

THE FLORIDA JUNIOR COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE

ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY INTERACTION

1969-70

FOR: THE DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MR. FRED H. KENT, CHAIRMAN

FROM: JOHN T. RICE, VICE PRESIDENT-
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT

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I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSES

On November 25, 1969, the District Board of Trustees of the Florida Junior College at Jacksonville held a special meeting on the Cumberland Campus to consider the report of the visitation committee of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. As a result of this report, and at the recommendation of President J. Bruce Wilson, the Board of Trustees charged John T. Rice, Vice President - Assistant to the President, with the task of studying communication problems between the College's administration and its faculty, and making recommendations to the Board to reduce any void which might be discovered. This report is the result of an extensive study conducted during the months of December 1969 and January 1970.

The purposes of this report are three-fold. First, the report presents faculty attitudes, opinions, and recommendations for the improvement of communication between the administration and the faculty, as well as for over all

improvements in the growth of the College in general. Secondly, it is the purpose of this report to not lay fault with any particular individual or groups of individuals, as it is readily seen that most of the problems discussed resulted not only from misunderstandings on both sides, but also in large part from the newness and rapid growth of the College. Finally, in the last section of the report (SUMMARY), it is the purpose of the writer, having carefully reviewed the faculty's recommendations and being more familiar with the over-all goals and structure of the College, to present high priority recommendations, which it is felt will not only contribute significantly to the growth of the College, but also are essential in order that the stated goals and objectives of the College be met.

The writer would like to express his appreciation to all those faculty and administrators who participated in the study, and who gave of their time and effort to bring about constructive recommendations for the continued growth of the Florida Junior College at Jacksonville.

II. METHODOLOGY

The visitation committee's report on the Florida Junior College at Jacksonville reflected a basic suspicion and distrust by the faculty toward the administration of the College. It became readily apparent that, in order to fulfill the requirements laid down by the District Board of Trustees, it would be necessary to gain assistance from the faculty in compiling the report in order that good faith in the project might be obtained. Consequently, an advisory committee was appointed by Mr. Rice, upon the recommendations of the President's staff, and was composed of the following:

Mr. Jon P. Cosby, Head - Department of Mathematics
and Science Southside Campus

Mr. Dan W. Hadwin, Counselor - San Diego Campus

Mr. Holland W. Rood, Instructor - Engineering
Technology - San Diego Campus

Mr. Robert M. Sanford, Chairman, Interdisciplinary
Studies - Experimental College,
Cumberland Campus

In addition, it was felt that should some of the recommendations from the report be implemented by the Board

of Trustees, it would be advisable to add Dr. Jeffrey Studkman, Director of Institutional Research, to the advisory committee, since he would be in a position to evaluate the success or failure of any such implementation.

The first meeting of this committee was held on December 1, 1969, and a plan of action was suggested and adopted. Each committee member would within a week submit to Mr. Rice a list of faculty with whom they had been in contact, to whom they had explained the purpose of the report, and from whom they had obtained permission for Mr. Rice to hold a confidential interview. In addition, all the faculty approached were told to inform their colleagues that Mr. Rice would be available at their convenience to talk with anyone, at any time, and at the site of their choosing. The advisory committee was urged to impress upon the faculty that the conversations of those participating would be held in strictest confidence and that anonymity would be preserved. In addition, faculty were told that this was not to be a report which would be used to harm individuals, but rather was an attempt by the Board of

Trustees and the College administration to unify the faculty and staff for the betterment of the over-all community.

Names of members of the faculty agreeing to participate were submitted, and, in addition, other faculty members volunteered, offering their services from time to time. In all, a total of 43 faculty members and 21 administrators were individually consulted and recommendations obtained, and, in addition, several group discussions were held in the faculty lounges. The advisory committee met again on January 8, 1970, for a periodic review of the recommendations obtained at that time, and a proposed draft of this report was submitted to the committee on Monday, January 26, 1970. On January 30, 1970, the committee met to offer suggestions and changes to the report prior to its submission to the Board of Trustees and the President of the College.

