

Faculty Senate Minutes
October 2, 2003
3:30 PM Taylor 306

1. The meeting was called to order by Faculty Marshal Larry Ham at 3:30PM. Members present included:

Sharon Babcock, Biology; **David Bernstein**, Computer Science; **Michael Busing**, Computer Information Systems; **Stephanie Chisolm**, Health Science; **Serena Colasanti**, Foreign Languages and Literatures; **Annick Conis**, Communication Studies; **Rory DePaolis**, Communication Sciences and Disorders; **Beth Eck**, Sociology and Anthropology; **Geoff Egekwu**, Integrated Science and Technology; **Richard Finkelstein**, Theatre and Dance; **Alex Gabbin**, Accounting; **Steve Garren**, Mathematics and Statistics; **John Gilje**, Chemistry; **Cynthia Gilliatt**, English; **Larry Ham**, Kinesiology and Recreation Studies; **Jason Haney**, School of Music; **Bob Jerome**, Economics; **Bill Knorpp**, Philosophy and Religion; **Val Larsen**, Marketing; **Reba Leiding**, Libraries; **Robert Lembright**, History; **Howard Lubert**, Political Science; **Brooks Marshall**, Finance and Business Law; **Dietrich Maune**, Media Arts and Design; **Aashir Nasim**, Psychology (Ugrad.); **William O'Meara**, Philosophy and Religion; **Traci Pipkins**, Writing Program; **Mark Rooker**, Art and Art History; **Jim Ruff**, English; **Karen Santos**, Special Education; **Craig Shealy**, Psychology (Grad.); **Michael Smilowitz**, Communication Studies; **John Slavin** (for John Wolf), Military Science; **Kent Zimmerman**, Management and **David Zimmerman**, Secondary Education.

Guests included: **Teresa Gonzalez** and **Susan Wheeler** from the Office of the Provost and **Sandra Eagle** from Technical and Scientific Communication.

2. **Provost Report:**

Teresa Gonzales reported that the child-care committee is being reactivated this year. The committee dealing with campus diversity, which was announced by President Rose at the September 4 senate meeting, is currently being organized. The chair, Daniel Wubah, is seeking input for this committee. Faculty salary increases are dependent on receiving a satisfactory or better evaluation. The increase is 2.25% this year. The individuals in the library responsible for Blackboard thank the faculty for their understanding during the present problems with the software. Doug Brown is working to obtain additional funds for salary increases and has asked the colleges to provide plans for spending this money. The Board of Visitors will meet tomorrow (October 3, 2003). The faculty handbook will be distributed but no vote will be taken regarding proposed changes. Beth Eck asked that if the University is closed in the future could it occur at a time *between* classes rather than *during* classes. (The closing during hurricane Isabel occurred at 3:00PM).

3. **Approval of Minutes:**

David Zimmerman requested that the minutes be approved. No changes being noted, they were approved unanimously.

4. **Treasurer's Report:**

Geoff Egekwu reported that the current balance in the flower fund is \$923.51. The balance in the university account is \$7,162.16. He reminded the senators to continue collecting dues from their colleagues. The computer lottery will occur again this year. The application form will appear on the senate Web site in late November/early December.

5. Speaker's Report:

Michael Smilowitz recognized the new senators from the College of Education and thanked the assembled senators for being on time for the beginning of the meeting at 3:30. Michael introduced Phil Emmert, chair of the emeriti task force, who reported on the final report of the task force. Phil thanked the members of the task force as well as the JMU emeritus organization and presented their recommendations. All institutions of higher education in Virginia were contacted as well as our nationwide peer institutions, identified by SCHEV.

(The full report and surveys used in compiling data for the recommendations will be posted on the Senate Web site)

Cynthia Gilliatt moved to accept the task force report; Beth Eck seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

6. Committee Reports:

Michael asked that debate be limited to 3 minutes per member as we discuss the following items. The senate concurred.

