



## FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

Thursday, December 1, 2022 (meeting held via Zoom)

**In attendance:** Speaker: Ott Walter; Communications Director: McDonnell; Art, Design, & Art History: Rooker; Accounting: Briggs; Biology: May; Chemistry: Kokhan; Comm. Sci. and Disorders: Clinard; Comm. Studies: Fife (proxy); Computer Science: Kirkpatrick; Early ELED & Reading: Mathur; Economics: Doyle; Edu. Found. & Exception: Brown; English: Lo; Finance & Bus. Law: Parker; Foreign Languages: Lang-Rigal; Geol. & Environ. Science: McGary; Hart School of HSRM: Hallmon; Health Professions: Goetschius; Health Sciences: Lassiter; History: McCleary; IDLS: Chamberlin; Integrated Sciences: York; Justice Studies: Watkins; Kinesiology: McKay; Learning Tech. & LE: Wilcox; Libraries: Price; Management: Lee; Math & Stats: Nelson; Nursing: Lewis; Phil. & Rel.: van Leeuwen; Physics: Butner; Political Science: Lubert; Psychology: Melchiori; Social Work: Hunter; Soc. & Anth.: Spear; Strategic Leadership Studies: Vanhove; Theatre & Dance: Finkelstein; Writing Rhetoric & Tech Comm: Hickman; Part-time Faculty Reps: Harlacker, Janow, Trocchia; Guests—Coltman, Shackelford, Tongen, Butters, and others.

Send the audit document along with the minutes

- I. **Call to Order**—3:55 p.m.
- II. The November meeting minutes were approved.
- III. **Provost's Report**—Dr. Heather Coltman
  - All employees are receiving a \$2,000 bonus (\$1,000 from the state, matched by \$1,000 from JMU). Adjuncts and part-timers are also receiving the bonus, demonstrating JMU's commitment to employees. There's a set of [FAQs on the HR website](#).
  - Flu cases are up. The vaccine is widely available, as publicized through an email sent on November 11, 2022. This email also included information about student absences. It's the students' responsibility to notify instructors of illness. Faculty are encouraged to be understanding and flexible. Faculty may not require documentation or proof of a positive COVID, flu, strep, or mono test, although faculty can require a self-care note from the UHC. Students can indicate on this note what their illness is. Falsifying illness information is a violation of the JMU Honor Code. Students experiencing hospitalization or other extraordinary circumstances should contact the Dean of Students Office. This is not new information, but it's important to share.
  - According to search committee chair Linda Thomas, there is an excellent pool of twenty-nine candidates for the CGE executive director position. Initial interviews will take place early in the spring semester, with campus visits in the third or fourth week of February.

- Questions arose at the last meeting about whether the move to the Sun Belt came at a cost of \$20 million. While more detail would need to come from Jeff Bourne or Towana Moore, the following information was shared: Athletics is an auxiliary unit, meaning no tuition money goes to funding Athletics. As part of the consideration process, a detailed presentation was given to the General Assembly to show how the budget would work and to prove that JMU had the necessary facilities. The conference waived the entry fee. There are annual increases in costs for six years (from \$1.5 million this year up to \$3 million in 2028/2029). Travel costs, football scholarships, salary adjustments, etc., are offset by additional revenue.
- Following up on questions about the COACHE survey, the provost pointed to work that's been done since 2019, including efforts to create standards for interdisciplinary teaching and interdisciplinary work; to develop best practices for mentoring; to conduct leadership workshops, seminars, and training; and to hold conversations with CFI and within the units. Evaluation and T&P guidelines live in the units, but efforts are being made to ensure that all departments are considering the COACHE recommendations (which had many parallels with the Climate Study).
- At the BOV meeting last week, the provost reported on the Quality, Access, and Affordability series. Paula Maxwell discussed the discontinuation of some programs (none that have enrolled students). Narketta Sparkman-Key, Sam Prins, and students presented on their work. One BOV member asked what shared governance is, so the provost will update the board on the work of the task force on shared governance.
- The provost answered the following questions:
  - The self-care note has generated concerns among faculty, especially those who teach large classes. Since it's non-verifiable, there's the potential for abuse by students. What are some strategies for minimizing problems?
    - Melanie Shoffner and Kathy Ott Walter are on the attendance task force, where there is discussion about attendance policies. Universal messaging is important to reinforce at August orientation, for example, that there is a strong correlation between attending class and student success.
  - Student absences are notably up, as is student disengagement. Are grades going down?
    - The registrar will run that analysis after the semester.

