

JSCC Faculty Council Meeting Minutes—April 6th, 2016

The Faculty Council met Wednesday, April 6th, 2016, at 3:00 p.m. in room 103 of the Nelms Classroom Building.

Present: Mark Walls, Carla Simpson, Tim Britt, Dr. Liz Mayo, Carmen Corder, Josh Britt, Scott Woods, Roger James, Dr. Mechel Camp, Vivian Grooms, Abby Lackey, Amy Wake, Jennifer Walker, members-elect Lisa Matlock, Melissa Sellers, Jennifer Reaves, and Tony Rafalowski, and visitors Anna Esquivel and Brenda Alexander.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Welcome to New Representatives

Chair Abby Lackey recognized new Council representatives: Lisa Matlock (CIS and Allied Health), Melissa Sellers (Nursing), Jennifer Reaves (Math and Science), Tony Rafalowski (At-large), Dr. Larry Gundersen (Social and Behavioral Science) and Dr. Billy Wesson (Communication and Humanities). The Council welcomed these new representatives, and the Chair reviewed the roles of service and the obligations to work for shared governance as members of the faculty's representative body. She reviewed the structure of shared governance: how the Chair attends all Administrative meetings as the primary faculty representative, how the Council Executive Committee meets with the VPAA to assure awareness both of faculty and administrative issues, and how Council representatives should communicate with their constituents to share Council information and to bring faculty perspectives to discussion.

2. Announcements

- Data and Dessert ATD meetings—remember to sign up.
- Nominations for Council awards—send nomination letters to Vivian Grooms.
- Important dates—4-7 (JSCC Ballpark Night), 4-13 (JSCC Job Fair), 4-19 (Brock McGuire Band), 4-21 (Scholarship Banquet), 5-7 (graduation).

3. Faculty Council Elections

For the 2016-17 academic year, the Council elected Scott Woods as Chair, Amy Wake as Vice-Chair, and Mark Walls as Secretary.

4. Termination of Athletic Scholarships

The Executive Committee reviewed its meeting with Dr. Blanding about his decisions to (1) defund athletic scholarships since athletes could receive Tennessee Promise money, (2) continue intercollegiate competition with “functionally D-III” teams in a D-I league, and (3) use athletic scholarship money both to fund club sports and a new women's coach. The Executive Committee provided a written summary of its meeting with Dr. Blanding (see

Appendix A, “**3-23-16 Meeting Summary: Executive Committee with Dr. Blanding about Ending Athletic Scholarships**”). After careful discussion, the Faculty Council determined that Dr. Blanding’s decision raised concerns for student welfare, for the college’s progress toward strategic planning goals, and for its performance toward key outcomes-based funding criteria. The Council determined also that Dr. Blanding’s unilateral process of decision-making compromised appropriate shared governance at JSCC. Because Dr. Blanding and key stakeholders had not analyzed the viability of club sports competition and had not pursued reasonable options for appropriate D-III league play, the council concluded this critical decision had been made with inadequate consideration.

The Council had asked Steve Cornelison, JSCC’s Athletic Director, to attend the meeting to answer questions about the scholarship budget. From him, the Council confirmed the current athletic scholarship budget of \$127,600. Last year’s budget for scholarships had been reduced to fund another coaching position, but that position remained unapproved. He also clarified Title IX’s distinction between straight percentage-based funding and participation-based funding toward equitability and compliance. He reviewed the nature of “club sports” and their connection to student activities budgeting rather than athletics. Cornelison clarified that JSCC teams would do well in a D-III league, but, in his opinion, a “functionally D-III” team playing D-I teams that recruited with scholarships would neither be reasonable nor ethical. He noted the closest D-III league was in Illinois and that the earliest JSCC could petition and move into D-III league play would be 2018. He acknowledged the success of men’s athletic teams and cited current coaches’ winning records (basketball: 261W-165L; baseball 119W-68L). He noted the long period of sacrificial part-time coaching for women’s sports.

