

# Johnson State College

## College Council Notes November 19, 2010



**Present:** Lori Adams, David Bergh, Jeff Bickford, Jeanie Cass, Benjamin Chaucer, Cynthia Hennard, Nikolaus Holm, Jo Ann Lamore, Sally Laughlin, Barbara E. Murphy, Sandy Noyes, Michael Osborne, Michael Palagonia, Dan Regan, Sharron Scott, Danielle Spring, Krista Swahn, Margo Warden, Sara-Ann Wolf.

Note taker: Heloisa Herder

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### **I. Update on JSC 2010-2015 – A Plan for Access, Engagement and Success – Barbara Murphy**

President Murphy welcomed all to the second meeting of the semester. She started by doing a brief review of the college plan to remind us of its goals and its use as a guiding document.

The plan leads with two very important academic goals. The first is *increasing challenge and student achievement*. It is really important to keep the balance of what we are asking of the students and the support we are offering to them to succeed. As part of this goal, we have started to look into: undergraduate research opportunities, an honors approach that fits JSC, and revisions to the general education core to give it more integrity. The VSC Program Policy Review that has just reviewed the general education program suggested that while JSC has good and reasonable courses, it isn't a program that presents itself as having a theme or reason. Without good rationale, the core can appear to students as a "a bunch of courses." The faculty will be proposing changes to make the program stand on its own. The *Basement Medicine* has taken an interest in the process of general education revision, and we can expect a story in the forthcoming issue. The general education committee will seek students' input, and Ben Chaucer, SGA president, confirmed that they will send two representatives to be part of the committee.

"The second priority in the Plan is *foster early and ongoing student success*. Like many colleges, we decided to strengthen our first year and that has intentionally been the resource focus in Johnson for the last five years. Research says that the next phase that you are likely to see student stumble is in their sophomore year. There is a "sophomore slump", and JSC will try to build on what we learned about early success and extend that to students throughout the years.

"The third goal focuses on enrollment; JSC wants to reach out to students who will do well and thrive at Johnson State. This is both a practical goal ( JSC depends on tuition revenue and a healthy mix of students) and a cultural, mission-related one: we want to identify students who will succeed here and after college. Penny Howrigan and Doug Eastman are leading this initiative.

"The fourth goal has to do with strengthening JSC's relationship to Lamoille County and Vermont. How can we be good contributors to our county and beyond, and how we can learn from the knowledge in the area and become scholars of our environment? What makes going to this college in Johnson

"Vermont different from going to a college in another location? How can we be good neighbors, good learners, and good teachers? The chair of the education department is helping us take a new look at relationship with K-12 partners in the nearby area.

"The fifth priority is aligning campus technology and IT upgrades with academic priorities. It is important that the places where we invest our dollars, whether they are in refurbishing rooms, buildings or smart boards, we want it to be informed and driven by academic emphasis. We are looking at where our enrollments and priorities to guide our investments. Of course, we have to honor life safety and maintenance needs, as well. A saying is: If you want to see what a college values, look at where it is spending its money. We want to spending money in places that align with what is important to us.

"The final priority in this plan is to strengthen our future through gifts, grants and investments. This is a focus on ongoing resource development, as we don't want to be entirely tuition dependent. This is the development area and grant writing goal. We don't have a grant's office, but our faculty in particular, have done very well looking for research grants in the last few years to support their work and student work with them. This is a quick run through of our colleges priorities," said President Murphy.

Academic Dean Dan Regan pointed out the importance of College Council members and the employees they work with to help in the realization of this plan. Dean Regan stated that in order for our students to succeed, we have to simultaneously provide them with a high level of support while we are challenging them. Many of the college council members are involved in the provision of this support, and these activities will be essential to the success of the plan.

President Murphy informed the group that JSC heard back from NEASC after submitting its 5-year report over the summer, that JSC is doing well and will have the accreditation extended for 5 more years. NEASC also made mention about how important the JSC college plan was to our working on our ongoing goals. President Murphy stated that a well-prepared College Plan goes a long way with accreditation agencies and funders as they demonstrate that a College takes its future seriously.

## **II. Campus upgrades: schedule and plans – Sharron Scott**

Dean of Administration Sharron Scott announced that the final renovations from the summer work at Bentley Hall should be done over the next couple of weeks. Dean Scott and members from the Art department and Science department are planning for the renovations for next summer at the Visual Arts Center and the rest of Bentley Hall.

E.F. Wall has been hired as the construction management firm for both jobs. Dean Scott said that they are in the schematic design phase, just past the conceptual idea phase. The next phase is design and development, construction documents, and then hiring the subcontractors.

