

## Minutes of the Faculty Council meeting

August 28, 2020

1. Welcome
2. Approval of previous minutes
  - Did not have time to cover this item.
3. Election update (Medora Barnes)
  - Election coming up next week.
  - Aggrievance committee needs 14 names on the candidate list.
  - It was brought to our attention that some of the information on FC website about committee members is incorrect. Yi Shang will fix this.
  - The election can be used as an opportunity to gather data about faculty opinions over current issues. Polls can be added about actions we could possibly take (regarding faculty positions lost in art history).
  - FC voted on the proposal that a list of questions be generated over the next couple of days, and an email ballot be sent to FC about including or excluding the items on the agenda for Monday's election. Medora motioned for the proposal; Karen Gygli seconded; 18 approved, 0 opposed, 0 abstained.
4. Financial review ad hoc committee report (Jerry Weinstein, Earl Spurgin, Mark Sheldon, Mariah Webinger)
  - The committee has not been able to meet with Lauri Strimkovsky (VP for finance & administration). They were able to meet with the provost, but couldn't get all the information they need. The committee is of the opinion that very little has been done internally in terms of programs and faculty productivity measure, which is not uncommon among universities. The lack of information makes it hard for the committee to come up with support for productivity measures. Their budgeting questions were not addressed satisfactorily. Nor were they able to see data that show that we are in a financial emergency (they were only shown the current year budget). To the question whether the auditors thought that the situation was so bad that we may have a concern of financial exigency, the answer was no. The committee won't have much to report until they meet with Lauri.
5. Proposal for one-year reduction in retirement benefits
  - The new medical benefit proposal is forthcoming which will supposedly rectify the inequity problem concerning faculty members starting before or after 2013 at JCU.
  - FC voted on moving the retirement benefits reduction proposal to the full faculty: 19 voted yes, 2 voted no.
  - Concerns have been raised about faculty not doing their part in budget-saving, thus shifting the burden unfairly to the staff. Faculty is of the opinion that giving up our rights won't help the staff either.

- However, our vote on the benefit proposals may very well be seen by the staff as a statement of solidarity with them.

#### 6. Proposed Spring Break redesign for Spring 2021

- The proposal is to cancel spring break, Easter break, and reading day, to keep MLK day and Good Friday, and to add a break day every two weeks or so.
- Faculty expressed concern that this might create difficulty for lab courses.
- Spring schedule due 10/2. This issue will be discussed more in FC and general faculty meetings in September.

#### 7. Update on salary reduction Handbook amendment (Mark Waner)

- The process was delayed since the admin. turned down the suggestion of collaboration on salary reductions and decided to act without the amendment. The FHB committee will continue with the work, but also expressed extreme frustration about the administration's disregard of the FHB.
- There was discussion about seeking legal counsel--we'd need to fund that as faculty
- AAUP recommended attorneys, but also said legal consultation hadn't bear fruit in many other institutions.
- The AAUP can't represent us legally, but could investigate and possibly censure the admin. Their resources are stretched thin, as similar issues are happening everywhere.

#### 8. Discussion of program termination process & response

- Gerry and Bo thanked the faculty for their support. Two departments have offered them positions, but the offers were apparently ignored by the administration. They expressed concerns that the disregard of tenure will not stop here. The ad hoc committee strongly recommended keeping the art history minor based on their research on other Jesuit universities, which was also ignored by the admin.
- Eliminating the two faculty positions will not do much in addressing the deficit problem. It is a symbolic gesture to the board and to faculty.
- Art history is a highly interdisciplinary field, there are many opportunities to relocate the two faculty members.
- Faculty can file a grievance against the provost and the president. Board of directors should be involved.
- We can also send letters to individual board members.
- An anonymous proposal of putting forth a faculty statement--"if the art history faculty members are not reinstated, we guarantee we will not vote for the benefit or retirement proposals"--did not get a motion.