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April 8:

Student Senate address pandemic concerns



[Morgan Reddekopp](#), News Editor

April 8, 2020

Winona State University's Student Senate met over Zoom, a remote conferencing service, on Wednesday, April 1, to discuss what the university is doing to accommodate students and faculty members during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Zoom meeting was broadcasted to the Winona community over Facebook Live. Student Senate heard from various guest speakers, administrators at the university through a Q&A format.

The main topics that were discussed during this meeting were the Pass/No Credit policy, financial reimbursements, housing and commencement.

Many students expressed concern about classes moving online due to the pandemic.

A petition was created and shared over social media to make all classes Pass/No Credit.

Winona State President Scott Olson said that the deadline to change a class from a letter grade to Pass/No Credit is being moved to April 27. This will give students time to talk to their advisors to weigh the pros and cons of switching a class to Pass/No Credit. Switching a class to Pass/No Credit could harm students who need a grade in a certain class in order to progress in their program, graduate or get into graduate school.

Toward the end of the meeting, senate decided to recommend the Pass/No Credit policy to be available on a class-by-class basis. It was recommended by multiple administrators that students first talk with their advisors before making the decision to switch their class to Pass/No Credit to ensure that they will not be harmed by their decision in the future.

According to provost and vice president for Academic Affairs Edward Reilly, the dean of the School of Nursing created a list of how changing each class to Pass/No Credit will affect a student. Reilly said hopefully other colleges at Winona State will soon create a similar list.

Student Senate was also briefed on Housing and Residence Life's efforts to assist the community during this time.

Paula Scheevel, director of Housing and Residence Life, said that as of Wednesday, all the residence halls were officially closed. Approximately 100 students remain in East Lake Apartments.

Scheevel said that students will be reimbursed for housing and meal plans and that the money will hopefully be sent out by the end of April. Both block plans and Kryzsko Cash will be refunded, but it will take time to calculate each student's refund amount, Scheevel said. Housing is charged daily whereas block plans are charged weekly, so the reimbursements will be calculated by going off the numbers as of Mar. 14.

Scott Ellinghuysen, vice president of Finance, elaborated on reimbursements. There could be a potential parking permit refund that would be effective near the date of the housing and meal plan refund. Ellinghuysen does not believe that a tuition refund will happen because, instead of stopping completely, classes have moved online.

There have been no decisions made for refunds on other fees such as the Wellness Center, the Student Union or Student Life. Payments for student trips such as travel studies that have been cancelled will also be refunded.

Ellinghuysen also said that student workers will be paid during the campus closure, even if they are unable to work and sent out an email on Tuesday. The payments will be effective Mar. 18 and students will be paid for their usual number of hours. Several options for commencement were also discussed during the meeting.

Options discussed included a summer commencement, a virtual commencement and inviting the spring 2020 graduates to the winter commencement.

The commencement committee said there would be no push to have an alternate spring or summer commencement, due to health concerns. Lindsay Marosi-Kramer, a member of the committee, said that they do not want to promise something that they may not be able to deliver on.

The option that seemed to get the most discussion was to have prerecorded messages from the deans of each college and the elected speakers, and in addition, invite the spring class of 2020 to attend the December commencement. There was also discussion of sending graduating seniors a care package including everything they would have received at their commencement ceremony. This package would include everything but the cap and gown.

According to the committee, an email will be sent out to graduating seniors, giving them an opportunity to provide feedback.

In addition to helping Winona State students, staff and faculty, the university is also trying to help the community of Winona.

Winona State donated 2,000 surgical masks to Winona Health, and also opened Tau Center to healthcare workers who were are unable to return home.

“Winona Health needed a place for certain healthcare workers who couldn’t return home either because somebody was sick at home or because they themselves had been exposed and didn’t want to expose their home,” Olson said.

Katie Wilson, a senate member working at a nursing home in Winona and Mayo Rochester, asked students during the meeting to donate blood if they are able, due to a shortage of blood.

The opinions expressed in this paper are not necessarily those of Winona State University, the Minnesota State Colleges and University system, or the Winona State University student body.

Relay for Life sees changes during COVID-19 pandemic



[Kellen Brandt](#), Features Reporter

April 8, 2020

Winona State University's 2020 Relay for Life, hosted by Colleges Against Cancer, was scheduled for Friday April 3, but had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the cancellation, Colleges Against Cancer is planning to re-schedule for an in-person Relay for life at a later date, while many other clubs are still finding ways to interact in an online Relay for Life.

