

WSU-Pullman Town Hall – July 24

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Phil Weiler: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Phil Weiler. I'm going to take my mask off so you can hear me a little bit better. I'm Phil Weiler. I'm vice president from marketing and communications here at Washington University, and I would like to welcome you all to our seventh in a series of WSU COVID-19 town hall meetings. We are joined today by a number of administrators from WSU. We've got a lot to talk about. It's been a busy 24 hours. Joined, first off, by Dr. Kirk Schulz, our president of Washington State University. Next we've Dr. Elizabeth Chilton. Dr. Chilton is our brand new provost, and executive vice president. So welcome, Elizabeth. We're glad to have you on our panel for the first time. Next, we've Dr. Mary Wack. She's the vice provost for academic engagement and student achievement. And then we've Dr. Jill Creighton. Jill is our associate vice president and dean of students in the Division of Student Affairs, and then finally, Dr. Mary Jo Gonzalez, vice president for student affairs. As I'm sure everybody knows, Washington State University announced yesterday that we are going to be making a change in how we deliver learning to students, and particularly our undergraduate students in the spring -- or in the fall semester. So what I'd like to do maybe is to start with Dr. Schulz. Kirk, could you talk to us about what has changed over the last month or so? Why are things different today than they were just a little while ago. I know that you in particular had been a strong advocate for trying to get students back to a face-to-face environment and now we've made that shift. So can you explain what's changed and what the thinking is behind that?

Kirk Schulz: Certainly, Phil. Thank you. I appreciate all the Cougs and all the members of the Cougs family who are joining us today for this town hall. It's been a very difficult decision to make the move away from our in-person undergraduate teaching activities. We really had talked about and planned about for the last several months. A lot of soul searching. Most importantly, it's really an examination of the data. It's looking at the trends that we see in COVID-19, not just in the

State of Washington. Not just Whitman County, but around the country. And recognizing that WSU and our Pullman Campus in particular, has students come from all over the United States and all over the world to study here and be part of the Coug family. I've mentioned from the beginning, as have my colleagues, that the safety of our faculty, staff and students is paramount. And when you say that, that's one thing, but your actions have to follow that and we believe this decision is really in line with ensuring a safe environment for our faculty, staff and students. When we were in mid June, I was very confident that we were going to be welcoming students back into the residence halls, back to our campus community, getting ready for in-person classes, putting our COVID-19 protocols in place, and it wouldn't have felt like it did year ago, but it was going to feel a little different than it might have if we were going only online. The fact of the matter is, if we look at the data, the spread of COVID-19 is significantly worse today than it was just three to four weeks ago, and unfortunately, it's also trending in the wrong direction. We've also looked at other campus communities across the nation, and there have been several outbreaks that have already occurred as people congregate in different types of events prior to fall semester or fall quarter terms even starting. So you add those two things together, and we just really felt this was the prudent decision to make at this particular time. Now, as people are kind of watching and listening, one of the things is, why not go ahead and try it? You know, you put all this planning in place, sure, we're seeing stuff spike, but why don't you go ahead and try it and see how that works. One of the things that the leadership team, and that's deans, chancellors, vice presidents, talked about from the very beginning was that we didn't want to do is bring everybody back, put everybody in residence halls, go that way, and then figure out in three weeks that it just wasn't going well, and the disruption of then saying, we're going to change, we need to send everybody back, we felt was much worse than making a decision now and letting people know about a month before we start classes. I want to reiterate, though, we are committed to a very high-quality educational experience for all our Cougs, for our families, for our students, for our faculty and staff. This is just a different way of doing it, but it's not less quality. It doesn't require less faculty and staff time. We want to make sure that while it's different, it's what you would expect from the Cougs and what you would expect from WSU, a great opportunity to move down your educational pathway and move on to doing great things in life. So Phil, that's the -- that's where we are today. Things continue to change rapidly, and but the safety of everybody, faculty, staff and students, community members, is really the paramount reason we made this decision at this time.

Phil Weiler: Great. Thank you, Kirk. I know in particular, I think we've heard from community members would have been concerned about what it would mean to bring students back, and so it's a -- I think people are having mixed emotions, definitely. I think people are disappointed, but I think they're also, to a degree, relieved. I'd like to now turn to our newest member of the leadership team, Dr. Elizabeth Chilton. I know, Elizabeth, we've a lot to talk about with regard to the fall semester, but I can't let this go by without acknowledging, this is Day 10 for you. So welcome. Thank you for joining us. You have come at a very interesting time. I'm just curious, in the ten days or so you've been on the job, what have you learned about WSU? Any reflections you might have?

Elizabeth Chilton: Well, first of all, I've been so impressed with the Cougar community throughout my transition here. As you mentioned, this is Day 10 for me in the job, and I moved here with my family from Upstate New York just a few weeks ago. And then this past week, as I've gotten to know WSU much more, I've been extremely impressed by the dedication of our faculty and staff, as we work through this very difficult decision, and also continued the hard work that is going to be required to support our students. This is a new Cougar experience for all of us, myself included, and as challenging as it is, I'm very happy to be part of the Cougar Family.

Phil Weiler: Great. Thank you, Elizabeth. Mary, this -- I know we're talking about primarily having undergraduate students going to a distance learning environment, but I'm curious, and I know there's a number of services that you and your team provide to students. Can you talk about what services are going to still be available to students even though we are going to be in that distance learning mode?

