

## **General Faculty Meeting March 25, 2015**

A General Meeting of the Faculty was held on March 25, 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, Tina Facca, Dwight Hahn, Simran Kahai, Dan Kilbride, Annie Moses, Mike Nichols, Alissa Nutting, David Shutkin, Elizabeth Stiles, and Tom Zlatoper.

The following members were absent: Jean Feerick, Simon Fitzpatrick, Linda Koch, Cindy Lenox, Gloria Liu, and Sheri Young.

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, February 25. No changes were offered and the minutes were taken as approved.

B. Next Faculty Council meeting: Wednesday, April 8.

C. Next General Faculty meeting: Wednesday, April 22. There will perhaps be four proposals to consider, so this is likely to be a busy and significant meeting.

D. The Ad Hoc University Committee to Study the Conflict of Interest Policy has been formed. The elected faculty are Dan Kilbride, Paul Lauritzen and Debra Rosenthal. Pam Mason, Alex Teodosio and Tom Zlatoper are the appointed members of the committee. Pam Mason will chair the committee.

E. The JCU Self Study prepared for the HLC in December 2013 and the JCU response to the Institutional Actions Council Hearings of the HLC (December 2014) have been posted on the Faculty Council – Sensitive Business course pages on Blackboard and Canvas. The HLC Action Letter is the final report from the HLC and is available on the HLC website. Faculty who wish to read the visiting team report (which has been superseded by the Action Letter) can do so in the offices of the

provost, the dean of CAS, the dean of the BSOB, or the interim director of assessment.

Jim Lissemore argued that faculty should be able to see the visiting team report by accessing it electronically in some sort of secure way. He recognizes that it is sensitive, but it has information that we need going forward. **Lissemore moved that the HLC visiting committee report be made available electronically to the faculty in a secure fashion within a week** (seconded Dan Kilbride).

Barbara D'Ambrosia spoke against the motion, arguing that electronic copies are not fully secure. They can be shared. Our competitors are using this information to lure students away. Jeff Johansen responded that he went to the Dean's office today and the physical copy was not available. Jeanne Collieran replied that it is there now. Johansen asked how we can discuss the HLC findings at this meeting when the document hasn't been made available.

Roger Purdy spoke in favor of online access in secure form so that we can all be informed. The current arrangement potentially allows misinformation to spread. Paul Shick asserted that paper copies should be more accessible than they are now if we aren't allowed access to electronic copies. David Shutkin suggested that we look at the report right now. Roy Day countered that perhaps relevant excerpts could be shared, noting, however, that he does support the Provost's decision not to share the document electronically.

Jerry Weinstein asked why we have these concerns. Jeanne Collieran responded that the interim reports in question are not part of the official documents of this accreditation cycle. The visiting team's recommendation is not part of the record. It was filled with errors to which we responded. The documents that are not online have sensitive information and that other institutions in northeast Ohio are disseminating HLC information to potential students.

Lissemore argued that there are risks with faculty not seeing these documents. We need a good understanding of the problems. Collieran replied that we have attended to many of the issues listed in these unofficial documents. Day noted that the IAC letter tells us what we have to do. The anecdotes in the visiting team report inform that letter but the information in the visiting team report didn't necessarily go into the official reports.

**Lissemore withdrew his original motion without objection. He then moved that hard copies of these documents be made available to department chairs to share with faculty at chairs' discretion** (seconded Johansen).

In the ensuing discussion, Weinstein asked if these two motions really are that different. Paul Shick suggested that the motion could be amended to note that

chairs will exercise appropriate caution. Lissemore accepted this as a friendly amendment. Kilbride suggested that we could ask faculty to sign a statement that they will not disseminate the information via photocopy, etc. to outsiders.

Scott Allen, Simran Kahai, and Nathan Gelehrt spoke against the motion.

**In the final vote, the motion was defeated (8 votes in favor; 44 against; 6 abstentions).**

Lissemore thanked the faculty for their consideration.

F. Faculty are encouraged to remain informed about the activities of the important University committees such as the University Strategic Planning Committee 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/>

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.

## II. Open discussion: Governance problems identified in the HLC Action letter.

Day suggested that this item be tabled and that we move to section III. This would give people the chance to read the HLC documents that are available.

Johansen moved that we proceed to item III (second D'Ambrosia); the motion passed.

