

# JSU Faculty Senate Meeting

## February 16, 2026, B01 Merrill Hall

### Minutes

**Senators Present:** Allen Gilbert, Allison Boswell, Andres Crawley, Ashley Rattner (Tim Lockette, alternate), Barbie Norvell, Brianna Turgeon, Chris Clark, Chris Hosmer, Courtney Peppers, David Thornton, Gorgin Mansourian, Jeffrey Zanzig, Jody Long, Kathryn Catlin, Lance Ingwersen (Ryan Burns, alternate), Leah Simmons, Maureen McGuire, Mike Burns, Nouredine Bekhouche, Patrick McGrail, Shellie Beeman, Stacy Mikel, Wendy Key, Yajun Lu

**Senators Absent:** Diane Best, Eddie Walker, Kazi Rahman, Kimberly Southwick-Thompson, Laura Barrow, Randal Blades, Stacey Gill

**Ex Officio Members Present:** President Heidi Dempsey, Vice President David Dempsey

**Ex Officio Members Absent:** Provost Christie Shelton, Faculty Commons Director Mica Mecham, Online@JSU Rep Shelena Cofield, Staff Council President, Department Head Council representative, SGA President

**Guests:** Michael Boynton

#### Agenda Items

1. Michael Boynton announced the upcoming mainstage production 'Pinocchio and the Tiny Pink Monkey', a world premiere written with students and directed by Carolyn Conover, and invited faculty to participate in a staged reading of 'Judgment at Nuremberg', seeking broad university involvement and offering roles for all comfort levels; Rachel from history will lead a post-show discussion.
2. Approval of Minutes (January 26, 2026)—**motioned to approve by Stacy Mikel, Chris Clark seconded the motion, approved.**
3. **Shared Governance Items**
  - a. **Faculty Handbook**
    - i. **Graduate Faculty Status 3.2.4** – Handbook Committee approved this version January 22
      1. Policy Simplification: The revised policy eliminates previous tiered distinctions, stating that faculty with terminal degrees in their field or equivalent qualifications are considered graduate faculty, aligning with standard credentialing practices.
      2. Clarification of Qualifications: President Dempsey explained that teaching graduate classes requires either a terminal degree or alternative qualifications, which are verified through departmental credentialing processes. The policy maintains flexibility for those without terminal degrees via established procedures.

3. **Approval Process: Stacy Mikel motioned to approve the revised policy, Leah Simmons seconded, and the group voted in favor, officially passing the policy.**
- ii. Deans will be voting on **Academic Freedom (2.1.1-2.1.3)** by March 11 – Senate approved this version last April.
- iii. **Copyright Policy 2.2.10** – Handbook Committee approved this version today (February 16)
  1. Policy Additions and Clarifications: The policy now covers the TEACH Act for electronic course delivery, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, ADA accommodations, and guidance on using Creative Commons and open domain materials. It emphasizes linking to library resources rather than hosting PDFs to address both copyright and accessibility concerns.
  2. Fair Use and Transformative Educational Use: President Dempsey provided examples of transformative educational use, such as showing film clips for analysis or embedding copyrighted material in lecture slides with commentary, clarifying when fair use applies and how to document permissions if needed.
  3. Student Work and Intellectual Property: The policy specifies that students retain copyright over their original work, and faculty must obtain permission before distributing student work outside instructional contexts. Internal uses for accreditation or tenure portfolios are permitted.
  4. **Voting and Peer Institution Comparison: After discussion, the policy was motioned for approval by Allen Gilbert, seconded by Mauren McGuire, and passed, with President Dempsey noting its strong alignment with peer institutions.**
- iv. **6.1–Separation and 6.2–Discipline/Dismissal** – Handbook Committee approved this version today (February 16)
  1. Role Clarifications: The revised policy moves authority for additional pay opportunities from the Provost to department heads, reflecting their responsibility for summer and overload contracts, and clarifies that administrative leave is not disciplinary action.
  2. Dismissal Process Changes: The dismissal process now allows the Provost five business days to decide after a meeting, followed by five days for the faculty member to respond, ensuring privacy and procedural fairness before notifying the university hearing committee.
  3. Automatic Dismissal and Availability: The policy specifies that failure to respond to hearing notifications results in automatic

dismissal and defines the faculty availability date as the trigger for action if a faculty member neglects to report at the start of term.

