

Juniata College Alumni Council Fall Meeting
Saturday, September 12, 2015 – Shuster Hall, Juniata College Field Station

Members Present:

Ashley Appleman '07
Annette (Reeder) Bair '93
Christopher Bair '92
Christie Brown '92
Nicole Close '92
Bonnie (Wineland) Crawford '64
Fran Fiorino '78
Tim Gill '08
Tracy (Stough) Grajewski '86
Elise Mihranian '14
Brenton Mitchell '06
John Noble '61
Jigar Patel '08
Bill Rys '96
Greg Schmidt '77
Diane (Morrow) Snider '79
Jennifer Wade '88
Roxann (Binner) Yon '84

Staff and Faculty Present:

Katie (Padamonsky) Dickey '97, Associate Director of Alumni Relations
Chris Gibboney, Alumni Relations Specialist
David Meadows '98, Director of Alumni Relations
Christina (Garman) Miller '01, Assistant Director of Alumni Relations
Lauren Bowen, Provost
Randy Rosenberger, Professor of Accounting, Business, and Economics

Members Not Present:

Shane Gallagher '10
Marissa Gunn '05
Stephanie Haines '92
Heather (Lecrone) Ott '09
Mike Valdiserri '81

Students Present:

Matthew Colabella '18, Juniata Activities Board, VP of Membership
Adena Delozier '16, Student Alumni Association Executive Board Member
Jecenia Duran '16, Senior Class Vice President
Reese Fisher '16, Senior Class President (arrived late due to soccer practice)
Lauren Lesser '16, Student Government President

9:05AM: Alumni Council President Christie Brown '92 called the meeting to order. Attendees were asked to introduce themselves.

9:15AM: Council reviewed the packet of material sent out in advance of the meeting, including the minutes from the previous meeting. The agenda for this meeting was also reviewed.

9:20AM: Minutes from the June 5, 2015 Alumni Council meeting were approved without comment. Bonnie Crawford '64 moved for approval. Brenton Mitchell '06 seconded.

9:21AM: Alumni Council President Brown provided an **overview of the purpose of Alumni Council**. She stated that members serve as ambassadors to current students, prospective students and other alumni. They also serve as ambassadors for Juniata College to the general public.

9:23AM: **Comments from Dr. Lauren Bowen, Provost.** Dr. Bowen came to Juniata a little more than a year ago and remarked on what she sees as a seamless transition. Going forward, her plan is to build on the College's current strengths while also taking advantage of opportunities for change. Regarding change, Dr. Bowen spoke specifically about two projects: Institutional Learning Outcomes and creating a Learning Commons on campus. Together, the two projects reflect a growing shift in higher education from teaching to learning and a need to assess the effectiveness of the College's current academic structure in adapting to that shift.

In terms of the Institutional Learning Outcomes, Dr. Bowen said that Juniata enjoys a "culture of autonomy." It needs to harness its resources and move toward evidence-based decisions.

In July, the College received a Mellon grant to assess the current core general education program, known as FISHN (Fine Arts, International studies, Social sciences, Humanities, Natural sciences). The assessment aims to answer two questions: What does the College want Juniata students to be; and how will those students demonstrate that they are what the College wants them to be?

Dr. Bowen estimates that six to eight outcomes will help answer those questions. Those outcomes are still to be determined, but may include areas such as *knowledge of content; research literacy; cultural literacy; technology; moral conviction; self-awareness; work ethic; civic engagement; the ability to communicate effectively; and intellectual curiosity.*

Dr. Bowen expects to present findings and recommendations to the Board of Trustees in April. She believes it's possible that recommendations could involve eliminating and/or changing some of the current designated POEs to place a renewed emphasis on individualized Programs of Emphasis.

As for the Learning Commons, Dr. Bowen described it as an integration of services in both a practical and a physical way. Many of the major services that students need would be moved to a central location. Students would have easier access to the services, and individual services could work more effectively with each other.

She envisions what she calls a center for student engagement. A centralized location where students can find information about and help with things such as internships, study abroad, student research and service learning. One challenge is how to integrate these areas and communicate among them. Dr. Bowen believes Career Services and faculty advising will play key roles.

Exactly where the Learning Commons will be located and how it will be structured is TBD, but Dr. Bowen believes it will help Juniata attract and accommodate students from a wider demographic pool. The Learning Commons will give them, and all students, increased access to a Liberal Arts education.

