

Faculty Council meeting

8 September 2010

The meeting convened at 3:05 pm with the following members present:

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| Mechel Camp (ex-officio) | Donna Johnsey |
| Richard Coppins | Andrew Kelley |
| Diana Fordham (Assistant Dean, Arts) | Carol Norman (Chair) |
| Powell Franklin (Secretary) | Bob Raines |
| Roger James (Vice-Chair) | Amy Rine Wake |
| Kim White | Rob Wyatt |
| Pam Xanthopoulos (Faculty Sub-Council Rep.) | |

Present also were President Blanding and Vice-President Dodson.

Chair Carol Norman called the meeting to order and introduced the single item on the agenda, our intent to seek clarification from Dr. Blanding regarding the role and purpose of our Faculty Council. Of particular concern to the Council and many of the faculty are specific changes to the constitution of the Faculty Council which limit terms and the number of representatives. Limiting terms and requiring the Council chair to serve as the Faculty Sub-Council Representative would be tantamount to preventing any JSCC representative from serving in an executive office on the Faculty Sub-Council, as a member of the Faculty Council must serve one year before becoming eligible to serve in an executive role locally, and Faculty Sub-Council representatives are subject to the same policy; thus, a limited two-year term on our Council would effectively prohibit any JSCC representative from meeting the criteria to be elected to an executive office on the Faculty Sub-Council. Furthermore, these strict term limits would hinder continuity and service to our local faculty.

Dr. Blanding responded by describing the top-down system of governance to which community college faculty, administrations, sub-councils, and TBR are subjected, at the governor's discretion and leisure. He indicated that, as for community colleges in Tennessee, the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs and TBR staff (through various sub-councils) meet quarterly to determine matters of policy and procedure. At the penultimate phase, the Presidents' Council meets to hear recommendations from the other sub-councils, and they will either agree with those recommendations, which will then be moved along the chain of command, or they will disagree and the recommendations will either die or go back for reconsideration and revision.

In response to the concern about requiring the JSCC Faculty Council chair to serve as the Faculty Sub-Council representative, Dr. Blanding asserted that TBR policy suggests that the Council Chair represent the Council and college on that body. In response to the concern about two-year term limits for Faculty Council representatives, Dr. Blanding suggested that all faculty should have the opportunity to serve on the Council in the true spirit of shared governance. He indicated that it is an unfair burden for some faculty to serve limitless terms while other faculty never or seldom serve.

Whether these are matters for further negotiation will depend, in large part, on the faculty via their representative body and their willingness to work with our administration, in good faith, to construct viable policy of which our president approves.

Dr. Blanding insisted that he has previously offered to negotiate the fine points of our proposed Faculty Council constitution, and that he remains willing to negotiate “90%” of our suggested policy, but that his is the final decision. He reiterated that he needs faculty input on certain issues, and that the role of our Faculty Council is to act as a representative body in delivering that input, but asserted that he must have the opportunity to provide input in that process as well. He indicated that his role is to represent our faculty to TBR, but that he can’t do this adequately “if we don’t have a dialogue.”

Dr. Blanding shared some concerns regarding the Complete College Act of 2010, particularly the mandate that all community colleges will begin offering coursework via class cohorts. JSCC will need to be prepared to facilitate our cohorts in programs that haven’t traditionally offered them (the Nursing program has offered cohort programs for some time now) beginning Fall 2011. He also suggested that we need to develop a comprehensive policy manual, something we’ve never had, and proclaimed the need for faculty/administration collaboration on this project.

Dr. Blanding defined the responsibility of our representative body as follows: “The role of the Faculty Council is to take the pulse of the faculty on issues, address policy, make recommendations, and then we can come to a consensual agreement .” He further asserted, “I am a proponent of policy. The Faculty Council needs to identify, from a faculty point of view, prospective policies so that we can be consistent across the board.”

Dr. Blanding informed the Council that a new position has been created by TBR, the “Vice-Chancellor for Community Colleges,” but that this post will remain unfilled by our current Chancellor. The incoming chancellor may well appoint someone to fill this position. Despite the apprehension of many faculty, warranted or not, regarding Chancellor-elect Morgan’s experience and education, he may well prove to be an advocate for community colleges in Tennessee.

In other business:

- Council Secretary, Powell Franklin, requested that the Faculty Council policy (taken from the Faculty Council constitution, appendix C of the Faculty Handbook) requiring the dissemination of hard copies of Faculty Council meeting minutes be waived, and that instead electronic copies should be distributed to Council members and made available to all faculty on JWEB. The Council voted in favor of this request.
- A motion was made and seconded that the Faculty Council, with the majority consent of the faculty at large, re-examine our current constitution and negotiate in good faith with our administration to finalize a document we can all agree upon. This motion carried unanimously.
- Faculty Council chair, Carol Norman, appointed Rob Wyatt our parliamentarian. Professor Wyatt has served in this capacity on a previous Faculty Council.
- Diana Fordham has agreed to implement an online discussion forum in eLearn, through which our Council may discuss business electronically and facilitate the many duties incumbent upon us.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for 3:00 pm on Wednesday, October 13, in the Foundation Board Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Powell Franklin, secretary