

Faculty Council Meeting Minutes 4-30-2014

Council Members Present: Kim Holland, Council Chair (Nursing); Richard Skelton, Vice Chair (Business/Industrial & CIS); Vivian Grooms, Secretary (Social and Behavioral Sciences); Karolyn Smith (Nursing); Jerry Gilbert (Communication & Humanities); Richard Coppings (Dean); Sara Youngerman (Math & Natural Sciences); Candyce Sweet, At Large Representative (Communication & Humanities); Mary Wadley (Communication & Humanities); James Mayo, Ex-Officio (Communication & Humanities)

Council Members Absent: Kim Todd (Allied Health)

Visitors: Bruce Blanding, JSCC President (present until 2:40 p.m.); Nancy Hickey, Liz Mayo, Cameron Byrd (SGA), Emily Fortner, Horace Chase and Lisa Crow (entered 1:25 p.m.); 2014-15 new Faculty Council members: Abby Lackey (Humanities and Communication), Nick Ashbaugh (Natural Sciences); Josh Britt (Math), Tom Pigg (Dean)

The meeting was called to order in the Classroom Building, Room 103 at 1:00 by Kim Holland, and Holland first recognized Abby Lackey. Lackey requested that JSCC employees do something for the family of Preston Turner, whose son (born 5 weeks ago and prematurely) was just removed from a respirator after having surgery. Holland will send an email back to her division including this information; James Mayo mentioned Faculty Sick Leave Bank, and discussion followed regarding guidelines for its use. President Blanding noted that the fund is especially good for new employees who do not have many hours built up. Lackey will take and coordinate donations for the family.

Comments from President Bruce Blanding/Questions From Faculty

- The current summer numbers year-to-date:
 - Summer Head Count, down 16.8%
 - Summer Full-Time Enrollment, down 21.3%
 - Fall Head Count, down 12.6%
 - Fall Full-Time Enrollment, down 10.8%
- Six years ago there were 110 full-time faculty; now there are 89 full-time faculty.
- There is a direct correlation between lowering enrollment and lowering faculty and staff. At this rate we could predict when the college would have to close due to attrition.
- Take a 27 million budget and take away \$600,000; 78% of the budget is salary and benefits which is a problem; the budget is hanging in there but going down and made up of two parts:
 - State appropriation—goes down each year
 - Student enrollment
- Last fall the Head Count was up 2.2%; and FTE down 3.6%--if dual enrollment was taken out, it would be 28.5% down, and FTE down 40%.

- Faculty asked if dual enrollment was making JSCC money. Blanding reported that it comes out about even, depending on whether adjuncts or full-time faculty teach the class. Blanding extensively explained how formula funding has changed, the importance of completers, and problems with persisting students; he also noted that JSCC ranks 11 of 13 community colleges in size at this time.
- Faculty is the future of the institution and who is interacting with the students. Blanding suggested that faculty could “watch it (i.e., the institution) die or help turn it around.”
- Faculty goal has to be student success and nothing less for students to thrive; Blanding said that if faculty don’t care, are casual about it, or let their colleagues remain unaccountable, “then we are done.” Blanding noted that there is no alternative and that we have to make sure students succeed.
- Karolyn Smith noted that she did see student success as part of faculty responsibility, and then she asked if Blanding would support program growth in areas with potential for growth by increasing number of faculty needed to do so. Blanding stated “give me a proposal...we will find a way.” Brief discussion followed regarding increasing numbers in current programs (e.g., Physical Therapy Assistant) and developing new programs to reshape the institution; Blanding suggested we have to have a more robust variety of occupational training available and dual enrollment to continue.
- Blanding noted that Horace Chase can help us get the resources, “if faculty do not run off all of the students.” Blanding provided an example of SGA deciding to have an election and an unsupportive email sent around regarding the elections being held in the classrooms.
- Blanding said that some faculty don’t understand the importance of taking attendance; 70% of our people are Pell recipients and must have attendance reported.
- Blanding suggested that faculty know what is going in the classrooms of their colleagues and that they should have a sense of collegiality and report concerns.
- Another issue is coming up: There are 9 people coming up for tenure, and it’s “up or out...” Blanding suggested that the only place we have to start is to get the student numbers up so that we can continue to tenure faculty.
- Blanding asked FC to work on college needs, come up with ideas, and see if we can figure out ways to turn the institution around, and stated that we have been “ignoring it” and that has not changed it; nursing works with their students in positive ways. Blanding noted the number of effective teachers at JSCC.
- Blanding said that we need to start with a higher percentage of success in faculty classes, and that it is up to faculty, as the professionals, how they raise the success rate without lowering standards. He noted that the State of Tennessee has indicated that we may not be offering developmental education in the future, and faculty need to be “prepared” to pull students out and work with them in every course if they don’t do well after the first test, for example. James Mayo noted that the students have to be prepared for success also. Blanding reported that the institution is willing to work with faculty on these problems to come up with and support solutions, and noted that “we have some of the most effective people than in anyplace” he had worked. Blanding’s directive to FC at this time, as representatives of the faculty, was to “work this stuff and come up with some ideas” on how to increase success.

