



FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

Thursday, January 29, 2026, in Hartman 2021

In attendance: Speaker: Ott Walter; Accounting: Briggs; Art, Design, and Art History: Brooks; Biology: L. Doyle; Chemistry: Kokhan; Comm. Sci. and Disorders: Harbick; Computer Info. Systems & Bus. Analytics: Wang; Computer Science: El-Khadi Rizvi; Economics: J. Doyle; Edu. Found. & Except.: Wiley; Engineering: Harper; English: Lo; Foreign Languages: Galarreta; Geol. & Environ. Science: Pyle; Grad. Psych.: LeBlanc; Hart School of HSRM: Hallmon; Health Professions: Harrison; History: McCleary; IDLS: Schmitt-Harsh; Justice Studies: Svigelj; Learning, Tech., & LE: Jin; Libraries: Price; Marketing: Snyder; Math & Stats: Garren; Media Arts. & Design: Mitchell; Mid, Second, & Math: Shoffner; Military Science: Eshelman; Music: Suggs; Phil. & Rel.: van Leeuwen; Physics: Butner; Political Science: Lubert; Psychology: Zinn; Social Work: Miller; Soc. & Anth.: Porter; Strategic Leadership Studies: Selznick; Theatre & Dance: Zazzali; Writing Rhetoric & Tech Comm: Hickman; Part-time Faculty Reps: Harlacker; Smith; Guests—Schmidt, Kolvoord, Kirkpatrick, and others.

- I. **Call to Order**—3:55 p.m.
- II. The minutes from December were approved.
- III. **Provost's Report**—Dr. Bob Kolvoord
 - General Education discussions are continuing. The goal is to reach consensus on the framework. The faculty votes this spring.
 - On AI, initial analysis of collected information shows consistency across colleges: we need more focus on AI. [Yasmeen Shorish](#) will serve as special advisor to the provost on AI. She will think about policy approaches and professional development for faculty.
 - Compression and inversion: Towana Moore, VP of Administration and Finance, allocated \$800K from the regular budget. The move addressed compression and inversion for the first time in seven years for instructional faculty. A&P faculty were included. JMU is below national norms at senior professor ranks. Sixty percent allocated to faculty with long years of service, 20% at senior rank, 18% at junior ranks. Affected were 486 faculty (44%) and 23% of A&P. The administration will continue working on this issue.
- IV. **Speaker's Report**
 - Guests: President Jim Schmidt
 - He has spent time traveling around Commonwealth to build relationships and to meet with employers, legislators, and alumni. The focus has been on garnering resources needed to meet our mission. As the state divests from public education, JMU needs to find more funding.

- His focus on the issue of affordability. “Access without quality is no bargain,” so the aim is to focus on quality, content, and skills to prepare graduates for the world they will enter.
- He will be paying attention to legislation. The goal is to keep us distinctive, to stand out in the marketplace, to be attractive to in- and out-of-state students. Currently, JMU has 25% out-of-state students. The goal is to set some of that money aside to become more competitive with salaries because faculty/staff are an important resource.
- He’s giving thoughtful consideration to university growth: enrollment, retention, certificates, remote, graduate education. JMU is aiming for 2 to 8% growth over time to attract faculty, staff, resources, and investment.
- Phase 2 has begun on the nursing behavioral sciences building
- The strategic plan is a 5-year plan spelling out the institution’s vision. 250 faculty/staff attended forums. Over 600 attended divisional/college meetings. Division heads chose 80 people for the vision teams and 30 people as subject matter experts/resources. Students are involved in each vision team. There have been three townhall forums to meet with members of vision team. The BOV will be updated at the February meeting. They will approve the plan in April. The strategic plan needs faculty support for plan to be successful.
- The following questions were discussed:
 - Is leadership monitoring pending US Congress legislation about foreign-born citizens needing to renounce prior citizenship? The university has been asked not to take positions on political issues not of direct relevance to the university. The president noted concern about the price of visas for foreign-born workers.
 - When creating the vision, how do we shape priorities in ways to account for variables outside our control? Pushing for more international students on campus. JMU is taking a pragmatic approach since the current environment will likely be a relatively short-term situation. JMU must focus on our core mission.
- Speaker Ott Walter gave the following report:
 - She met with provost last week about gathering data on grades (As/Bs, rigor) and faculty retention (who leaves, why, what AU, colleges). Preliminary data shows retention is unit dependent. Exit interviews are voluntary and thus hard to assess.
 - She will share information about ICE and DEI when available.
 - The speaker and the marshal met with REDI’s Anthony Tongen. They have asked for an org chart to clarify who college-level liaisons are and what they do. Senate bylaws will change to include the chair of the R & D committee as part of this group. More information will be in the quarterly email from REDI. There’s a plan to reconstitute the Faculty Research Council, but this will occur after the new provost begins. There’s a liaison group for now, but the hope is to build a new group with representation from the provost’s office, AA, faculty to

interact with REDI. The question of how to define REDI within the faculty governance structure is complicated because REDI moved out of AA. They're working to create a structure that works, especially in relation to the move to R2.

- If your senate term is up this year, remember to hold elections in your department. There has been a recommendation for the senate to consider moving elections to the fall semester to avoid a conflict with class scheduling before senate elections take place.

V. Treasurer's Report—Dr. Talé Mitchell

- The current balance in the senate's accounts is \$5,700.
- Five bereavements were sent out.

VI. Committee Reports

- A. Faculty Appeals—no report.
- B. Faculty Concerns—no report
- C. Adjunct Affairs—Chair Leslie Harlacker announced that the committee is planning to roll out the adjunct survey.
- D. Teaching and Student Relations—Chair Anne van Leeuwen reported that the committee is working with the SGA on the Madison Vision award selection and addressing AI.
- E. Budget & Compensation and Government Relations—Chair Harold Butner will update the senate on the state budget as it's finalized.
- F. Research and Scholarship—Chair Ben Selznick noted graduate research vision team wants input from senate. They will come to the committee's next meeting.
- G. Shared Governance—Chair Kristen McCleary reported that the committee is creating guidelines for voting at the unit level and processes to support communication transparency.
- H. Policies—Chair Steve Garren reported that the committee is looking at the timeline for student grievances.
- I. No Other Committee Reports

VII. No New Business

VIII. No Unfinished Business

IX. Adjournment