

HACC Employee Session Regarding the Faculty Vote

[JOHN SYGIELSKI and members of his cabinet are seated around a table in a boardroom.]

JOHN SYGIELSKI: Good afternoon, everyone. This is Dr. Ski, and I am delighted that so many of you have joined me this afternoon. We have a special edition of our weekly Zoom, session and so I look forward to spending up to the next hour with you. I'm going to try very, very hard to condense my comments so that it does leave time for questions or comments, recommendations.

However, I can't guarantee that, because there is a lot of information to cover and I want to be as thorough as possible. I am not trying to waste time so that we're not able to have questions. I really do plan on opening it up, but we know that there is an online form that you can complete to-- and ask any question that you may have about anything that's presented today or any other questions that you may have.

So today, we're focusing on the faculty senate cabinet, their resolution for a vote of no confidence in me, and in members of my cabinet who are functional leaders. Those functional leaders are sitting around the table as well. On Tuesday, we received for the first time the page that indicates the dissatisfaction that faculty have in me as your president and in the functional leaders, the cabinet members.

And I just felt it was very, very important that I had this opportunity with 48 hours, since I finally got to understand what the issues are, to make this presentation to you, especially before the final exam week starts. And so what I'd like to do is I am going to show several slides. And there will be some silence once the slide goes up, because I would like you to become familiar with that.

And then I'll begin talking. So for the first slide, what I'd like to show you is this is the roadmap that I plan on using for this conversation this afternoon. The first piece of what I'd like to do is really talk about our purpose, our core values, and the shared governance process.

The second is I'd like to talk about an overview of the vote of no confidence and what it means, the timeline of key meetings and activities that have been experienced by all of us here at the college, highlights from cabinet's responses to the vote of no confidence-- because for those that may not know, we were given a variety of statements that I would like to respond to.

We've become familiar with that. When you do fill out a question in that form, we provide you with a question on the left side and an answer on the right side. And then at the end, I'd like to talk about what happens next. So to start with, as far as our purpose, the core values, our new purpose is learning for all, learning for life.

That came from all four of our constituency groups working together and putting together our new three-year strategic plan. I really do want to express appreciation to everyone and what they've been able to do to help us get to this point. Regarding reorganization, I know that our reorganization is stirring up a lot of feelings and angst.

[A slide appears on screen that reads, “What is Our Purpose?” as the headline and “Learning for all; learning for life” as the subheading. There is a photo of a large group of students posing for a picture.]

I do firmly believe that being transparent, as we have been, has also created some anxiety for many of you. I also realize that it might feel like we're peeling that Band-Aid off slowly and painfully. I do want to say that it's truly not my or our intent. Whether HACC will be your home for years to come or it's time for you to move on in your professional journey, we really hope that I'm sincere when I say we look forward to working together.

I also, in my preamble, admit that some events and processes related to the reorganization have not gone smoothly. Today's topic is difficult. It is a difficult one to have. It really means to me that there has been some breakdown in communication and trust at least among some of our employees, and myself, and seven of my cabinet members. So I really want to identify and repair that breakdown.

Today, we'll be talking about the impact of the vote of no confidence on the college and our students, if that is the will of the faculty. Some of you may be asked to vote very soon, so I want to give you my perspective, and if possible, the opportunity to voice your concerns upon the conclusion of my remarks.

So the next slide that I want to show is what is-- what are our core values? This too came out of the work that members of all four constituency groups-- and I want to be clear-- faculty, classified staff, administrators, and students-- all work together to come up with our purpose and our core values.

[A slide appears that reads, “What are Our Core Values?” as the headline. Under is a list of four bullets, Excellence, Innovation, Inclusivity and Integrity.]

I believe, as I reflect on the 8 and 1/2 years that I've been here, we've come a long way.

Our core values have evolved to be more reflective of who we really are today and how we make the most and best difference in the communities we serve. I also firmly believe that the vast majority of HACC employees are living these core values. I want you to know that I'm sincere, when I say thank you.

Thank you for having a strong commitment to our students, as you hear me say, changing lives, changing destinies, changing family trees. Our core values should guide all of our discussions and decisions.

[A slide appears on screen with the heading, “What is Shared Governance?” Bullet one reads, “Promotes transparency, maximizes inclusivity, fosters mutual respect and allows the College to operate with the collaborative input of all those involved.” Bullet two reads, “Provides constituency groups opportunities and venues to receive information, participate in discussions and influence decisions.”

I want to start out with shared governance, because I believe that there is a misunderstanding about shared governance in higher education, and I just want to be clear and help you understand where the Board of Trustees and I come from, when we define our shared governance.

It really does promote transparency, inclusivity, mutual respect, and a collaborative input--critical-- so that all constituent groups are heard. All constituency groups are equal. Not one group is more important than another. That is a sentiment held by our Board of Trustees, and myself as well.

So shared governance truly does provide opportunities and venues to receive information, participate in discussions, and influence decisions. I'm delighted to say that our faculty senate president indicated on Tuesday she was very pleased with Aimee Brough, one of the cabinet members who is being also considered for a vote of no confidence in the work that she does in representing our shared governance process. So Aimee, I'd like to thank you for your work.

[A new slide appears with the headline, "Examples of Effective Shared Governance." Bullet one reads, "Meetings between constituency leaders and the president and Cabinet." Bullet two reads, "Faculty Organization representative's attendance at Board of Trustees meetings and committee meetings." Bullet three reads, "College Compensation Advisory Committee." Bullet four reads, "Faculty Workload Joint Committee." Bullet five reads, "Employee Engagement Team." Bullet six reads, "2019-22 One College, Uniting for Success Strategic Plan." The slide ends with "... and many others!"]