- Blanding named JSCC faculty who, in his opinion, are not performing adequately or appropriately in the classroom. He addressed Vivian Grooms and asked, “If you had a child at Jackson State, what...course would you advise them to take?” Blanding reiterated that he would not put his child in these specific courses due to the faculty teaching the course.
- Other questions were related to the \$600,000 shortfall and the financial implications of Learning Support Classes going away. Blanding explained how projections for what JSCC believes appropriations might be and how the budget is then planned. He noted some points discussed in the most recent budget discussions were reductions of \$300,000 in adjunct, summer school and overloads, but that there is still a cushion to cover needed pay with the hope that we will add more students. Deleting the VPIA position was discussed.
- In regard to the plan to cover learning support needs, Blanding noted that in Fall 2015 the impact of that program could be a 1.3 million dollar loss, and he noted that about 78% of our budget is salary and benefits, so cutbacks essentially mean a loss of people. Other institutions are considering lab fees, for example, to help offset some of the loss.

Committee that did not meet reported by Kim Holland

Bobby Smith sent out an email regarding poor summer enrollment. “The committee that never met” was the Ad hoc Summer Scheduling Committee, and faculty perceived it relevant to poor summer enrollment. Faculty Council had two FC members volunteer to be on the committee. Faculty Council has repeatedly asked when that committee will meet. President Blanding added that summer pay is important due to the challenge the college faces in getting faculty pay up to scale; he also added that there needs to be a reworking of the pay plan. One faculty mentioned that if there was a resignation by a full-time faculty, they could reapply for the same job and get greater pay. President Blanding reported that administration will have a meeting to see where the summer numbers are in regard to classes making. A question was asked about numbers needed for classes to make last summer due to several borderline classes that were cancelled. Grooms noted that this comment was one of the points to be made regarding communication processes, as the committee never met and that we find ourselves discussing the same things again; the question was asked, “Where does the information go...and did you (President Blanding) hear about the summer committee at any point?” President Blanding reported that he was unaware that the committee was formed. He did mention that summer pay helps to offset “relatively low pay for faculty” and that when he came to JSCC, distribution of courses was not fair between senior and junior faculty, which he changed. President Blanding suggested a summer committee does need to: 1) define the purpose of summer school; 2) and get the best scheduling for student need; it was clarified to President Blanding that the VPAA was to chair the summer committee. Lackey noted that one of the recommendations is that we speak to new summer students during this time, and that we could possibly get more students returning in the fall semester.

After faculty asked questions regarding marketing strategies to increase enrollment, President Blanding briefly described some marketing plans, including some comparative graphics that are

being prepared. One faculty stated that the impression President Blanding was leaving today is that low enrollment is directly related to what is going on in the institution related to faculty, yet that there are an overwhelming number of faculty and staff who are “bending over backward” to help students. An additional comment indicated the need for more supportive programs for faculty to improve student success. President Blanding responded, “Who is responsible for student success?” James Mayo and other faculty present answered, “We are; JSCC is.” Dr. Blanding clarified, “...the faculty teaching the class.” Blanding discussed student failure rates and suggested JSCC would be in a better place “if every one of us just had one more student succeed.” He also noted some of the problems are systemic. Blanding raised the topic of midterm grades, which he reportedly thought that faculty “were doing” until he found out about one week ago that they were not. Blanding reiterated that collectively, the college indicated that midterm grade reporting would be helpful but that they are not reporting. Faculty present this date noted several points: 1. Some faculty members are reporting; 2. There was no formal process to report communicated; 3. The VPAA reported at an in-service that there would be pilot reporting in Fall 2013 semester.

