

Faculty and Staff showers
Faculty Senate draft resolution
Fall 2014

The Faculty Senate recommends that the university plan henceforth to construct faculty and staff showers in all new academic buildings and in all renovations to existing academic buildings. The Faculty Senate also requests that when possible the university retro-fit existing academic buildings to accommodate the installation of new showers. The Faculty Senate desires that the university commit to installing showers in academic building construction for the foreseeable future, or until such time that a reasonable number of showers are constructed at each major area of campus (e.g., Quad, East Campus, etc.), in order to offer convenient access to all faculty and staff.

Current availability of showers

The Faculty Senate recognizes the current existence of showers in UREC, Godwin Hall, Taylor Hall, Memorial Hall, and the Student Success Center. However, these showers are either located in buildings inconveniently placed from where most faculty and staff work; or (in the case of Taylor Hall) in relatively inaccessible locations within a centralized building.

Rationale

JMU is fortunate to employ a reasonably active faculty. However, the Faculty Senate believes that increasing the availability and prominence of showers would encourage more faculty and staff to exercise during the work day and bicycle to and from work. The League of American Bicyclists has recognized Harrisonburg as a bicycle-friendly community,¹ and the university currently supports the transformation of our campus into a more bicycle-friendly space, as indicated by its development and implementation of a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.² The current proposal would support and fall in line with both of these initiatives. Furthermore, based on anecdotal evidence, the Faculty Senate believes that more faculty and staff members would cycle to and from work and/or exercise at work if they could easily and conveniently shower at work.

The Faculty Senate believes that increasing the prominence and availability of showers would support the university's larger commitment to environmental stewardship by encouraging employees to commute to work in a manner that does not consume fossil fuels. In this way, the Senate feels that this increased commitment to installing showers would support the university's new Vision Statement by promoting both Engaged Learning and Community Engagement. Installing showers would allow the university to encourage our community to learn more about alternative commuting options, and would thereby help to improve the quality of life and morale of members of the campus community. Installing showers would demonstrate to students the university's commitment to enable its employees to live more productive, meaningful lives, and would thereby help to advance its Mission Statement.

¹ <http://www.vabike.org/harrisonburg-is-newest-addition-to-bike-friendly-list/>

² <http://www.jmu.edu/bikepedplan/>

Practicalities

The Faculty Senate recommends that the university install new showers in buildings located throughout the campus and fit them with locked doors so that only faculty and staff may use them. The Senate does not suggest that the university provide soap or towels, but rather that it install and maintain clean shower facilities.

The Faculty Senate does not believe that this proposal would pose a substantial financial burden to the university. The added cost of adding a few showers (at several hundred dollars per shower) to multi-million dollar building construction or renovation projects would be negligible. There would be an added cost to clean the showers, but the Faculty Senate believes the cost to be justified by the benefits that would derive from the showers. The Faculty Senate does not believe that the current state funding situation should or would impede implementation of this proposal.

Drafted by Mark Rankin, Department of English