

ADAM HOWELL: All right, good afternoon. Welcome and thank you all for being here. This is our third digital staff forum and Q&A hosted by the Cornell Employee Assembly. My name is Adam Howell. I'm the chair of the Employee Assembly for the 2019 and 2020 term, as well as the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences representative on the Employee Assembly.

Now, I'm not going to take too much time this morning talking, because I want us to get to as many questions as we possibly can. But I'm just really thrilled that we're able to have this forum today, because as you all know, and you're experiencing, the situation that we're all in is changing rapidly, day to day.

In fact, I feel we're all living a lifetime every week that goes by. So it's so great that we're able to do this. I want to thank our panelists for giving us this time, because I know how busy university leadership is right now during this incredibly stressful time.

Again, I also want to especially give a shout out and thank you to our incredible staff. Throughout this entire situation, I have seen nothing but a constant stream of positive and inspiring stories about our staff pitching in, helping out the community, doing things above and beyond.

And it really, like I said, is inspiring, and shows the measure of character and spirit that the staff community at Cornell really has. And I just want to say to you all that you're doing so many great things out there. And I want to thank you, and that you are being thought of during this trying time as well.

The Employee Assembly, we are still fulfilling our roles. We are here to support the wider staff community in whatever way that we can. And this forum is a representation of that, and I'm grateful that we have this opportunity. But again, thank you to the amazing staff community that is doing so much during this time.

I want to mention that, again, we have our executive vice chair, Hei Hei Depew, who's going to be helping us moderate questions today, as well as Kristie Mahoney, our employee welfare committee chair, who's going to be helping her out. So thank you to both of you.

And at this time, I'm just going to turn it over to our panel to introduce themselves, do some brief introductions. Then we'll get started with questions. So Mary, if you want to go ahead, you have the floor.

MARY OPPERMAN: Thank you so much, Adam. And thank you again to the EA for hosting these forums. I hope that people are finding them helpful, and we're appreciative of the chance to hear from all of you. So thank you very much to the EA.

I'll echo Adam's thanks to all of you. I know these are difficult times, and what I've found in the last week is people are beginning to find their way in their work that is remote. And that's been extremely helpful. I think people are finally getting back to some of the things that they know they need to get done.

For our staff who are on campus, we thank you so much. We know that your work is essential to us getting our students fed and our online instruction started and keeping the campus safe and functioning. So thank you to all of you as well.

I'd like to also thank my colleagues who have joined us here today. It's very helpful to have them answer a lot of the questions that I just can't answer. I'll take just a minute before we get started. I have a few remarks. I'm going to turn it over to Joanne DeStefano afterwards, and we'll go down through the panel for some opening introductions.

I think you all know I'm the head of human resources. Privileged to have that role and to support all of you. It is, here at my house, I don't know how it is at your house. The sun is out.

So if you, at the end of this, if the sun's still out, please go outside and put your face in the sun and take a deep breath, because there's nothing quite as comforting as remembering that everything changes. Weather changes as well, and things progress and move forward.

So this is the third open forum we've had, and I will say I appreciate so many of you reaching out to me before and after these forums. And what I would say is, on of the questions that I'm hearing are falling into two categories.

The first is about health and safety, how do I keep myself and my family safe, and protect ourselves from getting sick. And the second one is, what's going to happen to my job. Do I have security, what can I rely on. And these are both understandable, broad questions.

It's also understandable that when our answers, and we try very hard to be honest with all of you and tell you what we know and what we don't know. And when our answers are not absolute, some of you are disappointed, and I appreciate the fact that you share that disappointment with me.

So today, we have health and safety experts with us to help provide additional information about what is known about how this virus travels. We also understand that you're concerned about workers on campus who are supporting our students.

We also have gotten questions just about your own movement, going to the grocery store, doing other things. So we will try as best we can to tell you what we know in those areas. We also understand that you have questions about your own job security, and a lot of questions have come up since the memo that was sent by the provost and executive vice president came out on Monday, and what it means for all of you.

I'm really grateful that our EVP and CHRO Joanne DeStefano was able to be with us today to review some of the actions we've taken. We felt it was very important to begin immediately to control costs through these measures.

I understand that seeing these measures may create more anxiety for some of you. However, the leadership team is doing everything we can at this time to control costs that we can control so that we can continue to employ as many of our staff as possible.

We simply cannot say that these measures will be sufficient to stave off any future changes, and we need to be honest about that, because we don't know how long this situation will last. But they are good, solid measures, and they will go a long way in helping us address what we know to be a financial stress and tension in the future.

We do not know how the virus, the progression of this virus, will impact our core missions of teaching, research, and service in the near term. But we do know that the sooner we reduce our future costs, the more resources we will have to protect our workforce and our students in the future.

