

JSU Faculty Senate Meeting

March 2, 2026, B01 Merrill Hall

Minutes

Senators Present: Allen Gilbert, Ashley Rattner, Brianna Turgeon, Chris Clark, Chris Hosmer, Courtney Peppers, David Thornton, Diane Best, Gorgin Mansourian, Jeffrey Zanzig, Jody Long, Kathryn Catlin, Kazi Rahman, Kimberly Southwick-Thompson, Lance Ingwersen (Ryan Burns), Laura Barrow, Leah Simmons, Maureen McGuire, Mike Burns, Nouredine Bekhouche, Patrick McGrail, Randal Blades, Stacy Mikel, Wendy Key, Yajun Lu

Senators Absent: Allison Boswell, Andres Crawley, Barbie Norvell, Eddie Walker, Shellie Beeman, Stacey Gill

Ex Officio Members Present: President Heidi Dempsey, Vice President David Dempsey, Faculty Commons Director Mica Mecham

Ex Officio Members Absent: Provost Christie Shelton, Online@JSU Rep Shelena Cofield, Staff Council President, Department Head Council representative, SGA President

Guests: Dr. Staci Stone (Vice Provost, Academic Affairs)

Agenda Items

1. Approval of Minutes (February 16, 2026) – **motioned by Leah Simmons and Diane Best seconded, approved.**
 - a. **Review and Approval Process:** Heidi summarized the highlights from the previous meeting, including passed policies and tabled items, and asked for any changes or revisions; after a brief confirmation from participants, the minutes were approved without opposition.
2. Dr. Staci Stone—JaxState of Teaching Task Force – Core Principles of Quality Teaching feedback and discussion
 - a. **Document Development and Stakeholder Involvement:** Dr. Stone described the collaborative process behind the document, including research by the Expectations work group, a faculty survey, and review by a task force of 20–25 members representing faculty and administrators such as Mica Mecham, Marie Valentin, department heads, and others.
 - b. **Purpose and Intended Use:** The document is designed to provide university-wide expectations for quality teaching, supporting faculty in preparing reflective statements for reviews, and potentially influencing templates for faculty annual reviews and tenure applications.
 - c. **Content Structure and Survey Influence:** The principles are organized by category, each with a definition and outcomes, and their order reflects faculty values as determined by the survey; the document is intended as a guide rather than a checklist or rubric.

- d. **Integration with Other Initiatives:** The task force includes representatives from various areas such as experiential learning, OER, and AI, ensuring the principles align with related initiatives and support consistency across departments.
 - e. **Next Steps and Feedback Process:** Dr. Stone will provide an updated version reflecting terminology changes, and President Dempsey encouraged members to share the document with their departments for feedback, with the goal of final consideration at the next Senate meeting.
3. Shared Governance Items
- a. Faculty Handbook
 - i. Feedback on 7.1 – not aware of any feedback provided on this?
 - 1. **Office Hours and Class Cancellation Policy:** The committee will add guidance on handling planned and emergency absences, clarifying communication expectations for faculty and addressing concerns about students being uninformed of class cancellations.
 - 2. **Class Cancellation Timeline Policy:** A new policy will require deans and department heads to cancel classes due to low enrollment no later than five days before the semester starts, ensuring students and faculty have adequate notice.
 - ii. Chapter 4 – Faculty Evaluation
 - iii. Senior Instructor – Has been presented to Dr. Harmon; Will be presented to President Killingsworth March 9
 - b. **JSU Accessible Events and Programs Policy** – This was tabled at the last meeting;
 - i. **Policy Review and Task Force Feedback:** President Dempsey consulted the Digital Accessibility Task Force, who expressed that the main concern was application to athletics rather than academics, and recommended continuing to table the policy until all feedback is addressed.
 - c. Digital Accessibility Task Force
 - i. **PDF Remediation Efforts:** Sean is dedicating significant time to remediating approximately 1.5 million PDFs for ADA compliance, with average remediation times of 3–6 hours per document, and the task force is exploring strategies to manage the workload.
 - ii. **Faculty Support and Communication:** A faculty team channel was created for digital accessibility and ADA issues, providing a space for training resources and questions, and faculty are encouraged to use alternative formats when possible to reduce remediation needs.
4. Senate Business
- a. Compensation discussion with Dr. Harmon
 - i. Staff compensation proposals (IT, Online@JSU, Counseling, Administrative Assistants) are ready to go to the President.
 - 1. These changes involve substantial financial impact (over \$300,000 for just three key areas).
 - ii. Faculty compensation work is not currently changing because the next steps depend on completing staff adjustments and budgetary capacity.

