

Jacksonville State University
Faculty Senate Meeting
October 7, 2024
3:15pm Merrill Hall B01
Minutes

Present: R Ahmed, A Balilaj (for C Wang), L Barrow, R Blades, A Boswell, K Catlin, C Clark, S Cofield, C Davis (for S Beeman), D Dempsey, H Dempsey, A Gilbert, S Gill, J Godbey, B Hankins, E Hardy, N Freeman, L Ingwerson, W Key, J Long, Y Lu, P McGrail, M Meecham, S Mikel, C Murtagh, B Norvell, J Ridlen, T Ridlen, C. Shelton, D Thornton, B Turgeon, K Walker, K Wickersham

Guests: L Bowling

Absent: C Hosmer, A Crawley, K Letson, P Robertson

Call to order: 3:16 pm

- 1) Approval of Minutes **First J Ridlen, seconded D. Dempsey (All in favor, none opposed)**
- 2) Welcome!
 - a. Welcome to SGA Student Senators who are in attendance – did not attend
- 3) Updates
 - a. University Compensation Plan/Faculty Salary Committee Q & A with Provost Shelton and Dr. Dempsey

History of Salaries:

Previous salary work (phase I) began in 2018 and went for 2 years. In Summer 2021, deans and HR adjusted many salaries that were low, using funding available from Academic Affairs (2%) and early retirements. At the Spring 2023 college check-ins, college-level data were shared on average adjustments. The Chronicle data set was purchased to use for salary comparisons. Phase II began in Fall 2023, including the formation of a Faculty Salary Committee, chaired by Dr. Michael Alvidrez (and later co-chaired by Dr. Heidi Dempsey). This committee worked with CUPA data to create recommendations for a revised salary structure and met with Dr. Harmon several times for discussion. A salary consultant group was hired in Spring 2024 to work on both staff and faculty compensation issues. (Note that there have not been salary schedules for staff or faculty in at least a decade, so much work was needed.) The Faculty Salary Committee is now a standing Academic Affairs committee so they can be proactive in addressing future needs.

Where we are now:

Regional and national comparison institutions were determined in conjunction with the salary consultants and are listed on the JSU website. CIP codes were identified for each faculty discipline and data on these codes were pulled from CUPA data. Salary tables (with min/median/max) for each CIP code and rank based on these data will likely be available later this week. It was noted that CUPA data for the Instructor rank are based on a 5/5 teaching load at other peer institutions.

Applications for distinguished ranks have been paused while issues are being discussed and addressed—including the lack of compliance with policy in relation to the amount of salary increase and its duration. (Faculty Senate Executive Committee has this discussion on their ongoing agenda.)

A question was asked about how the consultants' and salary committee's recommendations compare to the current salary plan. The impression from Dr. Shelton and Dr. H. Dempsey is that they are similar, but the implementation is a bit different from the original committee recommendation. That is, Dr. Harmon is going through salaries line by line and prioritizing those that are below the minimum in their proposed salary range; her secondary goal, funding permitting, is to address salary compression. Salary consultants have provided guidance on best practices in implementation. Other aspects of the overall salary plan are under ongoing discussion and will be addressed in future phases over the coming year and beyond.

A question was asked as to whether salary tables would also be published for staff—yes. These tables for all employees will be updated annually and will be incorporated into Banner as soon as possible—Dr. Harmon has been working many hours with Ellucian to get our system to accommodate salary adjustments. (This will take more time, which is why this first round of adjustments will need to come in the form of a separate payment.)

A question was asked as to whether there would be a staff salary committee—yes.

A question was asked as to whether equity in raises was considered—that is, would there be a higher COLA for lower-paid employees as there was last year, or would there be a cap on salaries with those above the cap ineligible for COLA? The Provost indicated that Senators could email her with ideas and she could bring some to the President, but that the final decision was his.

A question was asked about how promotion raises would be handled. This year, they went into effect as usual, but the updated salaries of those newly promoted faculty will be compared to the salary tables for their new rank in this phase. Future promotion raises are under discussion, but it was reported that as of Fall 2025 those raises would appear on the 9/1 paycheck.

Dr. Shelton indicated that she would share more numbers when available (e.g., the percentage of faculty/staff whose salary was below the minimum, etc.).

