculars are less important to families and students now than in the past (according to a recent report in IHE). Are we looking at the assets and the practices?**
 - *Yes, we are, and these are great points. I'd be happy to hear more specific suggestions.*
- **Please don't repeat the tired and inaccurate claim that universities (ie academics) never think about cost, only about "add, add, add." We've been through so many ups and downs and participated in strategic reductions and investments and thoughtless across the board cuts and been warned and cautioned for decades. We've seen permanent reductions in faculty and staff. We do not fail to think about cost and simply ask for more. Similarly, please don't suggest that we still operate on a 1990's (or 1970's) model; everything about how we work to the students we teach has changed. If the model is stagnant anywhere it is in higher administration and, more injuriously, in administrative processes. The conversation about the nearly unendurable process as time required to simply change the name of a course or its number or pre-requisites, much less to change a program is utterly ridiculous as are many of our budget processes.**
 - *I'm not sure I have a specific response except to agree that many of our processes are slow. That's true. I also agree that it's not that difficult to make changes to the structure of a major. I don't believe we have reduced the size of many majors, however, and they have tended to get bigger and bigger over the last couple decades. The FS program has gotten some smaller (at least since I've been here), but those hours have been added to majors rather than allowed to give students more flexibility.*

- **Also, similarly, unless specifics are mentioned, please don't suggest that "we are used to taking years to imagine new and revised curricula." Since when? Departments seem to change programs regularly as well as courses--and not only in response to mandates or challenges. We plan future changes while waiting for the most recent changes to complete the approval process. I think it is time for CAAC and AA to once again review all the possible curricular actions and see if there aren't 10 more that could be fast-tracked instead of forcing nearly every action to follow the slow-walk around the university. I think it is past time to consider the issue of external objections to changes based on anything other than direct impact on programs. Give departments the opportunity to rename courses, programs, even departments to catch-up to contemporary language of the disciplines and the professions--to meet the recognizability gap the Provost mentioned between what high school students think the names mean and what the departments think. Currently, we are loathe to pursue anything like that because every other academic unit has authority to say "nope, don't like it" or "don't agree" for nearly no reason and the process is stopped for hearings of objections or, worse, the proposing department is discouraged from continuing because "avoiding the conflict speeds up the process so at least some changes can proceed." Please provide two or three actual metrics we can use to frame the creativity you want us to bring to re-imagining our curriculum, our identity, our structure, our function. "Suggest anything" is not an efficient response to what has been framed as an impending apocalyptic moment. The "slogan" is CBC ("change or be changed") certainly arouses concern, fear, confusion, but more things like "60 in 6" -- more guiding benchmarks, more framing measures, would be more useful.**
 - *These are good suggestions, and I will talk with the Senate leadership about how we might process major and course changes very quickly this year or into next fall. The Senate passed an expedited process last year, but I don't believe it's been used yet.*
 - *In addition to "60 and 6" I'd suggest every major revise sequencing to make sure first-year students have a course (or two) that specifically engages students in what they will experience as majors (and do something similar for Transfer students but specific to what they are likely to experience in their first semester at ISU). This should include the most engaging faculty and content, and also the most indicative of the major so that students can make an informed decision to stay or leave as early as possible.*
- **Have organizations that support HE weighed in with ideas? Has AASCU made suggestions about the kinds of changes institutions like ours might work toward? Pointing to ideas doesn't stifle creativity (especially in a crisis), it can inspire it--if the message is clear that the ideas are meant to do that. Sharing those kinds of resources might be good.**
 - *Another good suggestion. I've shared quite a few articles and ideas with the deans and I'll encourage again that those are shared more widely.*
- **Is the FCTE going to be put to the task of helping with these conversations--curricular, pedagogical, change building? Seems like a good use of the center.**
 - *Yes the FCTE can certainly facilitate and help any faculty, program, etc. That is interested in its help. I'll suggest something more proactive as well.*
- **Naturally, I am hoping I will not lose my job on the Indiana State University School of Nursing staff. I have been a faithful employee for twenty years. However, is there a timeline of letting staff know what is the outcome of their employment?**