Mary Wack: Sure, Phil. Happy to do so. We are going to make sure that every essential academic support service that a student would have on campus will be available in the remote environment, and we're going to start with something new, something we didn't have a chance to put in place in the spring, because our move to remote learning was so sudden. But beginning August 3rd, and offered for multiple times in the weeks after that, we are going to debut a new training for new students, for their parents, and also their supporters, and, of course, current students are welcome to this, too. And it will be an introduction to the kinds of tools and processes and protocols of online learning so that students can begin their remote journey with confidence and with skill, and it will be presented in an interactive format, somewhat like this, with speakers, with activities, with chat, so that students will be able to begin with a great deal of skill and confidence. Besides

that, though, we've our full compliment of advising services. Tutoring, we will have remote tutoring for over 90 different courses, academic courses. We will have our full suite of career services, including our first virtual career expo. At the beginning of October, we will have hundreds of employers here to work with students and interview students and an incredible opportunity. And students will be able to prepare through the academic success and career center with interviewing tips, all sorts of resume-building activities. And so, in short, everything that we would have available in the face-to-face environment, we will have available in the remote environment.

Phil Weiler: Great. Thank you. That was new news to me. I'm glad you shared that.

Thanks. Mary Jo, I know that we are -- one of the big changes that this is going to represent that Pullman being the residential campus, we're not going to have students, for the most part, living on campus. And one of the things that -- one requirement that Washington State University has in place for the Pullman Campus that first-year live-in requirement. Can you talk about what is that? I know the abbreviation is FLUR. How is that going to change because we aren't going to be having students, for the most part, staying on campus?

Mary Jo Gonzales: Yeah. Thank you for asking the question, Phil, but I would like to make a few comments before I answer it. I want to tell you that we are truly sorry. I've read your E-mails. I've seen your posts on twitter, Facebook and elsewhere, and you have every right to be feeling exactly what you're feeling right now. But regardless of what you're feeling, we need you to continue to your degree. Keep working at it. Don't give up. No matter where you are or how angry you are right now, you have worked way too hard to get here, and that's to our high school students who are -- have graduated and wanted to start their first year, to our transfer students who were really excited to continue their career as a Cougar, and to our continuing students who may be looking at their senior year and doing it at a distance. Please do not let COVID or our decision stop you. You know, as the first-generation low-income students, and I'm the youngest of ten, I had to fight really hard to finish. You know, at Washington State, I finished my master's and Ph.D as a single mom, and I will tell you that these two degrees that I earned here changed my life, and I would not be sitting in this chair if it weren't for all the people during all of the difficult times that I had who said to me, please don't stop, because we need you in the world, and that is what I'm saying to you now. We need you to finish those degrees and be the leaders in the world. COVID has touched all of us in so many different ways. It's impacted our relationships, how we come together, including in our Cougar

community, and some of us have lost loved ones or had others that were really sick. We've had others who have lost jobs and incomes. And I don't have any words to make it better. You know, as my daughter tells me all the time, this really sucks. And I want to make sure that you know that we're trying as much as we can to keep in touch with all of you. I just got off of a call, a Zoom call, with our student government leaders, and these are our ASWSU student leaders on every one of our campuses. They asked some really good questions, and tough ones, which is their role to do. And, you know, we've heard you. You did not like the time line. Why couldn't we make it sooner. You have to know that we were listening to 30,000 different voices across the WSU System. Some said I wanted to be in person. Others said we don't want to come to campus. Still others said can we provide options? And that's what we've been trying to do. But as President Schulz mentioned, because the data wasn't trending, wasn't good, and it was nationally, as well in Pullman, especially in a healthcare environment where we couldn't manage a significant widespread outbreak, we had to make that decision. I need you to know that your life and your health means a lot to me as the vice president of student affairs, even if it means that the decision we made makes you angry at me right now. We don't know enough about this virus, and it's long-term unknown impacts. We did the right thing. We've been trying to do the right thing, and we want to let you know that it has never been easy. I do want to talk about, as Phil said, FLUR, but I also want to talk about some general housing. Feel free to go to housing.wsu.edu and on that front page there, there are outlines and answers to all of the questions that we're going to get today. Please feel free to go there. Again, that's housing.wsu.edu. If you're coming from a place of high transmission, where COVID is spreading throughout your community, I need you to please stay home and prevent that widespread outbreak happening here in Pullman. We just don't have the healthcare capacity. We did have to limit a lot more occupancy than we had previously expected, so the good news that if you fall under the FLUR, which is the first-year live-in requirement, also known as the freshman live-in rule, if you've lived at your permanent residence, it will count towards FLUR. So we are hoping and working really hard to make sure that we can open in the spring. If we can't, that whole year, living at home, will qualify for FLUR, and we want you to know that. By August 7th, you can either cancel or defer your contract. If you cancel your contract, it means that you may not have housing reserved for you in the spring, if we are able to open. If you defer it, that means we will hold your spot for spring 2021. Now, we know there are a lot of students who call WSU home, and they have nowhere else to go,

