

JSCC Faculty Council Meeting Minutes February 11th, 2022

The Faculty Council met Friday, February 11th at 10:00 a.m. in HS 111.

Present: Lauren Bryant, Liz Mayo, Kim Benson, Anna Esquivel, Justin Curtis, Mark Walls, Ben Lawrence, Becky Fisher (proxy for Craig Metcalf), Cassie Revelle (proxy for Cindy Roberson), Jane David, Stacey Dunevant, Bob Raines, Scott Woods, Marisol Hernández-Soto (visitor), Emily Fortner (visitor), Jennifer Walker (visitor), and Kaitlyn Hatch (visitor)

I. Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Mayo welcomed Council representatives and called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

II. Next Meeting

Friday, March 18th, 2022 at 10:00 in HS 111.

III. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: A motion and second were offered to approve the January 2022 Council meeting minutes as presented. The motion carried.

IV. Announcements

Chair Mayo noted the following items.

1. Chair Mayo has received a written reply from Preston Turner confirming no mold exists in the Nelms building classrooms.
2. Fully Aligned Fridays, a Faculty Development Committee program, would be available on Fridays at 8:30 a.m. beginning February 18.th

V. Reports from Committees

1. Faculty Subcouncil

Dr. Esquivel reminded Council representatives of her emailed Faculty Subcouncil meeting summary and noted a few key items from TBR:

- A. Alternate Work Arrangements—while TBR has no contractual obligation to enable remote work, it will consider arrangements. Additional state laws and applicable taxes may apply out-of-state employees working remotely.
- B. Outside Employment Disclosure Form not required for part-time employees who naturally may have additional work, but TBR auditors require it per policy.
- C. To accommodate sciences faculty, TBR may lift the compensation cap on summer load hours to 10.
- D. Following a recent pilot study, TBR will produce a policy to enable use of high school GPA as a measure for determining college-ready or LS course placement. TBR’s Office of Policy and Strategy offers information on Corequisite Learning Support at <https://www.tbr.edu/policy-strategy/corequisite-learning-support>.
- E. The Faculty Subcouncil requested revision of **Policy 1.03.04.00 Councils** to reflect changes in practice (often councils now elect subcouncil representatives rather than task chairs to represent). At this point, JSCC Council representatives reflected on how changed Faculty Subcouncil membership (inclusion of TCAT reps and loss of university reps) has radically marginalized the community college “voice” at this TBR-level meeting. An alternative business meeting exclusively for community college faculty representatives was suggested as needed.
- F. A Cycle 3 Open Education Resources grant for adoption/creation of OEP materials now exists. Candyce Sweet will work on the grant for JSCC.

2. Diversity Committee

Ben Lawrence reported that the Diversity Committee was rebuilding its approach and was “at work.”

3. Faculty Evaluation Committee

Chair Mayo noted that in light of faculty changes and area reorganizations, faculty representation on the Faculty Evaluation Committee would need to be reconsidered. She explained also that the college Steering Committee will produce a list of Faculty Council representatives on all Standing Committees. This list is needed by March 1st, but of course Council membership won’t be known until April. President Pimentel has suggested assigning Council representatives for standing committees after the Council elections.

4. Faculty Development Committee

Chair Mayo reported that the Faculty Development Committee still has money to assign for faculty requests. Faculty can use the J-WEB form to request funding.

VI. Old Business

1. Pay Plan Update

Faculty concerns about pay plan inconsistencies were brought to Dr. Pimentel. He has recommended that an outside body examine pay plan calculations. TBR determines who will review the concerns and they have selected Performance Point, the consultants who created the convoluted plan in the first place. Chair Mayo requests that faculty email her with any concerns or questions about calculation inconsistencies. She will later provide the consultant's and TBR's timeline for addressing erroneous calculations.

2. Summer Classes

Chair Mayo reported that interim VPAA Tom Pigg had communicated by email with President Pimentel regarding approaches for determining whether classes "make" or not in summer sessions. Decisions about this are still pending.

3. Advising Issues (Guest, Dr. Kyle Barron)

Invited by the Council to address some concerns about advising, Dr. Barron covered the following matters:

A. Text Messaging

Dr. Barron discussed the Cadence software which Student Services uses with a 52% response rate. JSCC has 50 user licenses for this and no funding for more. He said getting more was on his radar, however. The in-house J-WEB texting function is not as responsive as Cadence and students do not always receive those email messages. As of last November, he said, Victor Garcia had brought the J-WEB advisee lists up to date.

