

# Faculty Senate Minutes

September 5, 2002

Taylor 306

1. Faculty Marshall Larry Ham called the meeting to order at 3:35PM. Members present were: Jose Barrio-Olano, Foreign Languages and Literatures; Jack Butt, History; Rory DePaolis, Communication Science; Melody Eaton, Nursing; Beth Eck, Sociology and Anthropology; Geoff Egekwa, ISAT; Karen Ford, Social Work; Alex Gabbin, Accounting; Stephen Germick, English; John Gilje, Chemistry; Dona Gilliam, Media Arts and Design; Cynthia Gilliatt, English; Kevin Giovanetti, Physics; Larry Ham, Kinesiology and Recreation Studies; Art Hamilton, Finance and Business Law; Hossain Heydari, Computer Science; Steven Hoeltzel, Philosophy and Religion; Jason Haney, Music; David Kaplan, Management; John Klippert, Mathematics; Andy Kohen, Economics; Val Larsen, Marketing; Reba Leiding, Library; Charles Lockett, Psychology; Howard Lubert, Political Science; Roberta Mitchell, Communication Studies; Bill O'Meara, Philosophy and Religion; Gene Robinson, Geology; Mark Rooker, Art and Art History; Michael Smilowitz, Communication Studies; Grace Wyngaard, Biology; and David Zimmerman, Education. Guests included: Douglas Brown, Provost, Teresa Gonzalez and Susan Wheeler representing the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Levar Stoney, Student Government Association.

2. Minutes of the previous Faculty Senate meeting will be approved at the October senate meeting.

3. Speaker, Michael Smilowitz reported that the Senate Steering Committee was very busy over the summer working on a number of initiatives as well as changes to the Senate constitution. The senate office has moved from Roop Hall to Cleveland 312. It is extremely important that the upcoming bond issue is passed, and that it passes by a large margin. Kevin Giovanetti moved to adopt the resolution supporting the bond issue, Jason Haney seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. Provost Doug Brown was introduced and stated that the University has been asked to prepare E&G budgets for the upcoming two fiscal years reflecting a 7% reversion and a 15% reversion. This will translate to a reversion of approximately \$10M/fiscal year. The University is preparing reports that show the consequences of these cuts that will have a significant negative effect on the quality of education that our students will receive, their access to classes, their ability to traverse their various programs and their ability to graduate on time. Staff and faculty positions will be protected. We are attempting to make the case that since we (and several other Virginia institutions of higher education) sit at the bottom of the funding curve, we should not be asked to revert such a high percentage of our total budget. President Rose was very successful last year in obtaining funding for JMU. The present budget crisis has become very political and we should be ready to mobilize the faculty, our students and other voters to support the higher education referendum. Cynthia Gilliatt reported that she is working on a letter to alumni to support the bond issue and questioned what language would be permitted. Susan Wheeler stated that we could provide information about the things the bond issue will provide higher education in the Commonwealth but that we can't ask people to vote for the bond issue. This is an extremely fine line and Cynthia will continue working on the wording of the letter and the University will provide the faculty with a list of the past three to four years of advisees to whom this letter may be sent. Not only will this letter be concerned with the bond issue but also with the support of higher education by the legislature in the general budget. We as citizens of the Commonwealth may say anything to friends or former students, urging their support of the bond issue and higher education, as long as University resources are not used. Layoffs are occurring in various state agencies but to date, none have occurred at institutions of higher education. While rhetoric in the future may indicate that JMU is considering all personnel options, President Rose will avoid personnel layoffs as an absolute last resort. In response to a question from Bill O'Meara, Doug indicated that JMU had hoped to bring JMU's faculty salaries to a par approaching those of our peer institutions but the

budget reversions have cancelled that possibility. Diversification of our funding sources offers a long-term solution to this problem. We need to encourage our former students to serve as advocates for JMU as the legislature debates funding for higher education.

Michael Smilowitz reiterated that the language would be generated for the letter to alumni currently being composed by Cynthia Gilliatt. Packets will also be made available to enable us to encourage our students to register to vote in November. Information concerning this will be distributed by e-mail.