and so we've identified a set of criteria. You will also find that on the housing.wsu.edu Web site. But these criteria are demonstrated institutional need for you to live with us. This is a student who has a financial situation that requires living on campus, our first-generation veteran, as well as ROTC, former foster youth, those students who need an ADA accommodation and have worked with the access center to acquire that, as well as those students who are international or have to travel extensively to return home. There may be students would have courses that are face-to-face, and I believe we're going to identify those by August 1st, and those individuals will also be allowed to it. We also know that there are circumstances and situations that students aren't going to be able to live in their home. Please let us know. That also includes students who are housing insecure, or they're living in a space that is unsafe or they are unable to get the kind of support that they need to be successful in the university environment. We are looking really hard at fees. I do want to let you know, President Schulz mentioned about tuition, and I do want to let you know that we are looking really hard at the fees right now, and we will be getting you information hopefully by August 7th is our plan to let you know what fees we will be moving forward with and what fees that we will be either reducing or eliminated. So again, Cougs, I know that you're going through a rough time and we're here to support you in any way that we can.

Phil Weiler: Thank you, Mary Jo. I have to say, you're getting some love in the comments section. Several people have nominated you for president. So if you get drafted here soon, we'll know why. Speaking of the live chat, there are lots of people are using the chat feature. We're glad that you are. Thank you for doing that. We do have a whole team of subject matter experts who are monitoring the chat, trying to answer questions in real-time. As you can see, there's a lot of questions that are flowing through right now, a lot of comments. We did receive more than 500 questions just in the last 24 hours, so we're going to try -- we've gone through all those questions and tried to identify some of the main themes to make sure we cover those so that people can get their questions answered. And this next one, I want to address to the president, because this was probably the number one question we did receive. And that has to do with tuition. I think you mentioned it a little bit, but there was an assumption in some cases that it would be less expensive for Washington State University to deliver instruction in a virtual manner. Is that the case, and what are your thoughts about tuition? That something we would be able to lower or not?

Kirk Schulz: Phil, thank you. And thanks, Mary Jo, for your comments around the fees and us

taking a look at those. Our first priority when we're moving online is to ensure the Cougs have an exceptional educational experience, and those experiences are done by our outstanding faculty. But guess what, they require resources and dollars and investments in infrastructure and research. We will not be reducing tuition coming up, and this -- we've been consistent in this from the spring semester, for the summer term, as well as the fall term. I would ask our Cougar families to remember, we're also in the midst of a pandemic, and the university is cutting back on a lot of our expenses. This is not -- these dollars coming in are not being banked. They're not being saved. They are used to make sure that we have the right instructional experience going forward. Our faculty are still teaching. We're not dusting off recordings made five years ago and putting that forward. Folks are still operating. Our buildings are open. Campus is open. So when people sort of think, well, gee, we're getting a less of an experience, and so it should be less of a cost, it's a different experience, but we still have a lot of the same costs, if not more, to make sure that we're really delivering the online educational experience that Cougs should and would expect. Now, I know from looking at comments, seeing things on twitter, letters, E-mails that I've received in the last 24 hours, this is not what people want to hear. But I want us to be consistent that excellence and ensuring that our families have the very best new Cougar experience is our priority and these dollars are going to go directly to making sure that we can fulfill that obligation, that expectation and that promise. Now, I know that some families are also fiscally financially hurting. Some people are out of work. Lots of changes. Our financial aid office, our professionals, our advisors, are going to continue to work with families, and so as you have needs, reach out to us and we will do everything we can to fulfill those. That includes things like hot spots, loaning computers, those types of things that we've done in the past to ensure that all of our students can continue down their educational pathway. I want to reiterate one other thing while I've got the floor that Dr. Gonzales recently mentioned. To the Cougs out there, say you say look, if this is what you're going to do with your tuition and you're online, I just don't think this is what I want to do right now, please continue your educational experience. Go to a local community college, which is a great partner for WSU. Continue doing what you are. You may be upset right now about our decisions, but it's very, very important that you not decide to take the time away from your educational experience. We've data that shows for a lot of students, if you choose to do that, people never come back. I was talking to the president -- or a chancellor of one of our large community colleges in the state yesterday, and she even said, so often they'll see students

that are in their 30s coming back and saying I wish I would have stuck with it when I had that opportunity. So we want you to be a Cougar. We want you to be part of the Cougar family at any of our campuses, our global campus, but if you choose not to do that, please continue your education. It's really, really important to your future, your family's future, and our state's future.

Phil Weiler: Thank you, Kirk. Jill, I want to address the next question to you. President Schulz made reference to the new Cougar experience, and I've heard other people talking about it. Can you give us a little bit more information about what that means, what does that look like?

Jill Creighton: Absolutely. Thanks, Phil, for asking. Before I get into the new Cougar experience, I just want to say a special hello to our student Cougars that are joining us today. Like Mary Jo, I've been following our community on social media since we announced our transition to remote instruction, and what I've heard is everything from anxiety to frustration to anger to sadness to confusion, and also for many of you, I've heard your relief. And however you're feeling, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the loss that we're all grieving as one Cougar family, and name it as grief that we're not able to be face-to-face as a community this fall, and remind us all that being a Cougar has always been so much more than our education in the classroom. Being a Cougar is a holistic identity. It's rooted in our sense of community pride. It's a boundary list, an unstoppable spirit that transcends geography and carries us through our best days and our toughest days, and I know this is one of our toughest days. Being a Cougar means being a student of life, and being a student of life in 2020 means that we are all learning new coping strategies, finding our strength to persist onward and figuring out new ways of being a human being. So our student affairs team, staff and students, have been working tirelessly to build our new Cougar experience. So wherever you are on Planet Earth this fall, we are committed to keeping the fabric of our community woven together through a myriad of virtual opportunities, as well as limited in-person ones. I am about to drop a ton of information, and I know it will be long, so please stay with me. We're here to provide the healthcare that you need, the community you thrive within, and the joy that really is college life. Engage, support and connect. That's the mantra of the Division of Student Affairs, and that's what we're here to do this year. I have heard that many of you expressed concern that you're worried about being lonely or feeling isolated when you have to physical distance, whether that be at home or in the residence halls. And I want to assure you that our Cougar health services is here to support you and all of our common students for your mental, physical and community health needs. That

