

Employee Advisory Committee
James Madison University
September 4, 2013 Minutes

The James Madison University Employee Advisory Committee met Wednesday, September 4, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. in Taylor Hall, Room 303. Committee co-chairs, Christina Landes and Kristin Gibson presided. Other members present were Everette Clemmer, Karen Gerard, Steven Harper, Laura Hickerson, Jonathan Kratz, Paul Mabrey, Brian Owens, Tom Tao, and Greg Werner. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm. New members to the EAC include Steven Harper, Laura Hickerson, Jonathan Kratz, and Paul Mabry.

Madison Caucus for Gender Equality Updates and Collaboration (Guests: Meg Mulrooney & AJ Morey)

Meg Mulrooney and AJ Morey joined the EAC to share information about the Madison Caucus for Gender Equality which is supported by the Provost's Office, <http://www.jmu.edu/caucusgenderequality/>. The mission of this group is to:

1. To raise awareness of gender issues across the university
2. To promote equal opportunities for leadership in offices, programs and units
3. To foster a family-friendly work environment through effective policies that address not only family leave, but child care, elder care, and partner benefits.
4. To highlight exemplary policies, programs, practices and individuals in higher education that represent enlightened approaches to balancing career and family demands.

They hope to collaborate with our committee in the future regarding initiatives such as daycare, gender climate, salary equity, and consistent FMLA implementation. They also shared that they serve as a "safe zone" for confidential consultation related to issues of gender equality at JMU.

Compensation Issues

Committee members discussed the Compensation Task Force report, the salary increase decisions, the communication plan, and the effects of this on employee morale. Concern was voiced that a lower percentage increase awarded to classified staff (as compared to Instructional and A&P Faculty) appeared inequitable. Questions were raised about the upcoming In-band Adjustment (IBA) process. EAC members expressed concern that more progress needs to be made to address inflation and salary compression issues. Kristin and Christina shared that they will represent the EAC on the Compensation Advisory Council .

President Alger's Address to Staff

Christina led a discussion about the President's Address to Staff and asked for feedback regarding the annual event. Concern was expressed about the timing of the event, which took place on the last day of the modified summer schedule and whether that negatively affected attendance. Further discussion about attendance raised questions about whether the audience of this event was intended to be classified, A&P, or Instructional Faculty, given that the president addresses faculty during a separate event. Christina will follow-up with the president's office to ensure invitations are being distributed appropriately, as they currently are sent to all JMU employees regardless of classification for the event hosted by the EAC. Additional conversations related to the similarities and differences between the two staff addresses led to questions about whether the meetings could be combined in future years.

Summer Modified/Flexible Schedule

Committee members discussed the summer modified schedule and compensatory time for essential/on-call staff. Overall feedback was positive and the committee asked to see the results of the survey that was distributed to employees. Inconsistent communication was cited as a concern regarding the requirements of the summer scheduling and resulted in some confusion at the beginning of the summer. A recommendation was made that signage should be updated for parking and building hours for next year if the modified summer schedule is offered again.

Some concerns were raised about the faculty/staff picnic which was held on a Friday during the modified summer schedule. However, those who live nearby found it easier to make it back than those who live further away.

Staff Emeriti Association Task Force

Karen Gerard provided an update on the staff emeriti association task force and the survey they had distributed to staff emeriti. She shared that the preliminary participation information indicated a strong interest in the formation of a Staff Emeriti Association. More information and final survey results will be provided at the next EAC meeting.

The meeting concluded at 2:45pm. The next meeting will be held on October 2, 2013, 1pm, at University Park, UREC Gatehouse Meeting Room (1090 Devon Ln).