The Council determined that the availability of Tennessee Promise money did not justify eliminating athletic scholarships. Unlike regular students with Tennessee Promise, student-athletes are unable to take on part-time jobs to supplement any scholarship money. Schedules for intercollegiate athletic competition and training preclude other work and amount to a significant part-time job—one representing the institution. The Council also noted that JSCC’s athletes were some of the college’s best students. They participate in community service initiatives and as a cohort have the highest progression rates—12, 24, 36-hour matriculation, graduation, and transfer. The Council acknowledged that alienating this group of 86 students would remove a considerable “chunk of success” from JSCC’s statistical reporting.

The Council struggled to understand why successful programs would not be encouraged and supported by the administration more than they have been at JSCC. The loss of some successful programs in several areas since 2007 was noted. Some on the Council considered that this reflected a philosophical difference between those who saw JSCC as a “comprehensive” community college offering a range of student-enrichment options (like athletics, theatre, honors, international travel, etc.) and those with interests in adjusting community colleges generally toward a more one-dimensional TCAT model.

The idea that some of these programs might strain the budget was rejected. It was noted that this was the 20th anniversary of JSCC’s appearance in the 1996 NJCAA Baseball World Series and that the community then supported that opportunity for student-athletes and raised the money for travel. Some Council members emphasized that JSCC belonged to West Tennessee and that the regional community had interests in what its students could experience through the college. The Council rejected the idea that JSCC should not be a “comprehensive”

community college. In light of this, Dr. Blanding's view that international education money was inappropriately spent on a few people taking a trip, as he has put it, was denounced. It was clarified that only 15% of the total International Student Fee was spent on student travel and that the fee funded a range of international and cultural programs. It was noted, too, that JSCC had been the last institution to join TBR's international education initiative. Some on the Council felt this made the institution look foolish.

The Council heard a MOTION (1) to produce a statement censuring Dr. Blanding's decision to defund athletic scholarships and (2) to review and edit the draft statement as necessary. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously with one abstention. See Appendix B—**Statement of Objection: Defunded Athletic Scholarships**. In revision, Council representatives agreed to change this document from a Statement of Censure to a Statement of Objection.

5. Postponement of the Assessment of Administrators

The Council considered Dr. Blanding's decision to suspend the annual evaluation of administrators that had been scheduled for March, 2016. Representatives examined Dr. Blanding's emailed rationale for this decision. The Council agreed that Blanding's reason did not justify delaying the assessment: the proxy for the Faculty Council Chair had objected to VPSSIE Bobby Smith's re-engagement with the committee process.

Council members considered that the revised evaluation tool had been completed and approved and the process for implementing it had been finalized. It was noted that in JSCC's Achieving the Dream year, especially, data should be obtained and used to make adjustments. To not obtain such data in a timely manner for the 2015-16 academic year appeared conspicuous to some given the push to produce and apply data throughout the college. Others regarded the decision to be another example of an impulsive, unilateral decision. It was noted that faculty and other employees would have no means to reject an evaluation even if they had a legitimate rationale (which did not exist in this case). The idea of proceeding with some form of assessment was discussed briefly. In the end, the Council heard the following MOTION which was seconded and approved unanimously with one abstention:

The Council will produce a Statement of Objection to Dr. Blanding's postponement of administrator evaluations and will meet to edit and revise the statement as necessary. See Appendix C "**Statement of Objection: Postponed Administrators Assessment.**"

6. Ad Hoc LDA/Attendance Reporting Committee

Mark Walls briefed the Council on recent email discussions with Dewanna Latimer about faculty concerns that the LDA often may not represent student attendance accurately. Tim Britt, a member of the Student Aid and Awards Committee, noted that committee had also discussed the issue with Latimer. The committee will continue to examine the issue with Dr. Bailey and the Office of Financial Aid.

7. Library Changes

The Council heard concerns that important changes had been planned for JSCC's library but faculty had not been engaged in the thinking. The chief concern among Council members was that all stakeholders should be integrally involved in examining changes to library space. Chair Lackey explained that the Executive Committee had heard of these changes in its April meeting with Dr. Bailey. The Council noted that faculty from across the divisions need a seat at the table as plans for any changes are considered.

