



## FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

Thursday, February 25, 2021

**In attendance:** Larsen (Speaker); Accounting: Briggs; Art, Design, and Art History: Phaup; Biology: May; Chemistry: Hughey; Comm. Sci. and Disorders: Clinard; Comm. Studies: Woo; Comp. Inf. Sci. & Bus Analytics: Tchommo; Computer Science: Kirkpatrick; Early ELED & Reading: Mathur; Economics: Cavusoglu; Ed. Found. & Exceptionalities: Wiley; Engineering: Harper; English: Lo; Foreign Languages: Lang-Rigal; Geol. & Environ. Science: McGary; Grad. Psych: Critchfield; Health Professions: Skelly; Health Sciences: Ott Walter; History: McCleary; Integrated Sciences: McGraw; Justice Studies: De Fazio; Kinesiology: McKay; Libraries: Wilson; Management: C.K. Lee; Marketing: Ozcan; Math & Stats: Garren; Media Arts & Design: Mitchell; Mid, Second, & Math: Shoffner; Military Science: Turnboo; Music: Stringham; Nursing: Lam; Phil. & Rel.: Knorpp; Physics: Butner; Political Science: H. Lee; Psychology: Melchiori; Soc. & Anth.: Tanaka; Social Work: Trull; Strategic Leadership Studies: Vanhove; Theatre & Dance: Finkelstein; Writing Rhetoric & Tech Comm: McDonnell; Part-time Faculty Reps: Harlacker, Janow, Munier; Guests—Coltman (Provost), McClain (Assoc. VP, Academic Resources)

- I. **Call to Order**—4:08 p.m.
- II. **Provost's Report**—Dr. Heather Coltman
  - The Provost commends the incredible work of the campus history committee. Did so much work to create a set of recommendations about building names that were shared with the administration. New signs are already up.
  - The General Assembly is still deliberating about the budget
  - Jason McClain presented slides from the BOV meeting:
    - Where we are right now: we don't know what the Assembly's final compromise will produce. The House proposal is more favorable to higher education.
    - In-state enrollment growth: general fund support on a per-student basis is lower than at sister institutions. Charlie King and his team have made some inroads in lobbying. JMU Allocations: \$4 million to address the discrepancy, and \$5.7 million to address COVID. Undergraduate financial aid is \$1.279 million in all three proposals (House, Senate, Governor).
    - Proposed faculty salary increases for recognizing the hard work that faculty and staff are doing: 3.5% from the House, 3% from the Senate. The House version is not dependent on state revenues. (See breaking news note about the 5% increase that was passed by the legislature.)
    - A pay increase for adjunct faculty is expected from the state.
    - The steam plant is in dire need of updates (dire). The city owned it at one point, but they have since turned it over to the university. Funds that will go toward that effort come from the sale of bonds. Update from BOV: recognize the very unexpected and tragic loss of Dr. Terry Beitzel (recognized globally for his contributions)
  - DEI work: making really significant advances. There will be a summary at the end of the year. Hiring: how are we embracing a more diverse and accessible process? Events and resources and curriculum development.
  - Conversations are ongoing about the move to national status (R2 institution at the national level) and the resources we'll need. Bob Kolvoord and Brian Charette are putting together a survey. What will be the impact over the next 15 to 20 years, including on faculty workload. How will we

value research and teaching? We need to be prepared and anticipate what the concerns and questions might be.