B. Advisee Rosters and J-WEB Access

Faculty expressed concerns about why JSCC maintained three different lists of advisees. Dr. Barron said there was no good reason and that faculty should use the JWEB list which pulls live directly from Banner. Other lists use older data; even DegreeWorks and AdvisorTrac carry a 24-hour delay for updating. Faculty questioned why they might not have access to Argos which pulls from Banner and gives any listed email address, credit hours, and so much more information within one document. Faculty noted this would make communicating with advisees so much more flexible and the program provides about 300 different reports. Dr. Barron will check to see why advisors can't be provided the Argos "list of assigned" report. He noted though that this list still goes to department assistants to push out. The bottom line, he said, was to get the word out to faculty to use J-WEB for the most current listings.

At this point, the Council raised the nagging issue of unsuccessful J-WEB access with persistent "authentication error" messages repeating through multiple

consecutive attempts to log on. One representative reported his dean had checked with OIT and learned this was a state-wide TBR problem. Apparently, the current vendor responsible for the issue has said it will not correct the problem. For such a key portal's dysfunction to remain unresolved by any vendor contracted by TBR seems incredible, this representative suggested. Another representative proposed that our students won't have the resolve to try multiple times to log on to this main portal for college, employee, faculty, advisee, and student vital information.

C. AdvisorTrac

Dr. Barron reviewed the relatively inexpensive cost of the AdvisorTrac platform and acknowledged other platforms were better but costlier. He felt a better use of the money, if it were available, would be to get more access to the texting software used by Student Services.

D. Suggesting "Easier" Professors

Dr. Barron reported that the advising staff assured him they never counseled students about so-called "easy-A" professors. They did sometimes seek information about teaching styles and provided that information to students. Council members asked him to help advisors understand the importance of rotating class enrollments among professors to help balance class loads among instructors whenever possible.

E. Upcoming Advisement

Dr. Barron reminded Council representatives that students can begin registering March 1st and that the "clunky" J-WEB texting feature would be the best way to let advisees know this. The Council reminded him that advisors' expectations are that students take our class recommendations and, through J-WEB, register themselves and enroll in classes.

VII. New Business

1. Faculty Council Elections

Chair Mayo explained that the Council representative elections would again be a J-WEB vote and that Vice Chair, Kim Benson, would arrange the process. A list of eligible faculty would be produced ahead of the election, and Council members should carefully review the list to be sure all names on it are appropriate and that it is complete. Retiring faculty will have the option to vote but no retirees will appear on the eligibility list, of course.

2. Faculty Awards

Chair Mayo noted that the Council currently has no rubric to use for making award recommendations. Nominations are simply forwarded to the Council's committee for

determining these awards. She asked whether representatives wanted a rubric which might make the process more objective. The Council's view was that we just retain the approach of writing an award nomination letter on a form and that award criteria should be listed on the form as a kind of prompt for recommenders. The Council agreed that a small task force should create the nomination form and take charge of the faculty awards. Scott Woods and Bob Raine volunteered to do this.

3. Faculty Emeritus Nominations

Chair Mayo explained that although JSCC has not in the past often nominated retired or retiring professors as Faculty Emeriti, other schools do so and we might wish to as well. She noted no process exists for facilitating this, but that this year at least the Faculty Council might seek nominations, approve them, and pass them on to the administration to be forwarded to TBR. Mark Walls and Becky Fisher volunteered to gather the nominations and forward them on to President Pimentel.

MOTION: A motion was made for Mark Walls and Becky Fisher to gather Faculty Emeritus nominations this year and for specific protocols to be developed by the Council for managing this process in the future. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

4. Graduation Mace

Chair Mayo noted that some concerns had been raised about the script language for introducing the mace during commencement. She noted that Professor James Mayo had volunteered to edit this language and that the Council could review changes and vote later to approve it. The Council accepted this approach.

5. RIF Cuts to Nursing Faculty and Rejected Grant

With other nursing faculty guests, Cassie Revelle and Becky Fisher, proxies for Cindy Roberson and Craig Metcalf, presented concerns about JSCC's process for determining and enacting a Nursing program reduction-in-force plan. These representatives acknowledged the RIF plan affecting their program was warranted; their issue was that the Dean of Nursing had not been involved in the decision and was not informed of the coming RIF cuts. They maintained that accreditation protocols required Nursing faculty and Nursing's administration be involved in such decisions, but they were not. Additionally, Nursing representatives stated President Pimentel had explained that TBR required the RIF plan be kept secret, but that President Pimentel had shared this information with James Ross, President and CEO of West Tennessee Healthcare. This seemed improper to them, especially since their own dean was not informed in advance of the cuts, they said. Additionally, these representatives were upset that a substantial grant developed between the JSCC Nursing Program and West Tennessee Healthcare had been rejected by President Pimentel. Representatives from nursing emphasized their intent was not to argue cuts to their faculty weren't appropriate, but rather to object to how these cuts were handled. If nursing faculty had understood seven faculty positions and two staff would be cut, one representative said, more faculty or staff might have taken the buyout offered by JSCC and TBR.