We're also looking very carefully at the financial relief that may be available to use through the federal government. We have a committee that's standing up to try to understand what the support may be out there.

I want to acknowledge that I recognize that this is a very unsettling time, and it's normal and understandable to want concrete and reassuring answers. We're giving you the information we have, recognizing that saying we don't have all the answers may not be fully reassuring.

But we have made a commitment to be as transparent as we can be, even when the information which we are sharing is evolving. So thank you again for being with us. I hope you continue to tend to yourselves and those in your family and friends' circles.

Please use the support resources we're posting on our HR web page, and also on the university's microsite. The web page with HR support is hr.cornell.edu/covid19-workplace-guidance.

And there's just a wealth of things there for you, so we encourage you to look at it, and watch some of the videos, and take care of yourselves. And continue to let me know if you have questions. And now let me turn this over to Joanne DeStefano.

JOANNE DESTEFANO: Thank you, Mary. And thank you to the EA for allowing me to talk today. This is my first time attending one of these sessions. I have to say, I'm incredibly impressed. We've got over 1,800 people watching right now. That's amazing.

But I'm even more impressed with how well everyone has adjusted to the new mode of remote work. It's just been amazing that work has been able to continue as if we were in our offices.

What I want to do today is just spend a few minutes talking about the Ithaca campus budget, to give you all some context on why we made the decisions we made. So if you start from what our budget is in Ithaca, we have a \$2.5 billion budget.

Resources that support the 2.5 come from tuition, gifts, research, state appropriations, housing, dining, and various other revenue activities. We're projecting right now, through the June 30 year end, if we don't take any actions at all, we could see a \$45 million loss to the Ithaca campus only.

About half of that loss is a result of the significant reduction in our housing and dining operations. We've had to return revenue back to the students who left campus. The rest of the loss is mainly due to lost revenues across the rest of the university.

Right now, we're assuming that we will not resume full operations for the summer. We're hopeful that maybe early July we could get back, and that other activities may be able to come back.

Also, as we're watching the job losses across America, we are making assumptions that our financial need for our students is going to increase significantly. And right now, we're projecting about a \$30 million increase in financial aid for next fiscal year. We also expect some state appropriation cuts.

For the fall, we're planning full operations. However, we are expecting a decline in our international students. So when you add everything together, and again, with no actions taken, we could see a \$100 million deficit for fiscal year 2021.

Which then brings me to the memo that the provost and I set out to the campus community earlier this week. As Mary mentioned multiple times, we really value our employees. And as a result, we've looked for actions that we could take to preserve as absolute many jobs as possible.

For instance, the salary freeze. I know everyone counts on receiving your salary increase every year. But by freezing salary, we can save the university budget \$20 million just by that one action alone.

And we've been watching, over the past several years, our headcount growing. And it has consistently grown. And if we can hold vacant positions and be smart about not hiring new staff and finding new ways to repurpose as many people as possible, we will save jobs.

What's mind boggling to me is we spend over \$40 million a year in travel. I know much of it can't be avoided. You know, we have our campuses in New York City, and there's sponsored research travel and others. But even if we cut this number in half, that's a \$20 million savings a year. And again, it doesn't impact anybody's jobs.

We are asking everybody to put a strict discipline in place to force each person to think twice about their everyday spend. Even if you have the money within your budgets, our university dollars are very precious, and we need to always ask.

You know, one thing I always hear is, we need food for meetings, otherwise nobody will come to the meetings. Have we tried not having any

food? If we reduce spending, every dollar that we reduce spending will help save a job. And if people really need to eat, maybe you can swap who brings in the food for the meeting each day. Or you could cook. I don't cook, but somebody could cook for me.

We also spend hundreds of millions of dollars on capital spending. Rick Burgess, who be talking next, will be reviewing every single project to determine the necessity of the project. We want to be smart. I think that's the theme that we're trying to say, is we want to be smart about every single dollar we spend at the University.

And every wise dollar spent will help us come out of this. So to summarize, the actions that were taken earlier this week are a way to cut costs to help solve our projected budget issues with minimal staff disruption. Thank you for allowing me to at least share where I think our finances are going. And now I'd like to turn it over to Rick Burgess.

RICK BURGESS: Thanks, Joanne. And greetings to all. So Rick Burgess here, VP for Facilities and Campus Services. Appreciate you being here and appreciate the EA for setting this up.

So just as last time, our priorities are to maintain safety and security on campus, and to keep essential functions going on campus. So I want to really just give a shout out to all the folks that are doing that, particularly the folks on the FCS team.

We have-- there are still students that are living on board campus that-- listen to me and my Navy talk coming back out. Still living on campus, not onboard, sorry. We still have students living on campus. We have some essential research that is continuing.