#### IV. **Speaker's Report**

- Dr. Anthony Tongen from the Office of Research and Scholarship discussed the research side of the move to R2. This change allowed JMU to join APLU, which has created opportunities to have helpful conversations with other institutions' research officers. The central purpose of the Office of Research and Scholarship is to serve Academic Affairs and the entire university and to eliminate impediments to the flow of research and grant funding. Grants run through the Office of Research and Scholarship, as do all compliance needs. Student research is now supported through the office too.
- Tongen pointed to certain successes: \$31 million in external funding for FY 2022 and the forthcoming merge of faculty and student platforms such as SharePoint.

The Office of Research and Scholarship sends out a monthly update via email. The dean of each college has appointed a Research and Scholarship liaison. As part of the upcoming APR, which will be conducted next fall, a survey will be sent to all faculty in the spring semester to solicit faculty feedback.

- Concern was expressed from the floor about the action plan emailed in late October outlining the proposed research centers. The Faculty Research Council felt that their work wasn't valued and that faculty input was not taken into account.
  - Faculty will take the reins. It's a long-term plan, and it's exciting to see what creative ideas will come forward.
- The Faculty Research Council did a lot of work and collected a lot of data, but their voices were ignored.
  - The Research and Scholarship Task Force heard and responded to [the reports issued by the FRC](#). The Director of Student Research position, for example, was a direct response to the SNAP report.
- Further questions will be sent to Tongen since he had to leave to attend another meeting.
- Speaker Katherine Ott Walter spoke at the BOV meeting before break. She highlighted work from Kinesiology and Finance. The written and oral reports are in the Canvas Modules. Announcements and resolutions are also available in the Canvas site. Committee updates should be added under Discussions in Canvas. The speaker is working with Malika Carter-Hoyt to collect information on incidents of bias in an effort to refine the anti-bullying policy.

## V. Treasurer's Report

- Treasurer Cathy McKay reported a total of \$15,114.09 in the senate's accounts.
- Two units—Computer Science and Political Science—still need to submit dues.
- Ideas are invited for ways to contribute some of the funds to noteworthy causes.

## VI. Committee Reports

- A. Faculty Concerns—Chair Kristen McCleary announced that the committee is chipping away at the [list of faculty concerns](#). They meet in a week to focus on three issues in particular: the removal of curricular guidelines from the website, clinical hours in Nursing (how they're calculated), and the unexpected addition of others to faculty members' Canvas course sites.
- B. Academic Policies—Speaker Katherine Ott Walter reported that the transparency and accountability of A&P hires resolution will be introduced at the next meeting. The committee will be focusing on Academic Affairs policy #2 (about AUHs) and policy #5 (about grad faculty appointments).
- C. Adjunct Affairs—Chair Leslie Harlacker reported that the committee will be bringing forward a bylaws change to put in place a procedure for a midyear vacancy in the part-time faculty senator spot. They will also be proposing that the term be extended to two years (with staggered elections). The committee is reviewing the university policy about adjuncts that hasn't been revised in ten years.

- D. Student Relations—Chair Kala Melchiori announced that the committee met last month to select the finalists for the student engagement mini-grants. Eleven of twenty-five proposals received funding. The committee also worked in collaboration with many others to finalize the ODS resolution.
- E. Budget & Compensation and Government Relations—Chair Harold Butner and the committee met last month. They’re reviewing the overall budget, and they’re providing input to the R2 Task Force.
- F. Faculty Appeals—Chair Talé Mitchell followed up on the previous discussion of the inconsistent use of the word *day* in the Faculty Handbook. The committee recommends that when referring to fifteen days or fewer, *day* should mean business days, and when referring to more than fifteen days, *day* should mean calendar days.
- G. Nominations and Elections—Chair Melanie Shoffner and the committee are beginning to review submissions for the engagement mini-grants. To encourage more proposals, the application portal will be reopened. Details are forthcoming.
- H. Other Committee Reports—Jennifer Lang-Rigal, who serves on the Handbook Committee, will be posting proposed handbook changes. Potential revisions to handbook language about annual evaluations and tenure & promotion are on the table, so faculty review and input are important.

## **VII. New Business**

- The Resolution for Expanded Capacity and Strategic Planning for the Office of Disability Services (2-F22) was introduced.

## **VIII. Open Discussion**

- A question arose about whether there are guidelines for hiring adjunct faculty.
  - This process is handled by the departments, but establishing guidance would be prudent.
- Senators voted to continue meeting via Zoom. In the spring semester, the Faculty Senate will meet from 3:55 p.m. to 5:25 p.m. on the last Thursday of each month.

## **IX. Adjournment: 5:25 p.m.**