- *There isn't a specific timeline except to say that we will move as quickly as possible with as much care and thoughtfulness as possible.*
- **In August 2022, the CHHS Program Review task force made several recommendations that, to my knowledge, have not yet been addressed or even formally discussed within the college. One item particularly relevant to the current situation was the recommendation to consider combining programs with similar outcomes. More specifically, one suggestion was to create a Department of Kinesiology (essentially, merging AMR & KRS). The American Kinesiology Association's definition of kinesiology: Kinesiology is an academic discipline which involves the study of physical activity and its impact on health, society, and quality of life. It includes, but is not limited to, such areas of study as exercise science, sports management, athletic training and sports medicine, socio-cultural analyses of sports, sport and exercise psychology, fitness leadership, physical education-teacher education, and pre-professional training for physical therapy, occupational therapy, medicine and other health related fields. (<https://americankinesiology.org/about-us/>). This would encompass every program in the two (currently) separate departments. Such a merger would perhaps also grease the wheels for the dissolution of both the Applied Medicine and Exercise Science bachelor's degree programs. These programs should be altogether disbanded, and a new B.S. in Kinesiology should be created as a replacement for both programs. Then, shorter tracts/minors would allow more career-specific credentialing and/or coursework (e.g., Pre-Physical Therapy, Pre-Athletic Training, Massage Therapy, Coaching, Strength & Conditioning, etc.). One EXTREMELY IMPORTANT caveat – neither of the current chairpersons from either KRS or AMR should be assigned to chair this newly merged department (or school, if that is more desirable). New leadership would be needed. It may also be worth considering the closure of the current structure of the Department of Applied Health Sciences, with those remaining programs being put under the umbrella of Kinesiology as well.**
 - *I will pass this along to the Dean and ask for an update on the suggestions that came from the Program Review task force.*
- **It seems as though the discussion of Meta Majors has largely been abandoned. However, wouldn't it make sense to have 12-18 Meta Majors as a significant consideration when making decisions to reorganize departments and programs?**
 - *It's moving forward, actually, in the Lilly Grant working group. I will ask them to put together an update that I can share with the campus.*
- **Is there a need for three separate Science-oriented Colleges? Could the Science programs within CAS, all of CHHS, and all of Technology be combined into a true College of Science? It might also be worth considering a College of Education and Professional Studies.**
 - *Thank you, certainly other universities have done something similar. I will forward this to the deans and others who are considering different possible administrative changes.*
- **I missed the 2nd half because of having class, but I was curious if the colleges would be consolidated and if that is something that would happen by 2023-24.**
 - *Yes*
- **My other suggestion was in regards to marketing. As a marketer and with the environment we are in has the college thought of unique ideas that would differentiate itself from other universities?**

- *Yes we've been working with a new outside firm last year and this year. If you look through the digital and traditional advertising we have out there and have suggestions then please pass them along.*
- **Some things I have thought:**
- **1. M/W Tu/Th classes with only labs being on Friday. This would benefit our type of student and adult learners who need to work and now have an extra day to do so. This would also seem doable with our institution not needing as many classrooms and could move M/W classes to 75 minute classes. It could also provide a research day for faculty. The marketing technique would be no Friday classes which would make us different.**
 - *Interesting suggestions, I'm definitely passing these along to the campus.*
- **2. Finish classes (including finals) before Thanksgiving. This would give the university another avenue to bring in revenue by having a Winter Term (December) AND be unique with not having to come back after Thanksgiving. I think this would be a big draw for our students. We saw during the pandemic and I've talked to students who liked this.**
 - *Thank you for this one, I will certainly ask folks about this. It's interesting.*
- **3. Lastly the calendar. I sat on the transformational and it was disheartening that so many people didn't think we could change the calendar. I think, as you mentioned, people are afraid of change. We leave too many "dead weeks" on the table. I don't understand why we have two weeks with no classes leading into summer. If we want to improve our summer offerings, students typically like to take those right away. We lose that momentum when we have such a long layoff.**
 - *Also thanks for this, another interesting idea. The calendar is definitely something we could use to distinguish ourselves.*
- **4. Lastly, this is something IU does. They offer this 1 credit hour boot camp on weekends or 1 credit hour pre-semester to get people excited about their careers. It is a win-win for both the student and the majors as they get an opportunity to provide real-life experience with professionals for a weekend. I am happy to talk more about these ideas.**
 - *Thank you, please feel free to get in touch with me directly. We do something like this as part of the Lilly grant (Project Success) but it isn't aimed at major-specific content and skills. It's another interesting idea.*
- **What percentage of faculty are eligible for retirement? What additional incentive can the university legally provide to incentivize eligible faculty to retire at end of the academic year (Or, perhaps even in December 2023 at the conclusion of the Fall 2023 semester)?**
 - *You probably know that the retirement provisions were amended last year (for faculty and staff), but the folks in HR can give you details if you're interested or if you have colleagues who have questions.*
- **If we are shifting to either on-campus or online, does that mean we will shift to either traditional or non-traditional students by program? Programs that have both modes of delivery serve both students, and if they reduce to one mode, will have to choose which type of student they will serve. Is our strategy to serve traditional students and ignore the non-traditional student? What about international students**

who require on-campus courses? To simply say programs cannot offer both on-campus and online delivery ignores the reality that the two modes serve two or three distinct student populations. Trying to eliminate sequencing unfairly discriminates against scientific and technical majors where foundational courses need to be taught and built upon in order for students to be successful. Is this part of a strategy to shift ISU away from technical majors? On what basis will you make the decisions on faculty members you will lay off by early Spring?