We have some faculty who are still transitioning to get ready for the online instruction. So from FCS, we have the police officers that are still patrolling. We have building care personnel, maintenance personnel. We have folks from utilities ensuring that we have heat and light and water, and maintain all that. We have transportation personnel that are coming in.

Our people providing essential services have gotten appropriate training from EH&S. So my thanks to EH&S for being very responsive on that to make sure we have the right procedures, that we know how to use the Personal Protective Equipment, PPE, properly, and have helped us develop appropriate protocols and procedures to follow. So thank you for that.

Last time, I think I touched base a little bit on, there were some questions about the mail. We have been engaged with the local postmaster, and made some changes to mail delivery. So pretty much all the letter mail is coming to transportation.

We have the East Campus Service Center that's out by The Orchards out that way, Palm Road. And then our transportation folks are distributing on from there, and in coordination with the various units on campus.

So if you have not straightened out your mail delivery on the letter mail, Bridget Brady in transportation can help you with that. And we'll make those adjustments.

So Transportation, while I'm talking about it, has also been asked to develop the capability to move students. If there are six students that need to go to the clinic and back, so as we don't overburden Bang's ambulance with those type of transports. And that keeps their capacity for the higher priority emergency transports.

On the utility side, last week we conducted or executed a limited load shed on the steam system. So we reduced the amount of steam that we're putting out to campus. Many of the buildings are either not occupied or minimally occupied.

And in order to save energy, since we have fewer people on campus, we've reduced the amount of steam that we're pumping out. So our estimates of energy savings are somewhere on the, about the 30% mark already. So at least we are not heating empty buildings and preserving our money there.

We've also done some fume hood hibernation. So if a laboratory is not in use, we go through some procedures to secure those fume hoods. We've done a number of them. That really happens on the request of building coordinators.

So if there are building coordinators out there in our listening audience, if you have labs, as we sort things out, what's going to continue, what's not going to continue, and faculty, you know, finish out whatever they're doing to be able instruct online.

If there are additional fume hoods that can be placed in hibernation, we want to continue to do that so we're not wasting energy.

Last Friday, we got revised instruction from the governor's office. And we've been obliged now to pretty much wrap up all the construction that we had going on. Construction had been previously considered an essential function, and that guidance was further refined. So if the project is considered essential, work can continue.

So that really has resulted in us buttoning pretty much everything up. We're going to try to get some permission, if we can, to keep going. We are already experiencing some supply chain disruptions. So we'll see how that goes. We don't want to put people at risk. But at the same time, we would definitely prefer to keep some of these projects rolling.

And speaking of projects, as Joanne mentioned, we spend millions and millions of dollars on various capital projects. So we are now going to conduct a comprehensive assessment of those projects. The ones that makes sense that we absolutely should proceed on, we're going to, once we can clear the work stoppage that's been put out by the governor.

But we're mindful of our liquidity, and continue to do things like make payroll and that kind of stuff. So we don't want to commit a bunch of

money to capital projects that we may need in the near term for operational reasons.

So although we are fairly limited in operating status and in supporting essential functions only at this point, we really want to look down the road, and we're going to be standing up planning teams to think through and start planning out how do we get back to full operating status.

So we don't know when that's going to happen. It's not like we have a crystal ball here, so it's more scenario-based planning. But we can plan out what we will do once we do get that word. So that's sort of the wrap up as I see it in Facilities and Campus Services.

Let me just close by saying that I am tremendously impressed at the dedication of our Cornell community. We've got all sorts of folks on staff who have come in and continue to provide the necessary support for essential functions. And many, many others who are looking for ways to support our local community during a very trying time.

So tremendously impressed by that, and really just proud to be part of this organization. And with that, I will pass the baton to my colleague, Ryan Lombardi.

RYAN LOMBARDI: Thanks, Rick. And hi there, everyone. Ryan Lombardi here. It's great to be with you once again. My comments will be brief here. I, first and most importantly, just want to reiterate what everyone has said, which is a really resounding thank you and express my sincere gratitude.

You're just incredible. You're doing incredible work supporting our campus, supporting our community, supporting our students. As has been mentioned, a number of our students still remain here in Ithaca and on campus, and many of our teams are supporting those folks.

Most notably, probably our dining employees as well as our health employees, some of our housing folks. I really appreciate all that you're doing to keep our students fed and well during this difficult time. So thank you from me personally to all of the team members, both within SCL and beyond who are supporting our students.

I just want to emphasize and highlight one point that just makes me enormously proud to be associated with this university and with this organization. If you didn't read yesterday, the efforts that a number of the team in Cornell Dining did put together the food pantry in partnership with the Greater Ithaca Activities Center, GIAC, delivered food yesterday to over 120 local citizens who otherwise would not have had that opportunity.

