James Madison University is a comprehensive university that is part of the statewide system of public higher education in the Commonwealth of Virginia and is the only university in America named for James Madison. Established March 14, 1908, the university offers programs on the bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral levels with its primary emphasis on the undergraduate student. JMU provides a total education to students — one that has a broad range of the liberal arts as its foundation and encompasses an extensive variety of professional and pre-professional programs, augmented by a multitude of learning experiences outside the classroom. The university has been a coeducational institution since 1966.

JMU is located in the heart of the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia along Interstate 81, approximately two hours from Washington, D.C., and Richmond, Va. The campus is easily accessible from I-81’s Exit 245. The nearest airport is Shenandoah Valley Regional Airport (SHD) in Weyers Cave, 20 minutes south of campus.

Mission: We are a community committed to preparing students to be educated and enlightened citizens who lead productive and meaningful lives.

Motto: Knowledge is liberty

School Colors: Purple and Gold

Nickname: Dukes

Mascot: Duke Dog

Academic Affiliation: Colonial Academic Alliance

Athletic Affiliation: NCAA Division I

Senior Leadership Team: Jonathan R. Alger, president; A. Jerry Benson, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs; Art Dean, special assistant to the president for diversity; Donna Harper, vice president for access and enrollment management; Charles King, senior vice president for administration and finance; Nick Langridge, vice president for university advancement; Mark Warner, senior vice president for student affairs and university planning; Susan Wheeler, assistant general and university council; Maggie Burkhart Evans, executive assistant to the president

Academic Divisions: College of Arts and Letters; College of Business; College of Education; College of Health and Behavioral Studies; College of Integrated Science and Engineering; College of Science and Mathematics; College of Visual and Performing Arts; The Graduate School

Applicant Details (Fall 2012)
- First-Time Freshman Applicants: 22,648
- First-Time Freshmen Enrolled: 4,325
- Applicants Accepted: 63.5%
- Transfer Applicants: 2,107
- Transfer Enrolled: 628
- Transfer Applicants Accepted: 50.6%
- Total Applicants: 24,755

Percent Enrollment by Ethnicity (Fall 2012)
- Black or African American: 3.98%
- American Indian/Alaska Native: 0.15%
- Asian: 4.20%
- Hispanic: 4.03%
- White: 80.85%
- Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0.28%
- Number of International Students: 359

Degree Programs Offered
- Undergraduate: 71
- Master’s: 34
- Educational Specialist: 2
- Doctoral: 8
- Total: 115

Degrees Conferred (2011–12)
- Undergraduate: 4,096
- Graduate: 812
- Total: 4,908

Enrollment (Fall 2012)
- Undergraduate: 18,107
- Graduate: 1,820
- Full-Time: 18,392
- Part-Time: 1,535
- In-State: 72%
- Out-of-State: 28%
- Female: 60%
- Male: 40%
- Living in Residence Halls: 32%
- Total Enrollment: 19,927

Freshman Class
- Retention rate: 91.4%
- SAT mid-50 percent range: 1110–1270
- ACT mid-50 percent range: 24–28
- Ranked in top third of high-school class: 87%

Student/Faculty Ratio (Fall 2012): 16:1

Scholarships & Grants (2012-13)
- Full-time undergraduates awarded need-based scholarship or grant aid: 17%
- Average award: $2,944

Loans (2012-13)
- Full-time undergraduates awarded need-based loans: 28.2%
- Average loan: $4,873

Faculty and Staff (Fall 2012)
- Full-Time Instructional Faculty: 940
- Part-Time Instructional Faculty: 411
- Full-Time Classified Staff: 1,274
High graduation rates and low costs are among the factors landing JMU a place on Kiplinger’s Personal Finance’s top 100 “Best Values in Public Colleges” for 2013. JMU placed 20th on the list of four-year public schools that combine outstanding education with economic value.


JMU’s Alternative Break Program was the Break Away National Program of the Year for 2010. The award, which JMU also earned in 1999, recognizes the university’s commitment to active citizenship.

JMU’s commitment to becoming a model steward of the natural world was recognized with a Governor’s Environmental Excellence Award bronze medal in April 2013. JMU’s Institute for Stewardship of the Natural World was recognized for its learning outcomes and assessment work.

JMU is included in the 2014 edition of The Fiske Guide to Colleges, which features more than 300 of the country’s best and most interesting colleges and universities.

JMU is named one of the country’s most environmentally responsible colleges in The Princeton Review’s “Guide to 322 Green Colleges: 2013 Edition.” Factors considered in the rating system include green building certification programs, environmental literacy programs, formal sustainability committees, use of renewable energy resources and recycling and conservation programs. In 2012, JMU’s Wayland Hall became the first renovated residence hall in the country to receive the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design platinum award, the highest LEED certification status.

JMU’s College of Business remains in the top 5 percent of undergraduate business schools ranked annually by Bloomberg Businessweek magazine. The College of Business ranked 11th among public institutions and 29th among all business schools.

JMU is one of the top master’s-level institutions in the country in study-abroad participation, according to the Institute of International Education’s Open Doors 2012 report, which measured study abroad in 2010-11. JMU ranked second in the nation in participation in short-term programs and second in total number of students who studied abroad, with 1,101. In addition, JMU compared favorably with similar institutions in semester-long programs (12th) and programs lasting a full academic year or longer (15th).

JMU ranks No. 38 on The Forbes Top 100 Best Buy Colleges 2012 special report.

The U.S. News & World Report 2013 edition of its “Best Colleges” guidebook ranks the university No. 2 on the list of top public schools in the South and includes JMU among colleges and universities that were most often cited by college presidents, provosts and admissions deans who were asked to identify up to 10 schools in their U.S. News ranking category where the faculty has a strong commitment to teaching. JMU is included in the magazine’s listing of schools where students are involved in undergraduate research and creative projects that result in original scholarly papers that can be formally presented on or off campus.

JMU earned a place on the 2013 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction for commitment to service and civic engagement on campus and in the nation. JMU has been on the honor roll, which is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, since the list was established in 2006.