## III. Open hearing: Cohort Advising Proposal

Mike Nichols (chair, CAP) led the discussion, noting that what would follow is officially a CAP open hearing. He apologized for the late dissemination of the proposal. He noted that last year a faculty survey was done for the first year of cohort advising. It was decided to continue the program into a second year and then potentially have a faculty vote on the program.

Maryclaire Moroney thanked CAP and Day for the time today. She noted that the APTF Working Group on Advising marked the starting point for this revision of our advising program. The current cohort program is a work in progress. It serves as a platform/vehicle for more programming for freshmen; this is important as we move into the new Core Curriculum which does not have a First Year Seminar. Faculty were surveyed this spring about the cohort program. Two-thirds said that they know

their freshmen better because of it; most said that their freshmen were better prepared to have advising conversations. More work is to be done and we're happy to partner with the faculty to do it.

Jeff Johansen spoke in favor of the program saying that he believes that it has been effective in the sciences. He likes it much better than the old model and hopes the faculty approves it. It is better in many ways.

Mike Martin added that as a department chair it was helpful in planning. It allows for the better distribution of advisees across faculty in the department. He wishes that all faculty would participate.

Helen Murphy asked about faculty response to this year's survey. Moroney replied that a little over half of faculty participants responded; the same can be said for this year's freshmen.

Elizabeth Stiles asked if the new cohort model has improved retention. Moroney replied that retention has remained about the same and that she would like to see retention go up. She noted that studies indicate that the first six weeks of the term is the crucial period; this is when freshmen decide whether the institution is a good fit. Brendan Foreman replied that nobody may be at fault with regard to retention. Moroney replied that some decisions we can't control but we may be able to influence some students to stay.

Dan Kilbride spoke in favor of the cohort model. It allows the advisor to set freshmen off on the right course. It has the potential to improve graduation rates.

Paul Challen asked about seeing the survey data. Moroney responded that there is data in the report, but that some was not included because faculty names need to be removed. The student data indicated that they were satisfied with the program (overall it is very positive). Moroney will send more data for sharing.

Chris Shiel spoke in favor of the proposal, noting that the cohort model effectively developed the relationship between student and advisor.

Jim Lissemore argued that there are lots of positive aspects to the program. The students' making of an academic plan was the best thing that we had them do. Lissemore, however, noted that we don't have much data to work with here and there isn't accountability for advisors. The Boler School went to a different model, using big meetings, which is inconsistent with the CAS. He also argued that we need more faculty development dealing with how to talk to our freshmen.

Moroney responded that five workshops will be held in May to train advisors. We haven't assessed the inconsistencies mentioned. She noted that before last year we have no data relating to advising.

Karen Schuele responded to Lissemore's statement, noting that Boler faculty had 20 or more students per cohort. The Dean's office made a decision to handle some of the meetings as larger group meetings to alleviate workload on faculty. Lissemore replied that the STEM disciplines also have this problem (large cohorts).

Barbara D'Ambrosia noted that the vote on this proposal concerns continuance of this model. We are not voting on permanence; the model can still be changed. Roy Day noted that if we reject this proposal, we would go back to the previous model which isn't driven by data. Moroney noted that we're building in outcomes for assessment. In the end, we have to have a model with assessable results.

Foreman noted that the issue of advising loads feels like an equity issue with some people not advising as much as they should be. Foreman asked whether this program is thrusting students into majors from the beginning. Does this make it harder to change directions? Moroney replied that conversations about discernment can be had in the Fall advising meetings. Change of majors can be addressed here.

Mark Waner noted some faculty are also advising graduate students. That has to be considered when discussing equity and work loads. He also noted that he couldn't find an assessment rubric in the report. Moroney replied that it is being worked on through with Todd Bruce.

Lissemore noted that advising is part of teaching in our self-evaluation. We might re-think this.

Moroney noted that we are considering more staff for advising in Boler and perhaps STEM. Day urged caution around this. Advising changes require faculty approval.

Waner asked whether there could be a course release for heavy advising loads. We do not recognize advising as faculty work. We have said that we want faculty advising not professional advisers. We need to put resources into faculty as advisors.

Rodney Hessinger asked if we could have faculty outside of fields like STEM trained to do freshman-sophomore advising in STEM.

Nichols noted that this a vote of continuance of the model. A no vote means we revert to the previous individual model, but that we cannot revert to that exact model. There has to be professional development and resources put into any model that is implemented. CAP will discuss this. Further comments can be sent to Nichols via email.

#### IV. New Business

V. Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 3:12 pm.

Submitted,  
Gerry Guest  
Faculty Council Secretary