Examples of effective shared governance have been plentiful, since I have arrived. And even though many of these slides are not able to capture the dozens of examples that we have, regarding effective shared governance, these are at least six that I will very quickly run through. Every month, I meet with each of the four constituency leaders.

Many of them meet monthly or more often with cabinet members, many of those cabinet members who will receive a vote of no confidence. Faculty Organization representatives, especially our Faculty Organization presidents-- since I have been here, I think I've had four Faculty Senate presidents-- they attend the Board of Trustees meetings, hopefully letting you know what happened at those meetings.

And they are also included in the committee meetings-- Human Resource Committee meetings, Finance Committee meetings-- all other meetings. And my hope, again, is that they take the information from those meetings back to you, their constituents.

We have the College Compensation Advisory Committee, where that group gets together to talk to us about benefits, and salaries, percentage increases, et cetera-- Faculty Workload Joint Committee working currently on making sure that all is working well, from a workload perspective, in the classroom.

We have an employee engagement team that's been working for several years that have really helped us in professional development to provide all employees an opportunity to become better

in and out of the classroom. And as I mentioned earlier, all four constituency groups were engaged with our new strategic plan.

And over 1,000 responses were gained from all four constituency groups before we approved the strategic plan and presented it to the Board of Trustees. I also have said-- many of you have heard me-- there have been examples of positive outcomes, when administrators and faculty especially have worked together.

We've been able, over the last year or two, resolve many prickly issues together. Some of those examples-- and hopefully, some of our faculty, who may be online-- know that we were able to resolve a lab pay issue-- adjunct faculty pay. We also were able to build a Shared Governance Center, which came out of a survey that was first initiated in 2017 by the faculty.

There is a lot of work with joint committees, where we are able to have administrators and faculty work together to resolve issues. We also developed a process for announcing employee departures that came from our faculty recommendations, and the development of our new purpose statement and core values.

[A new slide appears with the headline, "What is Shared Governance?" It reads, "Shared governance does NOT mean that everyone's requests and demands are met all the time."]

So ladies and gentlemen, what is shared governance? Shared governance does not mean that everyone's requests and demands are met all the time.

[A new slide appears with the headline, "What is Creative Disruption." It shows a photo with a quote that reads, "The most dangerous phrase in the language is 'we've always done it this way.'"]

So as I transition, one of the things that you've heard from me since a convocation or two ago is that creative disruption is happening in higher ed from a national level, from a state level, and here at HACC.

Many of you read Inside Higher Ed, the Chronicle of Higher Ed, many of our trade periodicals that express often the disruption that's happening, the pain that that disruption is happening at either 1,100 community colleges across the country or thousands of other four-year institutions-- private and public institutions. So again, we are not alone.

So we've been talking about creative disruption for some time. The One-College reorganization and other measures that are being taken are done for the purpose so that we don't become another statistic on the national-- the nationwide trend of college closings. Unfortunately, I believe some of our colleagues are afraid in allowing fear of change to take over.

There's a difference-- and I want to be clear on this, because as I listen to faculty, many faculty who write me, who see me in the hallways, who contact me by phone-- I can see that it is normal to be afraid of change, especially when there's some change that is still unknown. And we know that, through this reorganization process, there still are some issues that are unknown.

I really want to encourage each and every one of you to trust the process. We really need to see things from a student's perspective. As you know, I often meet with students. I regularly meet with students. Yesterday, I met with students in Gettysburg. And to get their perspective really does make me sit back and think of some of the things that we need to do differently so that we can better serve our students.

In fact, after those meetings, I do send comments to all of cabinet, and especially to the functional leaders-- the individuals who may also receive a vote of no confidence-- on things that we may need to seriously consider to make the student experience better. I do want to say, though, that as I'm starting to sense and hear comments from some of our colleagues, when people intentionally try to sabotage the reorganization process with rumors, leaks to the media, and fear-mongering among employees and students, I really believe that no one wins.

Those people hurt not only the college, themselves, but most importantly, our students.

[A new slide appears with the headline, "What are We Learning?" There is a photo with a quote that reads, "Mistakes are meant for learning, not for repeating."]

So throughout this process that we have started in the summer, when it comes to reorganization, I like this slide, this quote here that I have used and have shared with those who follow me on social media.

I realize that each and every one of you-- those who affirm or approve of what I do and those who don't-- are really entrusting need to make the right decisions about the future of this institution. I know that I, we, have made mistakes, but looking back-- and looking back, there are things that I wish I would have handled differently. And that includes the implementation of our mental health counseling services for our students.

It especially bothered me that employees and students received different information, which resulted in confusion. Therefore, I sincerely apologize for those missteps, and I will assure you that those issues will not be repeated again. The cabinet and I do expect to be held to a higher level.

And I will say that cabinet will tell you they are held to a higher level, especially because of the disruption that is happening at the college or throughout higher ed in general. But I myself, as a fragile, frail human being, also expect all of us to make mistakes from time to time. Holding individuals to not make mistakes is an impossible standard to hold anybody to.

With the One-College reorganization, we are all leaders. I'm sure you've had conversations with colleagues that have turned to you for guidance and reassurance, but I do want to say that we are humble and that we are all committed together to ensure that our reorganization produces a better institution not only for us as employees, but most importantly, for our students.

[A new slide appears with the headline, "Our Roadmap for Today." It has five bullets. The first one reads, "HACC's Purpose, Core Values and Shared Governance Process." The second reads, "Overview of the Vote of No Confidence and What it Means." The third reads, "Timeline of Key

Meetings and Activities.” The fourth reads, “Highlights from Cabinet Responses to Vote of No Confidence Resolution. The fifth reads, “What Happens Next.”]

The second point of five that I would like to go through in our roadmap is the overview of the vote of no confidence in what it means. As I said, it was presented to us for the first time on Tuesday. It was presented to Cindy Doherty and myself. And so I've had 48 hours to review that one page.