So the spirit of community is incredible. And again, I thank you. I appreciate you, and sending lots of love to everyone. Next up is my colleague Joel Malina.

JOEL MALINA: Thank you very much, Ryan. And let me add my thanks to all of you for the enormous flexibility that you are all generating during

this truly difficult time. I just want to touch on a few things, and then I'll pass it off to Frank Cantone.

My division of University Relations, a couple of main components, just wanted to address some of our core areas of focus, and some of them address specific questions that I know have come our way. First on communications, I hope that you are finding our dedicated website, which is accessible from the Cornell.edu main page, the big panel space up top.

That has an FAQ that is being updated multiple times each day. It's also where you can find every communication, not just to our employees, but to students as well, just in case you're interested about what's being said to whom.

And of course, there will be, as we've continued to see each week, a need for broad messages, such as the one that went out on Monday from the provost and from Joanne.

Talking a bit about community relations, and a few people have asked, you know, what can I do to help. We've seen enormous expressions of willingness to engage, to help, empathy, compassion. We are so thrilled with those expressions.

There's a terrific website on the-- excuse me, a web page on the HR web site. It's the HR COVID-19 Workforce Guidelines. And included there is a terrific summary of community resources, which has specific information of where you might be able to lend some time or some support.

And, of course, Gary Stewart, who runs our Office of Community Relations, he's made clear that anyone can reach out to him, as long as, I guess, it's not 2,500 people at once. But please send Gary an email, and he'd be happy to help direct you. His email is gjs28@cornell.edu.

Finally, there have been some references to our efforts in DC, in Albany. Just to reassure everyone that we are very engaged with lawmakers, not only throughout New York, but throughout the country, to make sure that Cornell's needs, the needs of our employees, the needs of our students, the needs of our community, are being addressed in what's already been three aid packets out of DC.

We expect there will be a fourth one that will be developed over the coming weeks. There are working groups already focusing on what's already been enacted to make sure that we are in a position to take full advantage. A lot of the details admittedly still need to be ironed out through regulations, but we are very much focusing on this and working to make sure that clarity is brought forward as soon as possible.

Statewide, Rick mentioned the governor's orders. I do recognize that, and what originally was put out there didn't mention with specificity higher education.

But working with our Albany office, as well as with our leadership of our statewide university, private university association, there have been very specific conversations with senior members of the Cuomo

Administration, where we have been able to build out specific guidance with regard to universities and colleges. And that has been reflected in the messages that we've been putting forward.

So with that, just also a shout out to the EA, to Gina Giambattista, and our Office of the Assemblies for all of this wonderful work. These are really times where it's clear that the work that the EA does truly is of enormous value. So thank you to all involved. And with that, Frank Cantone.

FRANK CANTONE: Hi, good afternoon, everyone. I'm really happy to be part of this effort. And I think it's really important that we stay connected, even if it's in our new normal, digital world.

But I just want to acknowledge that our small team here in Emergency Management and working with our many partners across campus, including Cornell Health, Facility and Campus Services, Student Campus Life, University Relations, HR, and many others to help plan for where we are now, the last couple of months, and also respond to keep people safe and healthy, as well as keep the campus operational.

And also a shout out to the many, many staff and students who donated a lot of personal protective equipment from the laboratories on campus. We've gotten feedback from Tompkins County that what we have provided has been a godsend for the entire county.

So much appreciated. And also, we've seen a lot of supplies down to our colleagues at Weill Cornell Medicine, and they're also much appreciated for what we could provide. So I'll turn it over to Dr. Anne Jones.

ANNE JONES: Thank you, Frank. And yes, the partnership has been amazing. And I too would add that the messages of gratitude coming to the health center from the students who are receiving care and from all of you sending messages in support of our staff have been amazing.

So much thanks and much gratitude back to everyone. I know that there have been many questions coming in around a couple of health topics, so I wanted to take an opportunity to cover them just briefly in the health arena here.

And there's also been evolving literature on the topics of what we know about the virus, what we know about coronavirus, and what is being learned in the sciences and in the basic science literature, as well as the public health and the medical literature.

Probably the most common question that's coming up right now is this question of transmission, and how long is the virus able to live on surfaces outside the human body. So there was a study that was done in the National Institutes of Health that was published in the New England Journal of Medicine, which was the most recent literature on this topic.

And it summarized as follows. They did a very specific study that was looking under very specific circumstances, how long was this novel

coronavirus living on particular surfaces. Not every surface was studied in this study, but particular ones were.

And the summary of the literature was that this novel coronavirus can live up to four hours on copper, up to 24 hours on cardboard, and up to four days on plastic and stainless steel. But that the virus was much reduced after a 72 hour window.

So this brings up a lot of questions, we know, about what does this mean for groceries. Should we clean our groceries? What does this mean for coming home if you do go outside? What does this mean for mail, as has been mentioned?