- At the BOV meeting, a panel of grad students spoke about their research and their plans after graduation, which was exceptional and meaningful.
- The Provost updated the board on some of the lessons we've learned from last fall. Data reflect that there has been no dramatic difference in our students' experience and outcomes. Retention was 95.8%, which is really high (down less than 1% from last year).
- Grades: in fall of 2019, 77% of students earned A or B in their classes compared to 94% in fall of 2020. Looks like our students did well. Faculty were being accommodating. Fewer students withdrew from a class this fall than the previous fall. Very good outcomes. Course evaluations: looked good in aggregate. Fall of 2019 average 4.18. Fall of 2020, the average was 4.3. Courses maintained high quality instruction and interactivity. Fifty-five% of complaints came from parents. Calendar changes caused the most problems.
- Thanks to all of you. We are doing really very, very well.
- There are plans to produce a series of reports about what we've learned: What are we keeping? Virtual learning is here to stay. Many students want the flexibility, as do many faculty. We are definitely always going to be an in-person traditional campus. How do we find that balance (flexibility and engagement/interactivity) no matter the mode of delivery?
- Continue the conversations with your unit heads and deans.
- Nearly 100 candidates applied for the dean of the graduate school position. Twelve had zoom interviews. The search committee selected 3 finalists. Interviews start next week. You're welcome to participate. We have folks from all over the country.
- About vaccinations, see the email message from Rick Larson (2/25/21) about the VDH system sign-up.
- What follows are questions to which the Provost responded:
  - Q: What is the plan for office hours for the next academic year (in person v. virtual)?
  - A: Although it's probably too early to tell, if you've found a way to make virtual office hours work successfully, some of that effort can be continued, but as much as possible, we want to be in person.
  - Q: Some faculty are not happy about the extended time between classes because the current plan stretches out the day, which is more challenging for caregivers, pushes grad classes later. Explain why.
  - A: Main issue: allows more time for students to get from one end of campus to the other and prevent bottlenecks in buildings as students try to get to the classrooms. Ran analyses and decided to retain that. Also helpful for the bus schedule.
  - Q: Monday students couldn't get to class because of the snow. The university wants us to teach in person, but it didn't feel safe. How are those decisions made?
  - A: Those decisions are made between Public Safety and Charlie King's office. Can certainly look at that.
  - Q: Are we planning for full room capacity in the fall? (Concern from faculty.)
  - A: Meetings discussing this are ongoing. Based on the information we have now, we're expecting a return to pre-Covid conditions. We will be using spaces such as Grafton and Wilson. We've capped large classes at 150 seats, which will allow us to spread out. Doesn't solve the question of the 80-person classes. We'll revisit it if needed. WE plan to be back to as close to normal as we can get.
  - Comment from the floor: There's been a budget agreement, reached late last night, for a 5% raise, It's unclear whether it's dependent on state revenues.
  - Q: Instructors in GenEd are taking on a disproportionate risk. There's an equity concern about large classrooms.
  - A: This is a legitimate point that she'll raise with AUHes and Meg Mulrooney.

### III. Speaker's Report

- Speaker Larsen noted that there are more new resolutions slated for this meeting than ever before in one senate meeting.

#### IV. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Nevin Cavusoglu announced that there is \$7,133.60 in the account. Computer lottery winners have been notified and have two weeks to submit receipts

#### V. Committee Reports

- A. Faculty Concerns—Chair Steve Harper reported that at the last meeting, the committee discussed actions to be taken for the motion about negative pandemic impact on caregivers. The motion was sent to the diversity chair of each college for their consideration. A climate survey is coming out. The draft is currently in the provost's office.
- B. Academic Policies—Chair Smita Mathur praised the hard work of the committee members who have drafted three resolutions: Latin honors, the impact of covid, and annual evaluations.
- C. Adjunct Affairs—Chair Leslie Harlacker announced that the adjunct survey is going to be sent out within the next couple of weeks and expressed thanks to Jennifer Lang-Rigal who pulled together a draft.
- D. Student Relations—Chair Hakseon Lee reported that the committee met on 2/11/21. They could not come to a consensus about the faculty diversity initiative. It's up to the speaker whether val whether to bring it to the floor. The SGA forwarded a passed motion asking faculty to provide syllabi during the enrollment period; however, the committee recognizes that many faculty don't finalize their syllabi until right before the semester begins. Students want to know what classes are like. They discussed the prospect of uploading previous syllabi into MyMadison so that students will have some idea what to expect. (Kathy Ott Walter responded that Academic Policies talked about this idea and are not supportive. The fear is that students will object if something is different.
- E. Faculty Appeals—Chair David McGraw anticipates that a case will be coming within the next week, so check your inbox if you're on the faculty appeals committee.
- F. Budget and Compensation—Chair Kimiko Tanaka reported that the committee discussed with Caitlin Read the prospect of thanking state legislators for the financial support of higher ed. She'll help the committee draft such a letter in mid-March. One letter from the faculty senate is the preferred idea.
- G. Nominations and Elections—Chair Steve Garren pointed out that there are just two more full senate meetings. If there will be a new senator for your department, let Steve Garren (garrenst) know as soon as possible so that new committees can be formed. Also let him know if you're interested in being an officer. Officers earn a \$2,000 stipend. If anyone wants to be marshal, let steve know (though he's willing to serve another year). The elected rep for the Provost's Diversity Council is Smita Mathur. Hakseon Lee is new committee chair for Student Relations. The provost allocated \$60,000 for minigrants. So far, 27 proposals have been submitted. If something has changed since last year's photo, submit your new photo to Richard Finkelstein. If you need clarification, see the announcement on the Faculty Senate Canvas site.
- H. Other Committee Reports—Faculty Handbook recommendations are coming soon for the comment period.

