



FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

Thursday, December 2, 2021

In attendance: Speaker: Larsen; Accounting: Briggs; Art, Design, & Art History: Phaup; Biology: May; Chemistry: Kokhan; Comm. Sci. and Disorders: Clinard; Comm. Studies: Woo; Comp. Inf. Systems & Bus Analytics: Tchommo; Computer Science: Kirkpatrick; Early ELED & Reading: Mathur; Economics: Doyle; Edu. Found. & Exception: Wiley; Engineering: Harper; English: White; Finance & Bus. Law: Parker; Foreign Languages: Lang-Rigal; Geol. & Environ. Science: McGary; Grad. Psych: LeBlanc; Hart School of HSRM: Anaza; Health Professions: Goetschius; Health Sciences: Ott Walter; History: McCleary; IDLS: Chamberlin; Integrated Sciences: York; Justice Studies: Scheuerman; Kinesiology: McKay; Libraries: Clarke; Management: C.K. Lee; Marketing: Ozcan; Math & Stats: Garren; Media Arts & Design: Mitchell; Mid, Second, & Math: Shoffner; Music: Peterson; Nursing: Leisen; Phil. & Rel.: Knorpp; Physics: Butner; Political Science: H. Lee; Psychology: Melchiori; Social Work: Hunter; Strategic Leadership Studies: Vanhove; Theatre & Dance: Finkelstein; Writing Rhetoric & Tech Comm: Hickman; Part-time Faculty Reps: Harlacker, Janow, Stone; Webmaster: Cole; Guests—Coltman, Bauerle, Shackelford, and other observers

- I. **Call to Order**—4:20 p.m.
- II. **Provost's Report**—Dr. Heather Coltman
 - COVID vaccination rates are 92% for students and 90% for employees, with 100% of quarantine beds currently available. Information about at-home tests was sent via email. The leadership team continues to meet. No modification to the mask policy is currently planned.
 - The Board of Visitors (BOV) is implementing a change to the committee structure. Having a new committee, the Academic Excellence Committee (separate from Student Affairs), will be a big benefit to Academic Affairs, offering an opportunity to appear before the BOV for ninety minutes, four times per year. The change will allow more focus on our students, curriculum, and faculty accomplishments.
 - Enrollment: Melinda Wood, the new Director of Admissions, is implementing new strategies for recruitment using data technology. JMU has received over 20,000 applications so far, double last year's number at this point. So far, 6,000 applicants have been admitted, also far above last year.
 - There are many exciting events around campus at this time (e.g., the new AAAD Studies Center, the Global Civil Rights Symposium). The promotion path process for RTAs will begin in the fall of 2022.
 - Congratulations to Dr. Siân White on her new associate dean appointment in CAL.
 - The provost answered the following questions:
 - Are booster vaccinations being tracked?
 - Not currently.
 - What is the target for admissions?

- We're aiming for an incoming class of 4,650.
- Who presents to the BOV committee?
 - The Provost is the administrative chair; the BOV chair has not yet been named; the Speaker of the Faculty Senate and representatives from Academic Affairs deliver reports.
- Is DUO really necessary for logging in to Canvas? When students' phones break, students fall behind. And faculty sometimes accidentally leave their phones at home, losing access to important applications.
 - She'll take this question to Robin Bryan in IT.
- It's useful for a faculty representative to be present on the BOV student committee and for the student to be on the academic affairs committee so that we don't become disconnected.
 - Yes, we need to be thoughtful when we plan the agendas and will combine the committees when appropriate.
- For departments that haven't used RTAs, is there a promotion pathway for adjuncts?
 - The current plan is specifically designed for those already in full-time positions.
- Which universities will be our peer institutions if we achieve R2 status?
 - We have a preliminary list of nine schools, but it's not a fixed list. There's room for colleges and programs to look at their peers and to offer input. We've tried to be very thoughtful, but the metrics/criteria are tricky.
- Does the promotion pathway apply to full-time instructors who are not RTAs?
 - The current promotional path is for full-time RTA lines (lecturers and instructors). Fixed-term appointments, which are temporary appointments, are not part of the process this year.
- Is there a set date for the move to R2?
 - The Carnegie Commission makes its decision in December. We expect to hear in January.

III. Speaker's Report—Dr. Val Larsen

- JMU functions best when the Senate and the administration collaborate. It's important to try to resolve matters of controversy, such as the current dissension caused by the Speaker's November oral report to the BOV. Both the written and the oral report were submitted to the Steering Committee beforehand. In the oral report, he focused on the hiring protocol resolution passed last month with almost unanimous support by the Senate. The resolution seeks to have the restriction against ranking candidates withdrawn and the importance of faculty input reaffirmed. In his BOV remarks, Speaker Larsen tried to provide context and to emphasize principles of faculty primacy in hiring decisions within departments. The Senate should remain fully engaged on this issue. The Speaker expressed hopes for mutual understanding but noted that the Provost does not intend to rescind the new protocols. Further discussion will continue on Friday, December 3, at 9:00 a.m.

IV. Treasurer's Report

- Treasurer Cathy McKay reported a total of \$12,185.95 in the Senate's combined accounts. Departments that missed the deadline are Art, Design & Art History, Comm. Sci. and Disorders, Comp. Inf. Systems & Bus Analytics, Computer Science, IDLS, Libraries, Media Arts & Design, Phil. & Rel., Physics, Social Work, and Strategic Leadership Studies.
- The bereavement form is now submittable online. Thanks to Carey Cole and IT's Sandy Boyd for their help. The Webmaster is working on putting the link in the left menu of the Senate website homepage, but for now, the link appears near the bottom of [the main page](#). Make sure that your colleagues are aware of this service.