- b. Discussion with Provost Shelton and Dr. Dempsey about where Faculty Senate falls in the chain of command (e.g., some faculty going to Senate about issues are told they are not following chain of command) and Senate's authority/role

The role of Faculty Senate is to deal with collective faculty issues. There are liability issues if we deal with individual faculty issues, so her recommendation is for Senate to not engage with an issue unless it is a collective issue (e.g., work on a policy rather than an individual's grievance). It was noted that there is currently no grievance procedure for faculty, so Dr. Shelton indicated that in practice faculty could request a meeting with her to discuss individual issues, and she would respect their privacy. Work needs to be done to clarify the role of HR with faculty grievances and PIP (Performance Improvement Plans). The Faculty Handbook Committee is working on many of these pieces, but they are in the second half of the handbook, slated for Fall 2026 implementation. It was

suggested that the section on faculty grievances, including the institution of a Faculty Grievance Panel, could perhaps be approved this year as a separate policy for inclusion in the Fall 2025 handbook. Many Senators agreed that this would be ideal. This feedback will be taken back to the Faculty Handbook Committee.

- c. Discussion by Provost Shelton regarding “Unacceptable Workplace Behaviors” email from Dr. Harmon that was shared with Faculty Senate, Deans, and Department Heads:

Dr. Harmon has had to deal with several situations involving negative interactions with staff that report to her (which, of course, she cannot comment on individually). She asks that everyone respect other employees and remember that “we’re all in this together.” Dr. Shelton commented that workplace stress affects our health, so it is in everyone’s best interest to help foster a more respectful work environment. Be kind.

- d. Discussion with Provost Shelton and Dr. Dempsey about balancing/tempering expectations/demands placed on Senate leadership and administration

Dr. H. Dempsey indicated that administrators like Dr. Shelton and Dr. Harmon are working long hours, usually 7 days/week, so we need to be respectful of their time and avoid unreasonable demands or expectations. Dr. Dempsey also indicated that she, like other Faculty Senate presidents around the state to whom she has talked, also works long hours (avg. 60 hours/week). There is a lot of work being done this year to address a multitude of neglected issues, but the goal is to get back to a more sustainable level of work.

- 4) Unfinished Business
 - a. OneDrive storage for Emeriti Faculty

This is a contract issue with Microsoft, so little can be done to address increased needs for Emeriti faculty. It was suggested that we work on communicating this better to retiring faculty, so they can plan accordingly to save their research and other files in personal storage.

- b. Handbook discussion/feedback?

Skipped

- 5) Committee Reports
 - a. Executive Committee
 - i. Principal occupation and conflict of interest
 - 1. Provost was unable to attend Executive Committee meeting for this discussion so it will be on the agenda for our next FS President/VP/Provost meeting.
 - ii. University Committees
 - 1. Discussion with Cabinet about examining faculty representatives, staff representatives, and student representatives for university committees
 - b. Faculty Advocacy Committee

- i. PEEHIP supplemental allocation
- ii. PEEHIP premium assistance
- iii. PEEHIP rates for dual PEEHIP-eligible employees using family coverage
 - 1. Addressing this issue with JSU Human Resources/PEEHIP
 - 2. Addressing this issue with PEEHIP in terms of transparency of website and difficulty of switching coverage

Dr. J. Ridlen summarized the discovery of issues surrounding PEEHIP rate issues for spouses who are both eligible for coverage (e.g., both JSU employees or a spouse is at a PEEHIP-eligible institution). This was discussed in a meeting with Dr. Harmon and HR, who are working to identify employees who may be paying too much to PEEHIP. Senators were asked to communicate to their constituents that they should check their own PEEHIP rates (dual employee+dependents qualify for the \$207/month family plan instead of \$307 or one spouse paying the \$207 and the other paying an extra \$30 for a single plan) and make adjustments during the next open enrollment period, should a quicker remedy not be available.

The Faculty Senate President and Vice President will coordinate with Leigha Cauthen on strategy for communicating with the PEEHIP Board of Control in regard to PEEHIP website issues.

The committee wants to look at the possibility of adjusting the sliding scale for the calculation of the supplemental PEEHIP allocation, which is based on salary.