And so what is a vote of no confidence?

[A new slide appears with the headline, “What is a Vote of No Confidence?” It has two bullet points, one, “A vote of no confidence is defined as a vote by which the members of a body indicate that they no longer support and/or have confidence in leadership.” And two, “HACC has no official policy regarding the implication of a vote of no confidence.”]

You can read on the screen what a vote of no confidence, and how it is defined. I guess what I'd like to say is that HACC has no official policy regarding the implementation of no confidence. Over the last several months, members of cabinet and I have reached out to faculty groups, Faculty Senate Cabinet, Faculty Organization.

And being informed this week that many were looking to do a vote of no confidence against me and the functional leaders, despite multiple invitations to work together to address and resolve whatever issues there may be, despite multiple invitations to work together to address and resolve a number of issues that they believe are impacting the college.

[A new slide appears with the headline, “Who is Leading the Vote of No Confidence?” There are two bullets on this slide. Bullet one reads, “Some members of the 19-person Faculty Senate Cabinet (FSC) are initiating the vote of no confidence.” The second bullet reads, “This is only 6% of the 316 full-time faculty.”]

I'm disappointed and troubled by this action, as is the Board of Trustees. For those of you on the phone who are unable to read what is the vote of no confidence, a vote of no confidence is defined as a vote by which the members of a body indicate that they no longer support and/or have confidence in leadership. And that vote, as it is proposed or given to Cindy and I on Tuesday, is a vote of no confidence in me as your president and the functional leaders of the college, who sit around me today.

So who is leading the vote of no confidence? As best I can tell, some members of the 19-person Faculty Senate Cabinet-- FSC-- are initiating this vote of no confidence. These 19 individuals represent 6% of the 316 full-time faculty. In my mind, I wonder if some of these individuals don't have ulterior motives.

I do, though, want to say thank you to those 19 individuals and to our Faculty Organization president. They are volunteers, and I know that they are doing the very best they can in representing the interests of their Faculty Organization.

[A new slide appears with the headline, “What Does this Mean for HACC?” The body reads, “A vote of no confidence by faculty could result in” and follows with seven bullet points. Bullet one reads, “Negative, widespread media exposure.” Bullet two reads, “Lasting damage to the College’s reputation.” Bullet three reads, “Decreased enrollment (possibly resulting in future layoffs)”. Bullet four reads, “Fewer contributions from donors.” Bullet five reads, “Larger budget deficit.” Bullet six reads, “Strained relationships between administrators and faculty.” Bullet seven reads, “Strained relationships between faculty colleagues.”]

So what does a vote of no confidence mean for HACC?

You can see the seven points that are listed there. A couple that I want to highlight-- number one, the negative widespread media exposure. Ladies and gentlemen, we have worked very, very hard to move this institution and its brand to becoming preeminent in our communities, all of our communities, and online. Many, many in this institution have worked very, very hard to ensure that we receive the recognition we need. And therefore, it is important that we maintain that exposure in that brand.

The second is lasting damage to the college's reputation. I do believe that a vote of no confidence-- and if we look at the colleges throughout the country where votes of no confidence have existed, it has hurt their reputation. Flowing from that will be a possibility of decreased enrollment, which then, flowing down, talks may be about, with decreased enrollment, future layoffs.

There would be probably fewer contributions from donors-- our larger budget deficit, which we are trying to manage. But I think something that's really important, because I know that these two points have separated us-- at least from the four community colleges that I've worked at-- I believe that the relationships up until recently between administrators and faculty haven't been perfect, but they have been good.

And I think what would happen with a vote of no confidence is that we would strain those relationships, especially if we were to take a vote of no confidence before we discussed what the issues are that maybe a small group of faculty have with the administrators. Therefore, I would hope that we could speak together, review the issues, and then if we collectively are not satisfied, you would be able to take a vote of no confidence.

And the last is strained relationships between faculty colleagues. I already hear on a daily basis from the faculty that I interact with-- and interacted with some in Lancaster this afternoon-- that relationships are becoming strained between faculty colleagues.

[A new slide appears with the headline, “What Does this Mean for HACC?” It starts with, “A vote of no confidence by faculty will not change:” and is followed by five bullets. Bullet one reads, “The One-College reorganization.” Bullet two reads, “One College, Uniting for Success Strategic Plan.” Bullet three reads, “Shared governance process and policies.” Bullet four reads, “Decision to eliminate on-campus clinical mental health counseling.” Bullet five reads, “My renewed employment contract.”]

So what does it mean for HACC?

I will say this-- with the Board of Trustees' strong support, a vote of no confidence by faculty will not change the following points-- the One-College reorganization. For those of you that were at our board meeting in the spring, you heard loud and clear that this is the year the Board of Trustees wanted us to become a One College to do whatever we could possible to make that a reality.

And we are supporting the request of the board. The next is the faculty will not-- if this vote goes through, the faculty will not be able to change our strategic plan. That was voted on, again, by all four constituency groups. For number three, the shared governance process and policies, I want to say that, even though the processes and policies will not change, or could not change, or may not change, I want to say publicly that the administration is willing to discuss and pursue future changes to the shared governance process and/or policies.

However, a vote of no confidence does nothing to promote or further positive dialogue between the parties. And let me reiterate that, because I think it is so important. A vote of no confidence does nothing to promote or further positive dialogue between the parties.

I also want to say that it will not change the decision to eliminate on-campus clinical mental health counseling, and finally, it will not change my renewed employment contract, which the board unanimously approved renewing my contract as part of my annual review period the first-- the board meeting in December, the last board meeting of every academic-- or every calendar year.