Communication Channels

In response to the last statement on previous agenda item (midterm grades), Grooms opened this agenda item with a statement. As incoming FC Chair, Grooms related the need to clarify the expected flow of information through communication channels so that it may be disseminated back to faculty in a way that engages faculty to understand our approved processes so that faculty can be accountable to agreed upon standards. Concerns were verbalized related to expectations of faculty so faculty do not feel misunderstood or negatively misrepresented as a collective whole. President Blanding reported that the way the process is supposed to work is that FC is to provide information up the channel to administration and which eventually goes to TBR. Then the Chief Academic Officer looks at what needs to be worked on in regard to developing policy.

VPAA Search-news from Amy West, reported by Kim Holland with comments added by President Blanding

- Per President Blanding, the VPAA search was extended through April 25th, with approximately 20 applicants and perhaps only three of the applicants who are uniquely qualified. President Blanding reported that in regard to selection, JSCC can go forward and continue, or put a halt to the current search; there is also a second part to the search; JSCC has to get buy in by TBR, which will review and approve the applicant pool. Other colleges have reportedly had to do this 3 or 4 times; President Blanding noted that 60/40 odds would have the VPAA search pushed to next year, but that perhaps the committee may have a different view and the board may say, “okay.”
- Holland read an informative email from Amy West indicating there were 26 applicants and that a search committee meeting will be called; Holland noted that today is Wednesday, and no meeting has been called to date. It was also reiterated that there are only 10 applicants to review in the public folders. Dr. Blanding reported that that number was updated yesterday and for committee members to check.

- Related to this matter, FC faculty noted the lack of professionalism of job postings (e.g., 8 font, copy-paste used from other websites), and reiterated the importance of the VPAA position and obtaining good applicants via effective marketing.
- Dr. Blanding spoke briefly regarding previous VPAA failures, and he noted that due to the number of responsibilities of the position, (e.g., communication) that it would be necessary for a candidate to have been a community college faculty.
- President Blanding noted his willingness to talk about this and other needs and asked if there were any additional questions at this time.

Other Questions:

Grooms noted another communication issue related to the culture on campus and mentioned specific statements made today and on previous dates by Blanding regarding all or specific faculty members. Previous statements had come to her attention by way of different faculty constituents with similar concerns. Concerns were related to statements this date and from previous meetings that do not reflect a culture of engagement nor caring and which appeared to reflect power and control. Specific statements referenced included: 1) when Blanding said for faculty who do not care “get out” and go somewhere else; 2) that Blanding suggested faculty should take another faculty member evidencing behaviors of concern “behind a barn and beat them with a bat;” and 3) Blanding’s implication that a few faculty negative behaviors represent all faculty performance. Grooms protested that she would not want to be spoken to in ways that faculty would not be expected to speak to their students even if value systems were different, and how a top down and bottom up approach is needed to deal with the overall problem.

Blanding clarified that he has “no respect” for someone who does not respect students, that JSCC is not a university, and that faculty who do not like it can “get out.” Blanding gave an example by mentioning two faculty, engaging name-calling, providing negative descriptors for their behaviors, and reporting that one faculty had told a disabled student to leave class because the student would be in the way in the front of the room. In response to a question by Smith related to channel of reporting behaviors of concern, Blanding clarified that these behaviors can be reported to the President, who will go through the appropriate channels to deal with the problem(s). Blanding also agreed that there was a communication problem, as evidenced by Grooms’ statement in a previous meeting that if there were similar problems with faculty, these problems should be addressed to the VPAA. Blanding noted that these problems are the responsibility of all faculty, and that all faculty have to assume responsibility due to being the future of the institution. Blanding noted that he could retire “tomorrow,” but that faculty will be here and have to work to improve the college.

Incorrect Reporting of Faculty Pay across TBR-reported by Horace Chase

There is no additional information available on this agenda item.

