



## FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

Thursday, February 27, 2025 (meeting held via Zoom)

**In attendance:** Speaker: Ott Walter; Communications Director: McDonnell; Accounting: Briggs; Art, Design, and Art History: Brooks; Biology: L. Doyle; Chemistry: Kokhan; Comm. Sci. and Disorders: DePaolis (proxy); Comm. Studies: Nelson; Computer Inf. Sys. & Bus. Analytics: Wang; Computer Science: El-Khadi Rizvi; Economics: Doyle; Edu. Found. & Exception: Wiley; Engineering: Harper; English: Gerber; Finance & Bus. Law: Parker; Foreign Languages: Galarreta; Geol. & Environ. Science: Pyle; Graduate Psychology: LeBlanc; Hart School of HSRM: Hallmon; Health Sciences: Ott Walter (proxy); History: McCleary; IDLS: Schmitt-Harsh; Integrated Sciences: Davis; Justice Studies: Castle; Kinesiology: Wigglesworth; Learning, Tech. & L.E.: Jin; Libraries: Price; Marketing: Snyder; Math & Stats: C. Lubert; Media Arts & Design: Mitchell; Mid, Second, & Math: Shoffner; Music: Suggs; Nursing: Lewis; Phil. & Rel.: van Leeuwen; Physics: Butner; Political Science: H. Lubert; Psychology: Zinn; Social Work: Miller; Soc. & Anth.: Trouille; Strategic Leadership Studies: Selznick; Theatre & Dance: Zazzali; Writing Rhetoric & Tech Comm: Hickman; Part-time Faculty Rep: Harlacker, Trocchia; Guests—Kolvoord, Oldmixon, Kirkpatrick, Orem, Tang, White, and others.

- I. **Call to Order**—3:55 p.m.
- II. The minutes from January were approved.
- III. **Provost's Report**—Dr. Bob Kolvoord
  - The core curriculum process is moving forward. One hundred fifteen proposals were submitted. The Core Curriculum Task Force is working through them.
  - Reminder: The OKTA transition will happen over spring break. The transition will be easier if everyone is preregistered. No student work should be due over spring break or for three days afterward (just in case). A note will be sent to faculty.
  - The administration is taking a literal approach to the “Dear colleague” letter from the Department of Education, meaning they’re doing only what is asked, with no impact on curriculum, pedagogy, or research. Some edits are being made to the website. The guidance from the Virginia secretary of education is that we need to comply.
  - The following questions were asked:
    - What is changing? Student orgs? CMISS? A: Possibly. The letter is expansive and vague, and the administration is trying to figure out what the requirements are. Litigation was filed yesterday.
    - A group is OK to proceed if they don't have any limitations on who can participate? A: Forge ahead.

- What about scholarships? A: The administration has been thoughtful about the language used. There appears to be just one where there was some concern.
- Brother Ray is back, creating noise and disturbances. Doesn't there have to be sponsorship? A: Sponsorship is required only for the Quad, but we are trying to expand the definition of the Quad so that there's a larger protected space, especially by Keezell. This matter is on the radar, and we're working on it.
- It feels like a double standard: Faculty can't have signs up, but the public has broad speech rights. They're yelling deeply offensive and very personal comments, particularly to young women (with some students in tears). A: Time, place, and manner is something we have to address. We have to follow the law. Even hate speech is protected (SCOTUS case about the military funerals—even the most atrocious speech is protected). These are nuanced conversations. Even when we vehemently disagree with the speech, there's a "true threat" distinction that has to be made by the police.
- What if students are being physically assaulted? A: File a report with the police.
- A suggestion was made that faculty could band together on such occasions to be present as an organized force, possibly holding up sheets to shield student as they pass by. Also encourage students to have their parents call Richmond.

IV. **Speaker's Report**—Dr. Katherine Ott Walter invited two guests.

- Chris Orem (with input from David Kirkpatrick):
  - An email was sent to faculty senate members on 2/25/25 to complete a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis. This effort is part of the strategic planning cycle (last completed in 2018). With a new president coming onboard, this feedback will help develop an understanding of where we are.
  - The results will be reviewed very carefully at this summer's BOV retreat. The faculty's voice is really important. The strategic plan needs to emphasize our academic focus.
  - A final list will be generated that will become part of a broader survey that will go to students, alumni, and parents in late March.
  - Senators are welcome to reach out to Orem directly. The survey is open until March 7.
- Jeff Tang (with input from Registrar Michele White):
  - SCHEV looks at the data to make sure that space is being used effectively on campus. JMU is behind the SCHEVE targets for classroom utilization.
  - Odd class times hamper students' scheduling options.
  - Event management optimizer software will be used to make scheduling more efficient. The system is fairer because it treats

everyone the same and thus encourages equity. It's "morally indefensible" that some units "own" classrooms.