Dr. Ridlen also pointed out the need to communicate the availability of PEEHIP premium assistance for employees below a certain family income threshold. Dr. Connor Davis checked the PEEHIP website and noted that this application could be submitted anytime during the year, not just during open enrollment. <https://www.rsa-al.gov/peehip/premiums/premium-assistance-program/>
https://www.rsa-al.gov/uploads/files/PEEHIP_PAA_Premium_Assistance_Application.pdf

- c. Elections Committee
 - i. Time to start looking for new senators! If you are rolling off, please stress the importance of this role when seeking a replacement
 - ii. Senate representatives on Academic Affairs Committees:
 - 1. Graduate Curriculum: David Dempsey, Undergraduate Admissions Standards: Tray Ridlen, Academic Reinstatement: Barbie Norvell, Faculty Honors and Grants: Heidi Dempsey, Jax MIX: David Dempsey, Student Achievement: Chris Clark, Tenure and Promotion Appeals: Heidi Dempsey, Undergraduate Curriculum: Heidi Dempsey, Academic Assessment: David Thornton, Writing Across the Curriculum, Stacy Mikel
 - iii. Faculty representatives: 51 faculty members assigned; 5 more slots to fill
 - d. Policies and Campus Planning
 - e. Student Retention
 - f. Bylaws Committee (ad hoc) – no report
- 6) New Business
- a. Departmental concerns?

A Senator reported that a faculty member had noticed that their 10/1 paycheck did not include the full amount for their promotion raise. Payroll indicated that this would be corrected on the next paycheck and that they were checking other faculty paychecks to see if the issue was more widespread.

A Senator asked about the status of departmental tenure and promotion guidelines, which had been requested by Faculty Senate some time ago. Dr. H. Dempsey said that she would follow up with departments to get an update.

Dr. Dempsey provided information on meetings with our EAB consultant on 10/9, as well as on the Board of Trustees meeting next week (10/14-15).

- b. Committee organization time – did not have time
- 7) Informational Items
 - a. Midterm grades due 10/13 11:59 pm; No class 10/10-10/11
 - b. Board of Trustees Meeting - Little River Canyon Center: 4322 Little River Trl NE, Fort Payne
- 8) Motion to adjourn – **J Ridlen first, S. Mikel seconded (all in favor, none opposed)**

Additional Reminders:

Faculty Research Symposium Important Dates:

October 11, 2024 - Faculty Presentation Proposals Due

October 18, 2024 - Registration Deadline for attendance, keynote speaker luncheon, and awards reception - [Faculty Research Symposium - Faculty Commons \(jsu.edu\)](#)

November 7, 2024 - Faculty Research Symposium

3rd Annual Student Success Summit

February 4th and 5th, 2025 at the Houston Cole Library

“Student Success and Mental Health: Strategies for Faculty and Staff to Enhance Student Outcomes.”

But here’s the exciting part—we need your expertise and insight! We’re looking for engaging and impactful presentations on how mental health influences student success, and how faculty and staff can play a key role in supporting students during these critical times. If you’ve got a fresh perspective, research findings, or practical strategies to share, we want to hear from you! [Check out our details on the Summit and submit your proposal today!](#)



The deadline to [submit your proposals](#) is December 8th, 2024 at 11:59 PM

JSU Board of Trustees Committee Meeting Schedule

Location: Little River Canyon Center, Fort Payne, Alabama

TRUSTEES: Randy Jones, Vivian Davis Figures, Greg Brown, Clarence Daugeette, III, Rusty Fuller, Tony Ingram, Drew Linn, Gale Saxon Main, Randy Owen, Tony Smoke, Gov. Kay Ivey, Ex-officio

Monday, October 14, 2024

TIME CHAIR	COMMITTEE	LIAISON	
10:30 am – 11:30 am	Advancement	Dr. Alan Medders	Trustee Main
11:30 am – 12:00 pm	Audit, Risk, and Compliance	Mr. Skip Clark	Trustee Brown
12:00 pm – 1:15 pm	LUNCH		Little River Canyon Center
1:15 pm – 1:45 pm	Athletics	Mr. Greg Seitz	Trustee Ingram
2:00 pm – 3:30 pm	Building and Finance	Dr. Arlitha Harmon	Trustee Smoke
3:30 pm – 5:30 pm	Academic Affairs	Dr. Christie Shelton	Trustee Owen

Tuesday, October 15, 2024

TIME		
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Board Meeting	Little River Canyon Center


Faculty Senate Update 10/7/24

From Faculty Senate President <fspres@jsu.edu>

Date Tue 10/8/2024 9:20 PM

To JSU Faculty <jsu-faculty@jsu.edu>

Cc Department Head Council <academicleadership@jsu.edu>; Dean's Council <deanscouncil@jsu.edu>

 1 attachments (278 KB)

10-7-24 Faculty Senate Minutes.docx;

Hello everyone!