can include telehealth mental health needs as long as you're in the State of Washington. Our health promotion team will be introducing you to Healthy Cougs, which is a new campaign helping us to understand how we can do our part to protect against the virus. It really is on all of us to help stop the spread of COVID-19. I've seen a lot of questions about our recreation and fitness spaces, and I want to let you know that they are currently open with reduced capacity limits, which are aligned with our state and local health authorities' expectations, and as long as we are allowed to be open, we will be open. For those of you learning from home, we look forward to offering you virtual recreation classes and workshops that you can attend from anywhere you have an internet connection. So you might be taking Zumba on Zoom. The office of the dean of students will be open both virtually and in person to assist you with a wide variety of challenges ranging from basic need supports to figuring out how to navigate life at WSU and our WSU access center remains open for online appointments so you can receive the accommodations you need to learn in the virtual environment. Our center for student involvement has adapted engagement and leadership opportunities just left and right. There are currently over 400 registered student organizations on the Pullman Campus and so we will have a place for you whatever your interest. These organizations will be engaging both online and limited in person. Our student entertainment board is doing some really exciting things. They will produce virtual entertainment that will include a private live performances that our students will not want to miss, from concerts to comedians and speakers, to interactive events where students will be eligible to win prizes and meet other students, and our multicultural student services, our women's center and our GIESORC, which stands for gender identity expression and resource center, will be connecting students and building relationships through identity-based community. One example is that our women's center will be introducing an online magazine centered around students sharing your own experiences, research and art, around social justice themes. The GIESORC will be resuming our QHORT, which is a specialized student orientation for the LGBTQ plus community. If you're interested, please contact those offices directly. Mary Jo mentioned our institutional need criteria for living in the residence halls and if you do meet those needs, you will be welcome to our community by a team of residence life professionals and paraprofessionals that are dedicated to your community development and success. We will have limited food options available on campus, and they'll be aligned with our public health guidelines as well. So that is just a light sample of all the ways that our new Cougar experience will help our community thrive, both virtually and in person, and I want you to

know that these plans are absolutely still evolving. I also know that was a lot of information to get in about three minutes. So I want you to know that you can read more at the Web site that's on the slide here, cougexperience.studentaffairs.edu, and that Web site is available for the whole WSU system, not just Pullman. For our student Cougs, I want you to know that we're inviting you to your own dedicated town hall, on Wednesday, August 12th at 5:30 p.m. So mark your calendars now. You will get to meet some of the team that is building your new Cougar experience and you get to ask questions and questions that are focused on solely on you as students. I truly believe in our Cougar tenacity. Our fall 2020 semester is not lost. It's just going to be different so I want us to make the best of it, and with all of that said, Phil, I'll turn it back to you.

Phil Weiler: Thank you, Jill. Well-said. I like that line. It's not going to be lost, it's just going to be different. Elizabeth, I'd like to ask you a question. I know that what I saw when we made the announcement yesterday was that for undergraduates, by and large, courses will be delivered in a remote format, but there were some exceptions. Can you let us know, first of all, when are students going to find out which of their classes are delivered in a distance format and which ones will have some kind of face-to-face component, and what's the decision making, what's the thinking behind what courses might have to be delivered face-to-face?

Elizabeth Chilton: Thank you for that question. We will have both the undergraduate and the graduate course schedules finalized no later than August 1st. And I did want to say, as both President Schulz and Vice Presidential Gonzales said so well, and as the mother of a college sophomore right now myself, I know how critically important it is for students to continue their education. And while we know nothing can be replaced face-to-face, we're committed to offering a high-quality educational experience remotely. Our same stellar faculty will be teaching these courses. They are some of the top faculty and researchers and scholars in their fields, and they have a great deal of dedication to our students in the classroom. And also in mentoring and advising students as well. So we had already planned to offer most of our courses either fully or partially remotely to accommodate social distance guidelines. Our office of academic Outreach and Innovation is working with our faculty to convert most of the rest of the courses to a remote delivery, and I'm working with our deans and our faculty now to make decisions about which classes will still have a face-to-face component. But these will be very few. Decisions on that will be based on whether the course is required for graduation, whether the course requires specialized equipment or

facilities, and then also what safety protocols can be put in place for students to be able to access those facilities. Even in cases where we've classes with some face-to-face component, we're working to have plans in place to accommodate students who become sick during the semester or need to self quarantine because of exposure at some point. So even those with face-to-face, we want to make sure we're providing the flexibility for students who may not be able to return to campus safely.

