

Draft

Report of the General Faculty Meeting

April 21, 2021

- I. Approve minutes –
Approved by acclamation.
- II. Q&A with Al Miciak –
 - Previously submitted questions:
 1. Status of the proposed changes to CAS?
Plan is on the way. Faculty will hear from the CAS dean. Nothing to add.
 2. What is the role of USPG and other university committees?
The roles of the standing committees are unchanged. The USPG is pushing to prioritize the 40 goals embedded across the three pillars of the plan, and build action plans.
 3. What is the role of the faculty in the 100 day plan?
The priority, first and foremost, is to enroll the strongest possible fall class of freshmen, transfer, and graduate students. Our goal this year is 625 students. As of this morning, we have about 415 deposits. 5/1 is the coming deadline.
Second, we need to get very efficient in our stewardship of the university resources. We have done campus-wide reductions, and we need to do more.
Third, we need accountability to address the performance problems that cut across a lot of the activities. It's not just an academic affairs issue. It's across senior leadership, residence life, student affairs, and athletics. Everyone needs to aim at continuous improvement. The idea of transformative education is to give them the right amount of academic challenges, the right amount of experiential opportunities, and the right amount of personal formation. Everyone on campus is to provide in one way or another each of those 3 ingredients to the students. Since academic programs are the primary drivers of this, it falls especially on us to make sure that we are developing programs that are exciting, competitive, and compelling in the market place. If we have that we will have a revenue model that would support those offerings.
We also have to maintain a cost structure in line with the revenue model that supports our ability to deliver that portfolio with quality.
Ultimately we need to be able to pay market salaries and benefits to everyone who works here.
 - Questions raised during the meeting:
 1. Earl Spurgin: about the CAS restructuring model, is there anything that you have planned that would change the model. Is it a go for you?
Miciak: Yes.
 2. Brian Saxton: approximately what enrollment do we need for the fall to avoid a declaration of budgetary hardship in fall of 2021?
Miciak: it's a bit more complicated than a number. At enrollment of 625, and assuming the current tuition discount rates, we'd be starting the year with a gap deficit of approximately 6 million dollars, and that's probably at the low end. But the objective is not one year. It's a forward-looking three year plan. A big number in the fall would not

solve the problem. We have more structural issues than just the head count numbers. But it's a serious one.

3. Dan Kilbride: is the university willing to accept an enrollment lower than 625 if we could get an improved discount rate? What's the balance between the two things?

Miciak: our goal is to increase revenues. Increasing head count and improving net tuitions are both ways to achieve it. One doesn't have a priority over the other. The real struggle we are in right now, and I wouldn't prefer sharing this widely, is that we have 3,700-3,800 applications and we basically admit everyone who applies. We don't have an opportunity to get more selective with our discounting. One of the goals for marketing and enrollment is to increase the number of applications. It would be nice to say that we could drive revenue by a decreasing enrollment, but it's not practical at the moment, because pricing power comes with a bigger pipeline, it won't come with fewer applicants. Our reputation has taken a downturn over the last few years.

4. Marc Lynn: what are the main cost-related items other than reducing faculty that you're thinking over the next year or so?

Miciak: most of our expenses are in people. A lot of our fixed costs in terms of facilities etc. are not avoidable. One of the things we've done over many years is to avoid the maintenance on some of our facilities so we built up a large backlog of deferred maintenance on buildings, classrooms, dorms etc, which erodes our competitiveness when students come to visit the campus. A lot of the cost is a people issue. Travel and hospitality are other areas of high expenses. Faculty productivity is important, too. Reducing the number of small sections could contribute greatly to cost reduction. Increasing revenues is a much better path than cutting costs, but it's not easy.

Lynn: are you measuring faculty productivity with students per semester?

Miciak: student credit hours taught is the most uniform measure that cut across different fields. It's the job of all faculty to look at the data and do the best they can to make the best use of the resources. We can afford some small sections, but not a lot of them.