First of all, Council representatives expressed great empathy for their colleagues and for the situation they had experienced. It was felt broadly that nursing faculty should not have been in a position where RIF cuts surprised them. Chair Mayo provided nursing faculty and other guests with data showing the persistent and sharp downward trajectory of Nursing enrollment over several years. Some Council representatives and guests commented on the stark implications of this data and noted that any program administrator would have been expected to **(a)** know and understand these implications and **(b)** communicate those implications appropriately to faculty and staff under their charge to prepare them for a potential RIF outcome.

It was emphasized, without disagreement, that these tumbling program enrollment numbers certainly did not justify the long history of Nursing's disproportionate budget and swelling staff and faculty additions. One Council member pointed out that the Nursing faculty had been "victimized" by inept leadership at JSCC in recent years, that "this issue actually would have been addressed if, five years ago, the VPAA and President [Blanding] had done their job . . . [and that] they didn't do what was needed when the [enrollment] trends were recognized." One guest commented that JSCC administrators irresponsibly refilled positions vacated in nursing that shouldn't have been refilled based on the data and that "the President [at this time] allowed this to happen." As a result, college resources badly needed in other areas were dedicated unjustifiably to a program with falling numbers.

Additionally, Nursing representatives expressed concern that President Pimentel rejected a substantial Nursing area grant because, he said, recurring positions it funded could not be maintained following the grant period. However, Nursing faculty in the Council meeting maintained they were told their dean would revise the grant and delete concerning issues like the recurring positions. Even without the recurring positions, the grant could have been very useful in many other ways, these faculty said. They felt it was a significant missed opportunity.

The Faculty Council responded to these concerns as follows:

- To Nursing's concern that their dean was not aware of these pending cuts, several Council members asserted this was inconceivable. One representative acknowledged the dean may not have known the exact people affected, ". . . but she surely should have known [of this likely outcome] given the data." Other representatives noted that Nursing's administration should have prepared faculty for this potentiality, and an important accountability question is "why that did not happen?"
- To the concern that JR Ross was informed inappropriately about the RIF plan, a Council representative explained the nature of an RIF as "a universal process that any organization uses to reduce positions to maintain the organization's health"; confidentiality within the organization is important in such a situation and specific jobs affected can't be leaked. If President Pimentel told the CEO of West Tennessee Healthcare about the pending cuts, doing so would have been within TBR's parameters in this case and within the scope of what RIF plans are

and how they function. Another Council member stressed that only “TBR legal would have told Dr. Pimentel he could speak with James Ross.”

- To Nursing’s concern about the denied grant, one Council representative observed that if the grant led to additional recurring positions, it would have created ongoing problems for restoring JSCC’s financial capacity and worked against the Phase II restoration plan which included the RIF for this area in the first place. Still, the Council expressed confusion about why the grant would be denied if the recurring positions were deleted from it. Several representatives suggested that the Council seek clarification about this matter from Dr. Pimentel.

MOTION: A motion was made that the Council’s Executive Committee meet with Dr. Pimentel to seek clarification on (1) why the Nursing grant was rejected and (2) the perceived breach in confidentiality involving Dr. Pimentel’s communication with James Ross about the RIF plan affecting Nursing faculty. The motion passed unanimously.

See **Appendix A** for the Executive Committee’s report on this meeting.

6. Promotion and Tenure Portfolios

One proxy representative from Nursing questioned whether her area’s candidates for promotion or tenure should submit portfolios given the financial concerns now surrounding the Nursing budget. In light of the seeming instability of the program’s funding (given the need for the RIF), the question was why should faculty be encouraged to apply for promotion or tenure. The issue seemed to be resolved by the truth that if faculty did not apply they would never achieve such advances in their careers.

Another Nursing representative voiced a general frustration with the department’s situation now: “How do we continue to grow the program or keep it strong now? How can I teach twice as many students?”

7. Preceptorships

As the Council meeting ended, some Nursing faculty raised a concern that JSCC program was denied preceptors in clinical settings at West Tennessee Healthcare. Other area nursing programs, however, did enjoy the resource of preceptorships, and it was felt that this historical imbalance was unfair and inappropriate. One nurse attending the meeting said, so much of our time is required “to teach all labs and all clinicals” ourselves and yet “other colleges have adjuncts with [their] clinicals.”

