

Undergraduate Recruitment Committee Annual Report 2025-2026

Membership

Chair(s): Kelly Ball, Doug Hochstetler

Members: Adam Anderson, Audrey Burnett, Paul Campbell, Mindy Capaldi, Becky Childs, Samantha Collier, Cody Fouts, Oris Griffin, Dara Hall, Sara Hodges, Ashley Lindquist, Chris Meyers, Casey Ouren, Afzal Upal

Charge: This committee is charged with continuing the cross-divisional work to enhance the effectiveness, cohesion and impact of undergraduate student recruitment and transition activities. With representation from Admissions, colleges and Orientation, this committee will work together to identify opportunities to improve the recruitment-to-matriculation pipeline by:

- Exploring current practices and recommending improvements to event programming design, communication strategies, and student engagement practices
- Ensuring alignment of recruitment and onboarding efforts with institutional goals for enrollment and student success
- Providing ongoing feedback to inform decision-making around student recruitment activities

Summary of Annual Activity:

- Facilitated sustained cross-divisional conversation and collaboration among Admissions, Academic Affairs, Central Marketing, Orientation and Transition, and colleges to strengthen the recruitment-to-matriculation pipeline.
- Facilitated review and discussion of major recruitment events, including Fall and Spring Open Houses, Admitted Student Open Houses, Duke for a Day, Junior Open House pilots, and JMU 101 virtual programming.
- Supported improvements to orientation models, including expanded virtual advising, positive engagement outcomes from the “Your College Home” sessions, and planning for Summer 2026 orientation.
- Monitored application, admit, deposit, and matriculation data and JMU and higher educational environment trends for first-year and transfer populations, including continued growth in Common App and Early Action activity.
- Advanced university-wide core academic messaging, with colleges contributing discipline-specific value propositions to support consistent branding and recruitment communications.
- Highlighted and explored diverse college-level recruitment efforts such as ambassador programs, school outreach, admitted-student events, camps, previews, and virtual engagement strategies.
- Supported yield initiatives including personalized postcards, targeted digital campaigns, and enhanced coordination of college communications with Admissions.
- Discussed innovative recruitment and yield programs, including New Dukes Abroad.

- Identified opportunities to improve campus experience and navigation through wayfinding and academic-space branding discussions. Reviewed successful implementation in the King/EnGeo buildings.
- Gained familiarity with PAIR enrollment dashboards to highlight data sharing and recruitment effectiveness, enrollment trends and outcomes.

Future Work Planned:

- Shift from documenting unit-specific activities to examining opportunities for greater integration and collaboration with Admissions work in the next cycle, as an initial step toward a more intentional and coordinated recruitment approach.
 - Strengthen coordination to reduce fragmented outreach, ensure consistent institutional messaging and determine data sharing processes.
- Examine recruitment strategies through the lens of the new strategic plan, The Madison Promise, with particular attention to how it informs recruitment events, communications, and outreach activities.
- Continue refining recruitment and yield events and facilitating conversations about programming for recruitment events, including Junior Open House pilots and Admitted Student Open Houses, with clearer differentiation of purpose and audience, and to ensure alignment with The Madison Promise.
- Finalize, implement, and maintain the core academic messaging framework, including an annual review process owned by each college, in partnership with colleges, enrollment and central marketing.
- Expand use of CRM tools and shared communication systems to support faculty, academic unit heads, and student ambassadors engaging with prospective and admitted students.
- Increase focus on transfer recruitment strategies, including tailored events, advising coordination, and targeted communications.
- Advance campus experience initiatives such as wayfinding, signage, and branding of academic spaces as intentional recruitment assets.
- Leverage industry trends and data analytics more strategically to evaluate and inform collaborative recruitment and enrollment strategies and opportunities—communications, events, social media, web.
- Periodically revisit the committee’s charge to clarify scope, roles, and opportunities for targeted outreach in under-enrolled or high-need academic areas.