And in general, I think that what it means is that taking precautions and taking reasonable precautions for yourselves are the most reasonable thing to do. What we still know is that the transmission is still person to person via respiratory droplets.

And so it's about the transmission of those respiratory droplets, that's why social distancing is still very important, and why it's important to continue to practice social distancing as a public health measure.

And also, then, to take the actions that we can of our own selves to protect ourselves, no matter what surfaces we may be touching. So, for example, staying home if you're sick, and thereby removing yourself from any possible exposure that other people could have.

Avoiding contact with people who are sick. So therefore protecting yourself. Avoiding-- if you do come in contact with anything, then avoiding touching your eyes, or touching your face, or touching yourself in any way. That hand hygiene is so important. So focusing on hand hygiene, washing with soap and water, using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer is so important.

And then really focusing on, again, the social distancing measures. The more that we can all stay home, unless we absolutely need to go out, the better. The last thing, the last very common question that we've been getting is, what is the difference between social distancing, quarantine, and isolation.

Those are terms that have, in many ways, begun to be used interchangeably. But I'll just say briefly, social distancing is the measure that we should all be doing right now, regardless of whether we're sick or healthy. That's the idea of staying six feet away from another person, no matter where you are, and then staying home if you possibly can.

Quarantine is something different. Quarantine is the action of keeping people who are well away from anybody else so that they don't get sick. This is for people who may have been exposed or come in contact with the virus.

That is different from isolation. Isolation is used when someone gets sick to separate from anyone else and avoid transmission of the virus.

Each of these strategies are used with partnership with public health entities with medical practices.

And if you ever did have to come in or become evaluated for a coronavirus, one or more of these strategies may be used. So anyway, just those common questions have been coming up. Hopefully that helps with some of the public health knowledge out there. And with that, I'll hand it back over to Mary.

MARY OPPERMAN: I'm going to turn this back to Hei Hei for questions. I think that's where we are now. Is that right?

HEI HEI DEPEW: Yes. Thank you, Mary. I'm going to begin with a question that we've received via the chat. Can-- the provost email on Monday indicated that the salary increases related to faculty promotions are excluded from the freeze. Can you elaborate on why staff are no longer eligible for promotions, but faculty continue to be eligible?

MARY OPPERMAN: I'll give that a shot. So while we did-- well, we did basically exempt most salary changes, there is a step agreement for most promotions, from assistant, to tenured, from associate, to full. Those are the opportunities in line with the academic ladder.

And so for now, it really is important that we continue those, because they are longstanding understandings as people move through the ladder. It's quite different than the way we do changes in pay and promotion for staff, which is much more episodic and less structural.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. Given that normal parking enforcement besides handicapped spots and fire lanes are not currently being enforced, can the university suspend payroll deductions for employee parking passes until the work from home orders are lifted while the transportation office currently allows for users to mail back their passes to stop payroll deductions, which seems like an unnecessary burden on both staff and transportation employees to process on a case by case, rather than a blanket suspension?

RICK BURGESS: This is Rick. I'll take that one. You know, I will be frank that we've had higher priority issues to deal with, just in terms of getting to where we are. With the duration of this remote work, things seeming to stretch out. We're going to have to pick this up.

So I'm happy to take a look at it. I don't know what the answer is right now. We have part of the process, the whole payroll piece gets done with others. But we'll take a look at this thing and figure out something that works.

I agree that it doesn't make sense to continue to pay for something that we're not even using because you're sitting at home, and this applies to pretty much everybody that's got a paid parking permit. So we'll take a look at this one.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. How much in savings have been realized over the past three weeks in reduction of utilities, demand, and steam load shed?

Is there any thinking around moving to a four day work week in the fall to retain a portion of these cost savings?

RICK BURGESS: I'll hop on that now. And it's about 30% in terms of usage. It's kind of complicated to do it in terms of dollar figures, and I'm not going to try to do public math on that one. But about 30% so far, and I think we could actually realize a little bit more if we do some more of the fume hood hibernations, which, you know, I don't initiate those. Those are initiated out of the units.

Moving to a four day workweek, you know, you start to get into space use constraints, and competition-- you know, there are some that I've heard say in jest, you know, that nobody wants to have classes except Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. You know, so we would have a three day workweek.

I'm not in charge of that. I'm trying to keep the facilities that we got, and that really goes from-- the academic mission is where we start, and then we figure out what we need to do to support that.

MARY OPPERMAN: So let me jump in here, Rick. So I'm going to take what I think is the question behind the question, which is, how are we thinking differently about the efficient use of energy and space. And I do think we're learning some things about remote work that we may be able to leverage as we move back into full operations.