One Council representative, a program director, suggested JSCC faculty are “not at the table enough to assure our perspective is respected.” “It is important,” this representative said, “that our programs share hospital accommodations equitably.” The Dean of Nursing “must be approached about how to get this done.”

The Executive Committee resolved to add the issue of preceptorships to its meeting agenda with President Pimentel.

Final Remarks:

The Council sought to encourage Nursing faculty at the meeting. One representative stressed that moving forward, it would be productive to have more Nursing engagement in Faculty Council and in college affairs generally. Another representative emphasized the critical value of solidifying respect for shared governance among Nursing faculty and asserting expectations for shared governance with Nursing leadership. Nurses were reminded that election (not appointment) of Faculty Council representatives was college policy for all departments. Nurses were encouraged to consider very carefully to whom among them they wanted to entrust representation of their interests at JSCC.

MOTION: A motion was made to adjourn at 12:30 p.m. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark E. Walls
Faculty Council Secretary

Dr. Liz Mayo
Faculty Council Chair

Appendix A

TO: JSCC Faculty Council

FROM: Faculty Council Executive Committee

DATE: February 16th, 2022

RE: Summary of Meeting with President George Pimentel

In its February 11th meeting, the JSCC Faculty Council charged its Executive Committee to meet with President Pimentel and obtain clarifications for why he rejected a recent nursing grant written by JSCC's Tara Privette, Dr. Leslie West-Sands, and Dr. Vicki Lake of West Tennessee Healthcare. Also, the committee was asked to learn more about why Dr. Pimentel communicated with JR Ross, West Tennessee Healthcare CEO, about pending RIF plan cuts in Nursing faculty and staff. On February 11th, the Executive Committee scheduled an appointment with him on the 15th to discuss these and related issues. Below is a summary of his responses to the committee's questions.

I. Grant

The committee represented to Dr. Pimentel that Nursing faculty who attended the February 11th Council meeting knew very little about the grant other than what had been told to them by Dr. West-Sands and Professor Privette. These faculty understood the grant could have been adjusted or re-written to avoid recurring-cost additions of personnel. They understood the grant could have been used to support other college needs like Learning Support initiatives. In light of what they saw as flexibility with the grant, they were confused about why it wasn't acceptable.

Dr. Pimentel said he made it clear to the grant writers that he could not approve the grant unless it assured no new personnel would be added or supported through it. He explained that adding or maintaining personnel levels in Nursing would countermand the RIF plan's purpose of redistributing college funds to support more adequately key areas that had been underfunded for years. He emphasized that several revised versions of the grant never deleted personnel or positions he had concerns about. He noted the paradoxical bind he would face by enacting a reduction in force impacting Nursing while also approving a grant that would both involve current personnel in that area and bring more personnel into it. The bottom line, he said, was there could simply be no more personnel in Nursing, and the grant never adjusted to that requirement.

II. Communication with James Ross

With Dr. Pimentel, the Executive Committee reviewed concerns expressed to the Council about what seemed a breach of confidentiality for him to inform the President and CEO of West Tennessee Healthcare about the RIF plan before informing those affected at JSCC.

President Pimentel explained the long process (summer 2021 to present) of designing a plan to address JSCC's 3.1 million-dollar debt and then getting it approved. As the process moved forward, Dr. Kim McCormick, TBR Vice Chancellor of External Affairs, asked him to meet with key community partners including local legislators and James Ross. TBR was concerned with doing "heads-up" prep work and not blind-siding these stakeholders. President Pimentel said he first met with Mr. Ross over concerns raised when he would not sign the grant. At that time, President Pimentel said, he knew only that the RIF plan would address the 3.1 million shortfall but did not know exactly which JSCC personnel would be affected. He was hopeful the voluntary buy-out would help address the financial issue. He noted that originally the RIF plan included 26 JSCC positions, but that changed as several people in Student Services left the college, saving the school over \$300,000.00 from just that area. He noted that the voluntary buy-out has now been extended two weeks because of concerns in Nursing that some eligible for the buy-out would have considered that option had they known earlier their positions would be cut.

III. Nursing Preceptors

The Executive Committee briefed Dr. Pimentel on concerns expressed by nursing faculty that their program has been denied preceptorships at West Tennessee Healthcare when other nursing programs have them. The Committee asked Dr. Pimentel whether bachelor degree programs could have preceptors but not associate degree programs. The question, in short, was why couldn't the JSCC nursing program have them?

President Pimentel replied that he had checked with West Tennessee Healthcare, asked this question himself, and was told by Mr. Ross that "you can have them." President Pimentel said that he would "take this [matter] back to JR" if a problem having preceptors arose.