8. C-Building Second-Floor Construction

The Council expressed concern about scheduling disruptive construction work near classrooms. The Council determined that an email should be sent to Horace Chase and Gerald Batchelor requesting that more care be taken in scheduling maintenance and construction work while classes are meeting.

9. 2016 Summer Schedule

The Council noted that many faculty are concerned the new summer schedule may negatively impact enrollments across sections. While some positive views were expressed about the new scheduling, the Council agreed that faculty need to have input on changes to summer scheduling.

10. Academic Freedom with Textbook Choices

Several concerns related to the TBR textbook "bundling" plan were raised. Abby Lackey clarified that the plan was not going away and that she would take concerns to the TBR Sub-council.

11. MTSU Draft Agreement with JSCC

Abby Lackey summarized the proposal from MTSU's president that JSCC students with 16 or 17 ACT scores could receive "deferred" acceptance at MTSU after they complete 15 hours of course work. She referred to the recent email from Dr. Blanding regarding the proposal and asked the Council to have constituents email responses to her to be forwarded to Drs. Bailey and Blanding.

12. Dual Enrollment

A discussion on JSCC's Dual Enrollment was tabled until the next Council meeting.

13. May Council Meeting

The Council discussed having a pot-luck gathering on May 4th in the C-Building's Employee Break Room on the second floor. Awards would be made at this time.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Mark E. Walls, Secretary

Abby Lackey, Chair

Appendix A

Meeting Summary:

Wednesday, 3-23-16 (Executive Committee with Dr. Blanding about Ending Athletic Scholarships)

Dr. Blanding offered three rationales for ending athletic scholarships at JSCC. First, scholarships along with program costs, challenge JSCC's increasingly restricted budgets. Second, scholarship expenses do not serve the student body broadly enough. Third, Title IX requirements challenge JSCC's ability to provide parallel programs and resources for female athletes.

I. Concerns with the Budget

College finances and constricting budgets seemed to be Dr. Blanding's chief issue with providing scholarships. He suggested, further, that the general costs of athletic programs have become problematic and that hotel and other expenses of competing in national playoff competitions would simply not be possible. He noted that JSCC is the third smallest community college in Tennessee, and, for these smaller colleges, there are "no economies of scale to do what others do." Unlike Walters State, "we can't afford nationals," he said. He noted that unlike Walters State which recruits nationally, JSCC "finds it difficult to defend why [we would] go out of our service area for athletes" and noted that JSCC "has good coaches but not competitive teams." He stated that Tennessee Promise awards could be used in lieu of scholarship money for students recruited from our service area. He cited the problem of shrinking state appropriations (43%) and that the remaining 57% of our funding is tuition which, "when frozen," is "trouble" for JSCC. He noted the school could help student athletes with book costs not covered by Tennessee Promise and "knock costs [associated with scholarships] down 70%."

In short, Dr. Blanding's position is that "increasingly, [JSCC is] in a system pressed because money is tight and at the same time [it] has to tighten down" on expenses. He suggested the sort of choice schools are making now (or will soon have to make) by noting that Southwest Tennessee Community College recently fired a great many faculty, yet did not cut their athletic programs.

II. Concerns with Equitable Benefits

Dr. Blanding stated that athletic scholarships "only benefit a handful of [JSCC's] 4500 students." He compared the inequity of this cost to the \$10 fee all students pay to fund international education programs and stressed it was "not fair" that money from this account is "given to thirty people for a trip." While acknowledging the need to expand student experience interculturally, his concern, he said, is "how can we use money to benefit all, not just a few?" To this end, Dr. Blanding said he supported the expansion of athletics into so-called "club sports," a kind of intramural program that might serve wide interests among many more students who would enjoy competing at volleyball, soccer, and other sports on non-intercollegiate athletic "club teams." Such teams might organize for play among local colleges like Lane, Union, and the University of Memphis at Lambuth.

