
An information
resource for
James Madison
University



Administration and Finance
Human Resources,
Training & Performance

Human Resources Information Update August 2007

JMU EMPLOYEE MEDIATION PROGRAM WINS NATIONAL AWARD

Have you heard that our Employee Mediation Program won the 2007 CUPA-HR Successful Practices Award, as well as the 2006 Southern Region Successful Practices Award? This award is presented to an individual or team that demonstrates creativity, process improvement or professional achievement through the implementation of a significant new practice that contributes to the overall excellence of the institution's human resource programs, service and/or administration. What an honor!

The Employee Mediation Program is available to assist all employees in reaching their own solutions to issues in their work environment that may be difficult to address. Any issue affecting a working relationship between co-workers, a supervisor and an employee, or a group of employees will be confidentially reviewed.

The mediators are JMU faculty and staff who have been nominated, selected, and highly trained (some to the VA Supreme Court Certification level) to serve as mediators. Their job will be to assist fellow employees in arriving at their own solutions. All topics discussed in the mediation session are confidential. The agreement written by the parties is not confidential, but it will not be discussed or published except on a "need-to-know" basis. The first step in the process is to talk with your HR Representative or call Melinda Hardwick 540.568.3968 for more information.

OMMM...WHAT? OMBUDSPERSON

A familiar face and name in Human Resources, but the position is brand new! Effective July 1, 2007, Cathy Thomas assumed the role as JMU's Employee Ombudsperson. Formerly a member of HR's Management Services Team, Cathy now serves university employees as their Ombudsperson as part of the HR Service Center.

The university Employee Ombudsperson strives for fairness and equity, and does not take sides on behalf of any individual or cause. It is a safe place to voice your concerns, evaluate your situation, organize your thoughts and figure out your options from talking through a problem, to mediation, to filing a formal grievance. Options are given, but not opinions. The Ombudsperson operates with confidentiality and keeps no records identifying visitors. It can be a good first step if you don't know where else to turn or how to proceed. As a neutral, confidential and informal resource, the Ombudsperson does not provide legal advice or accept legal notice for JMU.

Cathy can be reached at 540.568.3967, or thomasce@jmu.edu. Her office is located in the University Services Building, Room 204N. Scheduling a time to visit is recommended.

Classified Employee Performance Evaluation Process

Reminder for Supervisors

In accordance with JMU Policy 1305, Performance Evaluation for Classified Staff, for an employee to receive an overall rating of either Extraordinary Contributor or Below Contributor, at least one 'Notification of Extraordinary Contribution' or one 'Notification of Improvement Needed' or Written Notice issued during the current performance cycle must be given to the employee. Notification forms must be received in Human Resources no later than the first work day of September (9/3/07) in order for the employee to receive either of these overall ratings. Please contact your HR Services Center Representative with any questions you may have regarding these forms or the evaluation process.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Question: You are going to lunch with a prospective new hire for a faculty position. You want to order a three-margarita lunch on this hot summer day and then return to work. Is this allowed?

- A. It is okay because it is a prospective faculty lunch, and you are not actually working in the office.
- B. You are not actually on campus, so you can order an alcoholic beverage.
- C. Three mixed drinks can impair your ability to perform your work, so you are not allowed to indulge yourself while performing the task of taking a prospective faculty member to lunch.

[Click here to see the Answer](#)

UPCOMING TRAINING SESSIONS

Please take advantage of free staff/faculty training sessions available through the Training & Development Department. Some of our upcoming training includes:

Individual Professional Development Plan - Presented by Diane Yerian and Jennifer Testa; Thursday, August 9, 2007, 2:00 - 3:30 pm located in USB 102.

Team-Building: Aiming for Buy-In - Presented by Jennifer Testa; Wednesday, August 15, 2007, 1 - 4:00 pm located in USB 102.

Everyone Makes a Difference: Creativity and Problem-Solving - Presented by Mohammad Sumbal and Jennifer Testa; Wednesday, August 22, 2007, 9 - 11AM or 2 - 4 pm located in USB 102.

Grievance Procedure - Presented by Human Resources; Wednesday, August 29, 2007, 1:30 - 4:30 pm located in USB 102.

Please go to the [training web site](#) for session descriptions and registration. If your department would like customized sessions, please contact Human Resources.