



FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

Thursday, November 7, 2024 (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: Harbick; Comm. Studies: Nelson; Computer Science: El-Khadi Rizvi; Early ELED & Reading: Mathur; Economics: J. Doyle; Edu. Found. & Exception: Wiley; Engineering: Harper; English: Gerber; Finance & Bus. Law: Parker; Foreign Languages: Galarreta; Geol. & Environ. Science: Pyle; Hart School of HSRM: Hallmon; Health Professions: Harrison; Health Sciences: Lassiter; History: McCleary; IDLS: Schmitt-Harsh; Integrated Sciences: Davis (proxy); Justice Studies: Castle; Kinesiology: Wigglesworth; Learning, Tech. & LE: Jin; Libraries: Price; Management: Pattie; Marketing: Snyder; Math & Stats: C. Lubert; Media Arts. & Design: Mitchell; Mid, Second, & Math: Shoffner; Military Science: Eshelman; 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; Writing Rhetoric & Tech Comm: Hickman; Part-time Faculty Reps: Harlacker; Guests—O’Fallon, Oldmixon, Grant, Hornsby, Liu, Gayne, Mulrooney, and others.

- I. **Call to Order**—3:55 p.m.
- II. The minutes from October were approved.
- III. **Provost’s Report**—Dr. Elizabeth Oldmixon
 - The Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Curriculum discussed the following:
 - GenEd renewal: Next September, from the top three to five proposals, which will have been fully developed by faculty teams over the summer, one proposal will be selected for the president to take to the BOV for approval. In this next year, what are the best ways to ensure that faculty are engaged and driving the process?
 - Q: Are faculty trying to drive the change? GenEd belongs to all faculty.
 - Q: Clarify the timeline because how would the new president have time to study the history of GenEd at JMU?
A: Good point. The timeline might be a little fast. The proposal process is underway (deadline: Dec. 16 for nascent proposals). Next semester, teams might be formed when there’s overlap or similarity. Three to five ideas will be stipended for summer work.
 - In response to questions raised in the past about administrative bloat, an Excel spreadsheet was shared to show administrative versus instructional position growth. It’s not a complete analysis.

- Q: How many new academic units were formed? A: Oldmixon will make note of the question and follow up.
- Why is there such a discrepancy in percentage growth between administrative and instructional positions? A: Often positions are intended to ease faculty workload (e.g., lab management, YCP teachers, professional advisors).
- Is there an update on the workload study? Workload policies are being revised at the rate of ten depts. per year. The first cohort started in September. The aim is to create greater transparency (e.g., How is work counted? How are those assignments made?) The goal is to involve department faculty.
- Has there been a level of productivity equivalent to the 50% increase in associate/assistant deans? A: This is a “known unknown” that needs to be answered. An updated list of ADeans was sent to Steering. CAL included ADean responsibilities.

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

- BOV events were held on the day of the Faculty Senate meeting. Academic Excellence and Student Affairs were meeting at 4:30 to discuss ODS (as requested by the BOV).
- Is there a classroom shortage? Are faculty being asked to change rooms or move online? There’s a conversation about classroom utilization. Jeff Tang and Michele White are coming in February to discuss centralized scheduling. Responses during the meeting indicate that some requests to change had indeed occurred, in particular to suboptimal times (e.g., 8:00 and later at night). Another comment is that it’s hard to break into “legacy” classrooms, especially large classrooms. For untenured faculty and adjuncts, 8:00 a.m. classes can lead to low enrollment and canceled classes. This is a Faculty Concerns issue. Scheduling is complicated, but there are best practices. Scheduling can cause tension between the administration and faculty.
- Now that REDI is out of Academic Affairs, it’s much harder to track information such as number of hires, the makeup of search committees, etc.
- How are searches going? Several searches are underway, and the process seems to be smoother. There are some difficulties with the size of applicant pools (too small to be certified). Committees are worried about losing great candidates.
 - The president is committed to smooth searches.
 - Is it possible to advertise salary ranges in the job ad to weed out those who would not be interested in working at JMU because of low salaries? This would prevent candidates dropping out after advancing far in the process only to drop out when salary is revealed.
- New hires aren’t paid until mid-September, which can be a major setback. The president and the provost are seeking creative solutions to the problem.

V. Treasurer's Report—Dr. Talé Mitchell

- The senate has approximately \$4,900 in the combined bank accounts.
- Four bereavements were processed since last month, fifteen since the beginning of the year.
- Seventeen departments haven't paid dues.
- Four winners did not participate in the computer lottery submission.

VI. Committee Reports

- Faculty Concerns—Chair Kristen McCleary shared the committee's [GoogleDoc](#). The committee is working on best practices for scheduling classes within departments. They are also working on how better to identify the source of summer pay on pay advice so that faculty can track their pay. Currently, the burden falls on the faculty member to track their compensation for summer work to ensure they stay within the 33% of their salary threshold, which is difficult because pay stubs do not identify the source of extra pay.
- Policies—Chair Smita Mathur announced that the committee is meeting with Academic Policies and the Academic Affairs Policies Committee (AAPC) to work on Policy #2 about AUHs. Policy 00 outlines the process for revising policies at JMU. The AAPC version of Policy 2 is the first policy to undergo that process and is currently being circulated among stakeholders, and then after considering their feedback and revising further, it will be available for public comment.
- Adjunct Affairs—Chair Leslie Harlacker noted that the committee plans to meet soon with the handbook review representative about how best to communicate with part-time faculty.
- Teaching and Student Relations—Chair Anne van Leeuwen announced that the committee will meet on November 14 via Zoom. It's an open session to raise concerns (e.g., Policy 3104 about the posting policy).
- Budget & Compensation and Government Relations—Chair Harold Butner announced that the committee will hold meet on November 14 to discuss various issues that have come up.
- Faculty Appeals—no report.
- Research and Scholarship—Chair Melanie Shoffner reported that sixteen mini-grants were fully or partially funded. The committee will share the results of the REDI discussion. Questions they plan to ask include How REDI will provide support for JMU as an R2 institution? How is REDI structured so that faculty can find support for external grants in particular? How will REDI support undergraduate research?
- Shared Governance—no report
- Other Committee Reports

- Sarah Brooks, co-chair of the Handbook Revision Committee, announced that the committee will be holding stakeholder fora to gather feedback. Written feedback can be submitted to handbookrevision@jmu.edu through December 13.
- The Faculty Senate of Virginia hopes to turn out faculty for Virginia Higher Education Advocacy Day on January 9, 2025, from 8:45 to 3:00. Location TBD. More information at this [link](#).

VII. **No New Business**

VIII. **No Unfinished Business**

IX. **Open Discussion**

- There's a conflict between the later fraternity rush period and exam week. (The speaker sent an email to Fraternity and Sorority Life but will check again.)
- Are the policies about AUHs advancing? The provost is interested in an early-warning system so that the faculty can signal concerns before issues spiral. CISE has been doing AUH 360 for years. Some units have a rotation. Units will decide internally whether to implement a rotation. The workload is different from department to department, even though the policy says 50/50.
- Moving new faculty into guest housing means that they need to pack up and move again to permanent housing, which is very stressful.
- For international faculty, status is tied to the contract start date, which is problematic with the current start date.

X. **Adjournment:** 5:20 p.m.