4. **Approval and Implementation: Motion to approve the revised version presented by the Handbook Committee was made by Stacy Mikel, seconded by Leah Simmons, and passed in the meeting, with training planned for department heads to ensure proper implementation.**
    - v. Feedback on 7.1 – Academic Policies
      1. Our goal is to have a final version of these for approval before the end of the semester so they can be included as part of new faculty orientation and adjunct orientation in the summer.
    - vi. Chapter 4 – Faculty Evaluation – under review by the Handbook Committee
    - vii. Senior Instructor – Has been presented to Dr. Harmon; Will be presented to President Killingsworth March 9
  - b. **JSU Accessible Events and Programs Policy** – The accessible events and program policy was discussed, with President Dempsey acknowledging incomplete analysis and the **group voting to table (motion by Kathryn Catlin, seconded by Maureen McGuire)** the policy until the next meeting to allow for more thorough review and incorporation of feedback.
4. President’s Report
- a. Board of Trustees Updates
    - i. Dual Enrollment Tuition Cap: The tuition cap limits dual enrollment students to seven credit hours per semester at the discounted rate, with additional hours charged at the full rate, addressing revenue concerns due to the low cost of dual enrollment.
    - ii. Distance Learning Fee Reinstatement: The distance learning fee of \$40 per credit hour for online or hybrid courses was reinstated for summer, following the exhaustion of COVID relief funds, and is under review by the budget committee for potential conversion to a general technology fee.
    - iii. Aviation Program Expansion: A new concentration in aviation, focused on public safety and law enforcement, was added and moved to the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, with initial faculty hiring and external flight instruction partnerships planned.
    - iv. Project Management Program: A new project management concentration was introduced under the business school, utilizing existing faculty and responding to student demand, with board approval pending.
  - b. Budget Committee Updates
    - i. Tuition and Fee Recommendations: The budget committee is meeting weekly to develop recommendations for tuition and fees for the upcoming year, focusing on revenue generation and cost containment.

- ii. PEEHIP Supplemental Charge Modeling: Dr. Harmon is modeling various approaches to the PHIP supplemental charge, considering factors such as income tiers, coverage type, and whether employees use university health insurance, to inform equitable fee distribution.
    - iii. Fiscal Conservatism Initiatives: Dr. Beasley advised faculty to minimize discretionary spending, such as unnecessary travel or duplicate memberships, to help preserve funds for salary increases amid rising costs.
  - c. AI Assessment Tools – last Senate meeting English representatives asked President Dempsey to check on the status of the Turnitin AI checker. She brought this question about this to Dr. Andrea Porter and Provost Shelton who determined that a final decision had not been made.
    - i. The Provost, after consulting peer institutions and EAB, decided not to adopt Turnitin's AI checker due to its high false positive rate, cost, and accessibility issues, recommending a shift in assessment practices rather than reliance on detection software.
    - ii. Assessment Practice Sharing: Faculty are encouraged to share innovative assessment methods, such as oral exams, to address challenges posed by AI and online instruction, with collaborative discussions ongoing between the Provost's assessment cohort and the President's AI cohort.
  - d. Instructional Format Discussions – this discussion point was brought up by the President and Provost in their CAHS check-in and then Executive Committee followed up with the Provost in their monthly meeting with her.
    - i. Instructional Format Analysis: Departments are reviewing the balance of online, hybrid, and in-person classes, with a consensus to increase in-person offerings post-COVID and ongoing analysis of student success across formats.
  - e. Faculty Senate Executive Committee asked Dr. Harmon to consider converting the distance learning fee to a general technology fee since all courses use the software/personnel supported by the distance learning fee (Canvas, Watermark evaluations, Honorlock, Online@jsu, Studio, Panorama) and there is not a strong distinction between online, hybrid, and in-person classes in terms of technology usage Post-COVID. This will be considered by the Budget Committee.
- 5. Committee Updates
  - a. Executive Committee – Heidi Dempsey, chair
  - b. Advocacy Committee – Kathryn Catlin, chair
    - i. See report below
  - c. Student Retention Committee – Courtney Peppers, chair
    - i. Editing their video; presented at Student Success Summit
  - d. Policies and Campus Planning – Mike Burns, chair
    - i. Working on Financial Exigency Policy

- e. Elections – Jeff Zanzig, chair
    - i. Working on committee recommendations based on Faculty Interest survey
  - f. Promotion and Tenure – Barbie Norvell, chair
    - i. Working on blueprint tenure and promotion guidelines
6. New Business
- 7. Motion to adjourn by Allen Gilbert, seconded by Leah Simmons, adjourned.**

### Jax State Faculty Advocacy Committee Report to Faculty Senate, 16 Feb. 2026

If you have questions, feel that your department's concerns are not being adequately addressed, or if you have additional concerns to bring up, please reach out to the Advocacy chair, Dr. Kathryn Catlin ([kcatlin@jsu.edu](mailto:kcatlin@jsu.edu)).

- Formal Request for Information regarding the salary plan has been drafted and the draft has been provided to Executive Committee.
- Please send Kat ideas for improving transparency between administration and faculty BEFORE THE END OF FEBRUARY. We will be drafting a document about this for the next Advocacy meeting.
- Guidance for faculty regarding student alcohol use on overnight trips: Kat met with Staci Stone and others about this; there should guidelines and/or a policy available soon, and training will be piloted through Study Abroad via Javier Burrows.
- We've collected data about program coordinator compensation from all colleges; expect a summary and data set to be shared with Senate soon.
- Advocacy continues to work on Academic/Athletic relations, Study Away policies, workload, facilities, HR confidentiality, advising/mentoring, and other issues. Expect more information on some of these soon. Please do not hesitate to reach out if there is anything we need to address.