## VI. New Business

- Faculty Senate Diversity Initiative—JMU had 21 black faculty in 2012, increased to the 30s by 2020. Just 4% of PhDs were awarded to black graduates in 2019. Every university knows it needs more BIPOC faculty. JMU has a serious pipeline problem. Under this initiative, departments nominate promising students, which helps students see their potential. Tuition loan and work-study money will be offered, as will help identifying PhD programs. Loans could be amended to be grants. Job guarantee is essential. This proposal helps us better serve BIPOC students.
- Motion to Amend the Faculty Senate Computer Lottery Eligibility Rules: rules right now allow faculty to win once every five years. When first implemented, we had a much smaller faculty population, so the chances of winning were higher. If passed, this change, increasing the number of years between wins, will improve non-winners' chances.
- Resolution on Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccinations: This proposal asks the university to make a mandatory condition that students demonstrate their vaccination status when returning in the fall. If such a mandate is legal, then we recommend this. Not sure that students could reasonably get vaccinated. University will monitor the availability to determine what's reasonable. Caveat for a medical condition or religious objection. Intent: assist administrators by going on record as a faculty. Better leverage for our administrators to go talk to people in Richmond to be able to say our faculty want this. We can't force it to happen, but we can give the administration support. The motion seeks to exercise our voice and express the will of the faculty.
- The Resolution Related to the Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic on Faculty at JMU seeks to address the pandemic, specifically asking that no changes that have been implemented should stay in place. Ed leaves were cut short in spring of 2020. Timeframe—important to address that we didn't have time to put in a resolution during the spring. Extend protections if the pandemic still affecting us next year. The focus is on flexibility.
- Resolution for Latin Honors Designation and Recognition at Graduation—this is an equity issue. Some students (e.g., transfer students) are treated as second-class students since they have to have four semesters and sixty credits at JMU.
- Resolution Related to Faculty Handbook and Annual Evaluations—control of annual evaluations is in the hands of faculty since they're in charge of building the criteria. Many departments have not been in compliance. The resolutions asks that they adhere to the faculty handbook.

## VII. No Unfinished Business

### VIII. Open Discussion

The Senate is on track to pass more resolutions this year than any previous year. Follow-up work needed to effect implementation. Responsible party (usually a committee) must be named. The responsible party will contact people, find out what the complications and tradeoffs are, and will seek to bring the resolution to fruition. The effectiveness of the Senate is a function of what we're willing to do. Passing a motion is just a starting point.

Q: What power does the Senate have?

A: We have suasion. This is why we have to stay engaged. Impressed with how open and responsive the provost and the president are to the messages that we send (e.g., colleges weren't consulting on budget matters). The Provost said if you don't have this, get it in place. When the senate speaks, people listen. Childcare resolution is a complicated question with a lot of tradeoffs. What are the complexities of implementation? How do we extend the conversation to show that we're staying engaged with a resolution?

Q: Timely action is needed on today's resolutions. Can they be considered even before passage?

A: The Provost appreciates a heads up even when resolutions are in draft form so that she can share them with the leadership team, the deans, and the AUHs; however, she wants to be careful not to jump over the faculty process.

Q: There's not always necessarily a tradeoff between a salary increase OR childcare center. There are different ways that major expenses could be finessed. Whenever we talk about a childcare center at JMU, this false dichotomy is presented and it's counterproductive.

A: Creativity is needed to solve this complex problem.

**IX. Adjournment:** 5:36 p.m.