Classroom Building Faculty Conference Room, Other Campus Projects, and Building aesthetics follow-up, Safety and Security follow-up (AED, CPR, ID badges) and OTHER--reported by Horace Chase

- Horace Chase reported that the campus project list is not all up to date, and that the plan is to put it on the web so we can see them all; the list will include items such as capital funding; deferred projects; maintenance list and the status of each project.
- Emily Fortner clarified that confusion came in only because an email was sent out requesting suggestions for projects, and that recipients of the email did not have a list to even know if a project was on the list.
- Holland noted the correct Campus Projects Committee member list is on JWEB.
- Partially due to budget constraints, the committee is taught how to rank and therefore prioritize projects (ranking factors used, for example include student impact, safety, and appearance, etc.), and to complete those projects within that year; Chase indicated recently trying to expedite project lists to new committee members. Maintenance projects has recently been separated into two categories, maintenance and deferred maintenance so each category can get a pool of funds which increases chances for a greater variety of project completion.
- Discussed how projects are submitted to TBR and these processes; JSCC submits projects and gets approval for a set amount.
- Fortner mentioned that our classrooms don't have personal ownership and reminded FC of the idea discussed about having each division be accountable to specific classrooms; Chase reminded that there are many other financial obligations to other projects that are priority over general classroom décor at this time.
- Chase addressed other specific financial questions. Chair asked about the justification of the VPIA position, in light of the enrollment problems, and noted that the position was justified in the past but that clarification is needed on who will take over VPIA responsibilities of fund raising and encouraging growth. Chase indicated that he could not answer the question. Fortner asked if there was going to be another reorganization. Chase mentioned the committee, and Tom Pigg noted that the reorganization had already happened.
- Chase discussed the Conference room to be made on second floor of the Classroom Building. Questions of concern from faculty this date included why President Blanding had indicated his wish to expedite the process but no feedback on timeframe had been given to faculty. Chase clarified that OIT is currently using that area for storage space, and that the project was never intended to be a short-term project. He also noted that if/when there is funding for only partial improvement to a space, he tends to wait until all funds to fully complete the space are available. Then, those utilizing the space will feel good about that space. The Conference room project will depend on a chain of other events related to OIT and Print Office spaces.
- Chase clarified that in regard to the Administration Building, there is nothing budgeted for renovations.

CCA Recommendations Follow-up-All Faculty Council Members

Holland noted that she will advise Bobby Smith regarding follow-up with any of these recommendations; anyone with feedback, please let her know.

Graduation Line-up reported by Kim Holland

Holland will be sending out the graduation line-up by email soon.

Adjunct Faculty Concerns-reported by Kim Holland

Patrick Davis with Distance Education has requested a meeting with the new FC cabinet to discuss adjunct-related concerns.

Idea Survey Interpretation Questions, Survey Timing, other Concerns--reported by Kim Holland

Please discuss satisfaction or questions with your constituents, as FC needs feedback related to these items.

Pay increases for Advanced Degrees, Change in Rank, and Contract Issues-news from Amy West as reported by Kim Holland

The salary plan is in JWEB in the Human Resources section; there is no specific policy on awarding teaching time for Graduate Assistantships.

PLA-reported by Richard Coppings

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) is how students can get credit for experience outside the college. There used to be a limit of 30 credit hours, and per Robin Maerk, there are residency requirements of 15 credit hours having to be completed at JSCC. The current point of discussion is whether we should have an hour limit or not for PLA. Two suggested ideas were that we could have program directors to evaluate students in different ways, or get approval by VPAA for each case. Jerry Gilbert suggested that there should be a limit on PLA hours and the limit could vary per the discipline. Richard Coppings asked that if anyone has specific input on this matter, to please contact him or their dean.

Reports from Council members on college wide committees-All Faculty Council Members

Dual enrollment Committee was noted to have not met this semester. There were no other reports.

Awards-James Mayo

Agenda item not mentioned, as Mayo had left the meeting.

