

Academic Affairs Administrative Staff Advisory Council (AAASAC) Year End Report – May 2022

Our Mission: To represent administrative employees, both full- and part-time, within Academic Affairs in the consideration of policies and practices that impact the direction of the unit.

Academic Affairs Administrative Staff Advisory Council (AAASAC)

AAASAC General Council is composed of representatives from colleges and units throughout Academic Affairs, including ex-officio liaisons Renee Reed (Provost's Office) and Kellie Crawford (Human Resources), who meet monthly as a large group. We maintain four standing committees and an executive committee, who meet individually to address issues affecting our constituents, and to move projects forward.

Additionally, AAASAC Council members champion projects, facilitate Virtual Network Gatherings, serve on subcommittees, and collaborate with campus partners to develop and support initiatives of mutual benefit.

Executive Committee: Kathy Lubkowski (Chair), Peggy Smith (Vice Chair), Sandra Purington (Secretary); charged with serving as liaisons to AVP for Academic Initiatives and Planning. Executive committee members both serve and coordinate the efforts of our four standing committees in developing project proposals, presenting them to the VPAIP and collaborating as needed until the project is complete.

- Council-wide Collaboration with Provost's Office for support, set-up and facilitation of Administrative Professionals Breakfast, held in Festival Conference Center Ballroom in April 2022.
- Successful recruitment of four new council members to begin their term on July 1, 2022: Melanie Carver, Hannah Evans, Kara Hill, and Marissa Zane.

Outreach and Engagement Committee: Erica Kann, Andee Henriques; supported by members of each committee.

- Produce AAASAC Monthly Newsletter with original content including features, opportunities, benefits, survival tips, and announcements. This effort has been very well-received – increasing both engagement and awareness.
- Management and maintenance of AAASAC webpage; updating and streamlining information, and adding group photo.
- Collaborated with other subcommittees and all members of AAASAC General Council to host a social and information gathering for our constituents in January 2022. The gathering offered admins a chance to socialize with one another, to take a tour of the newly-renovated College of Business complex, and to learn more about AAASAC. Each sub-committee offered an information table.
- Provided guided tours of the newly renovated Hartman Hall as part of this event.
- Created AAASAC business cards for distribution to new and current employees as a reference resource.
- Continued collaborative outreach efforts with other AAASAC committees.

Recognition Committee: Liana Bayne, Julie Love, Melissa Rebich, Kelly Sweet

- Facilitated the awarding of the 2021-2022 Provost's Award for Administrative Excellence, recognizing a second year of honorees with an increased stipend. This year's recipients:
 - Erica Kann, Office of Professional Development and Engagement, College of Business
 - Sandra Purington, Writing, Rhetoric, and Technical Communication, College of Arts and Letters
 - Liana Bayne (Part-Time), Administration, Libraries
- Served as the core Review Committee, and adapted processes to define recusal of nominees and invitation to additional objective reviewers.
- Future work on Provost's Award for Administrative Excellence:
 - Collecting feedback on the award process from all stakeholders, including reviewers, AAASAC Council and ex-officio members, representatives from Provost's office, etc.
 - Discuss feedback as a committee to implement updates and edits to award criteria, review process and screening grid. Begin working through potential changes to the award for 2022-2023.
 - Continue to steward the award process and advocate for it to be offered again in 2022-2023.
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- Designed and coordinated sending of Annual Staff Appreciation Cards for all administrative professional in Academic Affairs. Beginning in January 2022, alphabetical batches were sent monthly with projected completion in December 2022. Campus addresses are provided by Provost's Office quarterly via query.

Future work planned for 2022 - 2023:

- Update the staff recognition card in July 2022 to include the new members of AAASAC for accurate mailing purposes. Begin annual mailing process in January 2023.
- Participate again in helping to coordinate swag items for Opening Staff Address door prize.
- Continue looking for and engaging in new ways to promote recognizing others, especially our constituents, at the university for their hard work.

Work/Life Balance Committee: J. Michael Penney, Tammy Steele, Katrina Spickler, Nikki Corley

- Hosted Madison Scholarship Hub Overview facilitated by Steven Cox (in person and virtual attendance).

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- Created list of local hot spots on campus important for new employees to know and potentially use for meeting and event spaces.
- Created a digital map of campus locations, including addresses and contact information to add to website.
- Future Projects include:
 - Self-guided campus tour map with QR code to AAASAC website to include in new employee materials.
 - Create a central list of perks, benefits, programs, and classes for administrative professionals.
 - Investigating and creating opportunities for exclusive AAASAC programming – such as brown bag lunch programming, facility tours, after-hours social activities, and Wellness Initiatives that are compatible with family schedules.

Mentorship Connection Committee: Lori Tolbert (Chair), Lori Patton, Julie Love, Liana Bayne

Our recent committee name change reflects a more focused mission to make intentional connections with constituents throughout Academic Affairs for the purpose of improved networking, establishing community, providing resources, and ultimately improving retention, growth, expertise, and professionalism at JMU.

- Met with lead college and unit administrative professionals to learn what mentorship efforts are already in place, compiled best practices, and inquired about supportive and collaborative efforts. These conversations have been very productive, as at least three colleges do not currently have an organized mentorship program and are very receptive to partnering with us.
- Provide regular content for a Mentorship Connection section to the monthly AAASAC newsletter, including a “survival tip” with the AAASAC HelpLine information anchored in the template footer.
- Organized and timely distribution of Welcome Packets for new administrative professionals. These packets have been well-received, and have resulted in many emails and phone call follow-up connections.
- Collaborated on the creation of business cards with contact information and the HelpLine link; distributed at JMU Onboarding events, in the Welcome Packets, as well as AAASAC quarterly networking.

Common Goals:

- Build community for all constituents, as we strive to innovate and adapt to changing circumstances.
- Create opportunities for professional development, engagement and networking.

- Design and implement an integrated and inclusive approach to mentoring and retention that includes access to resources, experienced mentors, Q/A sessions, campus tours, community-building, and potential for collaborative training efforts.
- Advocate for our constituents in the development of policies and procedures, by establishing positive and inclusive communication pathways to provide richer context for evaluation and decision-making.
- Pursue collaborative and complementary relationships with both Talent Development and IT Training to coordinate efforts to extend the reach of current JMU offerings by providing context and timely support for administrative assistants who have completed applicable training.
- Cross-promote current opportunities for administrative staff.

AAASAC Future Projects

- Establish a subcommittee to focus on engagement and representation of wage/part-time staff and their unique concerns and considerations as members of the JMU community. Recruit two council members.
- Continued Stewardship of Provost's Award for Administrative Excellence.
- Collaboration on annual Administrative Professionals Breakfast.
- Short-term events (such as brown bag lunches) and communications related to recognition of employees; Supervisor/Peer recognition. We aspire to hosting quarterly networking events for our constituents.
- Strategic, sustainable expansion of Mentorship Connection efforts in response to growing need, including open discussion sessions for all administrative professionals where we can learn from and support each other in person on topics concerning setting up a budget, maintaining and projecting the end of year, recruitment, contracts and ePARs, etc.
- Establish Forms and Process Review subcommittees to address concerns in a focused and ongoing manner to ultimately build relationships with university departments beyond Academic Affairs. Primary goals include: improving communication, streamlining processes, standardizing procedures, increasing compliance, and sharing information.
- Campus tours, welcoming new hires, and programming in a post-pandemic world.