[A new slide appears with the headline, "Our Roadmap for Today." There are five bullets starting with, "HACC's Purpose, Core Values and Shared Governance Process." Bullet two reads, "Overview of the Vote of No Confidence and What it Means." Bullet three reads, "Timeline of Key Meetings and Activities." Bullet four reads, "Highlights from Cabinet Responses to Vote of No Confidence Resolution." Bullet five reads, "What Happens Next."]

So next, the timeline of key meetings and activities that will continue to show how the administration has tried to work or the constituency groups-- especially the faculty.

[A new slide appears with the headline, "How Did We Get Here?" There is a chart with a heading that reads, "Timeline of Events – Faculty Voice Survey." The first item on the chart is "April 3, 2017 – Full-Time Faculty Voice Survey results published on myHACC." Next is, "Oct. 20, 2017 – Recommendations from Faculty Voice Survey provided to Dr. Ski." Next is, "Nov. 29, 2017 – Members of Faculty Senate Cabinet met with functional leaders and Dr. Ski." Next is, "Dec. 20, 2017 – Members of Faculty Senate Cabinet met with Functional leaders and Dr. Ski." Next is, "Jan. 11, 2018 - Members of Faculty Senate Cabinet met with Functional leaders and Dr. Ski." Last is, "Jan. 12, 2018 – Revised Faculty Voice Survey results and adjusted responses provided to Dr. Ski."]

So I'd like to give some context over the next couple slides. For those of you on the phone who are not connected via our Zoom, there is a timeline of events, the faculty voice survey that was published on April 3 of 2017.

And then there are six dates that talk about a variety of actions that happened either from the faculty survey and from me and/or administration. The faculty voice survey was sent to faculty in the spring of '17 to obtain their feedback on a variety of topics. Now, I know that this timeline-- for those of you that can see it-- there's a lot of information on there.

The point I wish to illustrate in this slide and the next couple slides is showing that members of my cabinet-- these functional leaders-- and I have attempted to engage the Faculty Senate Cabinet and the Faculty Organization as much as possible in the hopes of addressing concerns and moving forward together as colleagues.

And we are happy to do so. Let me say, as I said to our Faculty Organization president numerous times-- and we reiterated on Tuesday with the provost Cindy Doherty-- we are eager to sit down and address issues so that we truly can become the best working environment community college in the nation.

My leadership style is relational, and I think many of you know that. I believe that problem resolution is vital and best achieved through open and positive dialogue. I'm going over the next couple of slides to point out to you specific moments when I believe more should have been done to continue that conversation.

Also know that this timeline is not comprehensive. For the last several months, I've held numerous meetings with our Faculty Organization presidents and with many others throughout the college.

[A new slide appears with the headline, "How Did We Get Here?" There is a chart with a heading that reads, "Timeline of Events – Faculty Voice Survey." The first item on the chart is, "Jan. 24, 2018 – Responses to Faculty Voice Survey Recommendations present to the renamed 'College Opportunity Committee.'" The next item is, "Jan. 25, 2018 – College Opportunity Committee met." Next is, "Feb. 16, 2018 – College Opportunity Committee met." "Next is, "Feb. 28, 2018– College Opportunity Committee met." Next is, "March 3, 2018 – Final responses to the Faculty Voice Survey shared with College Opportunity Committee." Last is, "Sept. 12, 2018 – Faculty Senate Cabinet met and discussed relaunch of Faculty Voice Survey."]

I'm now going to the second slide, the timeline of events from the faculty voice survey, again, showing administration's responses to the survey, responses back from the Faculty Organization.

The slide, for those of you that can't see it, demonstrates multiple meetings that were held between faculty and administrators in an effort to address the findings from the faculty voice survey. The College Opportunity Committee met six times in the late fall of 2017 and early spring of '18.

The name College Opportunity Committee was given to the group in January of '18, which is why maybe some people don't think the committee met all six times and think maybe that it only met three times. It was comprised of four faculty members and four administrators-- one CEO representative and one APO representative.

[A new slide appears with the headline, "How Did We Get Here?" There is a chart with a heading that reads, "Timeline of Events – Faculty Voice Survey." The first item on the chart is, "April 10, 2019 – Members of the Faculty Organization adopted a Resolution and demanded a formal response by April 29, 2019." The second item is, "April 11, 2019 – Faculty Organization Resolution presented to Dr. Ski." The next item is, "April 29, 2019 – Dr. Ski responded in writing to Faculty Resolution and attend Faculty Organization meeting with Aimee Brough, Cindy Doherty and Tim Sandoe." The last item is, "April 30, 2019 – Full Faculty Assembly meeting held; topic of unionization discussed."]

I am now on the third slide that shows the timeline. There are four points on this timeline. And I really want to pause here, because I think this slide is very, very important. When I was presented with another survey-- this time, the Faculty Organization resolution-- in April of 2019, I worked diligently to respond to the concerns that were presented.

In working closely with the functional leaders who too may be considered for a vote of no confidence, we together provided a 15-page detailed response, which is still available on myHACC. I attended a meeting of the full Faculty Organization at the end of April, and personally-- maybe naively-- believed that the meeting satisfied the needs of the faculty that were present.

I expected that the cabinet and I would continue to work with faculty to address the concerns brought up in their resolution, and I communicated regularly with the president of the Faculty Organization. However, rather than doing everything we could to address the problems at hand, I was informed that the faculty were going to choose the option of exploring unionization.

[A new slide appears with the headline, "How Did We Get Here?" There is a chart with a heading that reads, "Timeline of Events – Faculty Resolution and Unionization." The first item reads, "Faculty Senate Organization approved ad hoc committee to research unionization." The second item is, "May 30, 2019 – Kathleen Pratt shared results of the Resolution Priorities Report indicating satisfaction or dissatisfaction with how Dr. Ski has addressed Resolution." The next item is, "Aug. 6, 2019 – Faculty union Ad Hoc Committee Report was prepared." The next item reads, "Aug. 8 2019 – Revisions to SGP 804 Faculty Furloughs Policy submitted to shared Governance Committee." The next item is, "Aug. 26, 2019 – Aimee Brough attended Operations House meeting to discuss SGP 804." The last item is "Aug. 28, 2019 – Faculty Senate Retreat held; Union Research Committee presented research."]