- *We'll certainly have both on campus and online programs in some areas, but we have quite a few places where we're trying to schedule both modes of delivery for fewer than 10 majors. That's pretty hard to sustain. Rationalizing the size and sequencing of majors is not aimed at anyone in particular, but we need to do it.*

- **Are you canceling sabbaticals? We are not hearing anything about sabbaticals this year. I heard over the grapevine that phased retirement was being suspended, but there has been no announcement. This is really crummy as senior faculty members count on phased retirement as part of their retirement planning. This is a significant amount of money for them. If this is true, the Provost needs to make an announcement so that affected faculty can make adjustments in their planning. They will be angry, but they need to know.**

- *I am not canceling sabbaticals. I've communicated to deans (and via them to chairs and faculty) that the priorities will be the same as last year when determining which sabbatical requests we're able to support. We have quite a few faculty on sabbatical this year and I anticipate the same next year. No final decision on phased retirement requests has been made, but I will be sure to make a campus announcement as soon as possible.*

- **And your statements about recruitment you said that typically going to schools is not a good way to recruit. Why do you feel the high school recruitment is not a valid way to recruit? I live in a rural area about an hour away from here. When I have spoken with high school teachers in my area about colleges and where students are going, they admit that they do not give them information about Indiana State because Indiana state does not give them information, seek them out, nor give schools recruitment materials. They tell the students where to go based on materials that they have, brochures that they receive and schools in contact with them. Those schools are Purdue, IUPUI, IU, Ball State. Maybe if we change our mentality in the way that we think high schools operate we may get more students instead of the students from the poorer areas. Also, have you thought about giving departments a budget or money for online ads for their programs? What about having marketing work with departments to create professional commercials for their programs for social media and tv?**

- *I mentioned visits to high schools by faculty, I think. We visit high schools all the time, and we attend every possible high school recruiting fair that we can. Our Admissions folks are on the road constantly, and in high schools every day. We also work with departments on materials and videos (via TikTok, for instance), although we can always do more.*

- **The Economics major has not been viable in many years. It makes sense to reduce the size of the faculty to retain just enough faculty who could teach micro and macro for business majors and to discontinue the major.**

- *Thanks for the suggestion, which I will pass along.*

- **It is not clear if University College continues to provide important benefits to retention to keep it as a stand-alone unit. If the metrics do not support its value, it might be useful to disperse academic advisors to individual colleges for advising students and to get rid of administrative positions in the unit.**
 - *We definitely evaluate advisors (and the UC) on a regular basis. The retention rates have increased (close to 70% before the pandemic), so I think there is considerable evidence that the UC approach to advising has been successful since the UC was formed. My personal opinion is that the real question for us is how best to extend that approach to all students. I'm open to suggestions, but most schools that have been really successful use a combination of centralized and decentralized professional advising with support (or mentoring) from faculty. That is the model we've pursued in the Lilly grant as well.*
- **Will faculty in positions that are being potentially targeted for job cuts be made aware of these discussions? In cases like this where administrative decisions can have major negative consequences for faculty members' careers, transparency is absolutely the best policy. Leaders lose respect and credibility when these proceedings are done behind closed doors.**
 - *As I mentioned above, we will work as quickly as possible with as much care and thoughtfulness as possible. I've also said that I will be as transparent as we can be, involving deans, chairs, and the Senate.*
- **Before marketing ideas are promoted, why doesn't the administration actually talk to the departments as to how things will be tracked/ran and funded? For example, the Experience Grant was never discussed with functional offices as to how to make this work for students. We are now chasing our tails of how to make this works which is turning into more of a manual process which requires the labor hours from staff that could be used elsewhere. We are funding this grant with scholarship money, but are having difficulty finding the money to actually fund these experiences. Other colleges that have done this have raised tuition to fund the experience.**
 - *I'm sorry if it feels like a much greater commitment to Experiential Learning seems difficult or burdensome. The experience grants draw on what has historically been a hallmark at ISU, certainly something we have emphasized as core to our mission over the last two or three decades. My view was, and is, that faculty have expressed their support for EL dozens of times over the years that I've been at ISU, in curriculum reforms, Foundational Studies changes, the Mission-related activities in the Handbook, and so forth. The funding is coming from the existing scholarship budget—and the work being done in the Foundation as part of the Be So Bold campaign.*
- **During the meeting Dr. Olsen mentioned that four groups of prospective students have seen a greater than normal decline - 1. Pell eligible 2. Persons of color 3. First generation. 4. Rural whites, and, that these are nearly the exact demographic make-up of ISU. With this in mind, and knowing that these students may require extra resources to help them succeed such as extra mentoring by both faculty and support teams - Is there a lobbying effort at the state level to increase ISU's appropriation because of these special populations? It seems that if we tout our ranking in terms of being one of the best universities in the state in terms of upward social mobility, the state should provide us with the resources to be able to meet this unique challenge.**