The faculty interviewed came from every campus and from every instructional area of the College. Care was taken to achieve a balance of experience, youth, tenure at Florida Junior College at Jacksonville, and participation in College

activities. It is the view of the advisory committee and the writer that the comments contained in this report reflect a representative cross-section of the College faculty, and, while at times it is apparent that some of the recommendations reflect a microscopic approach to the problem, it is felt that faculty ideas should always be made known, that faculty opinion should always be sought, and that faculty concern should always be appreciated. Consequently, the section that follows (THE FACULTY'S VIEW OF THE COLLEGE) will at times reflect concerns and opinions which, because of their involvement in a specialized area, may differ significantly from those of the Board of Trustees and the College's administration. However, it is necessary for these bodies to understand this view in order that a knowledgeable course may be chosen for implementation of this report and in order that the administration of the College might better understand the effects of their decisions and policies upon those for whose support they are charged.

DISTRIBUTION BY DEPARTMENT AND BY CAMPUS OF FACULTY
PARTICIPANTS

	<u>CC</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>SD</u>
SOCIAL SCIENCES	4	4	2
Social Studies, Philosophy, Psychology			
LANGUAGES	4	2	2
English, French, Spanish			
HUMANITIES	4	2	6
Art, Music			
MATH & SCIENCE		6	1
BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY			3
COUNSELING & GUIDED STUDIES	1	1	1
ADMINISTRATION	*13	3	5

* Cumberland and Downtown Centers

III. THE FACULTY'S VIEW OF THE COLLEGE

This section will deal with faculty opinions and comments concerning their status, as they see it, within the Florida Junior College at Jacksonville. The writer wishes to impress upon the reader that the information about to be given is a one-sided view of a many faceted situation--that the faculty member quite often bases his opinion upon rumor and upon the opinions of his colleagues, especially in the absence of clarifying information from the administration. The presentation at this point of such information is intentional, for, if the administration is to implement methods of improving communication, it is imperative that they understand the presently prevailing attitudes and views.

Faculty attitudes at the College today result from a series of involved and complex events, the highlights of which will now be traced. The first major incident which served to provide fear, suspicion, and anxiety on the part of faculty members occurred in the Spring of 1968, during the second year of the College's operation. At this time a group

of faculty members, who had in the administration's opinion, failed to fulfill the terms of their contracts, were not recommended for re-employment. The faculty were told by these persons that they were called into the office of the Dean of Instruction and asked to voluntarily sign resignations without being told the reasons for such action. In most cases the faculty believe that the only crime committed by those released was their outspoken criticism of the College administration in open faculty meetings. One of these individuals obtained legal council and appealed to the Board of Trustees. She has now become a martyr with the faculty, and her apparent success before the Board has convinced the faculty that not only was she in the right, but so were all the faculty released at that time. This event is now known among the faculty as the "Great Purge," or the "Witch Hunt," and it was in reference to such that a member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Committee referred by name, when he voiced fear of a communications problem at the College.

The second major incident and probably the one which influences most heavily, present faculty opinion, occurred in the Spring of 1969 when the Faculty Affairs Committee was asked by the President to submit recommendations for a faculty salary scale. The Faculty Affairs Committee spent some time and a considerable amount of work reviewing faculty salaries throughout the southeast. They raised the question to the administration of whether their recommendations should contain the optimum desired, or whether they should contain what was felt to be realistic at this stage of the College's development. The Committee was told to present the optimum to serve as a guide not only for the coming year but also for future years. After some time this report was presented to the administration by the committee with a great deal of expectation and pride. Nothing was heard from the College's administration from that point on, and none of the committee or the rest of the faculty were aware of what was taking place until they read in The Florida Times Union one morning that the Board had approved a faculty salary scale for the coming year. A quick review of this scale, in

the committee's opinion, contained hardly anything of what they had recommended, and they felt used and angry. One of the members of this committee telephoned a member of the Board to express this concern, and, subsequently, the President appeared before the Faculty Affairs Committee to express the rationale behind the faculty salary scale that was recommended to the Board of Trustees. The committee member who had contacted the Board was scheduled to be placed on continuing contract shortly thereafter but this was denied him. The faculty are convinced it was because he had contacted the Board and had not followed through the proper administrative chain of command. This man's name was related to the writer in almost every faculty interview held during the preparation of this report even though he had left the College for further graduate training at the end of that academic year.