Lynn: how do you measure the productivity of the administration?

Miciak: we are not performing on marketing or on enrollment goals. But we are all on one boat. If the boat goes down, we all get wet. We have to have a good portfolio of academic programs, a strong marketing presence, and a strong enrollment. We spend a lot of time pointing fingers at each other—who's not doing what. But we all have to do the best we can.

5. Anne Kugler: what is the best that you are aiming for in terms of faculty productivity? CAS already cut 15% of their sections last year. Are you thinking of another 15%? I've noticed this year with my first year cohort that a lot of them have difficulties registering for classes. How far can we go in efficiencies before it starts having unintended consequences for things like retention? Where is the balance?

Miciak: our enrollment is also 700 less than we were. Just because we reduced doesn't mean that the reduction is commensurate with the declines. It's not my job to tell every department how to deploy their faculty. The departments make decisions about the

number of sections offered. But they need to understand the consequences of the decisions.

6. Carrie Buchanan: How much money is JCU getting from the two recent federal stimulus packages, passed in December and March? The estimates I can find online are: CARES Act in Spring gave us \$2.2 M of which \$1.1 M are for financial aid to students. December stimulus act gave us \$3.38 M of which \$2.27 M is institutional and \$1.1 M for fin aid for students. March stimulus, not sure yet but JCU is estimated to get \$6 M of that \$3 M will be for student financial aid.

Miciak: all the numbers are correct. The March one is not available until July. There's no question that it has helped. But we have a structural deficit: we brought in \$9.7 M less than we spent in fiscal year 21, but with the CARES Act and with the salary and benefit reductions, we'll balance the budget, but it doesn't mean that our revenue model works. We just postpone it for another year.

Buchanan: it seems to me that the \$5 M that you estimated originally that we were down because of Covid is totally covered by those stimulus packages, and there's an extra \$1 M.

Miciak: true.

Steven Herbert: this is not completely true. The CARES act money that we got in the past year covered a good portion of our Covid costs but not all of them. And the \$3 M plus we can't even use it until next year. And we'll have Covid costs into next year, not as bad as last year, but there will be some.

7. Sheila McGinn: you said we are all on the same boat. True. But the people in the front of the boat are ejecting people as we go along. So it does matter if you are in the front or in the back. Tenured faculty have lost their positions. As far as we can tell it's not going to change. Other tenured faculty are not really tenured any more. Meanwhile we now have two more vice presidents, so we have more vice presidents than the Ohio State University. I don't see how this helps us cut costs. And you already named three functions in which the administration is not working not up to par. Looks like we are throwing money at groups of people who aren't working up to par, and ejecting people who actually bring in money for the university because students come here to study with the faculty. Many share this observation that the administration is top-heavy, burdening the university, and causing some of the endemic financial problems.

Miciak: everybody's job is important. We've had a lot of staff colleagues leave the university as well. In consultation with the board the president has put me here to be a catalyst for change and I fully intend to put al my effort in.

McGinn: this isn't about you personally. We are spending too much on the top-heavy administration. People in the real business world knows this model doesn't work for 15 years and yet we are applying it at John Carroll. We should not have this many vice presidential positions. We should not have this many director positions. We should have people on the front lines.

8. Jim Lissemore: to my knowledge there is no internal external search process for the two VP positions just introduced. Is this best practice? Is it something we can expect to continue in the future? We went through a period in late 1990's when we had an

appointed president, appointed AVPs, and appointed Dean of Arts and Science. Are we going back to that model?

Miciak: no, it's not best practice. But under the circumstances the president and the board felt it was necessary.

9. Brent Brossmann: here's a question sent to me—faculty morale and trust are low at this point. What can you do to build these?

Miciak: I understand that people see facts in different ways. In the town hall meeting I used the word "lie". That was regrettable. I apologize for that. There's nothing I can say to turn the switch on morale. What we need to do is to improve, win in the market, and make the turn. I listen to all the feedback, take them all seriously, and try to process them the best I can. I try to encourage people to keep their eyes on the horizon when things look rough at the moment and keep working at continuous improvement. We have a lot of strengths and we can make it work.