But keep in mind that as we do that, there are certain things we do that are actually 24/7. When the students are with us, they're here all the time. And we have research that runs all the time. So I think this experience has taught us that we can think differently about how we operate, and that may well include more conversation about alternative or remote work.

But as is the case for absolutely every organization that does this, we do it consistent with our commitment to our core mission.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. What is the likelihood that we're going to see staff cuts and lost jobs due to this?

MARY OPPERMAN: Yep. I understand that question, and so I'm going to-- I'll try to do a better job of saying what we know. What we know is that we're working very hard right now to address what we believe will be the shortfalls. We don't know how long this will last.

We don't know what the impact of the virus will be on our long term financial situation. So I appreciate the question, but it would be irresponsible of anybody to tell you with certainty about what impact this may have on jobs.

What I can say is what the executive vice president said. We are all working very, very hard in our commitment to our workforce. You all can participate in that by helping us look at spend and suggesting, through your managers, ways to do things more efficiently.

And that is an honest answer for where we are today. And we'll continue to share information as we have it. That's the best I can do, and the question keeps coming up, because I think people want an absolute answer to the question, which is completely understandable.

But I've made a promise to be as transparent as I can be to you. And that includes telling you what we know today, even if it isn't the answer you are hoping for.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. Will LTIP rates change for fiscal year '21, or will there be a university-wide reduction in fiscal year '21 budgets?

JOANNE DESTEFANO: I can try that one. So we had-- we went to the board of trustees in January for endowment payout rates, which is what I think that they're asking about. And we have been paying out more than we should.

And so we had a plan to continue to reduce the payout over the next several years down to approximately a 5% payout. So that has already been approved, and units should mainly be aware of it.

What the implications are of the investment portfolio where all our modeling for payout is at a 6 and 1/2% positive return, right now, we're looking at a potential 8 and 1/2% negative return for this next year.

So there will be an impact going forward. Right now, we're thinking it might be-- we calculate on a seven year average, so it will take a couple years before we actually see the reduction in the payout piece. And yes, there will be budget adjustments. We're trying to figure that out now.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Another question I believe that you would be appropriate to answer. Could you kindly share the priority list of recouping revenue? What avenues are top priority? Where do staff roles fall in this metric?

JOANNE DESTEFANO: So I'm not sure I understand the question of recouping revenues. So, you know, we have our enrollment. And as soon as NCRE is built, we'll be able to add more students. And so that'll increase our tuition revenue.

Financial aid is an expense that will grow depending on the economy. And then federal appropriations, research dollars, gifts. As soon as we're able to go back out and try to get as much as we can, we will be trying to maintain our revenue sources.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. This feels a lot like, if not worse, than the recession of 2008. Is there talk of an early retirement incentive as there was in 2009?

MARY OPPERMAN: So I'll take that one. There are some differences. It does feel that way, I think, as individuals, as we look at this, but there are differences. One of the differences that we are trying to employ is, we're trying to make our changes as soon as possible. So that's why the Monday letter was so important.

As it relates to early retirement incentives or other incentives, we're not taking anything off the table. But I have to tell you, those programs are very expensive. And so when we look at a precipitous drop in revenue, we need to calculate and balance the cost of something that we would do with the other pressures that we have on us.

So we're not saying no and we're not advancing it as a yes. Right now, we have everything in the toolkit, and we're weighing the pros and cons of all of them.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. If student enrollment is likely to decline, then why not reduce financial aid rather than increasing it by another \$30 million?

JOANNE DESTEFANO: So one of the core principles of Cornell University is need-blind admission. So we don't know what the financial need is. If we wanted to reduce financial aid, the only way we could do that is look at people's ability to pay as they are applying and accept the people that can pay. And that just goes against one of the principles that we don't want to change at this point in time.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. All of our funds are from grants, which will expire within the next two years. How do we reconcile reduced spending with funds that will be lost if not spent?

JOANNE DESTEFANO: My recommendation is to spend your grant funds first, and then your general-- as long as they're legitimate expenses that can go against the grants. We want all restricted funds dollars spent first, so that it frees up unrestricted dollars that can help with the university budget problem.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. What advice would you give to staff members who have been deemed essential who have compromised immune systems? Once their half time has run out, are there any additional resources or any additional assistance staff members can access?

MARY OPPERMAN: So thanks for asking the question. If you are in a situation where you are in a medically compromised situation and you and your doctor do not feel that you should be working, there are programs to help you. Please contact the medical leaves administration area.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. Several units have discussed mental health and the need for nature RX. There seems to be a collective thought that getting outside is important. With the increased traffic at the gardens around campus, how are we addressing visitor safety?

JOEL MALINA: Well, I could address that, because we've made clear in as many of our conversations, I first want to echo the basic observation that Mary touched on earlier, which is absolutely, we want everyone to get outside. It's critical for wellness. I went out for a walk earlier today, and it made a big difference.

