

Research Notes

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Major Trends At JMU, 1990-91 To 2002-03

James Madison University has changed dramatically in the last dozen years. The growth from 11,000 students to nearly 16,000 students has had a major impact on the university's academic offerings, physical plant, its faculty and staff, and the Harrisonburg community. While some changes have been fairly dramatic, some equally important changes have occurred slowly and only reveal their importance over a relatively long period of time. The purpose of this Research Note is to highlight the major changes in JMU and raise some possible implications for the next ten years.

The Office of Institutional Research has been collecting trend data for more than 30 years. Many of these data are displayed in the [Statistical Summary](#). Last year the office developed a Web application that shows [major performance indicators](#). The purpose of these documents is to display to the university community many important trends and indicators. The data displayed in this Research Notes was collected from these sources as well as several [historical studies](#) conducting during the last two years.

The trends have been organized into several categories: admissions, facilities, faculty, finance, financial aid, and students. Selected trends are displayed below. The full list is placed at the end of this Research Notes.

Admissions:

Significant changes have occurred in new freshmen. In Fall 1990 JMU enrolled 1,912 first-time freshmen. In Fall 2002 3,283 first-time freshmen enrolled. In Fall 1990 men represented 42.3 percent of the freshman class as opposed to 35.5 percent in Fall 2002. The Fall 2003 freshman class is expected to be around 36 percent male. The percentage of new freshmen who indicated that their philosophy of education was primarily "social" increased from 32 percent in 1993 to 41 percent in 2002 while the percentage of new freshmen who indicated their philosophy of education was primarily "vocation" decreased from 54 percent to 46 percent.

Facilities:

JMU continues to be an efficient user of classroom and laboratory space that still meets SCHEV's standards, but the recent addition of new space has allowed the percentage of seats filled to decline from 75 to 67 for classrooms and 77 to 72 for laboratories. The \$99.9 million approved in November 2002 for JMU for construction will enable the university to construct facilities to meet current needs.

Faculty:

Many important changes have occurred in the faculty. The overall student-to-faculty ratio has declined from 18.8 in Fall 1990 to 17.4 in Fall 2002. The percentage of tenured faculty has declined from 71.2 percent in Fall 1990 to 49.7 percent in Fall 2002. The percentage of full-time instructional faculty who are female has increased from 30.1 percent in Fall 1990 to 38.1 percent in Fall 2002. The percentage of full-time faculty who are minority increased from 6.3 percent in Fall 1990 to 9.5 percent in Fall 2002. The percentage of faculty with five years or less experience at JMU has increased from 32.4 percent in 1990-91 to 46.6 percent in Fall 2002. In 1999-00 average faculty salary was \$1,800 below the 60th percentile of the peer institutions. By 2002-03 this had increased to \$6,000.

Finance:

JMU continues to be an efficient user of its resources in times of budget constraints and

retrenchment. The percentage of the total Educational & General budget devoted to instructional and academic support functions decreased slightly from 70.2 percent in 1989-90 to 67.7 percent in 2000-01. JMU still devotes a higher proportion of its funds to these functions than the vast majority of its peer institutions. On the other hand, the per student funding for in-state student from the Commonwealth has declined from \$3,484 in 1990-91 to \$3,296 in 2003-04 (in constant dollars).

Financial Aid:

Financial Aid from the Commonwealth increased from \$1,079,000 in 1990-91 to \$4,078,000 in 2002-03. The average undergraduate state grant or scholarship increased from \$2,076 in 1993-94 to \$3,259 in 2002-03.

Students:

The number and percentage of undergraduate Asian Americans and Hispanics increased from 345 (3.6 percent) in 1990-91 to 934 (6.5 percent) in 2002-03. During the same time period, the number and percentage of undergraduate African-American students decreased from 908 (9.4 percent) to 554 (3.8 percent). The percentage of students from Virginia declined from 77.7 percent in 1990-91 to 71.0 percent in 2002-03. The six-year graduation rate declined from 82 percent for the Fall 1989 freshman class to 78 percent for the Fall 1996 freshman class. On the other hand, student satisfaction with: class size relative to type of course; course content in major field; the university's concern for them as individuals; and classroom/laboratory facilities have improved since 1990-91.