I wanted to send out the minutes from our Faculty Senate meeting on Monday and catch you up on what we have been working on.

First, I've attached the expanded minutes from the last meeting where the Provost and I answered questions from Senators about the compensation plan and the Faculty Salary Committee. Provost Shelton also discussed what Senate's role should be in addressing faculty issues. Advocacy Committee also summarized some of the issues they found and have been working to resolve with Dr. Harmon and Ms. Casey regarding PEEHIP insurance premiums for dual-PEEHIP-eligible employees (e.g., both spouses work at JSU or at another PEEHIP eligible school) and the premium assistance plan (which allows employees who make below a certain amount of money pay a lower premium) — see attached minutes for more details on all of these.

There are also reminders about Faculty Research Symposium, Student Success Summit, and Board of Trustees meeting at the end of the minutes.

These are some of the other things Senate has been working on in previous meetings that I have yet to update you on:

- (1) You may have heard that there was a Department of Justice ruling that all JSU classes/Canvas shells/online materials must meet ADA accessibility requirements by Spring 2026. Several departments have met with Sean Creech about this already, but he is hoping more departments will schedule meetings with him to help create a game plan about how to address this. It may appear overwhelming at first, but it will be manageable if we take it one piece at a time and plan ahead. So, step 1 is that all faculty need to know what is coming and what is expected of them in order to start planning. Sean's office is also committed to helping faculty prepare for this and getting us whatever tools we need. We do not want anyone to abandon best teaching practices because of this mandate — it is an opportunity for us to meet more student needs and make more students feel included in our courses. We just need to figure out how to manage it and work toward that goal step-by-step. If you have questions or concerns about this process, please reach out to your Senator or to me.

- (2) Faculty handbook has slowed down a bit in order to give people more time to review, although we may have to pull a few select policies out from later chapters to add to the queue this year so they are not delayed an entire year.
- (3) We moved the Faculty Honors Committee out of Faculty Senate and made it a separate standing Academic Affairs Committee, although Senate will still appoint the members. This committee handles Emeriti appointments, faculty awards, and faculty scholarly activity grants.

Enjoy the football game tomorrow night and have a wonderful break from classes Thursday and Friday! Use that opportunity to catch up on your grading and submit those midterm grades! Or if you are me, you can plan to do your grading while recovering from minor knee surgery Friday. Don't be surprised if you see me hobbling around judging the Cockey Cookoff Saturday or at UN Day Tea at the International House on Sunday. I will update you all again after the Board of Trustees meeting next week!

Best,
Heidi

Heidi L. Dempsey, Ph.D. (she/her)

Faculty Senate President

Professor of Psychology

100 Ayers Hall, Dept. Psychology

Jacksonville State University

P. 256.782.5895 | C. 256.453.2426

The Friendliest Campus in the South.

WWW.JSU.EDU



BOT Update 10/15/24

From Faculty Senate President <fspres@jsu.edu>

Date Tue 10/15/2024 7:44 PM

To JSU Faculty <jsu-faculty@jsu.edu>; Dean's Council <deanscouncil@jsu.edu>; Department Head Council <academicleadership@jsu.edu>

Hello faculty!

I am writing today to update you on the Board of Trustees meeting that wrapped up today at Little River Canyon Center. First, and most importantly, the BOT approved the Adopted FY25 Budget, which includes the money for the upcoming phase of the faculty and staff compensation plan! This basically means that the BOT approved the money for Dr. Harmon's planned salary adjustments, so everyone can breathe a sigh of relief there.

Individual salary adjustment information will be sent out soon. And, as you receive information about your particular salary adjustments, feel free to reach out to your dean if you have questions about your specific case, or me, as chair of the Faculty Salary Committee, or Provost Shelton for questions about the salary plan overall. Dr. Harmon will be coming to Faculty Senate Monday to talk more about the compensation plan.