III. Concerns with Title IX

Dr. Blanding acknowledged difficulties with meeting Title IX requirements for equity in men's and women's athletics and noted that community colleges are "at risk to lose millions in federal support,"

generally, due to Title IX compliance issues. He noted regulations that schools must spend in accordance with gender enrollment ratios, and that with our 65% female enrollment our athletic budget should reflect 65% spending on athletics for women. He noted that it was hard to find the same number of female athletes as males in programs like softball and baseball and that we needed to hire “one more full-time coach” in women’s sports, but that there was no money in the budget. “If we can save on scholarship expenses, we can hire this coach,” he suggested.

Statement of Objection: De-funded Athletic Scholarships

JSCC Faculty Council

April 6th, 2016

Background:

In his March cabinet meeting, President Bruce Blanding announced the college will no longer award scholarships to athletes participating on JSCC's intercollegiate basketball, baseball, and softball teams. In a meeting with the Executive Committee of the JSCC Faculty Council, he clarified a three-part rationale: (1) the college's \$27,000,000 budget is stressed and the \$126,600 scholarship cost, apparently, is a good cut to make; (2) if kept in the budget, the \$126,600 could fund intramural-like "club sports" and serve students more broadly than it would by funding athletic scholarships for the school's 86 athletes; and (3) to be Title IX compliant, JSCC must hire another full-time women's coach which the scholarship costs could fund.

Council Perspective:

On April 6th, 2016, the JSCC Faculty Council found that Dr. Blanding's decision to eliminate athletic scholarships was poorly-considered. Given the college's emerging culture of data-driven decisions by engaged stakeholders, his unilateral directive seems unstudied. For his higher-ed colleagues at JSCC, Dr. Blanding's action is autocratic and disengaged from the college's strategic goal-setting. His decision fails to meet faculty expectations for careful analysis, reasonable judgement, and for the participatory approach to college and student success planning so integral to Achieving the Dream institutions.¹ The Faculty Council objects to Dr. Blanding's indeliberate choice for JSCC intercollegiate athletics. The Council requests that he rescind his decision and open the issue to more appropriate and thorough analysis by a team of personnel representing athletics, student services, college finance, institutional effectiveness, faculty, and ATD.

Discussion:

In his rationale for the decision, Dr. Blanding offered little objective, methodological accounting of reasons for eliminating this \$126,600 item in JSCC's budget. He gave no formal assessment of budgeting alternatives, just sweeping claims that directions in state funding would eventually force choices like large faculty layoffs (as at SWTCC) or terminated or reduced athletic programs (as—in effect—at JSCC). He never assessed his decision's impact on JSCC's intercollegiate athletics program or appeared to consider the program's key role in the college's *2015-2020 Strategic Plan*.²

Dr. Blanding also provided no studied proposal to transition JSCC athletics to a legitimate D-III community college league (the closest is in Illinois), and talked only vaguely about uncertain possibilities for intercollegiate play when—or if—TCCAA (DI) splits into a D-I and D-III league.

¹D-I TCCAA intercollegiate athletics is a core part of JSCC's student programming. It impacts "key student success measures" (*2015 ATD Cohort Implementation Plan—Jackson State Community College* 3) the college has reviewed as evidence in implementing an ATD "Student Success Vision." JSCC's ATD effort presumes college stakeholders in student success will be "involved in data analysis, ongoing planning, and strategy development" (7).

²Undercutting JSCC athletics will significantly impact JSCC's performance to Strategic Plan goals, but there seems to be no accounting for this in President Blanding's decision-making. Access Goal 1.1's benchmark (*2015-2020 JSCC*

No planning for a legitimate and ethical future for JSCC intercollegiate athletic competition exists. No plans have been considered for changing the school's status with the NJCAA or TCCAA or for scheduling appropriate competition or for budgeting as a "functionally D-III" institution.³ At best, the decision to terminate JSCC's "function" as a D-I institution seems to have been just casually considered by Dr. Blanding and, apparently, two other college presidents. The decision does not appear to have been based on any authentic investigation of this change's implications for athletes themselves, for their recruitment or retention, for their interests in completion at JSCC or for their aims to transfer as university student athletes.⁴