- Campus is split into different areas. Labs and other highly specialized cases are not affected. The system will save a lot of time and frustration. There is the ability to review and make changes.
- No more than 50% of classes can be taught on TTh or during primetime (midday times) to improve student schedule options.
- Having faculty review the draft schedule when it's available will be important. Faculty will still work with their departments on scheduling.
- Q: From the standpoint of student learning, 8:00 a.m. is not an "efficient" class time. Student learning should be part of the conversation. A: The state sets the rules. We need to hit a certain number of hours per week.
- Q: What about classes that have specific needs? A: The system contains twenty fields and a notes section. A specific room can be named as preferred or required. There is the opportunity to make changes when a room is really going to be pedagogically problematic.
- Speaker Katherine Ott Walter made the following report:
  - The 133% policy, which derives from federal law, is being adjusted and will be ready to go by summer. From Michael O'Fallon: Whether the figure includes summer teaching, J-term, and research grants is still being determined.
  - Tim Miller is under more pressure than the academic side with the "Dear colleague" mandates. The speaker offered the senate's help.
  - When you have questions for the provost, contact the speaker or your committee chair.

#### V. **Treasurer's Report—Dr. Talé Mitchell**

- The current total for the bank accounts is \$4,445. Seven bereavements have been processed since the last meeting, eighteen total. Some departments (Geology, Health Professions, Management, and Theatre & Dance) still owe dues. Please submit them.

#### VI. **Committee Reports**

- Faculty Concerns— Chair Kristen McCleary reported that the committee met and will meet again in the upcoming week. There's a request to discuss policies and develop a faculty role in "sunsetting programs." The executive orders on DEI are part of their discussions.
- Policies—no report
- Adjunct Affairs—no report
- Teaching and Student Relations—Chair Anne van Leeuwen announced that the SGA is seeking nominations for the [Madison Vision Teaching Award](#). Please pass on this

information to your departments. The committee may be involved in the selection process.

- Budget & Compensation and Government Relations—no report
- Faculty Appeals—no report
- Research and Scholarship—Marshal Melanie Shoffner noted that there are two officer positions open for next year: Speaker Pro Tempore and Marshal. She will send out position outlines. Officer elections take place in the April meeting. If your two-year term as senator is up, hold an election in your department.
- Shared Governance—no report
- Other Committee Reports—from Sasha Kokhan for the IT Strategic Advisory Council: The OKTA transition will begin 3/15–16, the first weekend of spring break. Because of the other changes and upgrades associated with Re-engineering Madison, this cannot be delayed. Despite all the planning and preparatory work, expect some IT services to be disrupted during spring break and some users not being to login. Everybody can check if their OKTA registration was successful by going to mylogin.jmu.edu Password changes are becoming annual, and JMU IT security training will be decoupled from password changes. The new training is not adopted yet, but state regulations require at least annual trainings, so they are not going away. Finally, JMU needs to transition to Windows 11 by mid-July. Currently only about 20% of computers on campus run Windows 11, and about 10% of computers cannot be upgraded to Windows 11. So, if you get those “computer non-upgradeable” warnings, please act soon to find a replacement computer. The Windows upgrades will be happening college-by-college with the first scheduled to be completed by mid-April. Expect an email with more details in 1–2 weeks.

Fletcher Linder and Elizabeth Oldmixon expressed appreciation for the phenomenal engagement by faculty in the core curriculum revision process and answered questions about the proposal review process.

- Q: In the flow chart, there’s a mention of “integrated” proposals. A: How this integration works will depend upon what the faculty are proposing. There will be some large structural proposals and some narrow ones. Faculty will be asked to prioritize.
- Q: The ad hoc committee will have four core members—why so small and why an even number? A: Five members will be suggested to avoid a tie. When a committee is too large, it’s hard to write. The suggestion will be made for A&P members to be ex officio (nonvoting).
- Q: At the end of the flow chart, there’s a vote from all faculty. Will the vote be binding? A: The vote will be input to the president. Ultimately, the president decides.
- Q: The appointment process seems a bit contradictory. A: Deans are appointing from a group that has been approved by the faculty.

- Q: What is the process for the joint speaker-provost appointee? A: This can be clarified.
- Q: The 115 proposals are a lot to go through in a survey. Can the proposals be distributed beforehand? A: The proposals are fewer than 100 words. The feedback form will be structured to be helpful.

VII. **No New Business**

VIII. **No Unfinished Business**

- The Resolution Endorsing James Madison University's Shared Governance Statement passed.

IX. **Open Discussion**

- The number of policy changes has been overwhelming. Policy 1000 appears to give the president power to make new policy without the standard ten-day comment period. This seems contrary to the goal of shared governance. In response, Speaker Ott Walter said that she is advocating for a faculty member to be on the University Policy Committee. Michael O'Fallon noted that there has always been a fast track in the policy for extenuating circumstances such as a government mandate.
- When community members come on campus and abuse our students, the Faculty Senate as a body can and should organize action.

X. **Adjournment:** 5:31 p.m.