- *Yes, our commitment to students in these groups is always a centerpiece of our discussions at the state legislature.*
- **Will the university move forward more aggressively with initiatives where technology can be used to improve operational efficiency and thus permit the reallocation of staff to other areas of strategic importance?**
 - *Yes, we continue to explore every possible way to enhance efficiency through technology.*
- **What is the plan for online education? Now that Extended Learning is defunct it seems like we're leaving a HUGE market on the table for other universities to gobble up.**
 - *As I've said in the various college and area meetings, the decision to reallocate the resources from EL to other areas was done in order to serve online students better. We are not, in any possible way, deemphasizing our online programs. Our growth in those areas had slowed dramatically and there was a great deal of evidence that we were not helping ourselves with a separate unit for distance students. We are more committed than ever to distance education.*
- **As a member of Gen-Z I need the higher ups here to understand that asynchronous, online learning needs to be taken seriously. People my age are struggling to survive on part time jobs and often need to take full time jobs while going to school. I'm a full time staff member here at the university and struggle to find asynchronous online classes in my major (Computer Science, the definition of a major that should be completable online!). This makes it hard for me to take more than one or two classes a semester, slowing down my education and career goals. I, and many young people like me, understand that online learning isn't the most robust or "best" way to learn, but it gets the job done and gives the many people in situations like mine the chance at an education, which should be the priority at an institution like ISU. Additionally, the sequencing of so many programs has to be reevaluated. I understand the need to take Calc 1 before Calc 2, but some of the sequencing is ridiculous and is a large reason for many of my peers not graduating on time. If the university is going to remain strict on this then those sequenced classes need to be offered in both the fall and spring. If someone falls off track it can set them back a whole year because the course they need is only offered in one semester per academic year. This has to change.**
 - *Thank you for these comments, and we are looking at all aspects of curriculum reform. As I emphasized in the online message that I posted earlier this semester, reducing the number of credit hours and simplifying the sequencing in all majors needs to be our first priority in the area of curriculum reform. I will pass along your comments re. asynchronous delivery.*
- **During today's open forum with Dr. Olsen, one thing that was brought up multiple times was this idea that there seems to be a rather palpable perception of uncertainty about what value a 4-year degree is worth. I'd go as far as to assume that this applied also to anything "higher ed." Despite this subject being brought up multiple times throughout the initial presentation as well as the actual open forum piece, nothing was disclosed concerning whatever institutional efforts ISU is pursuing to explore (and better recognize and understand) this perceived or actual phenomenon. So, what's**

being done to accomplish that? What cohorts have been surveyed or evaluated to determine whether these perceptions have merit or are just hyperbolic noise brought about by senior-level musings? If they are substantive, have any efforts been pursued here at ISU to incorporate an academic-scale course correction to accommodate potential differences in educational desires? For example, if research reflects an inclination to pursue trades-specific education programs by our core consumer groups, have any programs been created to leverage that? After all, no 4-year accredited university that I'm aware of within our entire region provides trades-specific educational programs...

One thing ISU has allowed itself to become more lax on is investment into its individual cultural identity. One way I'd like to see us do more of this is by instituting additional forms of ISU-specific events. Move-in Week always had at least one tent or station set up outside by the fountain by OIT with various games and other things... But we've slacked off on doing that. Making matters worse, I rarely saw other "units" or departments doing that, too. That's bad because those times act as a form of outreach for people beyond just the students who might be moving into the dorms, etc. We need to do things like this more often with more involved. I think our constant attempts to pander to special groups has to be stopped (or reduced at a minimum). We need to return to actual equality because whenever we pander to minorities or those associated to the LGBTQ+ groups under the guise of stressing equity, we project message that never coincides with that of an educational foundation a real university should be perceived as representing.

