

## **General Faculty Meeting January 28, 2015**

A General Meeting of the Faculty was held on January 28, 2015 in the Dolan Science Center Auditorium and began at 2:05 pm.

The following Faculty Council members were in attendance: Roy Day (Chair), Barbara D'Ambrosia (Vice Chair), Gerry Guest (Secretary), Ryan Allen, Scott Allen, Paul Challen, Jeff Dyck, Kristen Ehrhardt, Jean Feerick, Simon Fitzpatrick, Dwight Hahn, Dan Kilbride, Linda Koch, Cindy Lenox, Annie Moses, Mike Nichols, Alissa Nutting, David Shutkin, Elizabeth Stiles, Sheri Young, and Tom Zlatoper.

The following members were absent: Tina Facca, Simran Kahai, and Gloria Liu

The exact attendance of the meeting was not taken but clearly exceeded the necessary quorum of 41.

The agenda for the meeting was distributed in advance via email.

### **Minutes**

#### **I. Chair's Announcements**

- A. Minutes of the General Faculty Meeting, November 19. No changes were offered and the minutes were taken as approved. Roy Day noted that the Fair Trade Proposal discussed at this meeting was endorsed by an online vote of the faculty and also approved by the administration.
- B. Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Faculty, December 3. No changes were offered and the minutes were taken as approved. Day noted that the Resolution to form a collaborative relationship between the Faculty and the University Strategic Planning Group crafted at this meeting was endorsed by an online vote of the faculty.
- C. Next Faculty Council meeting: Wednesday, February 11.
- D. Next General Faculty meeting: Wednesday, February 25.
- E. There have been some recent bias reports that prompted Day to invite Terry Mills to lead a faculty discussion. This will be the first item on the agenda under Items for Business.
- F. We are in the second year of a pilot cohort advising program. The program is currently being reviewed by the Advisory Council for Advising and will be referred to the Committee on Academic Policies before a Faculty vote on whether to continue the program. If this General Faculty Meeting concludes early, it will be followed by a CAP open hearing on the cohort advising program.

G. The Board of Directors has established a website with important information about the Board and links to University governing documents: <http://sites.jcu.edu/boardofdirectors/>. Day noted that this marks an improvement in communications, as does item H below. We (as faculty) now have greater opportunities to keep informed.

H. Faculty are encouraged to remain informed about the activities of the important University committees such as the University Strategic Planning Group and the Provost's Council. Information about these committees, including agendas and minutes, is posted on the web:

<http://sites.jcu.edu/uspg/>

<http://sites.jcu.edu/provost/pages/provost-council/>

A recent email by the Provost updated the faculty on progress in this area.

At the start of each General Faculty Meeting, there will be a short period when faculty members on these committees will be available to answer questions. Paul Lauritzen noted that he would be happy to receive emails in this regard as well

I. James Watling, the Coburn Professor of Environmental Science and new to JCU this semester, was introduced by Mike Martin, chair of Biology.

J. David Shutkin, chair of Elections, reported that there are 202 faculty members eligible to vote this semester. A quorum is 41, a simple majority 102. Nine faculty are on leave.

## II. Report to the Faculty regarding ongoing Dean searches.

A. Ed Hahnenberg, Chair, CAS Dean Search Committee.

Hahnenberg reported on the status of the search. A survey of the JCU community was conducted November 24-December 5 to gather input on qualifications, competencies, and priorities. The position was posted on December 18 and a website launched ([sites.jcu.edu/casdeansearch](http://sites.jcu.edu/casdeansearch)). Credential reviews began this week. Candidates for interviews will be chosen by February 23. Airport interviews are planned for March 12-13. Campus visits are planned for March 19-27.

The survey drew 356 respondents (44% students, 34% faculty). The highest ranked priorities were: Foster teaching excellence, Support ongoing accreditation efforts, Promote effective communication within the college. Filtering out student responses, the highest ranked priorities were: Support ongoing accreditation efforts, Foster teaching excellence, Promote effective communication with the college.

In the area of Qualifications, the highest ranked responses among FSAs were: holder of a Ph.D, strong teaching experience, and experience in supervising faculty.

Among Competencies, FSAs ranked interpersonal skills, ability to engage faculty, and collaboration with diverse constituents as most important.

A Leadership Profile was created and is available on the search website.

At this point more than 50 applications have been received. Candidate diversity will be discussed at the next meeting of the committee.

B. Al Nagy, Chair, BSOB Dean Search Committee.

Nagy noted that Witt/Kieffer is assisting with both dean searches and that the Boler search is not as far along as the CAS search. The Boler Committee has been constituted and comments/questions can be sent to them. The Committee has met twice, and faculty input on the search will be solicited (a Boler School discussion took place last week).

A Leadership Profile is being drafted.

The timeline has been established. March will be devoted to credential reviews, choosing of candidates, airport interviews (around the 23rd). April (mid to late) will be devoted to the on-campus interviews.

### III. Items for Business

A. The challenges of presenting difficult topics in the classroom. Discussion led by Terry Mills, Assistant Provost for Diversity.

Day began by noting that there have been some incidents of bias reporting that led to Mills speaking with Day. Mills noted that the conversation with Day was about due process. Mills began his remarks by outlining four different scenarios that relate to bias reporting and difficult conversations in the classroom:

1. The Innocent Comment.
2. Silence or tacit approval (e.g., when a student makes an insensitive remark and the professor does not comment on it).
3. Incongruent remarks / humor.
4. Generational differences in the use of language.

Mills argued that we need to teach our students about civil discourse and how to engage in it. How do we make this part of the curriculum and/or a measurable learning outcome? Academic freedom / freedom of speech are important considerations here, as is the status and evaluation of emerging faculty.

A wide-ranging discussion followed.

Elizabeth Stiles asked if there had been a recent spike in reports of bias in the classroom that led to this discussion. Mills answered that there have been reports but not a spike nor an overwhelming number.

David Shutkin asked if there are possibilities for faculty development (e.g., workshops) relating to civil discourse? Mills noted that opportunities in this area could be cultivated by his office. Developing a requirement for students to learn about civil discourse might be desirable.

Dianna Taylor suggested that faculty who have experience teaching difficult topics in the classroom might share their strategies and knowledge. Mills will follow up on this idea.

Mariana Ortega suggested that some of the discussion misses the heart of the matter. Civil discourse sometimes avoids directly confronting issues of racism, sexism, homophobia, etc.

Linda Koch noted that we are talking about two different things: educating students vs. faculty practices.

In response to a question about process from Ryan Allen, Mills noted that he is working with the Provost on how to deal with complaints against faculty and that due process is important. In the past, there was a response team. Mills is now sending reports to the relevant division – if academic, it goes to Colleran. Paul Lauritzen suggested that there should be more faculty involvement in the process, not just Mills and the Provost

B. Morale and Governance problems identified by the HLC. What can the Faculty do to resolve these problems? Open forum.

With time nearly exhausted, Day pointed to some accreditation criteria as defined by the HLC. Criterion Four concerns teaching and learning, evaluation and improvement. Day noted that progress is being made here. Criterion Five concerns resources, planning, and institutional effectiveness. Day noted that we need to get involved and engaged with these issues to meet all the components of this criterion. Faculty Council will work on this with the administration. Linda Koch pointed out that morale is a part of effectiveness in these standards.

IV. New Business – none

V. Adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 3:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gerry Guest  
Secretary, Faculty Council