

Special faculty meeting  
Wednesday, March 27, 2019  
2 pm, Donahue auditorium

Faculty Council members in attendance: Brent Brossmann (Vice Chair), Angie Canda, Mina Chercourt, Gwen Compton-Engle, Greg DiLisi, Jeff Dyck, Kris Ehrhardt (Secretary), Richard Greci, Gerald Guest, Brad Hull, Dan Kilbride (Chair), Sokchea Lim, Bo Liu, Elena Manilich, Zeki Saritoprak Mike Setter, Christopher Sheil, Colin Swearingen, Mark Waner, Mariah Webinger, Gerald Weinstein.

### Minutes

Quorum at 2:05pm

#### 1. Introduction/background

Kilbride introduced the special faculty meeting which was called following a request of more than 10 members of faculty in response to discussion last week about Phase 2 of strategic plan and the decision about Dean Farrar. Kilbride noted that he had sent a letter to Pres. Johnson and the president had sent response—all of this was shared with the faculty. He then welcomed Pres. Johnson.

#### 2. Remarks by JCU President Michael Johnson

Johnson began by elaborating on some points he raised in his email. First, he noted that the purpose of the strategic planning program had not changed since he spoke in the fall. He noted that other schools are going through the same change. The first step in the process is one the school has already been through, i.e. the restructuring 2-3 years ago.

He then noted that there has been a lot of misrepresentation of the process and a lot of fear. He stated that he has tried to say there are a lot of things we don't need to do here because we are not a large university. He stated that the approach with consultant is a menu-based approach, meaning just the first step. We will have an opportunity to interact with them: they will come to campus for two days with meetings on campus. Then we decide whether we go forward with them. There has been no commitment beyond first meeting.

He noted that at different points he had made it clear that faculty lines are not on the table, but that it is about how we use our faculty; about how we use the faculty we have, not how we get lines back. He noted that he also had made it clear that he will work with faculty in the process. He noted that at first it wasn't clear how we were going to involve faculty, whether through additions to the steering group or by adding another group. He said that in processes like this you need a smaller working group that will work through the data—that seemed clear to him

that that is where faculty should be involved. He noted that stage is a lot of work, which is why a lot of schools get someone external to work through that data.

He noted that there are also fears that we have already made priorities—that is not true. His goal has been to wait until we get a chief academic officer. He stated that there's a lot of ground work that needs to be done before we make any decisions. He added that conjectures that decisions have been made are untrue—we won't make changes to academic programs without involving faculty. He repeated that faculty are involved in academic programs; we will need faculty involved in the process.

Finally, he drew attention to one slide from the USPG presentation—there are 3 steps and we are all in resource-constrained environments. Compared to Loyola-New Orleans or Wheeling, we've been through the painful step already and we are in a very different place than other schools. We need to look at who we have and how to use them and next, think about what new things we want to invest in.

### 3. Questions

- Question from a faculty member: thanks for addressing us so quickly. In your email there was one sentence: "we need to take a data-driven look at student demands...". First, in regard to "data-driven," I'm sure everyone supports using data, but any actions are only as good as the data used; data can be flawed, biased, cherry picked. When you addressed us in the fall, I was concerned about the numbers you used. Second, re: "student demand," a program may not be the most popular, but it may contribute to the university's mission. Third, re: academic programs and "what we can afford," why are academic programs the sole focus? what about other areas? HR? administration? advancement?
- Johnson: Regarding #3: most restructuring that was done was on the backs of staff—we have depts on campus that are working with barebones staff. 2) In many contexts I've said that you need to layer the mission over this, e.g. decline in majors in humanities and social sciences. How do you maintain the strong arts and sciences core? It's a first pillar in the strategic plan. 1) the data is what we have. Todd is pulling the data together now. In terms of the quality of the data, we're going to need to evaluate it.
- Question from a faculty member: I don't know the reason for declining enrollments in humanities—perhaps it is an overall cultural thing—but our philosophy department is half the size it was when I started. I hear from our majors that there are classes that we once offered that we can't any more. It is hard to attract majors when you do not have resources. Secondly, how was this consultant decided on?
- Johnson: I agree on your first point. 2) There are some different groups; ASP is one company that works with schools of our size, other presidents have said they are the best one for a school of our size. But we are not wedded to them. We'll need to have another meeting like this, and we may need a facilitator: someone who can handle the collection of the data. ASP will not make the decisions, we will make them.
- Question from a faculty member: I appreciate that you were prompt in responding; that was exemplary. But the idea of a planning process that was started before with data that