Phil Weiler: Great. Thank you, Elizabeth. Mary, I have a question for you. When we had to very quickly shift from our face-to-face delivery to virtual in spring semester of last year, we ended up making a change to the pass/no pass, and the dropping class requirements. What's the thinking about that for our fall semester?

Mary Wack: The thinking, Phil, for fall that we would not make a change to those academic policies. Spring, we really had to, given the circumstances, but as Provost Chilton just outlined, we really have had the entire summer to work out processes of design, of moving course materials in to remote modalities, investing in the faculty. We've a hundred faculty who will be earning a certificate of mastery in distance education. We have had about 400 additional faculty go through workshops on online pedagogy and so on. And so we're really confident about the quality of the educational experience that will be offered this fall. And don't think that we need to make an adjustment on that account. Now, as both Mary Jo and Jill said, we do have support through the access center so that students would have learning disabilities or need other accommodations for this learning modality can receive them so that they can work through their course work in a way that will allow them to be successful. And then as President Schulz mentioned, we also do have the technology supports for students who may have some challenges with technology. So taken all together, I think we're comfortable moving ahead with our current academic policy.

Phil Weiler: Great. Thanks, Mary. Appreciate the clarification. Jill, I want to address the next question to you. In the last 24 hours, I've seen a lot of comment and question about what does this change from face-to-face to remote learning mean for the Greek system. Do we have a sense of how our fraternities and sororities might be affected by this change?

Jill Creighton: Absolutely. I want to give a shout-out to our student leaders in our councils, our Fraternity Council, our Panhellenic Council, our national council and multiGreek council. Your student leaders have been working throughout the summer to try to find ways for our students to

participate in Greek life in the fall. We've moved all of our recruitment opportunities online, and so if you wanted to return -- or sorry, rather, if you wanted to participate in formal Greek recruitment this fall, you can register by August 1st, and I'll ask our wonderful chat moderators to drop the link for recruitment information in the chat here. We've many, many opportunities for you to engage not only in the recruitment opportunities in the process there, but also within your actual chapter once you've beneficially bid into your chapter. So there's a ton of information on the Greek life Web site that is coming out. Your recruitment chairs will have a ton of information available to you, but I also want to note specifically that in our original plan, you had to be into your residence hall by the 17th in order to participate. That is no longer the case, given the shift we've in our instruction modality. So you can participate in recruitment from wherever you are as long as you have an internet connection.

Phil Weiler: Great. Good information. Thank you. Mary Jo, another question that I did see a lot, again, over the last 24 hours, had to do with student fees. Can you address that question? What do we think is going to happen with student fees for the fall semester?

Mary Jo Gonzales: Yeah, sure. I want to remind everybody that student fees are exactly that. Many of our students from across the WSU system, it's not just on our Pullman Campus, Global has it, all of our campuses have student fees, and those are typically driven by student need and student desire. So students have to put those fees on a referendum. Students have to vote on them and then decide whether or not they want to support those fees. So I want to be clear that student fees have been in place for quite some time, not just for buildings, but for programs and activities. And so I want to make sure that you know that we are all looking at that, all of our campuses are discussing that right now, about what those fees will look like. I also want to be really clear that some of those students -- and I was here when we made the decision about the SRC, which is the Student Recreation Center on the Pullman Campus, and I voted in that process and voted for those fees, and that's what it means when we're taking on and building new buildings. It means that we have some building debt. It means that we have staff and students that we employ as a part of that, as well as programming dollars that go into it and so we are evaluating that for all of our campuses and our hope is that we would have an answer by August 7th, and let you know on each of our campuses what that student fee structure will look like. We do know, and we are looking hard, we didn't do it in the spring because we had hired a lot of employees, including student employees and wanted to continue paying them during the pandemic. We will be reflecting on that. Phil, this also has to do

with student employment and I think it's important that we talk about student employment. The Division of Student Affairs alone on the Pullman Campus employs about 3,000 student employees. Many of those positions will continue to move forward in a remote fashion. We do have some areas where students need to be physically on campus to have those jobs. Some of the housing, some are RA's, which are resident assistants who live in the halls. Those will continue. And so we want to make sure that you know, definitely talk with your supervisor and have a question -- ask them the question about can I do my job remotely or can I do my job physically. And that, again, is going to make the decision about whether or not you return to the Pullman Campus and live in our residential facilities, or even off campus. And so back to the question about student fees, let's also remember that many of those fees provide employment for students as a part of their experience so that helps them financially as well.

Phil Weiler: Mary Jo, that's a good segue to the next question I had. So you were talking about student employment. Another question, this is something maybe addressed to Mary, if I could. There have been some concerns from students that I've read wondering if the shift from face-to-face to remote instruction might jeopardize somebody's financial aid. Can you address that, Mary? Is that something that students need to be concerned about?