Certainly with regard to the botanic gardens, with regard to a lot of our wonderful areas for recreation and wellness around us, it's really just incumbent on individuals to practice those six feet separations.

We have all experienced individuals that we encounter who aren't. But we, as individuals, have that opportunity to make a detour, making sure we look both ways if we're crossing streets at the time.

But it really comes down to our greatest tool to get us back to normalcy as soon as possible, which is to enable the progression of the virus to happen as swiftly as possible, with an eye toward flattening that curve. We try to emphasize that in all of our communications.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. It was helpful to know some of the thinking around summer planning, given the recent mention of July 12 as the earliest on-campus classes. I know we don't know specifics of fall, but can you share your thoughts of what is being discussed for potential fall implications?

MARY OPPERMAN: So I'll start, and maybe Joel and others can jump in. One of the-- the deans are meeting with the pros on a regular basis to do contingency planning for the academic enterprise. And I think that the person who asked the question acknowledges, we just don't know.

And so we don't want to not do planning and be caught off guard. On the other hand, I think we're trying to weigh multiple factors as we do those contingency plans. So the deans and the provost team are actively looking at ways we might move forward if this summer comes and we're still not in a position where we can offer things on campus. Joel, did you want to add?

JOEL MALINA: No, that's exactly what I would have touched on, Mary. Thank you.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. What do you know about the current confirmed cases of COVID in Tompkins County? Where are the positive cases located? How many of the current confirmed cases are part of the Cornell community, students, faculty, staff?

JOEL MALINA: I can take that. But obviously deferring to Anne and Frank. The Tompkins County Health Department has a website where they keep track of the county-wide confirmed cases. We have, as part of that landing page on our COVID-19 website toward the bottom, we are keeping a tally of Ithaca campus faculty, students, and staff by number that have tested positive.

Recognizing that this is not always an exact science, our goal is to try to be as transparent as possible with the information that we have access to. I do need to underscore, there are significant and really critical privacy concerns at play.

As a result, we are not in a position to be communicating specifics in terms of who, what, where, or when. But we do want to be sure the

community is able to see the progression. I don't know, Anne, if there's more you would add.

ANNE JONES: Yeah. Really to echo that and emphasize the transparency on both of those websites, and especially on Tompkins County Health Department, there is a grid, and I'm looking at it right now, a grid that has the following factors.

Total number of people tested for COVID-19, of those, how many are pending, how many are positive, how many have been coming back negative, and then how many people have recovered. As well as a count of how many people who are hospitalized.

And so those are important numbers. To date, and what's being reported on the website now, the number of positive cases in Tompkins County is 76. And so that website is actually where we are getting that information. And that is being placed on there transparently for the community.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. Are current jobs posted on Workday still moving forward, or are they also being frozen?

MARY OPPERMAN: Yep. So we've asked each unit, college and unit, to look at the positions that they have posted and to take down those that they feel temporarily can delay, or they can reassign the work to someone else. And so those are all being looked at, and most of them, actually, are coming down.

So there are a few positions that there's been an agreement need to continue. But for the most part, they're being taken down. At last count, I think something like 75% or 80% of them had been pulled down.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Now that provost or the executive vice president approval for discretionary spending is required to ensure consistency, what is the preferred submission method to obtain approval? Is there dollar threshold for those purchases requiring approval?

JOANNE DESTEFANO: So Bill Sibert, the university controller, is meeting with all of the college business officers and administrative finance group on Monday. And they're going to work through our process, so more information will be coming out on that.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. Follow up to the faculty promotion raise question. Could faculty voluntarily give up a raise for the time being to help out with costs while still obtaining appropriate promotions? Is that something that could be asked of faculty, considering this issue?

MARY OPPERMAN: So everyone has given-- if you look at the Monday letter, you'll see that we have-- some individuals have already voluntarily reduced their salaries for six months. And we've made that option open to anyone who would like to do so, and that includes any faculty as well. So that's an open invitation to anyone who would like to do that to help us with our operating cost issues.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. There are concerns and stress happening around our ability to be productive while dealing with the reality of our current situation. What would you say to folks who are struggling to balance deadlines and mental health?

MARY OPPERMAN: Yeah, so thanks for asking that question. I think there's actually a lot that goes into that. So some of it is as simple but complicated as, all of a sudden you're home, and you don't have the normal way that you get things done, and you're trying to figure out how to do things in a different way.

And we did a panel about that, and we'll do some more followup. There's great resources, by the way, about this on the HR website. But the other thing that was recognized there, and I just want to say, we're thinking about it, as well as, you know, people who have children, the day care centers are, for the most part, closed. The schools are closed.