- *I will pass along the comments more specific to Student Affairs. In terms of "trades-specific" education programs, I'm not sure entirely what that means. We are not able to offer two-year degrees that would compete with Ivy Tech. In terms of the "value" of four-year degrees, that is a nationwide problem. I certainly talk about it whenever I can, and present the overwhelming evidence to as many groups as possible. Both in terms of life satisfaction (measured in many surveys) and lifetime earnings (measured in many ways), there is no question as to the value of a four-year degree. That is truer than ever, in fact, and particularly with so many programs in place (national, state, institution) that allows students to help pay for much, if not all, of their tuition.*
- Here at ISU, we need to do everything we can to avoid embracing this "reduction model" that we've been in the bad habit of embracing. I say this with the experiences of knowing how senior administrators tend to lean into perspectives regarding this sense of urgency about reductions, increasing efficiencies, restructurings, etc. I'm sure it goes without saying that these aspects of management always find their way into ongoing conversations of organizational futures, but it's during those times that I believe it's in our best interests to prioritize the inverse perspectives of looking at things from angles of increasing revenues, creating new things, adding-to or enhancing... The moral here being that we focus so much on reducing excess that we lose sight on the one irrefutable fact about ISU: it's a business and if we don't find ways of selling product, we're screwed. Today's presentation and open forum seemed to prioritize the prior reduction model mindset. I'm not sure that was necessarily intended because I found Dr. Olsen's efforts of trying to cushion the blow of staff reduction respectable, but in doing so, I think it reflects how budget problems create a downward spiral of losing sight of growth. With invigoration in mind, what methods have been explored to make money? Do any services exist that ISU can legally leverage to increase or diversify revenue streams? I.e. - leasing out resources or services to non-profits? This idea gets poo-poo'ed

too easily with excuses of dismissing it usually stemming from people claiming liability concerns who rarely enjoy legal credentials, and I think we should reconsider our stance with it moving forward as I'd bet everything we have that options exist in this vein of thought.

- *I appreciate your concerns, and share them. Honestly, we discuss other sources of revenue in virtually every meeting I'm in, including several of the things you mention. We are constantly looking at different ways to increase revenue. At the moment we are in a position of needing to reduce expenses, probably temporarily, so we need to focus on that. We're a state institution so we live within our budget. But I don't want anyone to think that we don't explore, and discuss, revenue all the time.*
- **If a position that is not vacant is cut, will the employee be offered any type of severance package? For example, if the employee has a college student attending ISU or attending classes themselves will they still be eligible for the tuition waiver? This was offered as part of the package in 2009/2010.**
 - *I will pass this along as well. I know that was offered in 2009-10, and we have already talked about these issues.*
- **The forum on Monday for Academic Affairs spent a lot of time talking about academic units and faculty and the plans for those groups. However, the group on Monday were not faculty. We were people from non-academic units. Why aren't there more specifics about what is going to happen to the non-academic units in Academic Affairs, even if only in general terms? Speaking for myself, I would rather know sooner rather than later if my job is going to be cut.**
 - *I expect that there will be more changes in the academic units (colleges, departments, etc.) than in units that are traditionally labeled as "support." For one thing, over the last few years, we have absorbed more (a greater percentage, that is) of employee reductions of vacant staff positions than faculty or administrative positions. We are always looking for ways to be more efficient, of course, and so there may be some changes in other areas. But I suspect that those will be much less significant.*
- **Employee morale at ISU has been the lowest I have seen in over 20 years at ISU and that was before it was announced that job cuts were coming. Many of us in the group that has historically been called "EAP" have picked up additional duties (without a bump in pay) as colleagues have quit or retired and not replaced since the beginning of the pandemic in 2020. Now we are faced with the prospect of possibly losing our jobs or taking even more duties if colleagues in our departments lose their jobs and we do not. From the Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology: "Whenever there's a perceived risk of being laid off, job satisfaction and productivity both decline, and employees have a greater risk of burnout." The University needs to take steps, besides a figurative pat on the back, to address burnout and appropriate compensation for the non-academic employees who will be potentially picking up even more duties after these job cuts occur.**
 - *The raises this year (both across-the-board and compression) are a first step to address salaries. This is also a discussion in nearly every meeting I'm in, so it's not unnoticed. "Morale," more generally, is a harder question in some ways. It's really difficult to assess, after the last 2-*

3 years, for one thing. Everyone in higher ed—across the country—is feeling a bit exhausted; that is the topic of at least one article every morning that comes across my email news feeds. So we're hardly alone. But I also believe it's everyone's responsibility, not just administrators or the university (or any employer) generally. Our students are incredibly excited to be here, which is always invigorating.

Responses above this line updated as of Wednesday, November 30, 2022 at 2:00 p.m.