

JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY
PROVOST'S COUNCIL

Jeanne Colleran, Medora Barnes, Sherri Crahen, Barbara D'Ambrosia, Margret Farrar,
Jim Krukones, Mark McCarthy, Al Miciak, Michelle Millet, Terry Mills,
Martha Mondello Hendren, Maryclaire Moroney, Ed Peck, Mindy Peden, Nick Santilli,
Elizabeth Stiles, Brian Williams, David Wong.

September 30, 2015

Minutes

Present: J. Colleran, M. Barnes, S. Crahen, M. Farrar, M. Hendren, J. Krukones, M. McCarthy, A. Miciak, M. Millet, T. Mills, M. Moroney, E. Peck, M. Peden, E. Stiles, B. Williams, D. Wong.

The minutes of the meeting of September 16 were approved.

Before turning to the agenda, J. Colleran took a moment to highlight several recent University achievements. First, according to data compiled by the Education Trust (a national non-profit advocacy organization) and reported in the *Plain Dealer*, John Carroll is one of 36 institutions nationally whose Pell recipients have graduation rates that are 10 percentage points *above* the average rate of their peers. (The average graduation rate for low-income students who received federal Pell grants is 5.7 percentage points *lower* than the rate for students who did not receive Pell grants at the same institution.) In fact, at John Carroll there is no gap in the graduation rates for Pell recipients and non-Pell recipients. Second, Terry Mills received a U.S. Department of Education grant funded at \$1.3 million under the First in the World program. The four-year project, "Linked Learning and Early Warning Approach for At-Risk Student Success (LLASS)," will create an intervention to study the persistence and academic progress of at-risk first-year students. In J. Colleran's view, the award demonstrates the capacity of the new Integrative Core Curriculum to attract grant money and includes extensive opportunities for faculty development. Third, Graciela Lacueva received a second grant from the Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation through their Career Ready Internship Grant Program. The \$349,230 grant—spread out over three years—will make it possible to fund approximately 190 paid internships for students from all majors with financial need while also covering some programming and administration costs. Finally, John Carroll was one of only five colleges and universities chosen this year out of a hundred nominations to receive the 2015 Higher Education Civic Engagement Awards presented by the Washington Center and the New York Life foundation. John Carroll is being recognized specifically for the creation of the "We the People" service-learning program. The award is worth \$20,000. J. Colleran noted that all of these achievements—which need to be amalgamated and marketed—relate to thriving and therefore retention, the principal topic of today's meeting. She urged that PC members celebrate these achievements with their colleagues.

M. Moroney then made a presentation on "Persistence and Retention at JCU, 2015-16." It began with portraits of students who got off to a weak academic start at JCU but have since turned their undergraduate careers around in terms of both classroom performance and extracurricular involvement. She then provided an inventory of various means of support available to our students: academic supports and interventions (e.g., academic advising and mentoring, academic support courses such as AR 112 and 120, the Learning Commons, and Services for Students with

Disabilities); crisis intervention (e.g., the CARE team, Early Alert/Early Warning, and Violence Prevention and Action); financial support (e.g., the Financial Aid office, work-study opportunities); and health and wellness/social support and engagement (e.g., Athletics, Campus Ministry, the Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion, the Center for Service and Social Action, and International Student Services). M. Moroney also pointed to a surprising trend, namely, the loss of high-achieving students in the first-year class (vs. the tendency to lose weaker students and to retain stronger ones in our transfer student cohort). She suggested that we might need to pay more attention to our more successful students, making sure, for example, to inform 2nd-semester freshmen about the variety of developmental opportunities available to them. Her comments elicited comments from other PC members. M. Peden described the trend as a significant shift that requires putting more resources toward high-ability students. B. Williams suggested that any student who was not engaged might be considered “at risk.” S. Crahen said that she has told parents at summer orientations that their non-athlete sons need to get connected and suggested that we might want to consider resurrecting learning communities in the residence halls. M. Farrar noted that the trend is not surprising: talented students tend to receive special treatment in their high schools but then discover that is not the case here. E. Stiles said that we need to build up programs that students are heading elsewhere for. J. Colleran suggested that direct admit would enable us to retain larger numbers of better students and that the matter might need to be considered by Faculty Council. D. Wong agreed that direct admit is important but wondered how we get there: Is it a purely administrative decision, or one requiring faculty approval?

B. Williams then introduced the idea of a Retention and Persistence Council, describing it as a strategic instrument and distributing a handout describing it in detail. The Council’s membership would be approximately eight individuals, including faculty. It was also suggested that students as well as other guests could be invited to meetings on occasion to report on specific issues. Linked to the Committee on Enrollment, the Council would meet one or two times per month and bring its findings back to the Provost’s Council, enabling that body to move from the strategic to the tactical. M. McCarthy said that the Council would represent something new. Until now, we have relied on anecdotes instead of concrete data; the Council would provide that kind of data and analyze it with the help of an appropriate cross-section of the University. M. Farrar suggested that the data would be useful for assessing the University’s strategic plan, too. The following individuals were mentioned as possible members of the Council: M. Moroney, B. Williams, S. Crahen, E. Stiles, Claudia Wenzel, and Shannon Kahle, the new coordinator of Institutional Effectiveness. T. Mills said that the Council could coordinate resources that are already available. E. Peck suggested borrowing language from the strategic plan to name the council, such as the Council on Student Thriving. B. Williams said he would issue a revised description of the Council and asked PC members to let him know whether it meets with their approval. M. McCarthy, for example, suggested that the revised description include the time frame indicating when the new body would report to the Provost’s Council.

J. Colleran said that the PC would discuss direct admit at its next meeting on October 14. As a preliminary to that discussion, she asked what input the faculty might want on the matter. M. Hendren pointed out that the *Undergraduate Bulletin* would be heavily impacted by direct admit. M. Barnes thought that direct admit to specific majors would need input from the faculty of individual departments, but B. Williams noted that direct admit more likely would be to an academic division as opposed to a specific department or major. When T. Mills expressed concern about the time that another review of direct admit would take, B. Williams suggested that he simply could make available to PC members the PowerPoint on the subject that he had

prepared earlier. J. Colleran said that, prior to the next meeting, she would touch base with those involved in the discussion of direct admit last year and put together a presentation.

As a final concern, J. Colleran mentioned the need to increase net tuition revenue, which would entail thinking differently about the marketing of our programs. A. Miciak noted a connection between that need and the issue of competitiveness, which he had raised at the USPG meeting the previous week.

As the meeting drew to a close, T. Mills applauded E. Peck and other participants for the first in a planned series of “Courageous Conversations” that had taken place not long before.

Minutes recorded by J. Krukones