

JSCC Faculty Council Meeting Minutes September 17th, 2021

The Faculty Council met Friday, September 17th at 10:00 a.m. in HS 111.

Present: Lauren Bryant, Liz Mayo, Bob Raines, Kim Benson, Anna Esquivel, Justin Curtis, Mark Walls, Ben Lawrence, Craig Metcalf, Jane David, Stacey Dunevant.

I. Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Mayo welcomed Council representatives and called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

II. Next Meeting

Friday, October 15th, 2021 at 10:00 in HS 111.

III. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: A motion and second were offered to approve the August, 2021 Council minutes as presented. The motion carried.

IV. Announcements

1. A vaccination clinic will be held at JSCC September 29th and 30th. Chair Mayo encouraged representatives to help encourage classroom and campus conversations about the event and the value of COVID vaccinations. Students, families, and others from the community can obtain the vaccine at this event. In discussion it was noted that some students—even clinical students required to vaccinate—report feeling “hounded” at times to obtain the shot. Sharing the importance of the vaccine was seen as important, but some students react to this concern differently.

V. Reports from Committees

1. Faculty Sub-council

Dr. Esquivel announced the TBR Faculty Sub-council would meet the end of October. Chair Mayo thanked her for keeping the council updated on concerns and issues at other TBR campuses.

2. Steering Committee

Dr. Esquivel reported on the Steering Committee’s efforts to organize and clarify protocols for populating college standing committees. She noted the need for more

timely committee assignments and perhaps arranging these in April before the spring semester ends.

3. International Education Committee

Dr. Esquivel explained that the International Education Committee's role would now expand from chiefly approving study abroad applications to advising and consulting with the new Global Learning Coordinator (Dr. Esquivel). She noted there would be a committee meeting October 5th and an annual kick-off promotional event for study abroad October 15th. She encouraged representatives to forward any ideas for international education programming to the committee.

VI. Old Business

1. Organizational Chart Changes & Faculty Council Representation

A motion was made and seconded to table this agenda item. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Budget and Enrollment Figures

Chair Mayo shared 14th day census numbers:

- Down 6.4% HC and 8.3% FTE (drops from last fall of 252 continuing students, 82 dual enrollment students, and 64 new students);
- Combined with 15.6 % FTE drop from last fall, this year's drop increases the reduction from Fall, 2019 to about 25%.
- JSCC's enrollment drops are actually less than some other colleges (Vol State and Motlow), and generally across TBR returning student numbers are declining;
- Last year's budget was cut \$3.5 million. Open positions were eliminated along with adjunct overload assignments and travel budgets.
- Going into Fall, 2021 JSCC's negative budget balance remained \$567,000. This Fall that will increase by another \$500,000, and \$453,000 more must be budgeted for Spring, 2022 for a total negative balance this academic year of \$1.5 million.
- TBR will not permit this negative balance to continue beyond May, 2022 when the budget must be balanced. Dr. Pimentel is working with TBR on a plan to balance the budget, and it will be announced soon.
- The Huron Group has studied efficiencies of support services outside of academics. Their report will be announced pending TBR approval.
- A dire budget will obviously require dramatic changes in the budget structure and institutional culture, and the school needs to be prepared to address this.

VII. New Business

1. Statement on Academic Freedom

Chair Mayo read a JSCC faculty member's statement on the need to protect higher-ed academic freedom from current political reactions to anti-racist agendas perceived as inherent to teaching so-called Critical Race Theory. The question quickly became whether the Faculty Council might endorse the statement. Council members rejected any actions that might justify or validate what one representative termed "legislative ideologies" that were "ignorant misunderstandings" of what Critical Race Theory actually involves. Another representative noted that academic freedom was already a fundamental principle in higher-education and that TBR policy protects it. Dr. Esquivel reported that Faculty Sub-council has considered this issue. According to TBR legal this concern just "doesn't affect" system faculty. It was agreed that Chair Mayo should respond to the submitted statement's author and clarify the Council's perspectives about this concern.

2. Bookstore

Council members stated great frustration with inadequate service from the JSCC bookstore operated by Follet. Numerous problems with textbook ordering and availability were noted. Problems ranged from not stocking enough texts to ordering different digital and hard copy editions to cancelled student orders and inconsistent modes of ordering (online options closing and reverting to in-person, main-campus ordering only, in some disciplines). The Council agreed that the bookstore's problems assuring textbook access are "a significant barrier" to student success and "affect student retention." Representatives from two discipline areas expressed interests in simply breaking ties with the bookstore, but it was acknowledged that the Follet arrangement was a TBR contract. Representatives asked Dr. Esquivel to inquire at Faculty Sub-council whether such issues affected other colleges in the system. The Council agreed that Chair Mayo should write a formal letter of concern to Tim Dellinger and Dr. Pigg about these issues. To facilitate this, representatives agreed to submit details of specific problems to her by Thursday, September 23rd.

3. HR and Compensation

The Council considered some faculty members' ongoing concerns and lack of confidence with implementing the faculty compensation plan. Some representatives acknowledged little more can be done to increase that confidence. It was recalled that in 2020, during the previous interim Presidency and under a different VPAA, the Council had stated concerns and monitored issues. At that time, Council Chair Candyce Sweet had read a specific list of concerns about implementing the plan in a Cabinet meeting. Chair Mayo acknowledged these concerns had been effectively voiced to President Pimentel and that he was aware of "everyday issues" related to pay equity and plan implementation. A recent concern—termed a "bait and switch"—with a retracted pay advertisement was discussed as a case of ineffective management of the plan. It was

asked whether the Huron Group's efficiency study would be public. Chair Mayo stated a summary would be available.

MOTION: A motion was made to adjourn at 11:22 a.m. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark E. Walls
Faculty Council Secretary

Dr. Liz Mayo
Faculty Council Chair