

General Faculty Meeting

October 24, 2012, 2PM, Donahue Auditorium

Meeting Minutes

I. President's Remarks

Father Bob Niehoff addressed the faculty and answered questions. He stated that he has been on the road visiting with alumnae and has heard good things. The alumnae he's met with have been impressed with the fact that the university is more academically challenging than ever before. Alumnae gifts and the Carroll fund are up and cash gifts are at their highest point since 2004. The Board of Directors is also strong in its support of the faculty and of strong academic programs. The President thanked the faculty for their work on the Academic Planning Task Force and reminded faculty that their continued work on assessment is essential for the Higher Learning Commission reaccreditation process. Demonstrating assessment is essential for reaccreditation and for federal student aid, and no matter who wins the election, there promises to be more regulation in the future of higher education. We need to have campus-wide conversations on how national conversations regarding higher education affect us and the President asks for help on this from Anne Kugler, Chair of Faculty Council, and Academic Vice President John Day. We have great stories to tell, stories other private schools can't match, particularly in areas of service and of low-income student retention. The President then addressed the questions sent to him from faculty.

A member of the University Enrollment Committee has requested that the first question the President addressed be recorded in the minutes:

While there has been some year-to-year variation, in recent years the Catholic percentage of our incoming class has ranged from 72 to 92, and the percent from private (primarily Catholic) high schools from 45 to 66 (in both cases the lowest figure is from the current first-year class). Also, in the last two years the incoming class was 55-56 percent male. Do you think it is important to maintain a high percentage of Catholic students who have attended private schools? Or should we be striving to attract more non-Catholic students, students who have attended public schools, and more females? If so, how do you think we can appeal to students currently not attracted to JCU?

The President said he would attempt to answer this question in three parts. First, "Why so Catholic": He stated that 60% of JCU students graduate from Catholic high schools, and 40% from Jesuit high schools, but this doesn't mean that we only admit Catholic students or that we admit them in larger percentages than at other Catholic universities. Our percentages are lower than other Catholic and Jesuit universities. In response to whether it is easier to attract students from a Catholic or Jesuit high school, he argued that these students are more likely to be engaged in service and that the emphasis on service at JCU attracts them. He hears this from prospective students and their parents. Catholic high schools, Jesuit high schools and "high end" public high schools tend to do a lot of service; urban public high schools don't do as

much service. Finally, the President noted that families of students attending private Catholic or Jesuit high schools are more accustomed to paying tuition for education. Also, if parents have already made an investment in education in that way, they want to continue to invest in a university like John Carroll. The percentage of our student body who are Catholic is less than that at Georgetown University, Boston College or Holy Cross College. And we DO try to attract students from other types of high schools, especially because Fr. Niehoff hears “What are you doing for Cleveland public school students?” in Columbus and D.C.

In response to a question on compensation, the President announced that a significant pool of compensation is possible for faculty by fall of 2013. However, it will be done without significant new hiring lines, since it is hard to do both at this time. The university is struggling not so much in terms of enrollment numbers, but in terms of the discount rates. It is also a hard sell to convince students from Chicago to come to Northeast Ohio; our location is a problem.

In response to a question about the recent trip to Ireland by alumnae, administrators and the football team, the President emphasized that the amount of energy around the trip has been incredible. It was paid for by alumnae, and brought in significant gifts to the university, including the College of Arts and Sciences. The trip inspired some alumnae to give who had never made a gift to the university before.

As a final note, the President thanked faculty, whose efforts lead to high retention rates. Because of faculty, students come to JCU, stay at JCU and succeed at JCU.

In response to a question from the floor, the President stated his belief that the election results will not matter to the fact that the U.S. Department of Education will play larger roles in regulating higher education. Right now, in his opinion, the attitude seems to be that private colleges do not need or merit support. But he reiterated that students on Pell grants do need support and that few can match our university in the number of those Pell students who graduate.