Dr. Blanding's vision of reapportioning the scholarship expense more equitably among students through "club sports" has no more analysis behind it than a casual discussion with local college presidents at their quarterly coffee klatsch.⁵ Dr. Blanding did not acknowledge consulting

Strategic Plan 13) states that JSCC annually will "increase 2% in headcount and FTE for fall and spring semesters" and will achieve a 10% increase by 2020. The 86 intercollegiate athletes on campus comprise 1.75% of the fall baseline headcount and 2.81% of that baseline FTE. Alienating this important student cohort with extraordinarily high graduation and transfer rates compared to the JSCC general population strikes faculty as reckless. Lose these students and JSCC must achieve 3.75% headcount growth and 4.81% FTE growth in fall semesters to meet its strategic goal. Headcount and FTE loss—not growth—is more significant for the spring headcount and FTE baseline if JSCC alienates its student-athlete cohort. For Access Goal 1.2's hope to grow "targeted subpopulations" (e.g. Male and Underrepresented Minorities) by 2% annually and 10% by 2020 (*2015-2020 JSCC Strategic Plan 14*), the damage from dismantling JSCC's athletic program would be catastrophic. The 47 male student athletes comprise 3.74% of the fall baseline Male headcount and 5.32% of Male FTE. They comprise 4.3% of the spring baseline Male headcount and 6.1% of Male FTE. For this strategic goal of 2% headcount and FTE growth, the 32 Underrepresented Minorities on JSCC teams comprise 4.0% of the fall headcount baseline and 5.7% of FTE (4.6% of the spring baseline for headcount and 6.6% of FTE).

³ JSCC's Athletic Director acknowledges that JSCC teams would "flourish" in an exclusively D-III league, but that it would be unethical to force a "functionally" D-III team to play D-I competition. Consensus is that Dr. Blanding's plan to do so will kill JSCC's intercollegiate athletic program.

⁴The significance of the student-athlete cohort to JSCC's Outcomes-Based Funding Formula should be noted. In the 2015-16 weighted outcomes point calculation toward funding, JSCC was fourth out of 13 community colleges, due largely to weak performance in five outcomes criteria for completion—third from last in "students accumulating 36, 24, and 12 hours"; third from last in "associates degrees awarded"; third from last in "transfers out with 12 hours" (THEC, *Outcomes Based Funding Formula Resources*, www.tn.gov/thecc/topic/funding-formula-resources). Compared to JSCC students, generally, whose 2003-2007 graduation rate was 24.56% (*JSCC 2014 Factbook 50*), JSCC's athletes graduated at a rate of 59.73% from 2012 to 2015 (*Jackson State Community College Homepage; "Athletic Consumer Information"*). The transfer rate for JSCC's sophomore athletes in 2014-15 was 100% (softball), 87% (women's basketball), 83% men's (basketball), and 70% (baseball) for a total 83% completion rate of at least 24 hours—but likely more—AND progression (transfer) rate. The 2015 graduating athletes at JSCC represent 2.7% of the 2015-2016 benchmark for the *Strategic Plan's* Completion Goal 1.1, which specifies an annual 3.75% growth in the award of associate degrees by the college for a cumulative 20% improvement by 2020 (*2015-2020 JSCC Strategic Plan 24*). In terms of meeting strategic goals for completion (critical for JSCC state appropriations), the intercollegiate athlete cohort at JSCC is essential.

