

# **A-Dean Working Group (ADWG) Report Spring 2023**

## **Membership**

### **Co-Chairs:**

Jeff Tang, College of Integrated Science and Engineering

Traci Zimmerman, College of Arts and Letters

### **Members:**

#### **College of Arts and Letters**

Melinda Adams

Karina Kline-Gabel

Siân White

#### **College of Health and Behavioral Studies**

Kevin Apple

BJ Bryson

Doug Hochstetler

Linda Plitt Donaldson

#### **College of Business**

Molly Brown

Kim Foreman

Scott Gallagher

#### **College of Education**

Oris Griffin

Amy Thelk

Bryan Zugelder

#### **College of Science and Mathematics**

Steven Whitmeyer

#### **College of Visual and Performing Arts**

Wren Stevens

Susan Zurbrigg

#### **Honors College**

Fawn-Amber Montoya

Felix Wang

## **Libraries**

Andrea Adams  
Bill Hartman  
Stefanie Warlick-Burrow  
Carolyn Schubert

## **School of Professional and Continuing Education**

Carol Fleming  
Sarah MacDonald

## **The Graduate School**

Laura Ryman  
Michael Stoloff

## **University Studies**

Audrey Burnett  
Scott Paulson

## **Charge:**

The A-Dean Working Group (ADWG) is charged with providing faculty members working at the A-Dean level the opportunity to share knowledge, collaborate to develop effective strategies for college/unit-assigned activities, and provide feedback to academic leadership on problems and emerging issues.

The A-Dean Working Group:

1. Fosters peer-to-peer learning and strengthen relationships across colleges/units through regular meetings and collaborative problem exploration
2. Explores challenging division-wide problems and emerging issues identified by the deans, vice provosts, and provost to provide possible solutions

## **Summary of Current Semester Activity:**

The ADWG had three meetings in the spring semester; summaries of each of these meetings are detailed below:

### ***January 30, 2023***

Elizabeth Oldmixon attended the meeting to talk about the workload analysis project. The exigence for this data collection is to begin to understand workloads across colleges to ensure that they are clear and equitable.

Elizabeth will work with A-Deans and AUHs to gather the following information by the end of the spring semester:

- Typical workload by department, faculty stream, and workload category, as a portion of 100%. For example, an AUH might report that the typical workload in their department is 60%/20%/20% (teaching, research, and service). When reporting the percentage of workload in teaching, it will also be helpful to know the typical weight per class.
- An overview of the factors that might cause deviation from a typical workload assignment—for example, new preps, teaching large sections, research productivity, etc.
- A list of commonly stipended activities among full time faculty.
- The approximate number of sections offered by department that are regularly taught as an overload.

### **February 27, 2023**

The meeting was focused on a discussion of evaluation practices *writ large*, with a focus on the evaluation of A-Deans and AUHs. The goal of the conversation was to gather information about the form and content of evaluations across colleges in order to think about how/if those evaluations should have some consistent features (for equitable practices) as well as how to best gather and utilize feedback in these evaluations.

### **March 27, 2023**

John Burgess attended this meeting to provide some context for the work he is doing RE: student evaluations of teaching (SETS) and to invite discussion and feedback on that work.

In addition to the whole group ADWG meetings, Jeff Tang worked with the Admissions sub-group (made up of A Deans who work with admissions and recruitment in their portfolios) and Melinda Wood. Below is a summary of that work during the spring semester.

Members of the ADWG subcommittee on student recruiting are:

Jeff Tang, CISE (chair)

Fawn-Amber Montoya, Honors

Audrey Burnett, US

Doug Hochstetler, CHBS

Oris Griffin, COE

Dara Hall, COE

Molly Brown, COB

Sian White, CAL

Susan Zurbrigg, CVPA

Steve Whitmeyer, CSM

Casey Ouren, Orientation

Melinda Wood, Admissions

Paul Campbell, Admissions

Ashley Lindquist, Admissions

The subcommittee met multiple times during both the spring and fall semesters to discuss various aspects of on-campus recruiting of students, especially open houses and CHOICES events, as well as to hear from Admissions about the range of student recruiting activities that they undertake, including with respect to diversifying our prospective and admitted students.

The main accomplishments of the subcommittee relate to the relative foci of the different on-campus events and the development of a common set of talking points for JMU faculty and staff to use in highlighting the strengths of the university.

Noting the significant overlap in messaging between open house, CHOICES, and Summer Springboard (now called Summer Orientation) events, the subcommittee suggested clarifying for each event what the main goal(s) and focus areas should be. In a modification from current practice, the group agreed that a general approach of focusing on the college-level – or equivalent broad interest area category – made more sense for the fall open house events, as at that point students are still considering many options and have not necessarily even committed to applying to JMU. The spring CHOICES events could then have a more granular focus, with a heavier emphasis on individual majors. The group did not come to a consensus on the focus for Summer Orientation. Note that there was broad agreement that we should have at least some content related to higher-level interest areas and specific majors at all of the large on-campus events; the only debate is about which is emphasized more.

The most tangible product to emerge from the subcommittee was a standard set of “talking points” that highlight JMU’s biggest strengths from the perspective of prospective students. These were rolled out at the last two CHOICES events in April 2023, and the subcommittee will be talking at the next meeting about how effective they were. Those talking points, which form the acronym DUKES, are:

- **DISCOVER** your path (or passion)
- **UNDERGRADUATE** focus
- **KINDNESS** and inclusion
- **ENGAGEMENT** opportunities (engaged learning, community engagement, civic engagement)
- **SUPPORTIVE** learning community

### **Future Work Planned:**

ADWG will continue its work next year, with Audrey Burnett, Amy Thelk, and Elizabeth Oldmixon working together as co-chairs to chart the work of the group. The tentative plan for the ADWG subcommittee on student recruitment next year is to spin it off into a stand-alone committee, with Melinda Wood and Jeff Tang as co-chairs. Discussion is currently ongoing about the appropriate scope for the purview of that committee.