Mary Wack: Sure, Phil. I think it's good news. So let me address a couple of different scenarios here. Now, the key thing for federal financial aid is whether the department of education approves online course delivery, and they have done so through December 2020. So if a student is receiving federal financial aid, that is student loans and/or Pell Grants, then they will continue to be eligible through the fall semester. So no worries there. If a student is not changing to a different WSU campus, if they're still in Pullman, the scholarship and tuition waiver awards should not be affected. So those are retained. If a student is thinking of choosing a different WSU campus, then those scholarship and tuition waiver awards will be looked at on a student-by-student basis. Really an individual personal judgment, depending on the award. It's complicated and technical. And I do recommend that people be in touch with financial aid, financialaid@wsu.edu, and they can also review the FAQ's and the information there. Now, if a student is -- has private scholarships -- many do -- or scholarships from entities that are outside of WSU, then those students should contact their funders to make sure that that eligibility will be retained if they're thinking of moving to a different campus. And then finally, if you choose to defer your enrollment, and plan to return to WSU within a

year, those recruitment awards will be reinstated. So those are those university awards, the university scholarships like the university Achievement Award, the distinguished University Achievement Award, the Cougar Award, the Western Undergraduate Exchange, and the Region Scholarship. So if you have any kind of concern about financial aid, please, get in touch with the professionals and the experts at our student financial services office.

Phil Weiler: Great. Thank you, Mary. Kirk, I'm going to address this question to you. Again, something I saw both online through things like twitter and Facebook, as well as some of the questions that were submitted electronically in advance, and that has to do with WSU athletics and what's going to happen to our fall season. Do we have an idea of how things might change due to this change in delivery of instruction?

Kirk Schulz: Thank you, Phil. And I appreciate the question, and actually, I wish I had a great answer for it. You know, as I look around the country, I -- the president of Clemson University is a personal friend. We've known each other for a long time. They announced that they were starting their fall semester online in a similar fashion to us, and the number one question he got was around Clemson football. Right now, really there's nothing new to report. We still continue and expect our fall sports to continue. We are -- and it's not a sole individual decision that just WSU makes. Remember, the PAC-12 conference, and so we have to work with our colleagues across the West Coast on whatever those protocols and things are going to be. I think the bottom line that is important for everybody to remember is the health and safety of our student athletes, and this is paramount. And if we can't guarantee a way that we can keep our student athletes healthy through competition, through the different venues, with fans there or not there, that's really the key thing. So this will continue to evolve over the next several weeks. I want to just give some kudos to our own athletic department here at WSU who have had students back for several weeks doing voluntary workouts and involuntary workouts, and they've done a fabulous job at keeping those students safe and making sure that we were doing all the appropriate types of things so that our students were in a great environment for their success. One of the things that everybody has to do, and this is going to be painful for some people to hear, we've gotta separate athletic competition from fans in the stands. And we may have to play football games, soccer games, volleyball games without the fans that are there that are a real part of the intercollegiate athletics experience. But I think it's going to be important as we look at COVID-19 over the next month, the next six weeks. That's going to really

dictate what we can do and what we cannot do. And I will tell you this, if we cannot guarantee the safety of our student athletes throughout the PAC-12 conference, in that case we're going to have to make different decisions. But today, we should expect those competitions to move forward, and we'll continue to keep everybody updated as we know more.

Phil Weiler: Great. Thank you, Kirk. Mary Jo, I have a question for you. I'm looking at the chat, and I think there's still some question and confusion about the first-year live-in requirement. Might be worth us just reiterating that. And then also I see some questions about things like I live in an off-campus apartment. What do I do if I've signed a contract to live on campus. What are my options. And so I think it's -- that's important information that's probably worth having us repeat it before we end the session today.

Mary Jo Gonzales: No, Phil, I absolutely agree. So I need you all to go to housing.wsu.edu because I'll be able to say it in two seconds, but there will still be confusion because frankly we've so many different student situations. So first of all, if you meet the university's requirements around demonstrated institutional need, you will certify that and get a room and get a move-in date. That's the first piece. The second group -- for those students who are opting to stay at home your first year, and the first fall, because we're just making the decision for fall 2020, that will count as your first year -- as meeting the first-year live-in requirement for the fall semester. So we encourage you to stay home, especially those of you who are coming from high community transmission areas. So that's a really important piece of that. You can cancel your contract or you can defer your contract to spring. And again, that is all outlined in housing.wsu.edu. We know there are a lot of students who are frustrated by the lateness of our decision because they have signed contract with landlords. We are having conversations with them. We are discussing the options and we are encouraging them to be flexible with students, given what is going on. And so please reach out. Please talk to them. Please engage with them. And then let us know how it's going. I think the second piece of that equation -- or the third piece of that equation is our fraternities and sororities, of which we've zero control. Please, talk to the housing core managers. Please talk to your chapter presidents. We know that some are already heading in the direction of making those decisions, and we want you to communicate directly with them. I would add one piece, Phil, because there was a question that I received, and students were asking me, Mary Jo, what can we do to get back to in-person classes. And I want to let you know, it's this. The mask. And a governor very recently said, wear your dam

mask. So I'm going to say that again. Say it much more -- please wear a Coug branded mask because that is the only way right now that we're going to be able to prevent transmission and we'll keep our community safe. The second thing is going to be a lot less popular, and that is do not gather in large gatherings. We know from the data that it is in restaurants and in large gatherings where this transmission is happening, and I want to make sure you understand the only way that we are going to be able to shift courses for spring is for all of us, that includes me, that includes President Schulz, Jill, Elizabeth and Mary, Phil, you, too. We can't get together until we get this under control. We were doing great as a country when we shut down, and we stopped the limitation. However, comma, what we didn't do is when we opened up, we weren't as careful as we needed to be. So I need -- if you all want to go back to this move-in, live-in environment, I need for those of you who are returning to Pullman to quarantine when you come here for 14 days and ensure that you're not infecting others if you have -- if you're either asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic. So you need to prepare for that if you're coming back to Pullman, and also understand that we have limited healthcare capacity in the Pullman and Whitman County areas. And so those are just some things I would say, Phil, not just about FLUR, but about what does it mean to be a member of a University Community and a University Community that's living in a very small rural town in Eastern Washington.