There was a follow-up to the question on enrollment, stating that the original question is not so much asking if JCU is “too Catholic,” but instead reacting to a common complaint that the university is finding it hard to recruit from outside Ohio. In response to this, should the university then try harder to recruit a wider pool of students from local public high schools? The President replied that that was why he was in favor of the recently approved program with Cleveland Heights and University Heights students taking classes here. He wants to get more public school students on the university campus. He and John Day are meeting with the superintendents from Orange and Solon to get more public school students here. The top concerns he hears from public school students are threefold: can I succeed at JCU, can I afford JCU and will I feel comfortable at JCU?

II. Handbook Committee Report on the Proposal for a Handbook Amendment for a University-wide Tenure Committee

Bob Kolesar (MT) thanked those faculty members who attended the open hearings on the proposed university-wide tenure committee. The proposal the Handbook Committee held open hearings on did not include the Appendix J to the Handbook, only the proposal on the UTC. He then went over the proposal posted by the Handbook Committee on the Faculty Council website, which had already been distributed to faculty, and went over the arguments, pro and con, which the committee heard during open hearings. He stated that the committee does not in principle oppose the formation of a university-wide tenure committee; however, due to concerns and unanswered questions raised by this proposal, the Handbook Committee is unable to support and recommend this proposed version of a UTC to faculty. It is up to the faculty to weigh the pros and cons to this proposal and to vote accordingly. The election will be held within 30 days of this meeting. To adopt this proposal, there must be a majority of all faculty eligible to vote; an abstention is a no vote. If a majority of all eligible faculty votes to adopt this proposal, it will be presented to the Board of Directors for consideration. In response to a question asking how Appendix J fit in with this proposal, Bob replied that Roy Day, Chair of the Rank, Tenure and Promotion Committee will be addressing that.

Initial comments from the floor included: that the points to be worked out in Appendix J are so significant that they should be in the proposal itself, not just worked out later if the proposal is approved; that the proposed UTC would be an additional layer in the tenure process that does not currently exist; and that there were already sufficient protections of candidates in place because Departments and COAD would be more familiar with the candidates than a UTC would be. Responses included: that this proposed committee reflected hard work and had more positives than negatives; that department familiarity could cut both ways and that the objectivity of this committee would be an advantage; and that faculty members as a whole have a stake on who is tenured at this university and should work to ensure that only those worthy of tenure should get tenure. Further discussion involved what weight this committee would have in the process, what the implications were of the membership of the proposed UTC changing for a candidate between Third Year Review and the final decision, and what the likelihood was that the committee would be staffed by the same members willing to do this work all the time, instead of a rotating number of faculty. Additional issues raised were whether this would make things more complicated or address the necessity of clear standards from departments; whether the amount of time for a UTC recommendation was sufficient; and whether faculty decision-making in areas outside their disciplines in awarding Grauels is an analogous process.

III. Rank, Tenure and Promotion Committee Report on Revisions to Appendix J and further actions

Roy Day, Chair of the RTP Committee, went over the following proposal, which will be on the ballot going out to faculty for a vote if approved on the floor today (see appendix to these

minutes). Day stated that if the proposed UTC is approved, the revisions to Appendix J would automatically be approved as well; if the proposed UTC failed, the revisions to Appendix J would not go into effect, even if by some fluke, the revisions were approved but the proposed UTC was not approved. If, on the other hand, the proposed UTC passed but the revisions failed, the current Appendix J will stand. The proposed changes to Appendix J only needs a plurality, not a majority of faculty eligible to vote. Discussion ensued. There were no open hearings on these proposed changes to Appendix J, so it was argued that they should not be on the same ballot.

Action: Roy Day made a motion that parts B and C be included on the ballot with part A. Julia Karolle-Berg seconded the motion. The motion carried, with 37 votes for, 20 opposed and 3 abstentions. The proposal on the creation of a University Tenure Committee will go out with parts B and C concerning Appendix J changes, with the understanding that if the proposed UTC fails, the proposed Appendix J revisions will not go into effect.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:23PM.

Minutes prepared by Karen Gygli, Secretary to Faculty Council