

Employee Advisory Committee
James Madison University
November 6, 2013 Minutes

The James Madison University Employee Advisory Committee met Wednesday, November 6, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. in Taylor 303. Committee co-chairs, Christina Landes and Kristin Gibson presided. Other members present were Leslie Beam, Laura Hickerson, Steven Harper, Tom Tao, Amber Weaver, Karen Gerard, Tom McHardy, Jesse Horneber, Jon Kratz, Paul Mabry, Everette Clemmer and Brian Owens. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm and minutes from the previous meeting were unanimously approved. It was announced that Amanda Echterling left JMU to go to VCU so she will no longer be on the committee.

Staff Emeriti Association Task Force

The recommendation that was agreed upon at the previous meeting was submitted by Kristin Gibson on behalf of the EAC on October 11, 2013. The President's Office has not issued a response yet.

University Planning Team

The University Planning Team met November 4. The objectives of the meeting were to integrate feedback that the JMU community submitted electronically regarding the strategic plan and to discuss a new Planning Tool for the University. The vast majority of feedback (191 out of 241), received from Oct 4-25, regarding the strategic plan was directly related to JMU's consideration about moving to FBS. The UPT focused on synthesizing other feedback since that decision does not fall into the realm of this group. Many responses provided suggestions for implementation that would be utilized at the objective level.

The UPT recommended simplifying core quality names to "Engagement" and "Faculty/Staff Success" to keep them broad, adding a goal related to student career outcomes, including a narrative to connect and create flow between all sections, and ensuring that objectives are created in collaboration with departments. Brian Charette sent these recommendations to the Senior Leadership Team. The BOV will meet January 17 for the final approval of the strategic plan. Budget initiatives will be due February 3, so there will be a short window to enter these requests.

Compensation Advisory Council (CAC) Update

The newly formed CAC met October 25. The CAC provides to the JMU vice presidents, compensation-related advice that considers the opinions of JMU employees and allows the vice presidents to render fair and equitable decisions. The CAC will help determine the most effective methods to communicate compensation related issues to all employees and will assist vice presidents in determining if compensation related priorities are appropriate. The EAC will be critical in helping provide feedback and communication for the CAC.

The CAC will begin its work based on prioritized next steps from the Compensation Task Force efforts. Several steps have already been completed or are underway, including the raises for faculty/staff on July 25, the 1% in-band adjustment (IBA) increase for classified staff effective in November, establishing a \$200,000/year pool of funds for future IBAs, investigating child-care solutions, establishing a compensation committee (the CAC), analyzing FMLA and medical leave policies on campus, and participating in COACHE and Great Colleges to Work for Survey. The committee will also focus on creating a multi-year salary increase plan for staff, determining the feasibility of funding all approved IBAs, determining feasibility of tuition remission, communicating alternate work schedule options, look into discount JMU programs, analyze educational leave and conference travel funds, and help analyze part-time and adjunct faculty compensation issues.

The first item the CAC and Vice Presidents wanted feedback from the EAC was related to Instructional Faculty promotions from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor and then to Professor. The Vice Presidents were open to hearing other options to the proposal, especially related to compression issues that may result. Overall, the EAC did not have any major objections to the proposal. A faculty member on the committee voiced that they think this is a good step and will help address some of the inversion issues. Suggestions were made about implementing a percentage increase based on years of service in order to mitigate the effects of compression. Recommendations were made to ensure communication to JMU employees included progress that has already been made such as the 1% IBA for classified employees.

The EAC briefly discussed the in-band adjustment process related to the additional \$200,000/ year provided by the university to make more progress towards funding requests. Concerns were raised about inequity between how E&G and AUX positions are funded for IBAs.

EAC Liaison Updates

College of Arts & Letters Advisory Committee

There was discussion in this group about the change in the Spring final exam schedule to accommodate graduation on Friday. Final exams start on Friday beforehand and some faculty members are concerned that students will not have enough time to prepare. Not everyone was aware of the change to the graduation schedule which raised concern about communication to employees and scheduling adjustments that need to be made.

Faculty Senate

There will be a motion for same sex domestic partner benefits based on W&M's recent efforts. At a recent meeting, there was discussion about the Athletics study and the potential move to FBS. There is concern in the senate about the decision-making process in moving divisions and listing Athletics in the same core quality as Recreation/Wellness. EAC members felt that they need to help students find their voice in this discussion.

JMU Classifieds

Based on an employee request, research was conducted regarding the possibility of starting an electronic classified ad page for JMU employees, similar to one that EMU offers. EAC members were interested in making it available to JMU employees through access with a secure login. Concerns were raised about our ability to offer this as a state agency and also who would be responsible for implementation and oversight. The JMU IT department was going to be contacted about feasibility of an e-classifieds page.

Survey Results

Rick Larson, AVP of HR, was contacted about survey information regarding childcare and the Best Colleges to Work For data. He expects to provide a summary of the Great Colleges to Work For soon which will be distributed to JMU employees. As a result of the child-care survey and the research conducted by the committee, HR has established a set of potential child-care scenarios for JMU. They are currently working on the descriptions, feasibility and potential cost of each scenario. Their goal is to produce an initial feasibility report for Senior Administration by the end of the semester which may allow action (if any) to be taken during the '14-'15 budget year.

HR Training

Committee members were updated on mandatory compliance training modules currently being developed by HR according to Department of Human Resource Management guidelines. HR plans to begin offering both online and in-person versions of these modules after the first of the year.

EAC Congratulations Cards

There was an interest in sending out cards signed by all committee members recognizing employees for important achievements, as was done in the past. Kristin committed to designing a new card if a previous version could not be located.

The meeting concluded at 2:30pm with discussion about scheduling a tour of Duke Hall for March 2014. The next meeting will be held on December 4, 2013 in Taylor 303.