5. Treasurer, Geoff Egekwu reported that the balance in the flower fund is \$1241.94. Geoff distributed a letter that may be distributed in individual department faculty meetings to explain the purpose of the flower fund. The senate has another source of funds which is made available through the Academic Vice President's Office. In this account \$4209.00 is available in personal services and \$2952 is available in non-personal services. Senators were encouraged to begin collecting dues (checks made payable to "JMU Faculty Senate") and also to let Geoff know of faculty who lose family members during the coming year so that flowers may be sent to that individual. Funds will be available to support the computer lottery this year. Information concerning the lottery will be distributed during the November-December time period.

## **6. *Committee Reports:***

**A. Academic Policies:** Beth Eck reported that the committee would meet on Thursday, September 12. Several items have been carried over from last year. Grade distribution data has been received and the committee will review this as it relates to the question of grade inflation. Qualification for honors recognition based on number of hours taken during a semester will be considered. The committee will look at Karen Sproules report on academic advising and the question of tenure for faculty who have joint appointments.

**B. Faculty Concerns:** Cynthia Gilliatt indicated that the committee would look at the Faculty Handbook this year, specifically those areas dealing with promotion and tenure procedures, faculty appeals of annual evaluations and remaining academic freedom issues.

**C. Student/Faculty Relations:** Reba Leiding reported that the steering committee met with President Rose this summer and, in response to a concern expressed by the president, the committee will consider ways the faculty can encourage student attendance at various university events/ lectures/presentations. Levar Stoney, president of the SGA, was introduced and spoke about events planned for commemorating the first anniversary of September 11<sup>th</sup>. Attendance at various events throughout the day is encouraged.

**D. Faculty Marshall** Larry Ham asked members to review the committee list and confirm their membership.

## **7. *Old Business:***

**A.** Larry Ham reported that the day-care committee had met throughout the summer and has prepared a needs assessment survey. This survey will be placed on the senate Web site and a report will be made available to the senate and sent to Doug Brown prior to the Board of Visitors meeting on October 4, 2002.

**B.** Larry attended the Association for College and University Clubs conference in Louisville, Kentucky over the summer. 37 colleges and universities were represented and Larry was impressed by the fact that mem-

bers reported a great amount of interdisciplinary synergy occurring in these clubs. A report will be submitted to the senate for consideration at a future meeting.

**C.** Michael Smilowitz reported on the Expanding Horizons initiative. He explained the genesis of this proposed program beginning with his own experience in Los Angeles as a middle school student. By exposing students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to cultural and academic activities to which they might not be exposed on their own, these students had a far higher chance of excelling academically and professionally. There are students in our own community who could benefit from a program such as this and the speaker would like to begin such a program under the auspices of the JMU faculty senate. A pilot program with Thomas Harrison Middle School is proposed, following conversations with Dr. Ford and Dr. Kidd who expressed interest in such a program. Andy Kohen moved to accept the concept of the Expanding Horizons program, seconded by Art Hamilton and passed unanimously.

## **8. *New Business***

**A.** Larry Ham asked for the Senate to go on record as supporting the passage of the Bond Issue for the support of the Virginia state parks system. There was discussion concerning whether or not the senate should take a stand on such an issue. It was decided that we as individuals could support such a resolution but that the senate should not. There being no motion, the senate moved to the next item on the agenda.

**B.** Bill O'Meara noted that certain wording in the senate constitution excludes the library faculty from senate membership and only tenured faculty are permitted to sit on the faculty appeals committee. This excludes RTA faculty members in CISAT from sitting on this committee. Bill has proposed that RTA faculty who have served for six or more years at JMU be permitted to serve on the faculty appeals committee. During the coming year we shall propose changes to the senate constitution to correct these matters. Bill outlined the process to amend the constitution.

**C.** Bill O'Meara indicated that improvement in faculty summer salaries should be considered again. Andy Kohen suggested that we discuss this matter with the faculty who sent us to the senate and report back at the next meeting.

There being no further new business, the senate adjourned at 5:00PM

Respectfully submitted,

David P. Zimmerman  
Faculty Senate Secretary