Summary and Implications:

What is remarkable about these trends is that while students and faculty have changed significantly during a very difficult financial climate, JMU students continue to graduate at a very high rate and express very high levels of satisfaction with the university. One might expect that a growth of almost 45 percent in twelve years would have a significant impact on student perceptions of the institution and how they perform academically. By all indicators, JMU continues to be a very positive place for students, both academically and socially. It is a testament to the skill and quality of the instructional faculty that they continue to provide an excellent educational experience despite the large changes in the faculty and students.

What are the implications for the next ten years for JMU from these trends? A few possibilities are noted below:

- The increased percentage of students who are female has had an impact on the social and academic environment of the university. It is likely that the overall graduation rate of JMU will return to 80 percent or higher because women tend to graduate at a higher rate than men. Support services have changed to accommodate the needs of women. There may be implications for intercollegiate athletics as it attempts to conform to Title IX requirements for gender equity.
- While the percentage of minority students at JMU has remained fairly constant, the dramatic decline in African-American students has been a source of concern to many individuals. The impact of these changes on services to multicultural students has been significant and may continue to be troubling to many students, faculty, and staff as the university attempts to serve a diverse student body.
- The continued financial stress of the Commonwealth will likely result in students funding higher percentages of their total education. Non-Virginia students already pay 100 percent of their total cost. Higher tuition costs will make it more difficult for

students and their parents to afford a higher education. Tight budgets will require innovative instructional methods to be used to educate a larger student body. JMU is significantly underfunded relative to its peers and the Commonwealth's own standards. This underfunding results in the need to instruct larger numbers of students without significant increases in faculty, staff, and operating funds. The need for external funds to support major initiatives has never been greater.

- The Commonwealth is expecting more than 38,000 additional students to seek higher education by 2010. Most Virginia public institutions, including JMU, will not likely increase undergraduate enrollment unless sufficient funding and facilities are provided. The implication is that JMU will become even more highly selective. The quality of undergraduates is likely to improve in the next few years as more highly qualified students seek the same number of spaces.

The trends described above and in the following tables present significant challenges to JMU in the next ten years. While it is impossible to predict what JMU will be like in 2012, it is likely that it will be as different then as it is in 2003 from from what it was in 1990-91.

The Office of Institutional Research intends to track these major trends and report them to the university community on a regular basis. Below is a list of the major trends.

Category	Trend	Year Reported [1]	Data	Year Reported	Data
Admissions	Mean SAT Score For New First-Time Freshmen	1995-96	1,186	2002-03	1,165
Admissions	Percent Of Applications For First-Time Freshman Class Accepted (Acceptance Rate)	1990-91	43.3	2002-03	57.9
Admissions	Percent Of Accepted Freshmen Who Enrolled (Yield Rate)	1990-91	39.5	2002-03	36.3
Admissions	Fall Headcount, Transfers	1993-94	467	2002-03	646
Admissions	Fall Transfers From VCCS And Richard Bland College	1993-94	199	2002-03	259
Admissions	Vocational Philosophy Of Education (Percent)	1993-94	54	2002-03	46
Admissions	Social Philosophy Of Education (Percent)	1993-94	32	2002-03	41
Admissions	Freshmen Ranked In Top 10 Percent of High School Class (Percent, Self-Report)	1993-94	43	2002-03	33
Facilities	Percentage Of Available Classroom Facilities (Seats-Hours Available) Put To Use By JMU	1993-94	75	2002-03	67
Facilities	Percentage Of Available Laboratory Facilities (Seats-Hours Available) Put To Use By JMU.	1993-94	77	2002-03	72
Faculty	Student-To-Faculty Ratio	1990-91	18.8	2002-03	17.4
Faculty	Percentage Of Faculty With Tenure	1990-91	71.2	2002-03	49.7
Faculty	Percentage Of Full-Time Instructional Faculty Who Are Female	1990-01	30.1	2002-03	38.1
Faculty	Percentage Of Full-Time Faculty Who Are Minority	1990-91	6.3	2002-03	9.5
Faculty	Total Student Credit Hours Per Full-Time Equivalent Faculty	1991-92	281.2	2002-03	257.7
Faculty	Percentage Of Total Time Devoted To Instructional Activities	1991-92	61.9	2001-02	70.0

