FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

September 8, 2014, 3:15 p.m.
1101C Houston Cole Library


I. Call to Order: President Melanie Wallace called the meeting to order and introduced guests in attendance.

II. Guests: (1) President Meehan provided copies of Fall 2014 census data, commenting that it was a “mixed bag” of news, but not as bad as it has been. Overall head count is 8,659, down 34 from Fall 2013 (undergraduates are up 59, while graduate numbers are down 93); this is not as large a decrease as in recent years, so we seem to have “turned the tide.” Overall Credit Hour Production (CHP) is 96,847 (nonremedial), down 1,093 credit hours, despite the prediction of an increase by orientation numbers; this, of course, means a loss of tuition revenue. Dual enrollment (CORE) increased by 222 students. Fall 2014 Quickfacts reported 2,589 freshmen—significantly more than sophomores or juniors—so work still needs to be done to retain freshmen and attract more transfer students. Dr. Meehan noted that our 661 first-time transfer students have an average age of 26. The number of international students is down; however, the recently audited English Language Institute continues to attract international students who stay at JSU, bringing in net revenue. Over the past year, 1,699 degrees were conferred. The 6-year graduation rate is 30%, but Dr. Meehan remarked that this standard calculation does not account for those who start at JSU and transfer to other professional programs. First-year retention is up to 72% this fall, and Pell Grant awards are up slightly after a huge hit last year. Dr. Meehan highlighted the record enrollment in Honors courses (549 enrollments, 378 unduplicated students). Distance Education student numbers are down 41 (–2.5%, not significant); note that, again, undergraduate numbers are up, while graduate numbers are down. The first-time freshman ACT score distribution shows a 3-point increase over 7 years.

Dr. Meehan summarized by saying that he had hoped for increased enrollment and revenue—and some early numbers seemed to point that direction—but it did not happen; he was aware that, unfortunately, that means no raises for faculty this year. He anticipates that every other university will increase tuition this year; we have not raised tuition for 2 years, which helps us to attract and retain students. However, we will have to raise tuition (probably 4% or so) for next year to cover the operating budget and provide needed raises; nevertheless, we will not break our promise to keep tuition at or below the median state 4-year college tuition level. He pointed out an interesting trend that students today are choosing colleges in metropolitan areas; Dr. Turner added that UAB is now our biggest competitor, not junior colleges (as it was 5–10 years ago). Perhaps students are looking for college locations where they can find jobs; it could help us attract more students to JSU if city plans come to fruition to make Mountain Street more of a business/entertainment district. His final remarks were to thank faculty for what we do; students
tell him that they enjoy JSU because they can actually develop relationships with and talk to their professors—that’s how we compete with larger universities. This is Dr. Meehan’s last regular Faculty Senate meeting; Dr. Melanie Wallace will represent the faculty on the presidential search committee this year.

*In recognition of Dr. Meehan’s retirement, Dr. Wallace announced that the Faculty Senate intended to plant a tree on campus in his honor—to remind him of how “deeply rooted” he is at JSU. She also presented him with a 50th anniversary edition of Shel Silverstein’s *The Giving Tree*, which would be given to him permanently after Senators have the opportunity to sign the book.

(2) **Dr. Rebecca Turner (Provost and VPASA)** pointed out that financial aid regulations are a “daily changing landscape” for us. It would be advantageous to have only one summer term, so we will be wrestling with that question. Departments should find out what their students need—and what they will actually take—in the summer and schedule course offerings accordingly in a more strategic fashion. The promotion and tenure call has gone out; binders can be picked up in Dr. Turner’s office. In response to a question about making the process electronic, Dr. Turner replied that the summary could probably be done electronically in the future, but supporting evidence would be more difficult to submit electronically.

(3) **Dr. Rosalynn Martin, PHR, Director of Human Resources** since April 2011, invited faculty to the first annual employee appreciation ice cream social on Oct. 3 at the Alumni House from 3:00–4:15 p.m.; personal invitations will be mailed Sept. 22. She announced that the 2014 administrator review should arrive Sept. 15 by email, allowing faculty to anonymously give feedback on their department head.

(4) **Allyson Barker, Controller and acting VP, Administrative and Business Affairs**, commented that her staff have worked to get financial aid refunds to students as quickly as possible; they have also automated book vouchers so that students can more efficiently use their financial aid at our bookstore.

(5) **KaSandra Russaw, PHR, Benefits Manager**, reminded faculty of the Sept. 10 PEEHIP open enrollment online deadline. A new PEEHIP wellness screening is required by May 15, 2015, to avoid a premium increase; there will be information sessions on campus Oct. 1 and there will be limited on-campus screening sessions on Oct. 10. There are screening forms to be used by a primary care physician; no copay is required if the visit is strictly for preventative services. She referred faculty to the PEEHIP website for clarification ([http://www.rsa-al.gov/index.php/members/peehip/](http://www.rsa-al.gov/index.php/members/peehip/)), particularly the September Advisor ([http://www.rsa-al.gov/index.php/members/peehip/pubs-forms/peehip-newsletters](http://www.rsa-al.gov/index.php/members/peehip/pubs-forms/peehip-newsletters)).

(6) **Vinson Houston, VP, Information Technology**, introduced Evelyn Bragg, Director of Learning Technology. One of her primary duties will be to serve as liaison between faculty and the division of Information Technology; thus, he will encourage her to attend Faculty Senate meetings.

**III. Approval of Minutes:** The May 2014 meeting minutes were approved.

**IV. Unfinished Business:** none.
V. New Business:

A. Recognition of New Senators: Dr. Wallace recognized incoming Senators—these include Patrick McGrail, Cynthia Connor, Stacey Mann, Bethany Latham, David Wood, and new SGA President Brett Johnson. [Note: Other new Senators have been elected since this meeting.]

- Dr. Wallace asked **SGA President Brett Johnson** to address the Senate:
  1. He encourages faculty to remind students to use the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE)—there are extended hours until 2 a.m. Monday–Thursday.
  2. The SGA has an initiative to improve campus spirit—which may help increase retention. Everyone is encouraged to wear red or JSU apparel on Fridays. Also the SGA will begin a shirt swap program on Fridays in the TMB by which students can trade other college shirts for JSU shirts; others will be donated to charity.
  3. Higher Education Day is April 9 in Montgomery; instructors are encouraged to structure class assignments and exams so that students are able to participate.

B. Committee Assignments:

- Dr. David Dempsey, Secretary, reminded Senators to send him information regarding their committee preferences and their department alternates.
- Dr. Wallace gave an overview of the Faculty Senate standing committees and indicated that every Senator should serve on at least one. Committees will elect their chairs, who will also serve on the Executive Committee. The Honors Committee will be needed soon to deal with Emeriti Faculty nominations. She noted that committees should meet approximately monthly and submit written reports to her.
- Dr. Wallace discussed the need for a Faculty Senate Web Manager. Bethany Latham volunteered, so Dr. Wallace appointed her to the position.
- Dr. Wallace asked Senators to send her names of possible guests to invite to future Senate meetings.

C. Recommendations Assigned to Committees: none.

VI. Announcements:

- Charlcie Vann announced the first Library Lunchtime Lecture of this year, to be held Thursday, Sept. 11, at noon on the 10th floor of the library. Mr. Edward Wood, a native of the area who witnessed Jim Crow laws, will present his documentary entitled “My Anniston.”

VII. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by Dr. Wallace at 4:30 p.m.