Remember that the plan is to multiply your current base pay by 1.02 to calculate COLA (which adds 2%). Then, if you still do not meet the minimum for your discipline and rank, then you should receive an additional adjustment to bring you up to the minimum. We know that further adjustments will be needed next year to start moving people above the minimums and account for experience, but the goal for this year was to get everyone (or as close to everyone as we could get) to the minimum (see below for how much money this takes just to move us that far). Then we will work on further adjustments, adjunct/overload pay, promotion amounts, etc.

To answer the question about what your current base pay is, go to MyJaxState --> Employee: My Paystubs, and look at your October paystub. Take "Regular Earnings" and multiply by 9 (if you don't escrow) or 12 (if you do escrow).

Other BOT highlights:

The evaluation of the President by the BOT said that they had full confidence in President Killingsworth and the work that he is doing. Greg Seitz was given the title of Vice President to match all of the others at his same level in the organization. The Provost's title was also changed by the BOT to Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs, so send her a congratulations to her for her much deserved promotion! She's now officially second in command!

For specific details on committees, here are updates:

Advancement: It was a record year for giving at \$11.8 million in gifts/pledges so far this year (above 2023 which was \$3.2 million). This includes \$5 million from AmFirst Credit Union. JSU is setting the stage for a new capital campaign. Enrollment is also up and we were close to 10,000 students with 9955. However, the largest increase in enrollment was in dual enrollment. There was also a great deal of discussion about the changing nature of the graduate landscape and us trying to find our place in the graduate market and growing graduate enrollment in the programs that can handle larger enrollments. There was also discussion about the increased numbers of transfer students as community college enrollment is rebounding. We are also offering two sections of SSC 101 this fall specifically for first generation college students to help this group transition more successfully to college.

Audit and Risk: Skip Clark announced he plans to retire in 2028 and has hired Sabrina Brown (JSU accounting grad) to train as his replacement over the next three years. The 2025 audit plan was approved.

Athletics: Some important take-aways from the committee meeting and discussion in the general meeting was that we were lucky we entered CUSA when we did because at that point the entry fee was \$5,000. It is now \$5 million to enter this conference. Further, if we were to leave the conference it would cost us between \$7 and \$8 million. So, for the questions about why we are "obligated" to spend the money on athletics, the answer is "in for a penny, in for a pound." And, as Dr. Harmon said in the budget discussion, we are spending about as much on athletics as we are bringing in. There are also financial implications for JSU if the NCAA antitrust settlement for NIL (name, image, likeness) is enacted. President Killingsworth estimates that JSU would be on the hook for around \$3.4 million payable over 10 years for our portion of this settlement. This is something affecting all NCAA Division I schools and not anything we have control over, but must account for in our budgeting. Greg Seitz was charged by the BOT to continue to seek revenue for football by getting us money-making games.

Building and Finance: They are going to increase the deposit from international students from \$100 to somewhere between \$100 and \$500 to try to deter international students from just using JSU to get their international visas and then switching schools immediately after arrival.

They also discussed our Standard & Poor's rating of BBB and what is affecting that rating (positives such as enrollment and retention, strong financial management, 160+ days of cash on hand, but negatives of debt owed). This led to the discussion regarding the funding for West Village and how much money it would cost to maintain the old dorms vs. build a new dorm and determined it still made sense to move forward with West Village (upper classmen housing near the baseball field).

Dr. Harmon gave the overview of the compensation plan and explained how it would fit into our overall budget. As you can see, she has allocated \$3.466 million additional dollars toward faculty and staff salaries this fiscal year (she had originally aimed for \$2 million, but scraped together an additional \$1.5 million to put toward this). Also note that this is how much money it is taking to do COLAs AND move most faculty/staff up to those minimums.