They're feeling a great deal of pressure within their-- to balance a whole lot of things that are kind right in front of them now, and we know that. So what I would say is, use good-- my good practical advice is, talk to your supervisor about when you can get your work done. Make sure you understand the deliverables that are in front of you.

Be open and honest about the struggles that you have in terms of what's happening in your home, and develop a go forward plan that's agreeable to you and your supervisor.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. Which jobs are so going to be continued to be recruited for? Are the provost searches for college deans continuing?

MARY OPPERMAN: So there are certain jobs that we will continue. So, for example, a great example is, if we need a dean, we need to complete that dean search. There are other jobs that are quite unique in their skill sets, so we can't obviously move somebody into the role, and those will continue as well.

There's no single pathway to answer this question. We're trying to go position by position and have a conversation about all of them and figure out which ones to move forward. I will say in this regard, and I do want to just go back to my acknowledgment that when you ask an absolute question and I don't give you an absolute answer, I want to acknowledge it that doesn't feel satisfying.

But I also feel that I have a great deal of regard for all of you and your ability to manage what can sometimes feel like less than concrete answers. And so I'm going to give you the honest answers that I have them, even if they're not in an absolute form.

So we're going through each job. We're trying to figure out which ones absolutely have to continue. We're talking about whether there's other ways to continue them. But there's no single pathway to say, this type of job will be filled and this type of job won't be.

I sat in on a deans meeting on Monday. And every dean, every vice president, and every vice provost on this campus is really being thoughtful about how to take this guidance and do their part in figuring out how we can capture some savings in these early days.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. As we identify departmental funds that will no longer be used for fiscal year '20, e.g. student recognition events, what is the best way to let the university know how much money we can roll back into the larger university budget?

JOANNE DESTEFANO: Well, my suggestion would be to talk to the University Budget Office, Paul Streeter's office. They will happily take any call that somebody is returning some funds to help the university budget.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. The university has a sizable endowment, and this is an international emergency. Can't the shortfall be covered by dipping into the endowment, considering the unprecedented nature of the situation?

JOANNE DESTEFANO: So the endowment is established based on gifts from donors. And the donors are under the understanding that we will never use their funds for anything else. It would require board approval. It could be an option, but it should be a very last option, because that means we have not been able to figure out the problem solving for ourselves, and that would just be a stopgap.

And the more you take out of the endowment, the longer the pain will be for the university, because so many of our funds-- so many of our programs are funded from the endowment, including financial aid.

HEI HEI DEPEW: Thank you. All right. Regarding budget, specifically event expenses, will schools be required to reduce or pare back the spend on major events, like orientation, first year family weekend, et cetera? Some of these events could produce a significant cost savings.

MARY OPPERMAN: Yes. So each-- I'm going to actually have Ryan talk about the Cornell-- the student-specific ones. But each of the colleges and units are looking at exactly that, events that we've always held, can we-- are we still holding them? If we are holding them, can we hold them in a different way?

RYAN LOMBARDI: And I'll just jump in there. We will be certainly at these kind of university-wide student type of events, like orientation, like family weekend that were mentioned. We will be taking a very close look at those and doing everything we can to reduce or eliminate a lot of the spend that does happen there.

Obviously, we need to transition our new students on to campus somehow. But I think this will require us all to take a really close look and figure out how we can realize some savings to support the institution, and we will be doing that.

ADAM HOWELL: I think that that's going to have to be our last question. We're at time. But I just want to wrap up by saying thank you all so much

for being here today. We absolutely appreciate it. We know how busy you are.

This is so helpful and so useful for everybody who was able to join us. So once again, thank you, thank you, Hei Hei, Gina Giambattista, again, thank you for helping set all this up. And we again, really appreciate your time.

We hope everybody stays healthy, happy, and able to weather this, you know, as we move forward. So once again--

MARY OPPERMAN: Can I just-- sorry. Can I just say two things? First of all, I've been noticing, as things come through, questions that we've answered now multiple times coming back through again. So one strategy that you can use, because I know sometimes, either you're joining late, or maybe there's something that you were thinking about when the question was answered.

These are all recorded and available, and you might want to go back and watch these first to see whether or not maybe the answer to your question is already there. So that's one thing.

The other thing is that I didn't start with this, but I want to end with it. Please keep our health care workers in, at Weill Cornell Medicine and all across New York, in your heart and in your thoughts.

They're getting to a very difficult time. They're working without, you know, just constantly. They're really in the thick of it, and we couldn't be prouder of them, but they're also really, really on the frontlines of all of this.

And they're remarkable people. And so however you do that, whether it's a wish, or a prayer, or a thought, keep them all in your hearts and in your thoughts. Thank you.

ADAM HOWELL: Thank you, everybody. Take care.

FRANK CANTONE: Thank you. Good afternoon.