The next slide-- again, presenting the timeline of events for faculty resolution and unionization-- will show six dates between conversations between me and the faculty union, and the reports that were provided, and information that was provided back to the faculty. On May 30 of 2019, I was informed that-- and I'll read from the email-- there is not a consensus on whether the FSC-- that's

Faculty Senate Counsel-- is or is not satisfied with your response to the resolution-- again, about four weeks after the resolution was presented, and I personally met with the faculty.

I was also told, quote, "the faculty at large will be invited to suggest to the Faculty Senate Cabinet, which, if any, portions of the resolution the FSC should continue to address with you. A Survey Monkey will be sent to all faculty in early June, with the survey closing August 27 in time for the FSC to discuss the results and decide action items at the August 28 meeting," close quotes.

Unfortunately, I've not seen the results of that survey, and I have not had an opportunity to respond to that survey. It seems as if, instead, a small group of faculty have moved forward with exploring unionization and a vote of no confidence.

[A new slide appears with the headline, "How Did We Get Here?" There is a chart with a heading that reads, "Timeline of Events – Faculty Unionization and No-Confidence Vote." The first item is, "Sept. 30, 2019 – Full Faculty Assembly held on unionization; Pratt provided list of top 10 faculty concerns to Dr. Ski, based on his request." The next item is, "Oct. 2, 2019 – Dr. Ski provided updated responses to Union Ad Hoc Committee Report." The next item is, "Oct. 27, 2019 – Dr. Ski provide responses to top 10 faculty concerns." The next item is, "Oct. 30, 2019 – Special Faculty Senate Cabinet met to discuss vote of no confidence." The next item is, "Nov. 19, 2019 – Chair of Faculty Union Outreach Committee presented at CEO meeting." The last item reads, "Nov. 26, 2019 – Dr. Ski and functional leaders met with FSC president to discuss proposed vote of no confidence."]

The last timeline of events that are presented on the screen show, again, when information was provided to me and when I responded to those points.

On several occasions this fall, I urged the president of the Faculty Organization to bring a group of faculty together to discuss and address issues. I also asked for a list of top concerns so that I and cabinet can address them. I'm very grateful the Faculty Organization president provided me with that list of 10 things, and I responded to those concerns with the same diligence I displayed when I received the Faculty Organization resolution in 2017.

The faculty, from what I'm told, continued their exploration of unionizing, and began debating the pros and cons of a vote no confidence. The cabinet and I-- the functional leaders and I especially-- have asked the Faculty Senate Cabinet president why a vote of no confidence is occurring before the cabinet and Faculty Senate Cabinet have not had an opportunity to talk.

Since May, I can point to at least 13 times when I've asked to speak with a group of faculty to address their concerns. My requests have been denied again and again. Regardless, today, I want to extend my sincere hope that the Faculty Senate Cabinet will re-evaluate their response and allow for a dialogue to resolve the problems they identify before a vote of no confidence is submitted for consideration.

Some of you may be aware that, in the last week or two, the Faculty Senate and Faculty Organization and president has agreed to bring together a committee, which we have named the

Team of Eight, which would be four administrators, four functional leaders, and four faculty members to begin to build bridges between faculty and administration.

And I am very, very grateful to the faculty organization president for making that a reality in the last two weeks. However, it is understood that we will come together after the vote of no confidence is taken. The members that I do hope do sign up-- and I know a request has gone out to faculty-- I hope that the members who will join us will commit to being civil, open-minded, having no personal agenda, having no ulterior motives, and being student-centered.

The next slide that I will show you is the one that probably disappointed us all the most, when we were talking about bringing faculty and functional leaders together.

[A new slide appears with the headline, "How Did We Get Here" and a body that reads, "One Nov. 26, the functional leaders and I asked to meet with the full Faculty Senate Cabinet to discuss their concerns. This request brought to the Faculty Senate Cabinet and was denied." A new slide appears with the headline, "Our Engagement about the Reorganization." It starts with, "During the last seven months, we have discussed the reorganization with many employees:" This is followed by six bullets, starting with, "Cindy Doherty held at least 21 meetings with various stakeholders." Bullet two reads, "Bob Messner held at least 41 meetings with various stakeholders." Bullet three reads, "Clarresa Morton held at least 40 meetings with various stakeholders." "Bullet four reads, "Tim Sandoe held at least 10 meetings with various stakeholders." Bullet five reads, "We have hosted 13 collegewide Zoom session and five campus forums." Bullet six reads, "I alone have met with several groups of students."]

For those on the phone, I'd like to read-- on November 26, the functional leaders and I asked to meet with the full Faculty Senate Cabinet to discuss their concerns. This request was brought to the Faculty Senate Cabinet, and was denied.

So during the last seven months, we've discussed the reorganization with many, many employees. I have mentioned this timeline. We've had Zoom sessions to involve people, engage them. As part of the shared governance process, I and functional leaders have been leading the reorganization and engaging in conversations, and especially with students.

So I find it difficult to believe that there are some employees at the college who feel excluded from the process, when the above meetings have occurred. For those on the phone, we've had our provost meet with at least 21-- has participated in at least 21 meetings with various stakeholders. Our chief information officer, Bob Messner, has held at least 41 meetings with various stakeholders.

Our interim vice president of student affairs, Clarresa Morton, has held at least 40 meetings with various stakeholders. Our chief financial officer, Tim Sandoe, has held at least 10 meetings with various stakeholders and has been involved in other meetings. We've had-- hosted 13 college-wide Zoom sessions, and I have hosted five campus forums in addition to emails and Ski Grams that have been distributed college-wide. And I alone have met with numerous students throughout this process.