In response to a question, Dr. Bowen said she wants Juniata to provide thoughtful and intentional academic support services to students, especially with respect to non-traditional students. She said the College is considering options such as a January term, a May term, and some pilot projects to help achieve this goal.

She answered a question about online curriculum by saying that it is currently up to each individual faculty member as to whether he/she wants to offer an online course. Some faculty do it more than others. Dr. Bowen spoke of the need to manage the online curriculum, setting limits if needed, in order to ensure those classes have that “Juniata feeling.”

10:00AM: Trustee comments from Nicole Close '92. Nicole welcomed Tracy (Stough) Grajewski '86 to the Board of Trustees. The Executive Committee of the Board met in August; the full Board is set to next meet in October. Agenda items for the October meeting include: approving changes in Juniata College's articles of incorporation; approving updated bylaws for the Trustees.

Nicole mentioned that Standard & Poor's maintained the College's A- stable bond rating. She also noted that a campus-wide Title IX workshop is scheduled for October 22. The College received a grant to fund the workshop. Lauren Bowen shared that Juniata was awarded a \$ 300,000 grant from the Department of Justice to support a violence prevention action center and coordinator position. It's \$ 100,000 per year for 3 years with the promise that we will sustain the commitment at the end of the grant period.

Nicole spoke briefly about the Board's various committees. She heads the Advancement and Marketing Committee, which is working to finalize a commitment by a donor for parcel of land and some outbuildings along the Juniata River.

Bill Rys '96 is on the Education and Student Life Committee.

Tracy is on the Enrollment and Retention Committee. She replaces Gayle Pollock '68, but Gayle will still serve as a consultant to the Admissions Office.

Director of Alumni Relations David Meadows '98 shared that an alumnus suggested recently to him that Juniata is not good at telling the alumni body when things aren't going well... that we lose an opportunity for alums to rally and help with something. This is in the context of Juniata missing the enrollment goals for Fall 2015 and referenced how well alumni *exceeded* goals in the giving challenges of recent years. While it's not a disaster, enrollment didn't work out the way we hoped. The suggestion was if alumni knew, then more help could be given. David asked the provost, the faculty rep and council for comments. Dr. Bowen shared that there was a spirited conversation at the first faculty meeting of the year about this and pointed out that we were on target as of April. It's not that it was a secret. Some modeling and planning didn't materialize. What is the best approach to getting the word out to alumni? The alumni body is not here getting the regular reports. Alumni Council is informed and will work with Enrollment.

Juniata fell short of its enrollment goal by about 20-30 students. The environment is so competitive with upward pressure on the Discount Rate. Students wait-listed to Juniata were accepted elsewhere. Susquehanna rallied on student numbers this year from last, but their discount rate went up to 63-64%. We've worked hard to keep ours down. We will work to find the right balance of numbers and discount rate for the next class. The shortfalls were mainly due to fewer football players, fewer students from China, and fewer ALANA students. Dr. Bowen noted that one year does not make a trend, but believes the enrollment office would be open to suggestions. If there is any message to go out to alumni, it's that any and all help alums can give to get students here would be appreciated. A helpful message to alumni might be to let them know the enrollment target(s) in advance. Could we get a positive goal out to alumni early and give updates? Could we use the Presidents Report from the Marketing Office to state the enrollment goals in advance and then follow-up by email in April to the alumni body? Could the April report include information on enrollment events that alums could attend? Consider targeted messages because some alums are more informed than others. Our faculty is extraordinarily committed in the process. Dr. Bowen acknowledged that we've tried some new things this year; we're re-grouping and keeping a balanced budget. The number of visits to the campus was down and that more could be done to get students to the campus.

10:25AM: Faculty comments from Randy Rosenberger, Professor of Accounting, Business and Economics. He began by saying that enrollment is important to the faculty. They will write notes, etc. to help convince prospective students to choose Juniata. He recapped the spring faculty awards and referenced the recent convocation, where the faculty speaker urged students to manage Juniata as if it were a balance sheet.

In years such as this, when enrollment is off, Rosenberger says student retention is important. He expressed concerns about what the recent departures of Kris (Dean of Students) and Sarah (Dir. of Academic Support Services) Clarkson could mean for those retention efforts.

Rosenberger went on to state his belief that it's time for a curriculum review to help the College keep up with a changing world. He said students as a whole push themselves harder than the faculty in the areas of accountability, inclusion and internships.

