

Report of the Faculty Council meeting

June 30, 2020

The objective of the meeting is to draft a response letter to the administration given the discussions in the 6/24 general faculty meeting and the issues currently facing the faculty.

Brent suggested that the current crisis could be an opportunity for building shared governance.

- ❖ Brent proposed including the following issues in the letter based on the 6/24 meeting:
 - 1) The administration needs to stop using financial exigency as a threat. The faculty recognizes that there is a financial difficulty, which does not amount to exigency;
 - 2) We need to slow down the process of decision making, and work towards building a consensus;
 - 3) The faculty needs to examine the budget numbers of the university. We can recommend a small team of faculty members, including those with accounting expertise, from both Boler and CAS, who are elected to some of the committees and can represent the full faculty;
 - 4) We need to see the impact of the budget cut on staff, and other areas of the university operation. We need to see the big pictures;
 - 5) The administration need to demonstrate the connection between strategic planning and department restructuring;
 - 6) Communication needs to be improved across the board;
 - 7) There needs to be more effort to increase revenue;
 - 8) The faculty still have questions regarding accommodations for instructors who have health concerns.

- ❖ Other issues that may be included in the letter:
 - FC members voiced frustrations about the problem of faculty being chronically underpaid given that JCU ranks 1st as teaching college in the Midwest according to US News.
 - Given that the FC executive committee meets with Steve monthly, it may be helpful to have the executive committee of the staff council to meet with Steve and Lauri monthly as well.
 - What specifically do we ask for when we ask for more shared governance--what other standing committees should have more routine interaction with the admin to make sure we have the access to the full story?
 - There needs to be more discussion about the logistics of fall readiness in writing (Brent indicated that the statement of HyFlex is coming out soon with details on logistics. There will be a couple of classrooms outfitted by the end of this week, so faculty can experience it).
 - Concerns about new programs: faculty need to be involved in the strategic plan.

- The mistrust between admin and faculty needs to be addressed, perhaps through some ongoing problem-solving seminar or forum where faculty can learn about what the admin does, or on shared governance.
- What happened to the big-ideas committee?
- Some of the current committee routinely listen to proposals and reports but don't really take action, and are not involved in decision making. Faculty needs to have a role other than a sounding board.

Brent will draft a letter in 1-2 days, which will be sent early next week to the admin. FC members suggested that the letter should be shown to the full faculty so they have an opportunity to provide input.

- ❖ What do we as faculty need to modify internally going forward?
 - We need to improve communication among ourselves and with the administration.
 - Building a flowchart of info
 - Improve the accessibility and organization of the faculty council web page;
 - We need to push for constitutional amendments which were already approved in the FC to be presented to the full faculty.

- ❖ Other Issues:
 - So far, 30 staff and 9 faculty members have taken the retirement package.
 - New contracts have been drafted which clarify that the salary remains the same, and pay reduction is just for one year.
 - Brent has informed Steve that faculty cannot vote in the summer about benefits reduction.
 - Is faculty involved in making the decision about whether we get back to campus at all in the fall? No. Students indicate overwhelmingly that they want to get back to campus.