

## PLUSC 10/12/2017

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**Attendees:** *K. Cote, L. Hibbs, A. Hinckley, K. Gaspar Poth, S. Refaei, J. Smith, J. Weaving, J. Winters*

**Also attending:** *J. Gregson*

**Attachment:** [J. Gregson's handout](#)

### Minutes

1. Introductions and discussion of PLUSC.
2. Faculty Joint Committee discussion led by J. Gregson
  - a. Full name is Faculty Joint Committee for Reduction and Reallocation of Force, shortened to FJC. FJC is complicated even to those serving. Composed of faculty members serving on Education Policies, Faculty Affairs, and Rank and Tenure committees.
  - b. T. Krise convened in December 2016. The membership changed in August 2017 due to normal committee rotations. Ten of the twenty members of the FJC rotated off.
  - c. History of FJC
    - i. Last Fall discussion started about the “August surprise,” referring to the dip in retention of 1st-2nd year returning students. This was not discovered until right before school started, hence “August surprise” moniker.
    - ii. This one time event led to work spearheaded by T. Krise and A. Belton to investigate several issues:
      - "What happened to those students?"

One factor here is that Nursing students left because of lack of capacity in that program. To address this adjustments were made to the recruitment process such that students now pre-apply to Nursing program when applying for admission, preventing withdrawals based on not getting admitted to Nursing.
      - Faculty student ratio

The dip in retention led to a corresponding dip in budget. A Student Faculty ratio working group was formed to investigate the potential issue with student-faculty ratio since enrollment has gone down but faculty hiring has increased. This is a complex problem because it is difficult to calculate what counts as a faculty and as student. Previously the faculty:student ratio was 15:1. It has changed to 11:1 gradually and unintentionally over the years. Current FJC recommendations will adjust

this to 12:1. Birth rates and other demographic data suggest this falling enrollment is not only a PLU problem, but a higher ed problem. Only 1 of the 10 independent colleges of Washington made their enrollment goal for this year and they had top 10 basketball team (Gonzaga). See [J. Gregson's handout on this topic](#).

d. Process

- i. Fall 2016 the university recognized faculty count needed to be reduced. According to faculty bylaws, the only way to reduce tenured faculty is budgetary necessity or cause (such as moral turpitude or gross negligence of responsibility). Budget balanced last year and this, but it's not sustainable.
- ii. The FJC worked through Spring to develop the rubric and determine what metrics matter. R. Brown hired Austen group to perform cost benefit analysis and ascertain whether programs generate revenue.
- iii. Provisional recommendations came out at the end of August 2017, identifying 35 programs. These were given the chance to respond to "What would it look like if \_\_\_?", with examples include "the major becomes minor," "the program is eliminated," "there is 1 less FTE," etc.
- iv. FJC received responses from the programs and is working on final recommendations. There is no firm date set for these recommendations. If FJC recommends elimination of majors, minors, concentrations, these must go before faculty assembly for vote. This will be addressed at the November 10, 2017, faculty assembly.
- v. FJC final recommendations go to the administration for review, and then before the Board of Regents at the December 9, 2017, meeting. The administration can make recommendations to the Board different from those made approved by faculty assembly, but board will know of both.
- vi. Summary of recommendation workflow: FJC → programs → FJC → Faculty Assembly → Administration → Board of Regents.

e. How are individual positions identified in units?

- i. Academic program identified first, then academic subunit (eg, criminology within sociology), then by points (seniority).
- ii. Offer of Voluntary Early Separation offered to faculty.

iii. Reallocation can happen, i.e. eliminated faculty can apply for openings in other departments.

3. Presidential search committee

- a. Discomfort from Board that only one staff member served on prior presidential search committee and that process of selection was less than ideal. PLUSC will need to nominate two people to participate in the process. These nominees will need to understand the breadth of issues relevant to staff and feel comfortable representing staff issues and concerns. Recommended that one be from PLUSC leadership and one from PLUSC membership or at large staff.
  - b. The search committee is made up of 5 board members, 3 students, 2 faculty.
  - c. Discussion of choices. K. Poth and S. Refaei chosen, with Jason as backup.
4. Information forthcoming about a Fall event, future discussion about survey and follow-up communication to staff. Setup forum with J. Gregson and A. Belton for staff to air their concerns.