

JSCC Faculty Council Meeting Minutes—October 7th, 2015

The Faculty Council met Wednesday, October 7th, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. in room 103 of the Nelms Classroom Building.

Present: Mark Walls, Roger James, Dr. Liz Mayo, Carla Simpson, Tim Britt, Vivian Grooms, Dr. Mechel Camp, Carmen Corder, Abby Lackey, Amy Wake, Jennifer Walker, Becca Rhea (visitor)

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Announcements

Council Chair, Abby Lackey, announced four matters: (1) additional Tennessee Achieves mentors are needed, (2) Dr. Blanding wants faculty to develop elearn or other class alternatives for inclement weather days, (3) per TBR policy, classes should remain politically neutral, and (4) JSCC's chain of command in Dr. Blanding's absence is the VPAA, then the VPFAA, then the VPSS, then the VPSSIE.

2. Dual Enrollment

Abby Lackey summarized her meeting with Andrea Winchester regarding the history, since 2011, of Council involvement and faculty work toward a dual enrollment handbook. The meeting was productive, and Andrea is eager to help resolve the sidelined handbook issue. Dr. Bailey has now populated a new Academic Dual Enrollment Committee with appropriate faculty and administrative representatives. The committee will also include a representative from the High School Initiatives and Recruitment office. It was noted that coordinating DE with high schools is surprisingly complex. Andrea had stated that her office would like to be kept in the loop when issues arise, and Mechel Camp explained her policy as Dean of copying the HSI office on all correspondence about DE issues.

3. Executive Committee Meeting with Dr. Blanding

Abby Lackey and Mark Walls summarized their meeting with Dr. Blanding on faculty concerns about the VPSSIE position: its sudden creation and its staffing without a competitive search. President Blanding explained that JSCC's weak spot in the SACS accreditation review was the core requirement Section 2.5 (Institutional Effectiveness). He felt a new senior level position at JSCC that addressed IE matters would be productive for the SACS review, but timing prevented a standard search process. In responding to Council concerns about the frequent in-house VP staffings by appointment, he recounted JSCC's troubled history of VPAA hirings and the need for stop-gap interim appointments when these personnel left the college. He was reminded that the Council wished to stress these long-term interim appointments had "lasted too long" since for all but three and a half years of his eleven-year administration, an appointed or interim "in-house" VPAA served.

In discussion, the Council emphasized that gaps in the school's IE capacities were understood early in the fall of 2014. It was stated that hiring an IE Director well ahead of the March, 2015

SACS Compliance Certification would have helped demonstrate integrated, ongoing institutional research. That might have addressed some of the non-compliances identified from that report (at least 50% of which were IE-related).

The Council considered whether creating the VPSSIE position at this point would make much difference for the SACS reaffirmation process, itself, but agreed this new VPSSIE role could be critical for JSCC's ongoing success. The Council concluded that following the SACS accreditation process, the Council and faculty must very carefully monitor the progress of work in the area of Institutional Effectiveness. It was stated that accountability is increasingly expected at some levels of the institution, but that it should be important at all levels.

4. Bookstore Concerns

The Council considered a list of concerns collected about the bookstore's operations. It was agreed that the list should be forwarded to Faculty Council members who should confirm that it is complete. The list will then be forwarded to the new bookstore manager and copied to Dr. Bailey.

5. New Assignments to Committees

Tim Britt agreed to serve on the International Fee committee. Roger James agreed to serve on the Tennessee Promise Support Team.

6. Nursing and Allied Health Practice Day

As a matter of unfinished business, the Council inquired whether nursing faculty had drafted a letter to Dr. Bailey to support their need to maintain one day each week for professional practice instead of fulfilling that practice on weekends. Council representatives from Nursing indicated the letter was "still on the table" and that they would check progress on the issue.