Faculty	Percentage Of Full-Time Faculty Holding Terminal Degree In Their Field	1991-92	75	2002-03	84
Faculty	Percentage Of New Faculty With Terminal Degree	1990-91	48	2002-03	76
Faculty	Average Faculty Salary: Distance From 60 th Percentile Of Peer Institutions	1999-00	\$1,800	2002-03	\$6,000
Faculty	Average Number Of Years Employed At JMU	1990-91	11.6	2002-03	10.3
Faculty	Percentage Of Full-Time Faculty Employed At JMU Five Years Or Less	1990-91	32.4	2002-03	46.6
Finance	Institutional Support As A Percentage Of Total E&G Expenditures	1990-91	12.3	2001-02	10.6
Finance	Instructional And Academic Support As A Percentage Of Total E&G Expenditures	1990-91	70.2	2001-02	67.7
Finance	E&G Appropriations Per FTE Student (General Fund And Non-General Fund) In 1992 Dollars	1991-92	\$4,757	2002-03	\$6,244
Finance	General Fund Support Per Resident FTE Student In Constant Dollars	1990-91	\$3,484	2003-04	\$3,296
Finance	JMU Tuition, Fee, And Room And Board Charges, In-State	1993-94	\$8,198	2003-04	\$10,794
Finance	JMU Tuition, Fee, And Room And Board Charges, Out-Of-State	1993-94	\$12,050	2003-04	\$19,061
Finance	JMU General Fund As A Percentage Of Total E&G	1990-91	60.5	2002-03	52.5
Finance	Distribution Of JMU Total Operating Expenses: Percent From General Fund	1988-89	36	2002-03	30
Finance	Endowment-Fair Market Value	1993-94	\$8,167,153	2002-03	\$23,200,828
Finance	Virginia Appropriations Of State Tax Funds For Higher Education Per \$1,000 Of Personal Income	1990-91	8.83	2002-03	6.63
Financial Aid	Average Undergraduate State Grant Or Scholarship	1993-94	\$2,076	2002-03	\$3,259
Financial Aid	Percent Of Fall Undergraduates Eligible For Need-Based Aid Who Received Aid	1993-94	23.4	2002-03	26.3
Financial Aid	State Aid Appropriation	1990-91	\$1,079,000	2002-03	\$4,078,000
Students	Percentage Of Men In The Freshman Class	1990-91	42.3	2002-03	35.5
Students	Number And Percentage Of Undergraduate Asian-American and Hispanic-American	1990-91	345 (3.6)	2002-03	934 (6.5)
Students	Number And Percentage Of Undergraduate African-American Students	1990-91	908 (9.4)	2002-03	554 (3.8)
Students	Percentage Of VCCS Students With The Associate Degree	2000-01	33.1	2002-03	42.1
Students	Number And Percentage Of In-State Students Enrolled During Fall Term	1990-91	8,554 (77.7)	2002-03	11,089 (71.0)
Students	Student Satisfaction With JMU In General (Percentage)	1990-91	95	2002-03	93
Students	Student Satisfaction With Class Size Relative To Type Of Course (Percentage)	1990-91	87	2002-03	88
Students	Student Satisfaction With Course Content In Major Field (Percent)	1990-91	75	2002-03	79
Students	Student Satisfaction With The	1990-91	67	2002-03	76

	University's Concern For Them As An Individual (Percent)				
Students	Student Satisfaction With Classroom/Laboratory Facilities (Percent)	1990-91	79	2002-03	87
Students	Student Satisfaction With Attitude Of Faculty Toward Students (Percent)	1990-91	90	2002-03	91
Students	Graduation Rate (Percent, Six Years)	1995-96	82	2002-03	78
Students	First-Year Retention Rate (Percent)	1990-91	93.5	2002-03	91.8
Students	Total Fall Headcount	1990-91	11,011	2002-03	15,612

[1] The "Year Reported" columns reflect the years that the data were first collected and reported by OIR to major publications and to the university. In many instances it is the same year as reported under "Data" (Fall Headcount). In some instances, however, the Year Reported reflects when OIR could first report the data. Good examples are six-year graduation rates and finance data. The graduation rates are reported in a specific year, but reflect the rate for a class entering six years earlier. Finance data are not available until six months after the end of a fiscal year.

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