was collected before is problematic. What's more, you were hired in a secretive way, but when the search for the president was formed it was clear that some people wanted a different ethos. I think some people wanted to start with different kind of leadership. Concerning data—you put up a slide with majors and data like that are problematic. The new core is problematic because it does not serve the majors.

- Johnson: that's why we need to put the data in your hands and have you wrestle with it. We're in good economic shape but we need to be in better shape. Regarding the search process, that is not unusual and is going on in many places. These aren't easy positions to fill and if you're a sitting provost, you're not likely to engage unless there's some amount of secrecy.
- Question from a faculty member: since you mentioned search process—that brings up the question of the dean. I know that you may feel limited in what you can say, but there are a lot of questions about this. I don't have concerns about going forward in this plan, but a number of people in CAS have issues without having a head of CAS.
- Johnson: the new provost will be in charge of the new dean search. Margaret is here and I want to respect and thank her for her work; what I can't do is touch on a performance review (which was in their appointment letters). There was a point in the process in February where she requested a 1-year renewal; that was tabled, we completed the reviews and we met with the executive committee to go over the process. We offered her a 1-year appointment extension which was renewable which she declined.
- At this point, Dean Farrar clarified that she had requested the initial 1-year extension to be considered under the new provost. Then she told the audience to spend its time talking about the prioritization.
- Question from a faculty member: First, your characterization of the previous downsizing of staff: what creates confusion is that administration is part of staff. We haven't seen that there was any restructuring of administration. Second, about timeline/mission—ASP isn't good about considering mission and faculty should be involved, but your group only gives two spots for faculty; moreover, if this is supposed to be done by August, how would faculty be involved?
- Johnson: It won't be done by August. In USPG we decided we would need one group, but then it became clear that we would also need a working group: that is where faculty will need to be. We just added an extra complication: the new dean search. If we need to take more time, we will. Regarding #1, if you look at the reorganization of the president's office, it's been through a lot of changes. I told my SLT that I would take a year to look at the structure because people had been moved around a lot, and whether they report to the president or provost. I already restructured one admin out president's office. I've been meeting with diversity committees and there is an argument there that I will need to create a new VP of diversity. I am cognizant of the comment, but... Angela and I are running the office by ourselves.
- Question from a faculty member: as you move forward with an interim dean of CAS, should that person recuse themselves from being in the search pool?
- Johnson: I think it's a terrible idea for an interim dean to put their hat in the ring. You confound the experiment when the interim puts their hat in the ring, not that you can't be

promoted from one position to another because you're a strong candidate. You have to be careful with the situation you create.