Kayce Redican, a sophomore majoring in elementary and early childhood education with a coaching minor, is the co-president of Colleges Against Cancer.

"As of right now, we as the Winona County Relay for Life board are looking at still doing a relay, but doing it in the fall of 2020," Redican said.

Though the delay in the event comes as a disappointment for many in the club, Redican recognizes how important it is to still have the event take place.

“I’m passionate about the Relay for Life, and I think having it in the fall would be different, and I think it would be a good change,” Redican said. “Other Relay for Life’s in Southern Minnesota have had a huge success with having it in the fall, so I think it would be good for Winona County.”

In the meantime, Colleges Against Cancer is encouraging club presidents and leaders on campus to reach out to their members and spread the word of online donations.

“Although the Relay is not in person, people can still donate online,” Redican said. “I think as long as teams and community members still talk about the Relay, it will be okay.”

Hailey Seipel, a junior majoring in applied and professional writing and minoring in mass communication journalism, is the Her Campus editor-in-chief.

Seipel has been reaching out to the members of Her Campus and encouraging them to make donations if they are able.

“Her Campus will be participating in this year’s Relay for Life via online donations from club members and peers,” Seipel said. “With the high likelihood that COVID-19 has left many people across the country tight on money, we are encouraging our members to donate just \$5.”

According to Redican, the Winona State community is finding ways to come together and support the fight in this digital world when being together in person is not a choice.

“Due to the corona virus, I understand that people may not be able to donate money, so hopefully having the Relay in the fall will give time for people to get back on their feet after the coronavirus and come together instead of just donating money,” Redican said.

Colleges Against Cancer rescheduled their Winona State University Relay for Life for Oct.23, 2020.

“Given these uncertain times, it’s heartwarming to know that people haven’t given up in the fight to cure cancer,” Seipel said. “We believe we can still make a difference, even though we cannot physically come together.”

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What to expect in crisis counseling: Part III



[Ren Gennerman](#), Copy Editor

April 8, 2020

While students are away from home and at college, they often rely on their friends more than their families, especially when in need. This means that during a mental health crisis or after a sexual assault, students may turn to their friends at Winona State University for help.

It is no wonder why students may rely more on friends during a crisis than parents or other family. According to a 2015 study conducted by American University, millennials grew up hearing more about mental health issues and are therefore less prone to perpetuating the stigma that earlier generations have. This means that students may see their friends as people who are less likely to judge them for having mental health issues than older people, such as parents.

Kateri Johnson, interim director of counseling services at Winona State, says that friends can be very helpful in influencing struggling students to seek help from the counseling office. However, there are some things students should know before telling their friends to seek help. First, she recommends that friends are the first line of support for students. Johnson sees people utilizing this tool, especially in the wake of student deaths.

“I think what a lot of people forget is that our supports, the people around us, are going to be the most important piece during those difficult times,” Johnson said. “Unfortunately, we’ve had campus deaths before and we have to remember that our supports are there for us. If you’ve been impacted by the WSU student death, [counseling is] not used a lot because at that time, when people are experiencing that loss, they’re leaning on their friends.”

That being said, Johnson said that sometimes friends can push too hard for someone struggling to seek help.

“‘Crisis’ is a very subjective term,” Johnson said. “As a friend to someone, don’t push them. What you may see as a crisis, for them may not be, or vice versa. Friends can certainly plant the seed, and if you feel like a friend needs support, you can suggest, ‘Hey, have you thought about talking to a professional or you thought about going to counseling?’”

According to Johnson, there are limitations on what the counseling office can do for a student at the request of someone else. She says this sort of forced interaction may make the student feel angry with the counselor or the friend who called.

“If someone calls over here and says, ‘I’m concerned about the student’, we can’t reach out to them,” Johnson said. “We have a policy that we don’t do that because that can really rattle someone and they can be even more resistant to talking if a counselor calls them and says, ‘Hey, so-and-so is concerned about you’. Just because they’re not choosing to come in here, if we call them it doesn’t mean they’re going to all of a sudden open up.”

However, Johnson stresses that if the struggling student makes the decision to come in for crisis counseling and wants someone to come with, a friend is more than welcome to walk them to the office and wait with them.

“At the end of the day, it has to be the person asking for help to come in,” Johnson said. “But friends can be a crucial part of that process. Always reach out when, when you feel like you could really benefit from talking to a counselor.”