Council member Jigar Patel '08 responded by asking if the "Beyond Tolerance" effort is working on campus. How can it be measured? Rosenberger answered by saying that you can see and feel if the effort is working. Dr. Bowen added that the Office of Diversity and Inclusion is doing strategic planning and has a report due soon. She said the office has recently been awarded for its efforts. Council member Elise Mihranian '14 said she noticed more positive changes last year after students started to "push back." President Troha led a well-attended forum on the issue.

10:47AM: Break

11:02AM: Comments from Senior Class Vice President Jecenia Duran '16. Jecenia was speaking in place of class president Reese Fisher '16 who had soccer commitments. (He did show up in time for lunch!) Jecenia said the senior class is focused on three things: 1) Raising money for senior week and for the class gift; 2) Bringing students together; and 3) Raising money for charity.

She said the senior class has a history of helping charities. As sophomores, they organized a concert to support Alex's Lemonade Stand, an organization that helps fight childhood cancer. The event has turned into a tradition for the sophomore class. Now as seniors, they are still deciding on a charity. They are also still deciding how to raise the money. Current ideas include a running event or something along the lines of Penn State's "Lift for Life."

The senior class also has other fundraisers planned to support its initiatives. A gift basket of Juniata swag will be raffled off at Homecoming; there's an event with celebrity bartenders; another fundraiser may involve disc golf or some sort of fitness challenge.

Jecenia said the class would like to revive the mud volleyball tradition. It was also tried last year but never happened. Several members of council raised liability issues as a big hurdle that would have to somehow be overcome.

11:10AM: Comments from Juniata Activities Board (JAB) VP of Membership Matthew Colabella '18. Matthew began by saying that JAB tries to schedule events every Friday and Saturday. The board has gone through some personnel upheaval since February. It now has a new adviser and a new executive board. One goal is to try to increase membership in JAB, particularly by reaching out to freshmen.

In terms of activities, JAB is considering separating Springfest from Relay for Life. The two events have traditionally been held on the same day, and Matthew feels that Springfest, which is organized by JAB, gets overshadowed. JAB also organizes other campus traditions including Mountain Day and Madrigal.

Other activities include “stressbusters” during mid-terms and finals. The events give students a chance to relax and unwind with bouncy balls and stuffed animals. And who doesn’t love stuffed animals, right???

11:16AM: Comments from Student Government President Lauren Lesser ’16. Student government is working to increase student involvement with service learning and ties to the community. The freshman class did (or will do) a week of service. There will also be a day of service each semester. The goal is to have each class do a service project. Students can attend meetings of student government and present ideas.

11:22AM: Comments from Student Alumni Association Executive Board Member Adena Delozier ’16. The goal of the Student Alumni Association is to increase student awareness about the Alumni Association. The SAA provides a support network for student networking. Members attend regional alumni events and practice networking through role-playing exercises. Adena noted that the club has grown over the past few years. Council President Christie Brown ’92 urged Adena and other students to reach out to Alumni Council members.

11:31AM: Comments from Director of Alumni Relations David Meadows ’98. Due to the previously mentioned departure of Kris Clarkson as Dean of Students, Dawn Scialabba will temporarily move from the Alumni Office to serve as interim Asst. Dean of Students. So, the Alumni Office is also now down a person. David expects Dawn to return to the Alumni Office at the end of May 2016. She will continue to compile the Class Notes for the alumni magazine.

David provided an update on the alumni directory project. It is on target to ship in October. He said the process resulted in about 3,000 new alumni sharing their info.

The first phase of the College’s website redesign just rolled out. More changes are coming over the next few months. Until it’s complete and the bugs are worked out, some sections of the website may look different or not look very good depending on what browser is being used.

David noted that the Alumni Office is undergoing a departmental review to ensure that the office is getting the most “bang for the buck.” The process includes an external review on 9/25 with peers from Elizabethtown and Washington and Jefferson.

Office staff recently traveled to Lebanon Valley College for PA Share, where they discussed alumni relations with people from other colleges and universities. David says Juniata is doing well compared to many of those other schools but does have opportunities.

11:42AM: Comments from Asst. Director of Alumni Relations Christina Garman Miller ’01. Christina explained that she handles the regional groups in Pittsburgh, Central PA, the Delaware Valley and the Washington, DC area. The clubs are structured in a similar fashion to Alumni Council. They try to have a balance of events throughout the year (service, career, social and Juniata Athletics). All four groups held sendoff events earlier this summer for students just starting at Juniata. In all, 160 people attended, including 21 current students.

The regional groups are involved in service projects. In June, members of the Central PA group packed bags of food for food banks in the Lancaster area . On October 10, a similar event is scheduled at a food bank in Pittsburgh. And, the Delaware Valley regional group is preparing for its annual Campout for Hunger on December 3.