Phil Weiler: Great. Thank you, Mary Jo. Kirk, I know you addressed the question about tuition early on in the -- in our conversation, but as I'm looking at the chat, a lot of questions about out of state tuition. Do you want to address that directly? Are we looking to reduce out of state tuition at this point in time?

Kirk Schulz: We are not looking to reduce any of our tuition, but what we would ask is for out of state students to reach out to our financial aid professionals and talk about their particular needs. And as Mary Jo and others have mentioned, so much of this is very specific to individual families and individual situations. As many different things as there are with housing, there are with financial aid and financial need. So we are not currently contemplating any sort of change in tuition at the in-state or out of state level, but we are committed to continue to work with families to do everything we can to make sure you're part of the Coug experience. I would also add on to Mary Jo's comments about the masks and the social distancing. There's also peer pressure. And this is not just students. This is administrators, faculty and all that. If you see a friend or colleague or something that's not wearing their mask, you don't have to be a jerk, but you do have to say, hey, how about you wear that

mask. And I know when I've done that or somebody's done that to me, I'll have it stuffed in my pocket and I just forgot to do it or something, but there's that positive peer pressure that we can also do to remind each other sometimes when that's not occurring. And so I agree. We often talk about our students, but I can walk around and see faculty and staff and community members also not doing it. So this is all of us. It's gotta be collective. This is an important part for all of us to remember. And to appropriately encourage colleagues when we need to that this is not a political issue, this is not whether you're Republican Or Democrat or liberal or conservative. This is really a public health issue that's important for the people around you as we bring people back to our community. This is going to be really, really important.

Phil Weiler: So Kirk, you and Mary Jo both talked about what we can do personally to make sure we're back in a face-to-face environment in the spring. Can you talk about the spring term? At this point I know the decision that was made was just for fall semester. Tell us about what your thinking is for spring semester and when we -- when do we think we might have decisions about spring? Or have we made a decision about spring yet?

Kirk Schulz: Yeah. Like Mary Jo, I had the opportunity to meet with our student leaders earlier today. The first question was about tuition. The second question was what about spring term. And I don't say that jokingly their question was, hey, this seemed really late to make this call. We sort of understand why you made it, but it seemed awful late. And is there any way, you know, when will you make that decision about the spring semester? As we were dialoguing, I reminded folks that, you know, if we look back to March, in these four to six-weeks period, boy, things have really changed dramatically. If we look at the curve behind Jill and her backdrop when she was speaking, you sort of see the ups and downs of it. So to make the decision on spring term today just doesn't make a lot of sense for us. And I know that's frustrating to some people, say, well, just make a decision. We feel we gotta wait and see where things go in the next several months, as we've more people back in our community, as we've more people wearing masks, social distancing, getting used to being around each other, as vaccines develop, as testing protocols develop and as things change. So I'm hesitant to give a specific date today and say we will tell you by this particular day. I think we want to keep in mind that families need to know and they need to plan. So at this particular point, I'm more concerned about appropriately getting fall semester off to a successful start, across all six of our campuses and all our students and their families, enrolled in classes, engaged in our exciting new

programming from student life, and at that particular point, once we get all that going, then we'll turn our attention to the spring semester. So people should not anticipate anything in the next couple months on announcing that.

Phil Weiler: Great. Thank you. We will stay tuned. Elizabeth, this is a question for you. I know we've been talking a lot about the Pullman Campus and the fact that the Pullman Campus is the one residential campus we've, but this decision is also being mirrored by our other campuses. Isn't that the case?

Elizabeth Chilton: Yes. So we have been in close communication with the chancellors of the other physical campuses of WSU, and they also had been moving to majority of remote instruction already. In fact, many of them, especially since they're much smaller physical campuses than in Pullman, had moved to what I would call high flex, which is that students could already take essentially their entire schedule online if they wished to, or could do a combination partway through the semester, for example. The size and the scale and the diversity of instruction here in Pullman doesn't allow us to be that flexible right now. And so I noticed that Tri-cities Campus, for example, announced today that they are moving to a model very similar to Pullman's, which is essentially even those classes that had a face-to-face component, they're reducing that drastically, and I know that the other campuses in Vancouver and Everett are also considering the same. Spokane had already announced that essentially they were fully remote instruction, again, with just some very few exceptions. So yeah, we're all working closely together. You know, these campuses are located in different communities that are having -- you know, they're in different counties. They have different incidents of outbreak. At the same time, statewide we're seeing the increase that President Schulz was just talking about, and we also want to make sure we're being consistent in our one WSU experience for students.

Phil Weiler: Thanks, Elizabeth. Another question that I had seen, I'm going to direct this one back to you as well. I saw both from parents and from students a question about if a student has a class that has a lab associated with it, for example, and they are not interested in relocating to the campus where they would have been going to receive the face-to-face instruction, what are the thoughts on what students should do? I mean, are they able to defer and take that class at a later semester? Or do you have other thoughts on what students should do if they find -- because you had mentioned August 1st is when students would find out which classes are delivered in a remote

fashion and which ones will be face-to-face.