The third and most recent incident has occurred this year and concerns the area of supply. Faculty

on the San Diego Campus were told that there was a shortage of paper and supplies for departmental budgets due to an over-estimation of last year's income by the administration of the College. They were therefore asked to conserve paper and other mimeograph materials as much as possible, and were further instructed that any material to be run off or reproduced (e.g., tests, class handouts; etc.) had to have the approval of the Area Coordinator prior to any machine's use. There have been occasions on the San Diego Campus, where tests as prepared by the instructors, have been questioned and in some cases materials deemed important by instructors were turned down for reproduction based on the opinion of the administrator involved. The faculty have considered such an abridgement of academic freedom, and are particularly concerned when they receive so much mimeograph information from central administration (e.g., notification of laundry coats, supply lists, bid specifications, and cancellation of faculty meetings) since there is supposed to be a paper

shortage which is affecting their class room instruction.

The situation and its concerns have been topics of discussion by faculty members on the three general education campuses.

The events mentioned above have, as might be readily seen, formed a base from which faculty opinion of the administration and their interpretation of the administration's view of the faculty have evolved. A summarization of the results of the writer's faculty interviews reveals the following outlook of the faculty toward the areas involved:

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

The administration is seen as a rather cumbersome, unwieldy structure, which is far too big for the present needs of the College. In addition, administrative salaries, according to faculty estimates, jumped as much as 25% at the central level during the past year, while the faculty received an approximate 5 1/2% raise. Consequently, nepotism and favoritism were charges constantly leveled at

the central administration, and, more damagingly, the faculty feels that the administration has failed to recognize the teaching role as the prime function of the College. The faculty feels the administration to be empire building, and concerned with quantity rather than quality of instruction.

CAMPUS ADMINISTRATION

In general, campus administrators are viewed quite favorably by the faculty. It is felt that quite often not enough decision making is allowed on the campus level and that this restricts and limits the effectiveness of the campus administrator. There seems to be a great conflict between the roles of department head and area coordinator as they affect the faculty. The faculty feels that an administrative position should not exist unless there is a definite need and purpose to justify its creation. They feel that under the present structure the department head is superfluous and that individuals filling this role are used as legmen by the area coordinators, with no real authority and recognition. Finally, campus morale is hurt by a lack of

opportunity to get together as a group and the fear of expressing critical opinion openly. The faculty blames this condition on the excessive use by central administration of the campus administrator's time and energies.

THE FACULTY

In general the faculty have good communication with one another, and respect the qualifications and abilities of their colleagues. They do feel that the faculty contribution to the institution is not recognized and that very few of their colleagues have received recognition for outstanding teaching ability or promotions for demonstrating administrative ability. They feel that it is the administration's desire for the faculty that they will be quiet, teach their classes, maintain the required office hours, and go home. This view is strengthened by the attitude of the Faculty Affairs Committee, whose members feel used and insignificant, and thus give the faculty no real voice to central administration and no means by which to convey constructive criticism.

THE STUDENT BODY

The students, in general, were held with great affection by the faculty. The writer has been encouraged by the dedication to the student body as exhibited by the teaching faculty. There is grave concern for the students by the faculty over the College's present interpretation of its "open door" policy. The liberalness of the policy, which allows unqualified students to enter the College transfer program if they so desire, coupled with the small, though competent counseling staff, which cannot adequately cope with the great numbers of students, combine to produce difficult classroom situations. In many college transfer classes, most particularly English and math, the dropout rate sometimes reaches 60%, as unqualified students become frustrated and leave the class. In, addition, career education classes (e.g., hotel management) go wanting because students who might benefit have not been channeled in this direction. This concern with the College's counseling and testing program, as it affects the student body, was voiced in every faculty interview obtained.

The above listed attitudes reveal concern and dedication from the faculty of the Florida Junior College at Jacksonville. In general, the faculty like teaching at the College, and wish to continue in this vein. In addition, the City of Jacksonville is extremely well-liked and desired as a place to make a permanent home. The ingredients for stability and high morale are present, and the recommendations that follow, which emanated from the faculty, reveal a willingness to continue to work to improve the College in the years ahead.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The faculty of Florida Junior College at Jacksonville, who were interviewed, were quite definite in their recommendations for the College. Their recommendations reflect a responsible attitude toward the institution and an optimistic outlook for its future. While the preceeding section might tend to appear oppressive, it is the result, in this writer's estimation, of a lack of knowledge by the faculty of the rationale behind administrative decision making at this institution. Consequently, the decision fell to the writer as to which of the many faculty recommendations would truly eliminate this lack of understanding and would provide an atmosphere within which understanding could exist.