⁵Dr. Blanding stated the idea of "club sport" competition at JSCC and among local colleges emerged from quarterly meetings between local higher-ed presidents (Dub Oliver, Niles Reddick, Logan Hampton and himself). When asked about a needs analysis or viability study, Dr. Blanding acknowledged only that a limited student interest survey had occurred but that the results were "mixed." As a key rationale for de-funding athletic scholarships and applying that money more broadly among JSCC students, the idea's full logistics, funding, and student appeal deserve more legitimate, objective study. Such a study would require a careful cooperative assessment of costs, facilities, appeal, and logistics by all local colleges. It is troubling that no formal needs analysis, viability study, or authentic proposal

meaningfully with appropriate college advisors or assessing—with any other stakeholders—the effects of de-funded scholarships on student athletes or on how athletes would view playing D-I teams (recruiting with scholarships) on a “functionally” D-III team (recruiting with no scholarships).⁶

Conclusion:

The decision to stop offering athletic scholarships at JSCC appears to have been made without formal planning and adequate assessment of its impact on JSCC’s intercollegiate athletics program, on student athletes’ needs, or on the impact that undermining or losing the athletic program could have on college strategic planning and performance funding. Likewise, alternative, broader use of the \$126,600 scholarship expense for “club sports” has not been fully, objectively assessed by all stakeholders. The decision to end scholarships and reapportion that cost seems based on preliminary thinking rather than studied assessment by all appropriate college advisors and personnel.

Among TCCAA institutions at present, no formalized plan exists for creating a viable D-III league in which JSCC appropriately could compete. Sustained intercollegiate athletic competition between a “functionally D-III” team and D-I teams is neither realistic nor ethical. If intercollegiate athletics ends at JSCC, the college will experience significant negative consequences for meeting its strategic goals and for improving its already weak performance on key state outcomes-based funding formula criteria.

has been sought or offered for the concept of “club sports” or intramural competition among local colleges. As currently conceived, “club sports” is a premature and inappropriate basis for justifying such a fundamental change in JSCC’s athletics program as the de-funded athletic scholarships.

⁶Dr. Blanding also emphasized that athletes recruited from JSCC’s service area could seek Tennessee Promise scholarships and that gaps in that coverage (like books) could be covered by the college, possibly through Foundation awards. It is worth noting that students with Tennessee Promise or other scholarships also are free to work part-time jobs; student-athletes training, practicing, and playing intercollegiate schedules, however, are unable to supplement any scholarship with part-time work. In any case, Dr. Blanding knew of no proposals or planning for supplementing the financial needs of athletes getting Tennessee Promise money. He stated that he was unaware of any preliminary discussions by the Foundation to provide such support.

Statement of Objection: Postponed Administrators Assessment

JSCC Faculty Council April 6th, 2016

Background:

In a March 18th 2016 email, President Bruce Blanding announced he was “postponing the assessment of administrators until the next academic year.”¹ He did this because a faculty member questioned VPSSIE Bobby Smith’s re-engagement with the Assessment of Administrators Committee after that committee, and Smith, agreed no administrator would be involved in the committee’s work. This faculty member who questioned Smith’s involvement was representing faculty employees by proxy at the request of the Faculty Council chair and was meeting on March 16th, 2016, with the chairs of JSCC’s two other employee councils (the classified and professional-technical staff councils). In that meeting, one of those chairs called the VPSSIE and asked him to attend their meeting to clarify an issue.

The issue in question had no bearing on the evaluation instrument, itself (recently redesigned and finalized) and no bearing on implementing that instrument (scheduled the following week). The issue concerned understandings among the three employee council representatives about the temporary or permanent status of what the Faculty Council chair and her proxy saw as a one-time, “stop-gap” coordination (or “co-chairship”) of the Assessment of Administrators Committee by employee council chairs in the 2015-16 academic year. The Faculty Council chair had agreed to this arrangement solely to help implement the new evaluation tool by the committee’s March deadline. After VPSSIE Smith met with employee council chairs on the 16th, he emailed President Blanding “on behalf of the Assessment of Administrators committee leadership”² to propose as an approved permanent policy change (1) this unresolved “co-chairship” of employee council chairs and (2) the appointment of the college webmaster and auditor as *ex officio* members to the Assessment of Administrators Committee, something the faculty proxy agreed was needed but that he also had emphasized should be voted on by the whole committee in the next academic year.