Jacksonville State University FY2024-2025 Adopted Budget Comparison

	FY24	FY25	Budget	
	Adopted Budget	Adopted Budget	Change	% Change
Revenues				
Tuition and Fees	99,278,867	101,698,428	2,419,561	2.44%
State Appropriations	53,428,224	57,283,222	3,854,998	7.22%
Athletics	6,287,889	7,396,889	1,109,000	17.64%
Auxiliaries	23,435,846	24,826,664	1,390,818	5.93%
Other	6,750,000	5,641,000	(1,109,000)	-16.43%
Restricted Funds	5,500,000	5,500,000	-	0.00%
Total Revenue	194,680,826	202,346,203	7,665,377	3.94%
Expenses				
Salaries	90,609,000	94,075,556	3,466,556	3.83%
Utilities	4,437,850	4,881,635	443,785	10.00%
Debt Service	6,586,324	12,694,096	-	0.00%
Scholarships	30,000,000	32,000,000	2,000,000	6.67%
Insurance	3,000,000	3,510,865	510,865	17.03%
Other Expenses	30,824,605	28,767,909	(2,056,696)	-6.67%
Auxiliaries	23,723,047	20,916,142	(2,806,905)	-11.83%
Restricted Funds	5,500,000	5,500,000	-	0.00%
Total Expenses	194,680,826	202,346,203	7,665,377	3.94%

* Includes the following earmarks:

Little River Canyon Field School	450,000	450,000
Center for Applied Forensics	500,000	500,000
Economic Development Initiative	225,000	225,000
Center for Manufacturing Support	700,000	700,000
Center for Law Enforcement Best Practices	475,000	475,000
Correctional Professional Training	150,000	150,000

Chief Barton also gave an update on Staff Council and how they are working to get the committee up and running, including developing bylaws and working to increase communication with staff across campus.

Academic Affairs: They discontinued the M.S.Ed. Reading Specialist degree in response to the Alabama State Department of Education's phasing out of that program and removed the certificates in Trail Science and Drone Piloting, while keeping the corresponding stackable microcredentials, which are financial aid eligible. Finally, they agreed to submit McClellan as an Off Campus Instructional Site to SACSCOC.

Kaleb Littlejohn explained how the Center for Best Practices in Law Enforcement was going (over 6500 officers trained) along with the new SE Leadership Command College. Senator Figures voiced a desire for there to be a degree program attached to the law enforcement training and Chief Barton discussed that a CJ minor in law enforcement is in the works. Mark Hopwood then discussed the Center for Applied Forensics and all of the work they do for surrounding law enforcement agencies with fingerprint and drug identification, as well as forensic training for students and law enforcement officers.

Lori Hensley then gave an very interesting presentation on how medical cannabis can be used to treat not just symptoms of Ewing's Sarcoma, but actually shrink the tumor itself, keep it from developing blood vessels that aid in its growth and metastasizing, and reduce interstitial pressure that keeps chemotherapy from reaching the tumor. She then explained how the two stackable microcredentials in Cannabis Studies would help our students gain jobs in a growing workforce in the state.

Joe Scott Morgan discussed his travels to the UK and how he is working to develop partnerships with institutions there to bring students to JSU (they don't get enough gun violence in the UK to adequately train them on this aspect, but they can get that here!). He also said that NBC was going to turn his podcast Body Bags into a TV show that will be shot at JSU.

Student Oli Harp shared her student symposium presentation of the evolution of Hip Hop and SGA President Kaitlyn Letson discussed J-Week and Homecoming week events.

I discussed how the Faculty Salary Committee had worked with Dr. Harmon on the compensation plan and how the Faculty Handbook Committee was in the process of stakeholder review of the first five chapters. Then I discussed how Senate worked with the Provost to revamp her webpages to have more faculty information and include information about Academic Affairs Committees. Then I discussed that we had also worked with the President on his committees and the faculty committee interest form that was distributed at the beginning of the year.

Finally, my biggest take-away from this meeting is that the BOT is working to be very fiscally responsible with JSU's finances. Every decision they made involved discussions about cost and revenue (even football), the university's mission and goals, and how they could help move the university forward. They genuinely care about our students and want JSU alumni to be proud of their degrees and alma mater.

And for those of you who reached out about my knee surgery, than you! All went well and I've been about to hobble around at the BOT meeting pretty well. I hope to be back to normal soon!

Best,
Heidi

Heidi L. Dempsey, Ph.D. (she/her)

Faculty Senate President

Professor of Psychology

100 Ayers Hall, Dept. Psychology

Jacksonville State University

P. 256.782.5895 | C. 256.453.2426

The Friendliest Campus in the South.

WWW.JSU.EDU