Academic Policies: Beth Eck stated that the senate must appoint a representative to serve on the General Education Council. Traci Pipkins, senator from the Writing Program, volunteered. Beth reported that the committee would meet with individuals involved with the freshman orientation program and the honor council to seek ways to improve the academic and intellectual atmosphere on campus. Cynthia Gilliatt asked that the committee look into the honor appeal process. Beth reported that the academic policies committee had discussed the grade inflation issue and they were making a specific recommendation that the date for dropping a class be moved to a point earlier in the term. This recommendation was put in the form of a motion that was seconded by Cynthia Gilliatt. Discussion followed concerning the effect of the drop date on grade inflation and the possibility of creating a "weighted" GPA based on the average grade for an individual class. Stephanie Chisolm moved to table the motion to the next meeting to allow for discussion with the entire faculty. The motion to table the motion was seconded by David Bernstein and passed unanimously.

The committee has also looked at the number of withdrawals that a student may take during her/his academic career at JMU. There is currently no limit to the number of withdrawals a student may take just as there is no limit to the number of repeated courses a student may take. There is a limit of two courses a student may take repeat/forgive (the original grade remains on the student's transcript and is used in determining that semester's GPA but is **not** used to determine the student's overall GPA). Michael asked that the committee look at statistics related to the average number of withdrawals taken by students at JMU and also review the possibility of re-instituting the WP (withdrawal passing) and WF (withdrawal failing) grades.

The committee's final recommendation was to publicize grade distribution data within each department. After discussion regarding grade inflation and whether individual professor's grades should be publicized, Michael directed senators to take these matters back to their individual departments for further discussion. Bob Lembright moved to table Beth's motion to accept the final two recommendations. Larry Ham seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Faculty Concerns: Cynthia Gilliatt reported that the committee is reviewing data collected during last year's RTA survey and developing specific recommendations that will be presented at a future meeting. The committee is also developing recommendations regarding pay, benefits and promotion for adjunct faculty. Data from our peer institutions is being studied. A list of JMU's 24 peer institutions may be found at the following URL: <http://www.jmu.edu/instresrch/peers/Salaries/aaup02.htm>

Cynthia moved to establish a task force to examine professional development issues at JMU to be chaired by Karen Santos. Since this is not a standing committee of the senate a chair may be appointed rather than elected by the membership of that committee. Michael Smilowitz, Larry Ham and Kent Zimmerman both volunteered to serve on the task force. The notion did not require a second since it came from the senate steering committee and it passed unanimously.

Institutional Budget Priorities: Val Larsen reported that the committee had met with J. W. Myers who indicated that 90% of the Academic Affairs budget goes to salaries and the remaining 10% goes to various office expenditures such as copying and supplies. While Academic Affairs receives a somewhat lower percentage of the total university budget than several of our peer institutions our academic program is considered more successful than theirs. This makes it difficult to justify a reallocation of the budget. Val invited senators to contact him if they felt they had information to support a reallocation. Larry asked if the committee could look into the 2.25% faculty salary increase and how it is being distributed throughout the University. Teresa Gonzalez offered to look into the matter and report back to the senate.

7. Old Business:

Bill O'Meara moved to have the Committee on Institutional Budget Priorities become a standing committee of the JMU Faculty Senate. The motion passed unanimously. The amendment will be put before the entire faculty for a vote.

8. New Business:

Beth Eck brought a plan for revising the daily course schedule to permit students to travel from various class locations on campus to others. This plan will be posted on the senate Web site. Discussion followed and several senators suggested that this plan does not really address the problem of a student getting from one point on campus to another point without having to skip an entire class period in their schedule. Revising bus schedules might help to alleviate this problem. Placing certain buses on "express" routes from one section of campus to another might offer a solution. Michael invited senators to discuss this matter with their colleagues and send suggestions to him and he will pass them on.

Marshal Larry Ham assumed control of the meeting and Michael Smilowitz presented a proposal (distributed electronically with the agenda for today's meeting) that the faculty senate establish a partnership program with local high schools to encourage students who might not consider attending college to attend JMU or any other institution of higher education. Michael explained the genesis for this proposal (Expanding Horizons) and answered several questions regarding the parameters of the program. It was explained that the senate would provide administrative leadership for this initiative but that the chair of the committee overseeing the program may not necessarily be a member of the faculty senate. There should always be a senator serving on the committee for reporting purposes. Michael presented this proposal as a motion for approval by the senate. Cynthia Gilliatt seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:05PM.

Respectfully submitted,

David P. Zimmerman, Secretary