

JSU Faculty Senate Meeting

March 16, 2026, B01 Merrill Hall

Minutes

Senators Present: Allen Gilbert, Allison Boswell, Ashley Rattner, Barbie Norvell, Brianna Turgeon, Chris Clark, Chris Hosmer, Courtney Peppers, David Thornton, Gorgin Mansourian, Jeffrey Zanzig, Jody Long, Kathryn Catlin, Kazi Rahman, Kimberly Southwick-Thompson, Lance Ingwersen (Ryan Burns), Leah Simmons, Maureen McGuire, Mike Burns, Patrick McGrail, Randal Blades, Shellie Beeman, Stacy Mikel (Danyel Munster), Wendy Key, Yajun Lu

Senators Absent: Andres Crawley, Diane Best, Eddie Walker, Laura Barrow, Nouredine Bekhouche, 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

Minutes

1. Approval of Minutes (March 2, 2026) – motion to approve by Courtney Peppers, seconded by Jody Long, approved.
2. JaxState of Teaching Task Force – **Core Principles of Quality Teaching** feedback and discussion
 - a. Senate expressed general support for articulating a shared institutional vision for high-quality teaching. However, members indicated they were not yet comfortable moving the document forward for a vote due to a lack of clarity regarding how the principles will function in practice, particularly in relation to evaluation and implementation.
 - b. Consistent with Senate’s role in the shared governance process, the body discussed the proposal and identified several areas where additional information is needed before taking action. Specifically, senators requested clarification on:
 - i. how the principles will interact with the FAR teaching evaluation process,
 - ii. how alignment with the principles would be evaluated or demonstrated,
 - iii. where the document will reside within university policy or guidance materials, and
 - iv. the implications if a faculty member is perceived as not meeting the stated expectations.
 - c. Senate indicated it would be more comfortable considering the document once these elements are clarified and presented within a broader implementation framework. The overall sentiment was not to reject the proposal, but to request additional context before proceeding to a vote.

- d. Senate also noted that faculty have provided preliminary feedback on wording and organization, which could be compiled and shared with the task force as part of a collaborative review process.
3. Shared Governance Items: Faculty Handbook
 - a. **Section 2.1 Academic Freedom** was approved by Senate in April 2025 and is on the EDC agenda for approval by deans March 11, 2026.
 - b. The Handbook Committee received stakeholder feedback on **2.2.10 Copyright, 3.2.4 Graduate Faculty Status, 6.1 Separation, and 6.2 Discipline/Dismissal** by February 20, 2026.
 - i. Final versions of these policies were passed by Committee February 16, 2026 and disseminated for vote by Faculty Senate and Deans.
 1. Senate voted to approve all three policies February 16, 2026.
 2. These sections are on the EDC agenda for vote March 11.
 - c. The Handbook Committee received stakeholder feedback on Chapter 7 select policies (section 7.1) by February 27, 2026. The Handbook Committee had previously received stakeholder feedback on Chapter 4 November 11, 2024.
 - d. The Handbook Committee revised Sections 7.3.2, 7.3.7, and 7.3.8 to align with the Provost's "Faculty Availability" directive on February 26, 2026.
 - i. Final versions **Chapter 7 (Sections 7.1., 7.3.2, 7.3.7, and 7.3.8) and Chapter 4** were passed by the Handbook Committee on March 9, 2026.
 1. **Faculty Senate will vote on these sections by April 6, 2026** and Deans will vote on them by April 8, 2026.
 - e. The Provost's wording of **2.2.5, 3.1.1, and 3.1.3 was updated in the published handbook** on February 1, 2026. This was the result of the reconciliation process between deans and Faculty Senate.
 - f. The Handbook Committee voted on February 16, 2026 to remove **the Overload Policy from the Policies & Procedures Manual** and just keep it within the Faculty Handbook.
 - g. The Handbook Committee voted on March 10, 2026 to **remove section 8.1.2 Salary Increments** from the published handbook. This section referred to merit pay. Given that this is not a current university practice, this section was removed to reduce confusion regarding current salary practices.
 - h. The Handbook Committee approved **Section 2.3.1 Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment** for feedback by stakeholders on March 9, 2026. **This feedback is requested by April 17, 2026.**
 - i. The proposal for the Senior Instructor rank has been presented to both President Killingsworth and Dr. Harmon for their consideration. The President requested the proposal be amended to three-year contracts and resubmitted to him.
4. **NIH and NSF Grant Financial Conflicts of Interest Policy (POLICY NO.: I.01.15.01)** – feedback to President David Dempsey by **April 6, 2026.**

5. **JSU Accessible Events and Programs Policy** – This was tabled at the last meeting; President Dempsey has not had time to revisit this, so it will move to President David Dempsey’s ongoing agenda
6. Senate Business
 - a. Compensation
 - i. There is now a meeting scheduled with the salary consultants, Salary Committee Leadership, Senate Leadership, Dr. Shelton, and Dr. Harmon on April 17 to discuss questions related to methodology and their recommendations.
 - ii. President Dempsey communicated the Senate’s request for a central repository for salary-related information.
 - iii. President Dempsey has provided Dr. Harmon and Ms. Casey with a PDF containing unanswered emails from compensation@jsu.edu with the request that they provide a response.
 - b. New Programs and Curriculum
 - i. Provost is now asking if deans can provide specific documentation (from department curriculum committees as to votes on new programs, program changes, minors, catalog changes, etc.)
7. President’s Report
 - a. Reclaim the Narrative – show the value of faculty through personal interest stories – see Canvas – recommended by the National Council of Faculty Senates
 - b. **Faculty Survey** – draft was reviewed
 - c. Panorama Accessibility Report – see Canvas
 - d. Midterm Grade Report – see Canvas
8. New Business
 - a. **HB580** – Update and commentary
 - i. Senate discussed potential responses to HB580 and agreed that, at this time, it would not issue a separate institutional statement. Recognizing the value of a unified, statewide voice and the potential risks of institution-specific responses, Senate will defer to the Alabama Council of University Faculty Presidents (ACUFP) to provide a coordinated response.
9. Committee Updates
 - a. Executive Committee – Heidi Dempsey, chair
 - i. Senate Calendar was passed
 - ii. Subcommittee appointments made; decision was made by Executive Committee not to continue the Promotion and Tenure Ad-hoc committee beyond this year
 - iii. **Subcommittee chair elections – the following committee members were elected chair and will join the Executive Committee.**
 1. Student Retention – Maureen McGuire
 2. Faculty Advocacy – Ryan Burns

3. Policies & Campus Planning – Mike Burns

4. Elections – Stacy Mikel

- b. Advocacy Committee – Kathryn Catlin, chair
- c. Student Retention Committee – Courtney Peppers, chair
- d. Policies and Campus Planning – Mike Burns, chair
- e. Elections – Jeff Zanzig, chair
- f. Promotion and Tenure – Barbie Norvell, chair