- iii. Faculty concerns center on:
 1. Understanding methodology for the current salary tables and what methodology will be used going forward.
 2. Lack of clarity about why the Faculty Salary Committee proposals, such as banded approach, were not adopted.
 3. Confusion over how consultant data was used (including how Faculty Salary Committee's feedback was or was not incorporated).
 4. Missing updates to the public-facing compensation website.
 5. Desire for a realistic timeline and prioritization sequence so expectations are realistic.
 - iv. Feedback Requested from Senate
 1. Clarify specific questions faculty still have about compensation tables and methodology.
 2. Identify what elements of communication faculty most need
 - a. How to communicate more effectively?
 - b. Who should be communicating?
 - c. What needs communicating?
 3. Provide Dr. Harmon with a list of timeline-related concerns and expectations from Senate. Kat proposed collecting all unanswered compensation-related emails from faculty, compiling them into a single document, and forwarding them to the appropriate contacts, with a one-week deadline for submissions.
 4. Ask any faculty who have not received answers to compensation@jsu.edu emails to resend these.
 - v. **Requests for Improved Transparency:** The group requested regular, detailed updates on compensation progress, clear timelines, and updates to both internal and external resources to ensure faculty are informed and can track developments.
 - vi. Dr. Harmon is also providing a detailed Budget Allocation Model to help employees understand the budget process. This will include information on how the Budget Committee works along with how decisions are made on the Expense and Revenue side.
5. President's Report
- a. Faculty Survey
 - i. David was tasked with preparing the faculty survey and soliciting input on useful questions, while faculty availability dates will soon be included in contracts and the academic calendar.
 - b. Faculty Availability Dates – Provost sent email to all faculty; dates will be reflected in contracts and on the Academic Calendar soon

- c. Employee appreciation week –free UREC day pass (w/ID) Wednesday: free Frios pops (w/id) Thursday @ 2pm in front of Angle Hall; free lunch (w/ID) at the cafeteria Friday; free baseball tix 6 pm Friday; free women’s basketball tix Saturday 2 pm
 - d. Textbook adoptions for all courses and sections will be dues on Thursday, March 5th at midnight.
 - e. 2026 Jax State Student Symposium is this **Friday (03/06)**
 - f. Subcommittee requests – most have filled this out; trying to balance interests with representation
 - i. Heidi explained the process for assigning members to subcommittees, balancing preferences with required representation, and raised questions about continuity versus rotation for committee membership.
6. Committee Updates
- a. Executive Committee – Heidi Dempsey, chair
 - b. Advocacy Committee – Kathryn Catlin, chair
 - i. Faculty were informed that program coordinator compensation information is accessible on Canvas, and they are encouraged to review and share this resource with their departments as needed.
 - 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
7. New Business
- a. New Programs and Curriculum – how do your departments/colleges record and track curriculum votes? When considering new programs, especially those who do not have faculty lines, who votes on the curriculum/program proposal.
 - i. The group discussed methods for recording and tracking votes on curriculum changes at department and college levels, noting variations in practice and the need for clear documentation to prevent confusion at the university committee stage.
8. **Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Courtney Peppers, seconded by Stacy Mikel, approved.**

Jax State Faculty Advocacy Committee Report to Faculty Senate, 2 March 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).

- **You have a few more days to send me ideas about transparency.**
- Formal Request for Information regarding the salary plan has been drafted and the draft has been provided to Executive Committee.

- We've collected data about program coordinator compensation from all colleges; a summary and data set are available in the Senate canvas shell.
- Kat plans to have a full Advocacy report for 2025-26 available by the end of the academic year, hopefully sooner.
- Advocacy continues to work on Academic/Athletic relations, Study Away policies, student alcohol use on trips, workload, facilities, HR confidentiality, AI support, 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.