Council Perspective:

On April 6th, 2016, the JSCC Faculty Council found that while VPSSIE Smith re-engaged with the Assessment of Administrators Committee and communicated with President Blanding officially to propose policy changes for the committee, this was no reason to suspend the assessment, itself. Smith’s connection with the committee and with the president “on behalf” of the committee leadership did not affect the integrity of the evaluation tool, which webmaster Victor Garcia had worked carefully to enable for JSCC’s use in March. It is critical that those being evaluated through the assessment process stay disengaged from it, but the Council sees VPSSIE Smith’s intervention on March 16th as a simple mistake that should not have provoked Dr. Blanding’s unilateral decision to terminate the evaluation process in 2016. The question of committee leadership—which the five faculty members on the Assessment of Administrators Committee understood to be settled—certainly could be re-considered in the next academic year.

¹Blanding, Bruce. "Re: FW--Assessment of Administrators Items." Message to All Exchange Users (Jackson State Community College). 18 Mar. 2016. E-mail.

²Smith, Bobby. "Re: Assessment of Administrators Items." Message to Bruce Blanding. 16 Mar. 2016. FW: All Exchange Users (Jackson State Community College). Bruce Blanding. 18 Mar. 2016. E-mail.

Postponing the 2015-16 assessment of administrators until the next academic year is unwarranted and problematic given a history of employee concerns about the design, implementation, and accuracy of administrator evaluations at JSCC. The Faculty Council objects to Dr. Blanding's abrupt decision to stop the evaluation of administrators scheduled in March. The Council asks that the evaluation be implemented before the Spring, 2016, semester ends.

Discussion:

The Council expressed concern about the questionable basis for Dr. Blanding's choice to suspend the evaluation. The Council also was concerned about his process of unilaterally determining to suspend it. If the president felt the assessment's process to be "disorderly" or that the assessment's "implementation" was problematic, there had been no indication of that when the Assessment of Administrators Committee designed and finalized its new process and the new evaluation tool weeks earlier. In fact, the five faculty members of that committee all agreed the process had gone well and been accepted by the President. Only after VPSSIE Smith's re-entry into the committee's business did Dr. Blanding perceive "issues regarding the process of implementation of the assessment" and "other potential issues" threatening "an orderly process for conducting this survey" which warranted doing it "next year."³

Significantly, this whole matter relates to issues that surfaced in October, 2015, about employees' lack of confidence in the results of administrative evaluations at JSCC. At the start of the Fall, 2016, semester, some employees complained that the administrator evaluation process had languished ineffectively over summer months when many faculty were not on campus. Then, in this context of concern about poorly implementing the assessment tool, the Faculty Council discovered significant discrepancies in documentation of President Blanding's assessment ratings given to JSCC's Strategic Planning and Efficiency Council (SPEC) in Fall, 2014, and his ratings reported in final 2015 SACS documentation. In October, 2015, the Executive Committee met with JSCC's HR Director, Amy West, and the new VPSSIE, Bobby Smith, about these discrepancies. Bobby Smith explained the errors,⁴ corrected them, and agreed with the Executive Committee that weaknesses in

³In his email, Dr. Blanding referenced broadly the faculty proxy's emailed objections and clarifications about (1) Smith's re-involvement with the committee, (2) Smith's proposal for Dr. Blanding to approve employee council chairs "co-chairing" the committee and (3) Smith's proposal for Dr. Blanding to approve the JSCC webmaster and internal auditor as *ex officio* committee members (which the faculty proxy intended for a committee vote). The Faculty Council believes all of these "issues" relate to the committee's structure, alone. This is an important matter that should be clarified and settled next year, but it is not related to the finished and approved evaluation instrument that was scheduled for use in March. Certainly, the proxy's "issues" do not pertain to protocols for implementing that instrument—for "conducting the assessment of administrators"—as represented in Blanding's text below:

_____ has raised some issues regarding the protocol for conducting the assessment of administrators. In order to allow adequate time for thorough discussion of these issues, development of recommendations, review of those recommendations and finalizing of the process of implementation of the assessment, I am postponing the assessment of administrators until the next academic year. Hopefully, these and any other potential issues can be resolved to everyone's satisfaction and we can then proceed with an orderly process for conducting this survey next year.