- Question from a faculty member: I think there's been an issue about timeline—on a slide you created for USPG you noted that this would be done in the winter and spring 2019—there are phrases here that make it look like programs would be eliminated.
- Johnson: the key words to me are due diligence. if that statement means that we'll make decisions now, I apologize.
- Question from a faculty member: I appreciate the tiered process of bringing ASP in. how much are they charging us for this? and then how much would the larger commitment cost?
- Johnson: some back-of-envelope calculations: each module had price range. Phase 1 is relatively inexpensive and all paid out of presidential operating funds; with their whole team it's \$17,500; next stages – everything = \$100k; but hopefully we won't need to do all of them, maybe we'll decide to do none of them. It's not a million dollars.
- Question from a faculty member: regarding the timeline and the need for a committee of faculty who will look at data. There are only a couple months left of the year: how much time will people have time to look at this, if we want to elect people?
- Johnson: we won't be making decisions by August. Kate Malone is assisting us to get the different pieces of data into one depository and to keep meetings meeting. The timeline that I put together is one I made in fall, but I'm happy to slow down the process. It is important to deliberate long, but once we decide we need to execute quickly.
- Question from a faculty member: if you're going to do an evaluation of administration, I'd suggest going back in time. About 70% of upper admin positions have been created in last 10-15 years. Some of those positions were created while we were in a financial crisis.
- Johnson: it's not a justification but part of that is a natural adaptation to the more complex world we are in now vs. the world 15 years ago. That's an explanation not justification.
- Question from a faculty member: I'd like to address the distinction between form and content—I'd like to reiterate what I've been hearing people take issue with is not the content but the form—just like telling your spouse, "don't feel that way" doesn't work in counseling. I'd like you to think about how ASP, whose literature advocates an adversarial relationship, presents a particular feeling to the faculty.
- Johnson: my main comment is that the discussions you're seeing are ones that I'm now seeing. There is a disconnect from the things I'm reading, that that faculty need to have input, which is contrary to what other people are saying.
- Question from a faculty member: thanks for your frankness, especially about your answer about fees. In the spirit of the motion of the previous faculty meeting, I'd like you to hit pause with this group.
- Johnson: I agree. Let's have ASP come in and then decide together which we want to go.
- Question from a faculty member: part of the reason you're here is because JCU hasn't had a strong tradition of shared governance. I'm grateful you're here and answering questions. I want to ask you to make decisions that respect shared governance and are in line with the Faculty Handbook.
- Johnson: I am trying to get caught up with the Handbook—I'm sorry I haven't memorized it yet. Let me know if I violate it. Regarding the spirit of shared governance, I have some

strong views: there are some decision that need to be made by administration and some that need to be made by faculty. And the curriculum belongs to faculty. It is the faculty who decides what we're going to teach. It's going to be important to figure out what we can do in the spaces between departments to find things for our students. We need to figure out where we have traction and where we can find more.

At this point Johnson left the meeting.

#### 4. Discussion among faculty

- Comment from a faculty member: Was that a commitment or not? to shared governance? to the Handbook?
- Comment from a faculty member: Thanks to Dan for writing the letter. I want to remind colleagues about pay freezes and when the university asked to restructure our health policy. After the restructuring we got a pay cut—I believe that we were promised that they would put more money in our retirement. I hope my colleagues will proceed cautiously.
- Comment from a faculty member: He literally said, if I violate the handbook let me know. We need to do that. I was sick at the last meeting. but I feel like what we're doing right now IS shared governance with the meeting last week and this week.
- Comment from a faculty member: I was pleased by what happened today. But we're going to get some representation and we are going to need to talk with our representatives. If you want a voice now is the time to do that. I don't know what that's going to look like, but we need to let our reps know what our views are.
- Comment from a faculty member: When ASP is here we need to be very, very present. We need to put everything aside and confront these people. The president didn't really address our concerns about them—we need to get them to out themselves.
- Comment from a faculty member: Do we have a schedule for April 23 and 24<sup>th</sup>? Can we ask the president to tell us?
- Comment from a faculty member: Did he mention any other consulting groups? That's a red flag to me.
- Comment from a faculty member: In a spirit of transparency, I was wondering if faculty can attend the meetings of other divisions on campus; e.g. part-time faculty who are in the advancement office can sit in on these meetings; can that go both ways?
- Comment from a faculty member: Regarding ASP: we are the people who are better able to interpret the data. "Student demand" is a fictional construct because the demand comes from our requirements. Unless they have something really special that they show when they're here that we should press back.
- Comment from a faculty member: Re: cost cutting—can we press the school to give us numbers so that we can understand better how to cut things better?
- Comment from a faculty member: I think that hitting pause means holding off—to me, having a new provost and a new president—when we look at data-driven change, should they be all new or should they get to know us first?

- Comment from a faculty member: “Facilitator” is one of those Orwellian double-speak words. My idea of a facilitator is a person who helps people speak with each other.
- Finally, Dean Farrar stated that she is happy to talk with you about my experiences/process. She intends to be an advocate for CAS for as long as she can. She had not been given an exit date yet.

The meeting adjourned at 3:21 pm.