[A new slide appears with the headline, “Our Roadmap for Today.” There are five bullets. Bullet one reads, “HACC Purpose, Core Values and Shared Governance Process.” Bullet two reads, “Overview of the Vote of No Confidence and What it Means.” Bullet three reads, “Timeline of Key Meetings and Activities.” Bullet four reads, “Highlights from Cabinet Responses to Vote of No Confidence Resolution.” Bullet five reads, “What Happens next?”]

So point four of five-- highlights from cabinet's response to the vote of no confidence resolution. Again, we were presented with our resolution of no confidence, and there were various points that were given to us on Tuesday, 48 hours ago. And I am going to very quickly run through 12 points.

You are more than welcome to take a look at these at your leisure. They are in a PDF format at myHACC under the Office of President channel, and you will be able to read them in greater depth.

[A new slide appears with the headline, “Cabinet’s Response to Vote of No Confidence Resolution.” There is a screen capture of the myHACC Employee home page pictured.]

So what I'd like to do now is I would like to go through a few of the points that were brought to us on Tuesday.

[A document titled “President’s Cabinet Responses to the December 2019 Faculty Senate Cabinet (FSC) Resolution of No Confidence” is on screen. It can be found [here](#).]

So for those online, I won't be able to read through all of them. I'll highlight for you the 12 points. First had to do with an injudicious institutional reorganization and with inadequate time to collaboratively plan for the transition and ensure minimal disruption in Student Services.

I do want to say that discussions about the One-College reorganization were part of the development of the strategic plan that was approved by the board in August of '19. As a result, objective one is design and implement a One-College organizational structure by July 1, 2020. Six months into the initiative, we have had many meaningful discussions with impacted groups, and have made adjustments accordingly.

We believe that we can achieve the objectives set by the Board of Trustees with the continued collaboration among all the constituency groups. Additionally, the reorganization is student-centered, and will result in minimal, if any disruption to students.

The next area, number two-- abrupt elimination of wellness counseling without a plan to provide services for students. We have acknowledged that we've made some mistakes with this initiative. However, we believe that where we have landed is in the best interest of our students. The decision to contract with Mazzitti and Sullivan EAP Services to provide mental health clinical counseling offers many, many additional services to our students that they never had before.

Number three, declining efficacy of shared governance and violation of shared governance policies, including, but not limited to, furlough, retraining, reassignment, and tenure-- the

decision to eliminate the faculty counselor positions and furlough the faculty counselors was made so that we can provide specialized services to our students and reduced costs.

It does not indicate a decline in the efficacy of shared governance. The college continues to uphold college policy 899, Shared Governance, and SGP 100, Shared Governance Policy and Handbook. Number four, in attention paid to data trends over the past eight years in the areas of secondary school enrollments and virtual enrollments-- which has, in part, led to financial deficits, requiring changes that affect enrollments.

The college has been responsible in paying attention to national and statewide enrollment trends. We had been projecting flat enrollments for a couple of years, but enrollments declined, contributing to budget deficits. Noticing this change, we proactively brought in a reputable consultant, Ruffalo Noel Levitz, to provide a more accurate picture of enrollment declines for the next several years, beginning an academic year '18 and '19.

Number five of 12, long-term inattention to procedural justice creating an unnecessary environment of chaos, anxiety, low morale, and dysfunction-- I request the Faculty Senate Cabinet provide me with specific examples so that we can effectively respond to this statement.

The Faculty Organization action request the Board of Trustees to do the following-- number one, suspend further reorganization until specific complete and measurable plan for the college reorganization is created in direct consultation with all constituency groups. My response, after talking to the Board of Trustees, is that the college administration will continue to work towards the objectives that faculty, administrators, staff, and students agreed to uphold in the 2019-22 strategic plan.

We welcome the faculty organization's ideas and ongoing cooperation in this endeavor. Number two, engage all stakeholders in continued development and refinement of a plan to restore wellness counseling services. Wellness counseling services, I respond, is provided by the eight wellness counselors who are employed full-time on our campuses for the duration of this academic year.

In the meantime, a plan for wellness services is under development by the Next Generation Taskforce. Mental health counseling is the only service that was interrupted. The replacement plan, however, is much more accessible for HACC students, allowing for 24/7 counseling via telephone, virtually, or in person in their local community.

Number three, comply with existing shared governance policies, including, but not limited to furlough, retraining, reassignment, and tenure-- this is occurring. We welcome a discussion on examples where it is believed that this is not happening. Number four of seven, create a multi-functional representative group to focus on data monitoring and enrollment trends, and to better serve as a regular conduit of information to the Board of Trustees-- the college has begun planning the establishment of a Data Governance Committee.

In fact, several months ago, the task force, led by an employee who is no longer employed by the college-- this progress on this will resume when the position of assistant director of institutional

reporting is filled. Additionally, there will be a department dedicated to assessment and strategy within the Office of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management.

Number five, include a brief report to encourage open dialogue from the constituency group presidents at each board meeting-- during the December Board of Trustees meeting, and prior to having read this resolution, the board agreed to engage the constituency leaders once a term.

Number six, charge for all constituency group leaders to organize a shared governance summit in the spring of 2020-- the college continues to uphold college policy 899 Shared Governance and Shared Governance Policy 100, Shared Governance Policy and Handbook. Number seven, do not extend or renew the college president's contract for employment-- as I said previously, on Tuesday, December 3, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved my extension through June of 2023. This occurred as part of my annual review period, which happens every December.