The final section which follows this (SUMMARY) will confine itself to the recommendations which the writer feels deserve immediate attention and implementation. This section, however, will list recommendations by category to give the reader an over all understanding of what the faculty feels

is needed in order that the future growth of this College might proceed along constructive lines.

ADMINISTRATION

The primary feeling of the faculty is that the administration should not only concern itself with faculty opinion, but also faculty should be involved in the actual decision making on those matters which affect the faculty personally. Consequently, it is recommended that the administration take steps to insure feedback from the highest level on faculty recommendations as presented by their representative body.

It is recommended that the position of Department Chairman be eliminated and that the position of Area Coordinator be retitled to that of Area Director, who would in turn report directly to the Assistant Dean of Academics on each campus.

The above recommendation is further involved in a faculty feeling that too many central administrators are

presently on the payroll for current college needs.

Consequently, it is recommended that when in the opinion of the President of the College and the District Board of Trustees, a new administrator is to be hired that not only should applications be sought from within as well as without the present faculty structure but also the justification for such a position, as well as its duties and responsibilities, should be made public to the entire College community.

Finally it is recommended that administrators, both on the central and campus levels, make a conscientious effort to visit with faculty in the campus lounges and in the faculty offices, in order that enlightened communication might take place.

FACULTY PROFESSIONAL STATUS

It is apparent that the faculty are of the opinion that the College's administration does not recognize the faculty's status as one of professionalism. It is therefore recommended that the criteria for successful teaching and

promotion be developed for the Faculty Handbook, and that the faculty be judged against that criteria for reemployment. In addition, the procedures through which a faculty member is recommended for reemployment need to be spelled out in the Faculty Handbook so that the individual faculty member will be aware as to whom he is responsible and to whom he can look for professional guidance and evaluation.

A tremendous amount of concern has been experienced by the faculty over the 10 1/2 month contract with the Florida Junior College at Jacksonville. A perusal of other colleges in this state and throughout the Southeast has shown this policy to be almost unique at this College. The 10 1/2 month contract works a hardship on the faculty member who wishes to return for further graduate study as well as the older faculty member who does not desire summer employment for health or other reasons. It is recommended that the administration review the 10 1/2 month contract with special consideration being given to merging the present two summer

terms, into one eight weeks term. It is further recommended that a standard ten month contract (mid-August through mid-June) be developed and that summer teaching be an optional decision of the faculty member with a salary based upon the number of days worked.

Finally, it is recommended that a policy on academic freedom and tenure be developed immediately. The present continuing contract, if carefully studied, does offer the needed job security for professional teaching status. However, the verbage involved is confusing to the faculty and a clearer statement as to continuing contract status (tenure) is needed.

ACADEMIC AND COUNSELING PROGRAMS

Throughout all of the interviews obtained, it was apparent that the faculty are greatly concerned over the slow development, as they see it, of the College's Guided Studies and various vocational programs. It is recommended that the counseling staff on all campuses be enlarged for the coming year, with special emphasis on persons to be used for testing

and career counseling. It is necessary that more students be channeled into vocational programs from which they may gain some measure of success and refused entrance into the college transfer program unless they are willing to go through the proper Guided Studies program. The College needs to establish standards and required levels of achievement to insure this process. By adopting a commercially-produced placement test, the establishment of such objective standards and levels of achievement would be facilitated.

The present structure of using the Curriculum and Instruction Committee as a screening process for changing or innovating new academic programs can be successful with some reorganization. However, requiring all members of a department on all campuses to be in full agreement before even a textbook can be changed is unrealistic. Faculty are simply posting the required textbook and course requirements and then doing what they desire, regardless of College policy. It is recommended that the Curriculum and Instruction Committee play a

larger role in the final decision-making of academic programs and that this committee be responsible to the properly representative faculty body for recommendations to the President in the area of curriculum.