V. Committee Reports

- A. Budget & Compensation and Government Relations—Chair Tim Ozcan reported that the committee met with Charlie King. Caitlyn Read, the Senate's liaison in the finance office, will come to the January Senate meeting. Among all universities in the state, JMU is at the very bottom of the state funding list and has been for years. JMU is requesting a \$5 million increase for next year (and \$5 million for the subsequent year). Caitlyn Read created a video, which will be sent out through Canvas. Faculty voices can be helpful in lobbying the legislature to fund this increase.
- B. Faculty Concerns—Chair Katherine Ott Walter announced that the committee met jointly with Adjunct Affairs and Academic Policies to discuss workload. They are gathering information to make recommendations about departments creating policies about equity. The committee will meet next Thursday (12/9) with Academic Policies to discuss the DEI training pause.
- C. Academic Policies—Chair Smita Mathur noted that the committee met three times, once jointly with Faculty Concerns, as mentioned above. They'll meet again jointly on Dec. 9. They're in the process of developing a resolution on the workload equity issue.
- D. Adjunct Affairs—Chair Leslie Harlacker reported that the committee is also working with Faculty Concerns and Academic Policies on the workload distribution problem. The committee continues to work on the survey report. The FSVA is collecting matters of interest/concern for the January Advocacy Day. Contact Leslie or Val with any input. The Committee for Academic Policies is reviewing a proposal from Dietetics and Nutrition about restructuring the master's program because credentialing will now require a master's degree.
- E. Student Relations—Chair Hakseon Lee expressed thanks to the committee for reviewing the student mini-grant applications, which were all funded. Xavier Williams, the student representative on the BOV and a member of the Task Force for Racial Equity, is working with the committee to have the DEI statement (from a 2019 Senate resolution) required for syllabi. Expect a resolution in January. Next semester, the committee works with the SGA to run the Madison Vision Teaching Awards. Hakseon raised concerns about two paragraphs in the faculty hiring resolution passed last month that focus on DEI. He suggested that the motion needs to be revisited.

- F. Faculty Appeals—Chair Talé Mitchell is working on clarifying language in the handbook about the appeals process for misconduct and sanctions. By the end of the semester, she will send a draft to the committee for review.
- G. Nominations and Elections—Chair Steve Harper shared the list of the fifteen mini-grant winners and thanked the committee for their quick work in determining the awards. The Provost’s office funded \$58,000—\$8,000 above the original pledge of \$50,000.

VI. Unfinished Business

- The Resolution on Instructional Faculty Covid-19-Related Policy passed.

VII. Open Discussion

- Provost Coltman started the discussion by echoing the call for collaboration and partnership with the Senate. She greatly values this relationship and believes that trust, direct dialogue, and transparency are important. However, what happened with the Speaker’s oral report to the BOV about the faculty hiring protocols was not collaborative. Faculty are mistaken about a number of premises in the resolution passed last month. The motivation for the document about hiring practices was to improve transparency, consistency, and equity, and to reduce institutional liability. Ranked lists have the potential to cause harm to candidates. At the point of a job offer, the process becomes a confidential personnel matter—an administrative function delegated to the president, who has delegated the responsibility to the provost. It ceases to be a faculty governance process. Prior to that point, it’s a deeply integrated and scaffolded process involving faculty.
- The Provost and Vice Provost Bauerle fielded the following questions and comments:
 - Why was this change implemented over the summer?
 - The process originated in HR, seeking to clarify the practices that we already had in place. We worked with deans and AUHes to make sure we were accurately representing the process, not to make changes. “The timing was the timing.” The goal is to have an excellent faculty.
 - Is it an anomaly if a search committee was not invited to craft the job description?
 - We would want to hear more about that particular situation.
 - Is it ever the case that people on the unacceptable list make it onto the acceptable list, or that people who never applied are hired?
 - If a candidate makes it all the way to the finalist stage and is deemed unacceptable, that would be very, very unusual.
 - Those hired have to have applied.
 - Faculty feel more and more that they have less voice in hiring their colleagues.
 - Faculty recommend colleagues for hire. None of that has been eroded.
 - How is there less liability in acceptable/unacceptable versus ranking?
 - We aren’t legal scholars, but harm can be perceived by the candidate. It can be tough for search committee members to maintain confidentiality when there is pressure from colleagues. Sometimes confidentiality is breached, which can result in someone perceiving that they were not the top candidate.
 - Then address the issue of confidentiality.
 - There is now a comprehensive common document.

- The lack of clarity at the AUH level has created mistrust in my unit. Furthermore, processes that are new (the training now required of search committees, new red tape and required approvals) are creating a time issue. We are missing the wave-one and even the wave-two candidates. The new processes are also putting undue stress on the time commitment of diverse faculty (now required to be on the committee).
 - We'll look into the communication glitches. We're aware of the bottlenecks and will investigate. We're also aware of the burden on faculty of color, and we've got to make sure that the workload is considered.
- The goal is an excellent faculty. Is the criterion for hiring recommendations excellence or acceptability?
 - The criteria are set by the department.
- Are departments allowed to set the bar at excellent?
 - We would hope that excellence is what we're looking for.
- If there are two excellent candidates, can the short list be just two candidates long?
 - Typically, three finalists are interviewed.
- What's the rationale for removing reference checks from the committee?
 - Reference checks are done confidentially—they've always been performed by the search committee chair.
- Having a too small number of candidates put forth as excellent can lead to wasted resources and a failed search.
 - The hope is that all finalists would be excellent candidates.

The resolution expressed a concern about a loss of faculty discretion and involvement. This is an ongoing conversation to be continued at the December 3rd meeting and the next Senate meeting.

VIII. Adjournment: 6:05 p.m.