⁴Item 4 of the "November 4th, 2015, Faculty Council Meeting Minutes" clarifies these errors:

. . . after the data had been distributed in a SPEC meeting last fall, Bobby Smith discarded "0" responses to assessment items because the "0" lacked a true numerical correspondence to rating choices for assessment items. The more recent SACS data on administrator assessments, then, was quite different from that published

the evaluation instrument, in its implementation, and in the function and composition of the Assessment of Administrators Committee should be addressed immediately to restore employees' faith in the evaluation process and its results. For this reason, a fresh and focused effort was launched to reconstitute the Assessment of Administrators Committee and charge it with improving the procedures and the tool for evaluating administrators. As this work began, the Faculty Council offered suggestions for the committee's structure and the instrument's design.⁵ The committee worked carefully to produce its deliverables. It regularly conferred with its stakeholders and obtained their suggestions and approvals. By mid-March, 2016, the evaluation was scheduled, and the only issue being discussed was the confusion about the temporary or permanent nature of the committee's so-called "co-chairship" of employee Council chairs.

Conclusion:

Dr. Blanding's decision to stop the 2015-16 administrator evaluations strikes the Council as rash. This decision fits a pattern of unilateral decision-making which does not assist JSCC's progress to reassess and refine its programs and its approaches to doing business. The Council believes, in this case, that Dr. Blanding should have contacted Angie Brown, the assigned coordinator of the Assessment of Administrators Committee, briefed her on his concerns, and allowed her to resolve, with the committee, any confusions it had about committee structure. By itself, that confusion was no obstacle to implementing the 2015-16 evaluation of administrators on schedule. That confusion and VPSSIE Smith's proposal to have Dr. Blanding appoint *ex officio* committee members rather than enable a committee vote on them certainly do not constitute "issues regarding the process of implementation of the assessment," as Dr. Blanding described them. The Council is aware of no "other potential issues," as he notes, impacting the scheduled evaluation of administrators. And finally, the Council perceives that, on balance, the work of all stakeholders in this effort was "an orderly process," not disorderly as Dr. Blanding appears to imply. The Council holds that his suspension of this evaluation until "next year," as he states, is an unnecessary abrogation of an effective process at JSCC, one in which stakeholders, in good faith, worked diligently and carefully as a team, identified problems, and then addressed them. Their efforts deserve better than Dr. Blanding's consideration of this matter, and the Council asks Dr. Blanding to rescind his decision.

previously. Additionally, the president's row of data was in error and did not match the raw data report due to a clerical mistake. Bobby Smith had copied a row of conglomerate ratings for all administrators and pasted that row of information into the president's row on the final table. After his meeting with the Executive Committee . . . Bobby sent a corrected document to all SPEC committee members and contacted Dr. Bailey about the error . . . in SACS compliance reporting. Dr. Bailey contacted Dr. Nuria Cuevas, JSCC's SACS liaison, about the matter, and she recommended an explanatory letter be sent to the SACS committee. Dr. Bailey sent that and received a response that all was OK as far as SACS was concerned."

⁵ Item 2 of the "December 2, 2015, Faculty Council Meeting Minutes" illustrates the Council's careful monitoring and intentional engagement in the redesign of assessing administrative employees:

The Council agreed no administrators should oversee the evaluative process, . . . that Angie Brown would be an appropriate person for this overall responsibility . . . [and] that consistency of process and validity were key issues. Answers and ratings should be clear. (For instance, current confusions about using "0" as a low numerical rating or a non-value response should be resolved). The Council agreed the assessment and distribution of results needs to happen quickly during the last quarter of the academic year, probably in March. Representatives felt a typed comments section was essential for adequately evaluating administrators. A motion was made and passed to send Dr. Blanding and Dr. Bailey the Council's suggestions for the assessment instrument and for the committee's organization and process.