Another event Christina is involved in is set for later in September. It’s an affinity event to celebrate the “glory years” of Juniata football from 1947-62. 40 alumni have signed up to attend; more than 100 people in all.

Christina says she is also working on engaging alumni in other areas around the country. Events in California are planned for October. Jigar Patel '08 organized an event in Texas when he traveled there recently. She invited other council members to think about these kinds of opportunities. Any council member can host a simple event like this.

11:51AM: Comments from Assoc. Director of Alumni Relations Katie Padamonsky Dickey '97.

Preparations are well underway for Homecoming and Family Weekend, October 2-4. This year is an extra challenge because after the College picked its date, Penn State scheduled a home football game for that Saturday. As a result, the Alumni Office got the word out early to parents and reunion classes, urging them to book rooms early. There are lots of great activities planned. The Field Station has their usual events plus they're adding a lunch and pontoon boat rides. There is Band Reunion, a magician and OSA is planning a semi-formal dance for the students. The Carnival on the Quad, Marketplace, Picnic Lunch, Beer Garden and Wine Tasting events continue to be very popular. Katie believes that, after several years of increases in Homecoming attendance, this year's numbers may be down slightly. She invited council to help by attending (if able), volunteering while here, posting things on Facebook while here. The deadline is officially past. But it's still okay to attend.

NOON: Lunch

1:15PM: Strategic Plan review and Committee Goals from Council President Christie Brown '92.

The Strategic Plan has an over-arching goal, which is to spread the word about Juniata. Sub-goals include achieving a 30% giving rate among the alumni donor base, a diversity of alumni helping to recruit new students, and an equally diverse pool of alumni advocates who support Career Services activities and introduce new alumni to these activities.

Enrollment Committee member Fran Fiorino '78 talked about her recent experiences representing Juniata at college fairs. She would like to have more information in order to effectively answer the various questions asked by students and/or their parents. Alumni reps are given a "kit" of College materials and Gold Cards to take with them. Basic information is shared. College fair reps adhere to standard operating procedures (like not luring students in with candy). It's great to do your first one with Holly or another experienced volunteer if possible.

Council members received handouts of upcoming college fairs where alumni reps were needed. They were also informed of an upcoming reception in Philadelphia for prospective Juniata students.

In terms of the Career Services Committee, it is tasked with organizing alumni participation in the Career Fair. The committee will also work with the Provost/Academic Affairs on creating initiatives that fit in with the Provost's long-range plan.

The Development Committee will focus on Alumni Council's outreach to peers. It will establish ways to measure that outreach so that giving can be effectively encouraged.

The Communications Committee will find new ways to share information about the College and will set measurable goals to track progress. Committee members will also spend time with other committees at each council meeting to help ensure an effective and consistent message.

Chris Bair '92, Alumni Council Past President and current member of the Development Committee, suggested reaching out to past council members for help in achieving these strategic goals.

1:47PM: Committee breakout sessions

3:53PM: **Reconvene for committee reporting, starting with the Development Committee.** Council President Christie Brown '92 spoke for committee chair Roxann Binner Yon '84, who had to leave early. Brown stated the Development Committee would focus on three things: education, preparation, and action. The committee would act as something of an "advance team" for the entire council.

Specific to-do items include putting together a toolkit about the development process. Also, each committee member will contact five (5) alumni before the February meeting; another five (5) will be contacted before the June meeting. Additional specific goals may still be developed.

Committee member Brenton Mitchell '06 said there should be a consensus about what it means for an alum to "participate." He said participation means that a donation is made, no matter how large or small.

3:57PM: **Enrollment Committee.** Committee Chair and Alumni Council Vice President Annette Reeder Bair '93 started by saying that the committee will look at the existing materials in the Enrollment office. They will check to see if there is already a list of FAQs. If there is, are the questions the right ones to be on a list that may be given to alumni representatives when they travel to college fairs? When alumni reps return from college fairs, they should give feedback to the enrollment office. What are the top questions that are asked that you could not immediately answer? Share that with Enrollment.

There will be a conference call on November 17 with staff liaison Holly Rennell regarding that feedback and travel season and upcoming recruitment efforts.

Director of Alumni Relations David Meadows '98 noted that there is already a volunteer toolkit on the Juniata Admission Ambassadors website ([juniata.edu/jaa](http://legacy.juniata.edu/jaa)) for the Juniata Admission Ambassadors: <http://legacy.juniata.edu/services/jaa/toolkit.html>.