Elizabeth Chilton: So what I would suggest -- you know, we are definitely moving to remote instruction for as absolutely many of our -- as many of our courses as we can. If there is a way to do it, we will work with faculty to make sure we can do that because we certainly don't want to have any student feel that they're pressured to come back to campus just because of one class. You know, that would be really challenging for some. On the other hand, some students, if we can ensure social distancing, if it's a type of instruction that just absolutely cannot be offered remotely, then obviously we would. So in many cases, especially if a student is not a senior, for example, and would have the opportunity to take that class at another time, even if it does have a face-to-face component this semester, you know, our recommendation is please stay home if you can. That sort of mirrors what Vice President Gonzales was saying. We really want you to stay home unless you absolutely cannot and need to come to campus for the reasons that she outlined. So yes, absolutely, delay that particular class if you can. But we are absolutely committed to trying to make sure that as many of our classes as we can are offered remotely.

Phil Weiler: Great. Thank you, Elizabeth. I guess I look at the clock here and we're getting close to the end. President Schulz, do you have anything that you wanted to add before we close out our session today?

Kirk Schulz: Well, I appreciate all the people being on board. I appreciate my colleagues here. I understand that when we deliver this news and information, that I think as other people talked about, there are mixed emotions. From some of the comments I think coming up, people aren't happy with all the decisions that we have made, but I think it's important that we make the decisions as quickly as practically possible. We let you know and we let you know that we're here to try and help. And I think what we've seen in previous semesters as we've given information out, after a few days, as we get more and more information out and we're able to work and answer questions, you know, it really kind of helps everybody come to a better place. So please continue to ask questions. Please continue to reach out. We've given you lots of different places around our WSU community to reach out, whether it's financial aid, whether it's around housing, whether it's around some of the exciting new programming, new orientation, new things that are going on to make sure you have that new Cougar experience. I know there's also a lot of our faculty and staff that are on this today also listening, learning, getting information. There's a lot of questions around budget and

what the decisions that we are making are going to do to people's jobs and livelihood that work at our WSU campuses or work at our campus in Pullman. Our town hall next week, we'll make sure that we explicitly address a lot of the physical challenges and, you know, the decision to move online, the decision to not have the residence halls at the same capacity we thought. These all have ripple effects within our community and we're going to be prepared to talk through some of those things and answer those questions next week. So thank you for being here. We appreciate everything that our colleagues across the campus are doing. We're here to work with you, and we want you all to be and continue to be members of the Cougar family, whether that's online in front of your computer, doing Zumba on Zoom, or getting ready to graduate, and being disappointed that your last term is not going to be in person, or that you're not going to be with your colleagues in the Greek community. We're going to do the best we can to make sure that you have a memorable but different experience. Go Cougs.

Phil Weiler: Thank you, Kirk. Mary Jo, did you have something you wanted to add before we close off the hour?

Mary Jo Gonzales: Yeah. I really think it's important that we take a moment to thank our faculty and our staff who have been working really, since March, to transform this experience, especially the new Cougar experience, who have been literally working every day, including weekends, to build these plans and develop these plans, and are just as disappointed as you are. I was talking with a group of student affair staff just yesterday, and a few of them started crying because of how much they miss seeing you. So please know we're here for you. We haven't walked away from you. We're going to support you in every possible way we can, and the only way we're going to get together and to do this is, as Jill said, is as a Cougar community. So I do want to take a moment to give a shoutout to all, across all of our campuses, who have done everything that they can to make this experience. We are all transitioning together. We are all grieving together. And guess what, we're going to get through Crimson and Gray all day every day, baby. Let's go.

Phil Weiler: Thanks, Mary Jo. I want to echo that as well. I know that there have been a tremendous number of people who would have been working, as President Schulz said, since March, putting together plans for how we can reopen our face-to-face experience. Those plans are not going to go to waste. We are not going to use them in our fall semester, but with any luck we'll be using them in our spring semester. So thank you to all those folks who would have been looking at

questions about testing and contact tracing, how we can make sure that we are making the facilities as clean and safe as possible. So thanks to all those folks who put in many, many hours putting together those plans. Those plans will be put in place. We're looking forward to seeing all of you in a face-to-face environment. Hopefully next semester. Thank you all for joining us. I want to thank our panelists for taking the time. I want to thank our chat. We've got -- Elizabeth has her paw up. I want to thank the folks who were monitoring the chat and answering questions. Really appreciate you all doing that as well. As President Schulz mentioned, we do have our next COVID-19 town hall scheduled. Typically we do these every two weeks. Given the importance of the decisions that we're making and the fact that we are close to the start of the semester, we're going to actually hold our next COVID-19 town hall a week from today. So that will be Friday, July 31st at 1:00 p.m. Encourage you all to join us. As President Schulz mentioned, we want to be able to use that to talk about issues around budget, what the financial impacts are of this pandemic on Washington State University and all the steps we're taking to make sure we can deliver the absolute top notch educational experience to students and to make sure that we can keep our faculty and staff employed and being able to be productive. So again, thank you all for joining us. Have a wonderful weekend, and go Cougs.