7. Assistants for Deans' Offices

Abby Lackey reported from Dr. Blanding that it had been determined three full-time assistant positions were needed, one each for Nursing, Social Sciences, and Communications and Humanities. This required reassessing the budget and re-examining and reallocating existing positions. Some supervisors who might lose part-time positions as budgets are reallocated had not yet been informed, and this entire process has held up postings for the office assistant positions. Council members remained shocked that this process could move so incredibly slowly; they pointed out that Doris Clemmons-Hill's retirement from Dean Camp's office was in July and was anticipated prior to that. Council members considered this situation to be untenable for the deans, "ridiculous," and contrary to conditions appropriate for student success.

8. Proposal to Revise Sick Leave Policy (for Optional Personal Days)

The Council discussed a suggestion by Dr. Blanding that faculty should have some of their sick leave days designated "personal leave" days. These appear to be needed for faculty as

indicated by differences in how school employees accommodate perilous weather conditions that do not close the campus. All employees do not have the same alternatives for preserving pay when they elect to missing work for safety reasons or other important needs. To avoid losing pay, staff and twelve-month faculty use accrued “annual leave” days in such cases. Nine-month faculty do not qualify for annual leave, and most just make arrangements with their deans to cancel or cover classes they cannot safely attend. Policy prohibits using sick leave for absences unless faculty are genuinely ill, pregnant, or attending to the serious illness of a family member, so no policy protects pay for absences other than illness. The Executive Committee reported from Dr. Bailey that one approach in Mississippi designates some annual sick leave days to be “personal leave” days faculty can use to cover absences for reasons other than sickness. A motion was made, seconded, and approved to have Council Chair, Abby Lackey, propose at the October Faculty Sub-Council Meeting that nine-month faculty sick leave policy include some days that may be used either for sickness or for other personal or emergency needs (see attached proposal).

One view from the Council was that sick days and personal days, if they were authorized, should be kept distinct and that using personal days for inclement weather was problematic.

9. Blue Jeans Concerns

The Council discussed the inequities of delivering part of a class on ground and part by Blue Jeans technology. The issue is that Blue Jeans mediates the class experience significantly and that Blue Jeans students do not get the many productive subtleties available to a ground class. One recent grade appeal has maintained that a disadvantage existed for one part of the class (with Blue Jeans) but not for the other and that the student would have done better in the less-mediated group of ground students. Information was shared from an email that suggested students don’t get adequate training in Blue Jeans before classes begin and that the first two weeks of class are “rocky” as a result. Problems exist with inconsistent headphones, equipment, and access. Audio issues result from the patchwork of different headphones, and that when the chat feature is used due to audio problems, long and awkward pauses result. The Council considered the possibility of using TAF money to purchase headsets and noted issues with assuring return of the units. Visual difficulties with the technology were mentioned. The suitability of Blue Jeans for full-sized classes was questioned, and it was stated that many other issues exist. Council members agreed to gather specific concerns from their constituents about the Blue Jeans course delivery approach.

10. Campus Safety Concerns

Issues were raised about safety in distance-ed classes when there is no facilitator in the room. Vivian Grooms stated she would take that concern to the SIT Committee on which some distance-ed faculty serve. The Council discussed a hit and run incident on campus and the long time required for completing a police report (needed for insurance filing). A need for more security cameras was noted. Other questions ranged from what to do in active shooter incidents and sharing such plans with students to where campus crime statistics might be found. It was stated that more licensed mental health counselors were needed at JSCC. Another view was that safety studies should be done for all JSCC facilities, and that there are still no lockable doors at off-campus centers. The faculty’s need for more hands-on, practical

training for active shooter scenarios was discussed, and a concern was raised about cars with no tags parking in faculty spots; such cars, it was felt, should be ticketed. The Council agreed to forward all safety concerns to the SIT team.

11. Assessment of Administrators

The Council discussed faculty interest in reexamining the assessment of administrators and its processes. More standardization is needed. The assessment should occur annually, and the Assessment of Administrators Committee should meet to consider those and other issues with the assessment tool and with the process. The results should be maintained and should be disseminated. It was suggested that the Council may wish to draft a statement of what it believes should be included or changed in that assessment.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Mark E. Walls, Secretary

Abby Lackey, Chair