



FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

Thursday, January 20, 2025 (meeting held in person)

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: Harbick; Comm. Studies: Nelson; Computer Inf. Sys. & Bus. Analytics: Wang; Computer Science: El-Khadi Rizvi; Economics: Smith; Edu. Found. & Exception: Wiley; Engineering: Harper; English: Gerber; Finance & Bus. Law: Parker; Geol. & Environ. Science: Pyle; Hart School of HSRM: Hallmon; Health Sciences: Lassiter; History: McCleary; IDLS: Schmitt-Harsh; Integrated Sciences: Davis; Justice Studies: Castle; Kinesiology: Wigglesworth; Learning, Tech. & L.E.: Jin; Libraries: Price; Management: Pattie; Marketing: Snyder; Math & Stats: Garren (proxy); Media Arts. & Design: Mitchell; Mid, Second, & Math: Shoffner; Military Science: Eshelman; Music: Suggs; Nursing: Lewis; Phil. & Rel.: van Leeuwen; Physics: Butner; Political Science: Sulfaro (proxy); 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; Guests—King, Kolvoord, Oldmixon, Shackelford, and others.

- I. **Call to Order**—3:55 p.m.
- II. The minutes from December were approved with a minor clarification.
- III. **Provost's Report**—Dr. Bob Kolvoord made a few remarks and then President Charlie King addressed the senate.
 - The provost noted that he has endorsed the shared governance definition that is currently before the senate.
 - His office is working on AA Policy 2 about AUH evaluation. It will be done by the end of the semester.
 - Revised hiring guidelines were put out in the fall.
 - The contract/pay start date for new hires is being resolved.
 - An Academic Affairs [statement on JMU's R2/national university status](#) was disseminated last semester.
 - The president and the provost met with the Steering Committee in August, and they meet with the speaker regularly.
 - The following information was presented by President King:
 - In new *Wall Street Journal* rankings, JMU was named the 27th best public university and number 70 overall (out of 500 universities).
 - JMU received 42,091 applications for the class of 2028 (47% from out of state). This high number is a result of JMU's R2 status, athletics success, word spreading about the good experience students have and their employability, and faculty dedication.
 - The latest crop of students is 28.5% out of state (from 36 states).

- For fall 2025 admissions, 19,000 early acceptances were sent out last week (44,585 total applications).
- Admissions recruiters are looking to the South (FL, TX, GA) for new students.
- The 2024 University Career Fair was the largest in JMU history.
- 95.2% of graduates with a bachelor's degree reported a career outcome.
- 96.4% of students with advanced degrees reported a career outcome.
- The president and the provost dedicated \$40,000 for the Senate Mini-Grants.
- The Madison Trust will be back on March 14—over \$1 million awarded to projects.
- The 3% raises in July 2024 and (expected) July 2025 and the holiday bonuses were highlighted.
- Reengineering Madison, which involves replacing current technology, including PeopleSoft, is still in process. The CRM implementation is designed to improve people's jobs. The ERP assessment and selection is beginning with a decision expected 6/2025.
- Rebuilding the Village is underway. Potomac Hall will be a 461-bed dorm.
- Carrier Library renovations will be completed in January 2026 and open to students for the fall of 2026.
- For fall 2025, Festival is adding B&F Burgers and Fries, Ignite Pasta and Pizza, Madison Press, and Chick-fil-A.
- JMU fundraising had its second-biggest year (\$28.1 million). Stan and Rosemary Jones donated \$2.5 million for a wing of Carrier Library.
- The general assembly is in the middle of the legislative session. Proposals for JMU include \$1 million to hire 14 nursing faculty, adding the renovation of Johnston Hall to this summer's Spotswood Hall renovation, and an athletics bill that would allow the university to deduct medical costs that have resulted from NCAA rules. Also proposed is a study to determine the feasibility of offering the same retirement benefits for campus police officers as for officers in the city and county. JMU struggles to recruit and retain campus police officers.
- The presidential search is in the advanced stages (beginning interviews) with the aim of recommending a candidate to the BOV by the end of February.
- A firm has been hired to draft the next master plan (present a draft to the BOV in June with a plan finalized by the fall).
- The following questions were addressed by the president and provost:
 - Is it standard to offer new hires unrestricted funds for research? We do advantage younger faculty who are then expected to find grants later in their careers.

- How are international students being supported? CGE has reached out to every single international student. We're paying close attention and looking out for them.
- What's the status of compression and inversion? A review is underway to attend to this issue.
- Will you provide a short budget update? We're waiting to see what the General Assembly does. YCP will offer an expanded number of slots beginning in the fall. A 0% tuition increase is not feasible because of salary and health insurance increases.
- What checks and balances can be put in place before the new president begins? We're committed to making the case that what's in place is working.
- Any news on the federal grant pause? We're keeping very close track of the fluid situation.
- What happened to the JMU Promise? Covid paused the program. It should be revisited. A case still needs to be made in Richmond for more state support for JMU.
- How is JMU positioning itself to be proactive and responsive to the many directives coming from the federal government (e.g., deportation in the schools where JMU education students are placed)? We're staying in close touch with what's going on in Washington, prioritizing our values, and doing what we can to help people who are feeling anxious. If ICE officers come to campus, refer them to the JMU Police (540)568-6912.

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

- The speaker is talking to Tim Miller and Eric Nickel about trying to increase the number of spots in UREC children's camps.
- Peer coverage for classes works differently in different departments, but if a faculty member needs to be out for an extended period of time, then those covering classes should be duly compensated.
- The speaker is working with and supporting people doing DEI work.
- There are faculty on the COACHE committee (the survey has now been released). They are open to more faculty sitting on the committee. If interested, contact ottwalmk@jmu.edu. Responses to the COACHE survey are completely anonymous. Harvard collects the data and returns aggregated results.
- Send suggestions for guardrails/checks and balances for the new president to ottwalmk@jmu.edu. These are important to establish by the anticipated July 1 start date.
- Since REDI moved out of Academic Affairs, new guidelines and policies about faculty's say in centers and institutes need to be developed. Elizabeth Oldmixon is looking forward to working with faculty on this matter.
- Departments need to have governing documents in place (how the faculty vote, how overloads work, etc.). Please send examples of effective documents to ottwalmk@jmu.edu. Elizabeth Oldmixon is developing a template.
- Thanks to those who volunteered to have BOV members visit their classes.

- Jeff Tang and Chris Orem will be coming to the February meeting to discuss the master plan process (SWOT analysis) and the centralized scheduling process.

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

- Some departments still owe dues. Please submit them.

VI. **Committee Reports**

- Faculty Concerns— Chair Kristen McCleary has been updating the committee's [GoogleDoc](#).
- Policies—On behalf of Chair Smita Mathur, Speaker Kathy Ott Walter reported that the committee collected feedback from stakeholders about Policy 2 and is working to have a new version by the end of the semester.
- Adjunct Affairs—no report
- Teaching and Student Relations—no report
- Budget & Compensation and Government Relations—no report
- Faculty Appeals—no report
- Research and Scholarship—no report
- Shared Governance—no report
- Other Committee Reports—Sarah Brooks sent an email with updates from the Faculty Handbook Revision Committee on 1/30/2025.

VII. **New Business**

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

VIII. **No Unfinished Business**

IX. **Open Discussion**

- There is a bill before the state legislature about having a faculty representative on all state university BOVs. The Faculty Senate of Virginia supports this bill. At JMU, the speaker sits on the BOV as a nonvoting member.

X. **Adjournment:** 5:18 p.m.