[We return to the slides. A slide appears with the headline, "Our Roadmap for Today." There are five bullets. Bullet one reads, "HACC Purpose, Core Values and Shared Governance Process." Bullet two reads, "Overview of the Vote of No Confidence and What it Means." Bullet three reads, "Timeline of Key Meetings and Activities." Bullet four reads, "Highlights from Cabinet Responses to Vote of No Confidence Resolution." Bullet five reads, "What Happens next?"]

So what happens next? And I know that you have listened to an awful lot of information, and I do hope that you will go to myHACC to review the information there and continue to engage us in conversation. But the question is, what happens next?

[A new slide appears with the headline, "What Happens next?" There are five bullets. Bullet one reads, "Faculty will be prompted to cast their vote soon." Bullet two reads, "Dr. Ski and the Cabinet will continue to try to work collaboratively with the faculty." Bullet three reads, "We will continue to update the HACC Board of Trustees, which has expressed their full, unequivocal support of me and the Cabinet." Bullet four reads, "We will continue to lead the many good employees at HACC." Bullet five reads, "We will continue to do what is best for our students – our TOP priorities." This is followed by, "The actions we take now will have significant impacts on HACC and our communities for years to come. Special Message:"

So what you see on the screen-- I'll read for those who are online-- what happens next is that possibly, faculty will be prompted to cast their vote very soon.

I will tell you that the functional leaders and I will continue to try to work collaboratively with all faculty. We will continue to update the HACC Board of Trustees, which has expressed their full, unequivocal support of me and the functional leaders of this institution. We will continue to lead the many good employees at HACC who are ready, willing, and able to continue to serve our students in unique and special ways.

We will continue to do what is best for our students, the reason that each and every one of us are here. It is only fair that we have an opportunity to resolve the concerns in a productive way, such as, I pointed out, we have done in the past. I, and we, are ready to do that with the Team of Eight meetings through shared governance.

The functional leaders who are also being considered for a vote of no confidence and I believe that every avenue must be exhausted before a vote occurs. The FSC believes this vote needs to occur before that opportunity opens, from what I have heard. HACC is not a perfect place, but let me tell you, having visited many, many community colleges-- as I was elected chairman of the American Association of Community College Board of Trustees several years ago-- I do know that we have many, many, many additional programs and services that make us very, very special.

I'm going to digress quickly to say that, on Tuesday, during cabinet and during the Board of Trustees meeting, for those of you that had an opportunity to listen to some of our faculty, like Linda Mininger, Dan Fahringer, Lori Shoemaker, [INAUDIBLE], and Rick Albright, and Tamara, to listen to those faculty members would make you very, very proud of the exciting things that are happening at this institution.

And over the last several months, when I talk to constituents from each of the groups and they express to me dissatisfaction with what some may be trying to do within this institution, they continually remind me of what an outstanding organization we work in, with great benefits, with a great opportunity to not only advance our own personal and professional careers, but our students, especially.

Most of the employees at HACC are very, very good and hardworking people. Please, I ask you, continue that good work for and on behalf of our students. Please continue to hold me and the cabinet-- especially our functional leaders-- accountable and responsible.

I will say this, as I have said to the Board of Trustees-- no one will be allowed to destroy or sabotage HACC, no matter who it is. Disagreement is one thing-- manipulation, deception, and sabotage are altogether different, and will never, ever be tolerated at HACC. I appreciate those of you who put our students first each and every day, especially during the changes that we are experiencing.

Frankly-- I can't say it enough sincerely-- thank you for maintaining your positivity in the midst of these changing times. As you see, for those that can see the screen, these actions that we take today, next week, over the next several weeks, will have a significant impact on HACC and on the communities we serve. So what I'd like to do now is conclude my presentation with a very short audio clip.

TOM RICHEY: Greetings. I am Tom Richey, chairman of the HACC Board of Trustees, and a proud trustee since 2007. As you may know, there are reports of a vote of no confidence for Dr. Ski, HACC's president, and his cabinet. I want to emphasize the position of the HACC Board of Trustees regarding this action.

We strongly reject this decision and course of action, which was made by a small group of employees. A vote of no confidence for Dr. Ski and the cabinet is also a vote that threatens the futures of HACC students, the very reason we're all here. The HACC Board of Trustees wholeheartedly supports Dr. Ski, and his cabinet, and we stand united with him. Thank you.

[A new slide appears with the headline, “Again, What Does this Mean for HACCC?” The body reads, “A vote of no confidence by faculty will not change:” and is followed by five bullets.” Bullet one reads, “The One-College reorganization.” Bullet two reads, “One College, Uniting for Success Strategic Plan.” Bullet three reads, “Shared governance process and policies.” Bullet four reads, “Decision to eliminate on-campus clinical mental health counseling.” Bullet five reads, “My renewed employment contract.”]

JOHN SYGIELSKI: So in conclusion, what does a vote of no confidence mean for HACCC? A vote of no confidence by faculty will not change the following items. So it is my sincere hope that, in working with the Faculty Senate Organization president, faculty cabinet, and others, that we will be able to come together over the next several weeks or next several months collaboratively, collegially, so that we-- the functional leaders, especially-- can find out what the issues are, and we can address them in ways that will continue to make this an outstanding place to learn, to teach, and to engage with each other.

[The screen returns to the live view of JOHN SYGIELSKI and members of his cabinet seated around a table in a boardroom.]

So at this time-- I know I have seven minutes available-- Cindy Doherty is my MC, if you will, and I would be more than happy to answer any questions that you may have, or to engage the functional leaders who sit around me-- have them answer any questions that you may have as well.

CINDY DOHERTY: There are questions and comments in chat. Are you looking for comments?

JOHN SYGIELSKI: We can start with the comments, sure.

CINDY DOHERTY: Dr. Ski, I gave you the results of the survey you spoke of at our September meeting and confirmed that with you when you recently brought it up. Please see my email [INAUDIBLE] recall asking-- you asking to meet with FSC since my tenure as president. Kindly email me with a list of dates [INAUDIBLE] requests.