As for GOLD card follow-up, Annette reported that a follow-up letter went out to the Alumni Weekend attendees. Similarly, they plan to send a follow-up correspondence to Homecoming attendees, but that it would likely be electronic since physical addresses of younger alums might not be as accurate as their email addresses.

Attempt to get seniors engaged before graduation.

Slides from enrollment presentations can be sent out to council members, and more formal presentations involving enrollment and the Gold Card can be made at regional events.

4:03PM: **Career Services Committee.** Alumni Trustee Nicole Close '92 spoke for committee chair Heather Lecrone Ott '09, who was unable to attend. Nicole began by outlining plans for the Career Fair on February 26 and the Wine and Cheese Networking Reception that follows. A schedule for the Career Fair will be sent to members of Alumni Council. Committee members will be "on-call" for the week leading up to the fair to assist Career Services with requests from students for resume or interview tips. Additionally, each member of Alumni Council is asked to pledge cheese and two (2) 1.5 liter bottles of wine for use at the Networking Reception.

Career Services organizes a Professional Development Workshop series for the fall and spring semesters. Speakers for the fall are already lined up, but four (4) speakers are needed for the spring. The committee will work to help set up a speakers bureau which would include people who signed up for the Juniata Career Team. Past Alumni Award winners will also be targeted.

There was much discussion regarding housing assistance, particularly for students doing internships in the Washington, DC area. Internships may be unpaid, and the cost of housing in DC (and other urban areas such as NYC) could prevent a student from taking advantage of an internship opportunity. Many of the

ideas floated were met with concerns about liability. Alumni Trustee Tracy Grajewski '86 thought background checks for prospective hosts would be needed. Director of Alumni Relations David Meadows '98 feared that students could be sent into unsafe situations. Council member Brenton Mitchell '06 felt the students themselves should have some sort of training so they know how to behave if they are guests in someone else's house.

Nicole suggested asking alumni to donate travel points that could potentially be used to lodge students in hotels.

Assistant Director of Career Services Tammy Stuber said the Development Office runs a Superinternship Fund that gives a one-time stipend up to \$ 5000 to students to support their internships. Tammy suggested that building up this fund may be an effective way to support housing assistance. It's a competitive application process.

4:17PM: Communications Committee. Committee chair Jigar Patel '08 ran down an ambitious to-do list designed to strengthen the connection between the College and its alumni. The committee plans to start by using Homecoming as an opportunity to make new alumni aware of Alumni Council. They also hope to draft a letter to faculty to make them more aware of Council. The committee will also develop a handout that can be distributed at SAA events. Members will work on ways to connect clubs with alumni. They'll develop an email template for sending thank you notes to classmates/young donors (just thanks, not to donate more). Alumni can be invited to the Liberal Arts Symposium.

The committee plans to increase the use of social media by Alumni Council. A Council Facebook page (separate from Jen Wade's Alumni Council page!) will be set up and can be used to, among other things, post comments from alumni regarding their time at Juniata. Once the alumni council page is up, they plan to work on the creation of an infographic. It should be posted in a couple of months. They encourage that it be shared. Share with Emeritus Council members.

The committee plans to meet with Marketing so that Council can present a message consistent with the College. Talking points will be ready for the February meeting to take away and memorize. They think it will be important to have someone from the marketing department at the February meeting so that Alumni Council can get real time feedback during their breakout session. Jigar reminded council members to report any time they spend sharing posts on Facebook as volunteer time.

Director of Alumni Relations David Meadows '98 followed Jigar's comments by recommending that Jigar speak to Provost Bowen about the proposed faculty letter. He also said that the goal of Alumni Council is to build capacity for partner offices, not to create more work for those offices.

4:30PM: Wrap up by Council President Christie Brown '92. Christie said she will send out a summary of goals and tracking. After hearing these reports, please jot down ideas that came to mind and then talk to individual committee chairs if you want to volunteer or have someone in mind who would be a good volunteer for one of the major areas (Enrollment, Development, Career). She made one more pitch for suggestions for future Alumni Council members and award recipients. Christie will send a summary follow-up and then the Enrollment Committee will send their slides. Chris reminded everyone that potential council member submissions are added to a running list and that the committee must consider a balance of gender, geographic area, and years represented. If they're not selected this year, they'll stay on the list for future consideration.

4:37PM: Meeting adjourned. Next meeting is Saturday, February 27, 2016 in the Sill Boardroom.