In order to complete the work next year, we will have to relocate staff, faculty, and classes individuals from both Buildings. Bentley Hall will not be available for use for the entire summer and we are looking to locate labs for summer research. The Visual Arts Center is much more complicated as it will be offline for a full semester (FA11).

People and functions will be relocated to McClelland Hall 1<sup>st</sup> floor, and this process should start during exam week. There is still no appropriate space for the Sculpture classes, and we are exploring the possibilities of partnership for a space.

President Murphy addressed a short-term concern regarding the parking space in McClelland. There is enough space in McClelland for the faculty to park, and students will have to carpool and walk as they have always done. There is a call for people who are interested to work on McClelland project.

President Murphy informed us that money will be put aside for upgrading signage at the college. The location of the signs will be considered, and this project will happen mid-spring. The sign at the main entrance of the college will also be replaced, as it is too easy to miss our front gate.

A college council member asked if JSC Business and Marketing students participate on the design projects, competitions or suggestions on the process of how Marketing is done here. President Murphy replied that sometimes yes. Marketing students go to different offices doing interviews and collecting information surveying different college functional areas.

Another college council member asked if any work will be done on the residence halls in the near future. Dean Scott confirmed that the next round of residential halls will be in Arthur Hall to address all of the restroom facilities. That work should be occurring in the summer following this next one. The residential construction money is being saved to do that work in one summer. JSC receives a modest amount of money annually, 250K a year for improvements on the residence halls. Typically that money is dedicated towards infrastructure, like elevators, restrooms, sprinklers, that are important and necessary but not very 'showy' projects. Dean Scott will be looking at what will be the next round of renovations for the residence halls.

The speed bumps have been taken off for the winter season, and with this removal have come some speeding issues. However, there is a need for a traffic control to keep the speed down and we are researching speed tables. A speed table is a 12 foot expanse that slows the traffic down and does not interfere with snow plowing. Here at the college, they would be placed in three locations: by the stop sign near Martinetti Hall, in the back of the residence halls, and at the Y by the college apartments. As it is too late this season, we would install them—if they are affordable and are judged to be a good strategy-- in the spring.

Dean Bergh informed us that JSC now has Verizon coverage on campus. This is great news as most of the incoming students have Verizon contracts.

There is a proposal to build a bell tower on campus, where the Chesamore Bell would be placed and there would also be a clock. This is a development opportunity, as individual donors could choose to have their names on the base of the tower or on a stone in a small plaza for a gift. The site of the tower needs to be carefully considered to best complement our location and views. There is enthusiasm among some alums, who really believe that it is a good way to draw gifts.

### **III. Student Government Association – Ben Chaucer**

SGA President Ben Chaucer informed us that this has been a great semester so far. The SGA has been working more with Residential Life as part of their goal, and Residential Life students have also been attending their meetings. They have a lot of great senators that are doing great projects:

- handicap ramp has been repaired,
- campus sustainability group is looking at compost buckets for dorm living areas,
- cross country trails are being worked on to become more usable to the wider spectrum of the community.

President Murphy announced that the students are also helping the colleges to represent true needs when the budgets are prepared. Ben Chaucer and Jon Wilson went to the last Board of Trustees Finance and Facilities committee meeting. Ben Chaucer said that he will be working with the other state colleges to compile student input about tuition increase. Ben Chaucer is making sure that the students' input is based on numbers and clear data. President Murphy said that JSC students have gone on record to say essentially "keep my education as valuable as it is now".

President Murphy also wanted to mention that she approached Ben Chaucer, who shared a SGA request that the Senior Class consider a gift to the college. They are hoping to revive the college tradition of a class gift. President Murphy said that it is a great tradition and she is thankful.

#### **IV. Other Business/ Announcements**

- Mike Palagonia reported that this has been a good semester with very few incidents and vandalism isn't out of the ordinary. There seems to be a respectful quality of life on campus and residence halls.
- Dean of Students David Bergh said that skateboarding continues to be a hot topic, particularly on the stairs of LLC. Dean Bergh hopes that this issue can be resolved without banning the practice. He encourages all community members to feel the power to talk to people, if they see them skateboarding in the LLC area.
- Dean of Students David Bergh reported that there has been progress on the smoking topic in two fronts. They have been exploring further educational and cessation opportunities that can be offered at JSC. The smoking task-force will also continue to gather more information on the state of smoke-free campuses nationally. A lot of information was posted on the Great Smoke-out day on campus by the Wellness Committee.
- Next College Council meeting will be February 4, 2011.

cc: President's Council