ORGANIZATION AND SUPPLY

It is apparent to the writer and to the faculty that the present representative faculty body, the Faculty Affairs Committee, is not an effective voice for the faculty. Indeed, this body holds such a negative connotation to the faculty at large, and to the committee members, that it is necessary to develop an entirely new structure for open communication and trust to grow. It is recommended that a faculty senate be organized upon recommendations from the faculty at large and responsible directly to the President and to the Board of Trustees for expressing faculty viewpoints and opinions. This faculty senate should be representative both by number and by department so that even the smallest departments will be represented, while the larger departments will naturally have

a greater voice. The president of this senate should be invited to the President's staff meetings, when applicable, and should join with the President's staff in attendance at the regular monthly meetings of the District Board of Trustees. It is further recommended that some member of the College's administration represent the College as an ex-officio member of the senate in order that continuous communication between the faculty and the administration might be facilitated.

One of the prime areas of concern and frustration among the faculty stems from supply and budget problems. It is recommended that the budget, as approved by the Board of Trustees, be communicated personally by the Vice President for Administrative and Business Affairs assisted by the comptroller of the College to the faculty senate proposed above. In addition, during the academic year when requests are initiated for supplies by an individual faculty member, a copy of this original request, as well as the disposition of this request should be forwarded back to the individual faculty member by return mail from the purchasing department.

Additional concern both in the area of the college book store, and audio-visual equipment was voiced. It is recommended that the administrative structure review these two functions and initiate methods to streamline both of these functions in order that the individual faculty member may meet his classroom needs on time.

The basic problem of communication at the Florida Junior College at Jacksonville has been the faculty's feeling that the administration reacts negatively toward faculty involvement in College affairs. It is recommended that regular periodic campus meetings, as well as quarterly all-College faculty meetings be initiated. It is further suggested that notice of these meetings be delivered at least a week in advance to the faculty members and that they be allowed to submit questions and concerns in writing prior to the meeting, so that the administrator involved might know the faculty feeling and might personally absolve rumor and frustration by open communication.

V. SUMMARY

This section of the report will be used to convey to the reader those concepts which the writer and his advisory board unanimously feel will serve to open channels of communication between the faculty and the administration. Much constructive thought by the faculty lay behind the recommendations of the preceeding section. However, a realistic appraisal of the structure and development of the College at this time renders many of the recommendations unfeasible. Therefore, it is felt that the following suggestions should be seriously considered immediately:

1. A faculty senate or like body, wherein representation is based both upon number as well as department, should be instituted. Some member of the administration of the College should be chosen to meet regularly with this body and the head of said body should meet periodically with the President's staff as well as attend regular Board of Trustees

meetings. The faculty need to feel that their suggestions are being heard, and, in addition, they need to know why such suggestions are finally accepted or rejected in order to allay rumor and suspicion.

2. The now present 10 1/2 month contract should be shortened to a 10 month contract (approximately mid-August through the second week in June) for all full-time instructional personnel, at the same salary scale normally used for a 10 1/2 month contract. Serious consideration should then be given to combining the now present two summer terms into one eight weeks term, whereby the community will still be served on a yearly basis, and the faculty will have the opportunity, as well as the motivation, to increase their skills.
3. The criteria for successful teaching performance and the procedure used to evaluate and recommend a

faculty member for re-employment need to be spelled out step by step in the Faculty Handbook. The faculty now evaluate their students based upon certain required levels of performance, and it seems imperative that they in turn be so rated.

4. The administrative staff of the College at all levels need to make every effort to visit with faculty and communicate with faculty in their offices, in the lounges, and in committee meetings. The faculty need to feel that the administrative staff recognize the administrative role as one of support and the faculty role as a primary function of the College.

The writer believes the faculty to be concerned and well-intentioned toward the Florida Junior College at Jacksonville. The writer further is aware of the administration's concern for the faculty and their welfare. The resolution of any misunderstanding will be easily attained by the communication of such concern.

Finally, the writer wishes to express his appreciation for all those persons who have been so open and so kind to him in his efforts. It is believed that the proper beginning has been made by the assignment from the District Board of Trustees and the President of the College for a study like this to be made. It is hoped the results will serve the future growth of this institution.