News from the Faculty Sub-Council—reported by Kim Holland

- Tennessee Promise Update—Fall 2015 commitment \$350 million for recent graduates;

- Embedded Remediation—Dr. Denley (TBR) reported that this plan is not a done deal to date; questions are related to how we will pull together classes to include remediation, and what the impact on community colleges will be; Anna Esquivel and Candyce Sweet have pilots in Fall 2014 semester that will embed Learning Support (LS) into the English Comp I course by using an extra lab; there would be 13 college ready and 10 learning Support students for this pilot; there are 21 total college pilot programs to be engaged Fall 2014, and depending on the outcomes, the question may be resent to faculty for feedback.
- Legislative Update-- Holland has a copy of a legislative update of concern by subcouncil. She requested faculty review the update.
- Dual Enrollment—Documents related to Dual Enrollment guidelines were distributed. These are TBR documents being considered; please review, and provide feedback for next FC Chair on this matter.
- Summer Pay—There is no information regarding JSCC decreasing summer pay; however, many system colleges are capping summer pay. Presidents can ask Chancellors to waive the summer pay list.
- **JOBSS4TN**—This is a website suggested for review.
- Academic Foci—FC members were asked to review the list of Academic Foci, which are suggested but final decisions have not been made to date. Each school does not have to implement all, but can't create new ones.
- Research Grants-- Recent research grants that were awarded were distributed to FC; please review.

Discussion regarding today's meeting—All Faculty Council

Faculty Council Chair suggested that based on discussion this date, it is FC responsibility to respond to the information that was provided by the president. Chair also noted she will contact Amy West regarding the date of the meeting for VPAA search committee. Related observations of concern this date included:

- President Blanding's history of speaking similar ways to others, ignoring comments, and interruptions of others speaking;
- Faculty feelings of disrespect;
- Pointing out specific faculty members with degrading language and comments;
- The need to hold administration to the VPAA search and to even put another advertisement out earlier, in November if necessary, to get early applications for VPAA if there are not currently enough;
- The verbal abuse that happened in the meeting today;
- Feeling nervous about the history of moving action of the FC forward due to concerns about the President's ability to work with FC in the future and not really answering any requests put forward by FC;
- That the relationship appears to be about power and control and not about mutual cooperation which needs to be top down in organizations;

Grooms moved to draft a letter of response to today's meeting information that would include the following points:

1. Clarify the communication channels of the deans and others involved;
2. That the VPAA not be put in that position for another year, related to nepotism and other concerns noted;
3. We make a statement about a culture of caring and that the President would not use the type of language with us that we would not be expected to use with our students.

Discussion of the motion followed with related comments about comments made this date about midterm grades, and creating a caring environment for the students to be as successful as possible, while keeping the standards, as well as attempting to create a positive narrative going forth. It was noted that Mary Jo Boehms had brain surgery and many faculty were not aware of this and therefore unable to express support that we all need. It was noted that we need to take the “higher road” which will benefit us as a Council. A question related to what faculty should do about the names that were brought up regarding coworkers who are not performing up to standards; in response to the question, it was recommended that concerns should be directed to your respective dean. Discussion regarding the motion included a comment suggesting that the letter should include a very direct and strong statement regarding how disrespectful behaviors like those experienced this date create a contaminated, hostile working environment.

FC Chair suggested Human Resources have the opportunity to call a meeting to address the VPAA search, and that a motion need not include comments about current VPAA concerns at this time. After discussion of several possible motions, the current motion on the floor was withdrawn, and following motion was made by Grooms:

Motion: Faculty Council will create a response to the statements made by Dr. Blanding this date and that the response will be brought back before FC for a vote. The letter will indicate Faculty Council position on the following points:

1. Need for clarification for communication channels;
2. The need for establishing a caring and non-hostile working environment;

Discussion was called. It was noted that there have been communication issues with the VPAA, who is also the SACS liason during a reaffirmation year, and will be also responsible for following up with FC on this matter. After discussion of concerns regarding actually obtaining a response to the letter from FC, Grooms amended the motion to include a request for a response to the letter within 14 days to the current chair of the faculty council. Karolyn Smith seconded; all present current members voted yes for the amendment. There was a vote for the motion: 6 for, none opposed for the voting members still present.

Other discussion: It was noted that Amy West sent an email closing the college at 3:00 on Good Friday; however, nursing students were in class at 3:30 p.m. and some students had clinicals and were at the hospital. This was reportedly perceived as disrespectful to those teachers and students. Mary Wadley provided a motion to close the meeting at 4:34 p.m. Richard Skelton provided a second. All voting members voted yes to adjourn.