11/26 when I volunteered to meet with you and your cabinet to answer the questions on the vote of confidence, I did not deny the request to meet with FSC [INAUDIBLE] suggestion to the board of trustees this week that the constituency group presidents have an opportunity to engage them at the board of trustees meetings As a friendly reminder, at the 11/26 meeting referenced above, I shared that suggestion with you.

JOHN SYGIELSKI: Thank you. Thank you, Kathleen, for those. The response-- and I'm sorry that I misspoke-- my 13 requests of you were for members of-- several faculty members to be able to come together with me, Aimee, Cindy, and Tim Sandoe to be able to have those discussions.

So I apologize for saying the Faculty Senate Cabinet. It was to have faculty members join us in a dialogue and communication, and I will provide you those 13 emails and/or conversations that we did have, regarding that. [INAUDIBLE]

CINDY DOHERTY: Okay. Dr. Ski, I do have a question. When I first briefed you over the summer that a vote of no confidence was being discussed, you did not seem concerned, telling me that it's happening all over the country. In subsequent meetings, in which I continued to brief you, you continued to share that it seemed like a national trend, and you notified the Board of Trustees to expect it. What has changed?

JOHN SYGIELSKI: Nothing has changed. In my conversations with you, Kathleen, you're absolutely right. This is a trend that has happened nationally. We know that there are many community college presidents that have also received votes of no confidence, Board of Trustees that have received votes of no confidence.

I did tell you that I did realize that it was a national trend and that it was happening. In person, I always brought up the idea that it would be nice if we could come together-- if a small group of faculty and a small group of administrators could come together to talk. In my emails to you, I consistently asked for a small group of faculty and our administrators to be able to come together and address the concerns that our faculty have.

CINDY DOHERTY: Just a friendly reminder to ask their questions through the chat-- everyone is muted.

JOHN SYGIELSKI: So should I repeat that? The question was asked, in my conversations with the senate-- Faculty Organization president, when I was told that there was the beginning of no confidence in me, that I had repeated that it was a national trend and that it was occurring at colleges throughout the country and why I didn't seem to talk about much else. And I did make mentioned in my conversations and in writing that I looked to talk about the concerns and issues before it got to a full-blown vote of no confidence.

CINDY DOHERTY: Here's a question-- what specific issues where are you anticipating discussions of with the small group of faculty and cabinet?

JOHN SYGIELSKI: The issues would be whatever was being discussed at the Faculty Senate Cabinet meeting that caused a conversation of looking at a vote of no confidence in me and the functional leaders. It was only on Tuesday that I received that information, because any of the concerns that were brought up prior to that were answered thoroughly by me and the functional leaders-- and in many cases, no responses back from those submissions.

And so I really wanted to know what were the issues that we needed to address point by point so that we could work together, as I so want to do-- work together to resolve those issues before it goes to a vote of no confidence or continues to strain relationships among employees at the college.

CINDY DOHERTY: The points on your slide mentioning what you will do going forward are vague-- i.e., lead the faculty. What is the reality that the group of eight will actually get anything accomplished?

JOHN SYGIELSKI: Well, as we have proven in the past, when we come together and map out a strategy, identify the points, we will be held accountable for sure on my end by the Board of Trustees, who will want to see that we are moving in the direction of resolving issues as best we can. We will have to identify what those issues are.

We will have to agree upon what those issues are. We'll have to define what the outcomes will be and how we will know if we are successful. So there will be quite a plan that will need to be put together so that we together will be able to resolve the issues.

And I'm eager. I really cannot wait for that to happen, so I am hoping that a vote of no confidence that is being promoted by a small group of faculty will be suspended and that we can come together in earnest and in good collaborative, collegial manner so that we can work on these issues. And then, if we are collectively not satisfied and the small group of faculty believe that we have tried everything we can to resolve issues, to ensure that this is the best educational institution in central Pennsylvania, then I would be very supportive of no confidence.

CINDY DOHERTY: Two more questions-- or three-- what are the specific things you learned from the way faculty counselors were treated, and what will you do to prevent similar mistakes?

JOHN SYGIELSKI: There are several points that we have learned, and I think, most importantly, it is to ensure that we have all of our plans in place before they are delivered to employee groups. The problem with being transparent is we have been-- we have the option-- are we transparent and provide everything, including our thought process-- which I know does create some concern-- or do we just announce things after things are a done deal? And so I think the biggest point that we learn is that we want to make sure that all our ducks in a row, especially when it impacts our colleagues, in particularly.

CINDY DOHERTY: Is it to be understood that a vote of no confidence will be harmful to the college, regardless of whether or not the majority of faculty vote in favor of it?

JOHN SYGIELSKI: I believe that the attempt is negative for the faculty, no matter if it passes or not, because I think it really is symptomatic of an issue that needs to be addressed. I think to move to any vote shows that there has been a breakdown in communication or engagement. And as I think I tried to display and demonstrate to you, we believe that every opportunity-- we have reached out providing answers and opportunities.

We believe that we have tried very hard and that we're not getting the response back, other than we've concluded our conversation. So I do firmly believe that even a vote of no confidence that fails is not good for the institution, because it demonstrates a breakdown in relationship. It represents a breakdown in communication.

And I think we can avoid that, if all parties are willing to come to the table and speak honestly, openly, collaboratively, and in a visionary manner. It is now 4:33, so I do want to thank all of you for taking your afternoon and being with us. We do believe that this is a very, very important topic.

And again, feel free to submit your questions as you've become used to doing. Submit them, and we will look forward to answering those questions for you. Feel free to email me. Stop me in the hallway, as so many of you do on a regular basis. I do want to thank you again for participating with us in this important Zoom session.