III. Class Calendar – Hessinger & Rick Greci

➤ Hessinger:

- the conversation about the change of schedules has been going on for a very long time. In the proposal there are mainly two relatively minor changes. Our proposal pushed back the class meeting time in the morning from 8 to 8:30. The 8 o'clock classes were running at about ¼ of the enrollment as our most popular periods. The next step is to send surveys to faculty and students to see people's preferences. The other change is to push back the common meeting time from 2pm to 3:30pm.
- We presented to faculty council, student council, and staff council, and received feedbacks. E.g. student athletes' morning practice usually ends at 8am, so they can make it to the 8:30 class but not the 8am classes.
- The Boler undergrad curriculum committee took a look and their concern is that the Monday Wednesday 3:30 slot, although only used half as much as the Tuesday Thursday 11am slot, is still a significant offering for them, particularly for some adjunct faculty. The 75 minute block is also conducive to their case study instructional method.

➤ Greci:

- Our alternative proposal kept the original proposal. This proposal starts later and end early at 2:20pm. This allows for another M.W. time slot from 1:30 to 2:45 whereas before we only had the 3:30 slot. We would keep the 3:30 slot for adjuncts who won't be attending faculty meetings anyway.

➤ Hessinger:

- you can always start earlier or end later, but the principle we are trying to observe is not to knock out two popular periods. Faculty can have the flexibility of having Monday/Friday classes etc. We are just trying to map out the most common periods in this proposal.
- Once we have your feedback the next step is to develop a survey, send it out to the entire community. The aim is to find the consensus. If there is a wide consensus we can make a recommendation to the provost.

IV. UCEP Transfer Policy Proposal – Krueger (Tomorrow is Angela Krueger's last day at JCU)

- Angela Krueger: this is a revised proposal that has been worked on for the last couple of months to help JCU become a more transfer-friendly institution. In the fall of 2017 we revised transfer rules to allow only 60 credits to transfer for students coming in from 2 and 4-year institutions. We've seen a significant drop in applications since that time. There are a number of factors involved. One thing we noticed is that our biggest population of transfer students is from 4-year institutions. Those who have over 60 credits either don't apply or don't follow through with the process. We try to find a balance between degree integrity and transfer friendliness. In this proposal we allow the credits to come in for students from 4-year institutions but require that 50% of the major be done at John Carroll and a minimum of 30 credits be done in residence. This way we ensure that they are here at least for a year and a summer if not two years.
- Hessinger: the number of credits they need to complete at JCU is not necessarily 120 minus the credits they transfer. It's the 50% of the major as well as the transfer core that is the standard. They need to understand that from the get-go. Also, if people are worried that this opens the floodgate, it simply doesn't. Transfer from 4-year institutions is not a market where you can go and recruit. To have big transfer numbers, we need to have articulate agreements with 2-year schools.
- Brossmann: to clarify, this proposal doesn't deal with the issues of 2-year colleges, it also has nothing to do with the core.
- Spurgin moved to send it to full faculty for a vote; Lissemore seconded it; 80 yes; 0 no

V. Election nominations call

Chrystal Bruce showed the current ballot with open seats. People who are interested in the open or non-open slots should contact those on the election committee by the end of tonight.

VI. New Business

- Advice from the faculty's attorney concerning our contracts for the next academic year: non-tenured people should sign and turn in the contracts; tenured people can wait a bit longer. The attorney will supply a letter that they can append to the contract when turning it in. the letter and a rationale for it will be sent out soon.
- Dan Kilbride: I understand that Brent Brossmann is not standing for reelection for faculty council chair next year. I propose that everyone of us at this meeting need to give Brent our most profound thanks for the work that he has done this year. Brent, we owe you a great deal.