

SPCE Task Force Midyear and Final Report

Membership

Chair: Dr. Narketta Sparkman-Key

Members: Jason McClain, Dr. Keith Holland, Dr. Linda Thomas, Dr. Mark L'Esperance, Dr. Scott Paulson, Jolie Lewis

Charge: Goal 1, Objective 1-2 of the Academic Affairs Strategic Plan identifies providing a range of options for degree completion for undergraduate and graduate students as a high priority. Further, Goal 3, Objective 1 of the Academic Affairs Strategic Plan identifies expanding community engagement as a high priority. Additionally, leadership transitions within SPCE, and expanded attention on economic engagement provide the division with an opportunity to re-examine the organizational structure of SPCE with the goal of optimizing the University's and Division's goals in key areas.

To these ends the Provost has appointed the School of Professional and Continuing Education Appraisal Task Force to lead the division through a process of analysis, consultation, discernment, and innovation. The members of this task force will:

1. Study all aspects of SPCE, consulting with an array of stakeholders both on and off campus. It will also identify best practices among peers, assess the feasibility of new models, and gather information from staff, instructional faculty and administrators.
2. Advise academic leaders on expanded communication and messaging about the SPCE's role in JMU's unique blend of liberal arts, research, and professional education.
3. Make recommendations on programs, structure, leadership, organization, budget management, and alignment with other units within Academic Affairs and across the University.

Summary of Current Semester Activity:

1. INFORMATION GATHERING

- The SPCE Appraisal Task Force held meetings on the following dates:
 - September 29, 2022
 - October 13, 2022
 - October 26, 2022
 - November 9, 2022
 - November 28, 2022
 - December 19, 2022
- The SPCE committee was divided into specific areas, in which external meetings were held to address those areas:
 - Jason McClain and Dr. Keith Holland- Budget Process
 - Dr. Keith Holland and Dr. Narketta Sparkman-Key- Economic Development
 - Dr. Mark L'Esperance and Dr. Linda Thomas- Academic Programs

- Dr. Scott Paulson and Jolie Lewis- Youth Programs

2. ADVISE

Opportunities for Growth

According to the 2022 Task force review the following were outlined as opportunities for growth:

1. Current budget complexity and misalignment has resulted in the over promising of support to outside units, inability to replace current dean due to the need for support of over commitments, miscalculation of cost for day-to-day operations and difficulty in sorting through budget.
2. Lack of developed relationships with SVP and SVTC due to lack of follow through, no accountability and lack of touch points. Overall communication has been identified as a challenge.
3. Lack of shared vision and relationship with Research and Scholarship which has led to overlap in efforts.
4. Lack of awareness and centralization of all youth programs across campus.
5. Lack of collaborative relationship with graduate school and shared vision for marketing and recruitment. Lack of fiscal support to graduate school for human resources that support the marketing and recruitment of graduate programs.

According to the 2019 APR the following are outlined opportunities for growth within SPCE:

1. Too Many Accommodations, SPCE takes on many new seed projects that are trial projects without determining need, feasibility etc.
2. Inconsistencies in Procedures and Policies, SPCE has inconsistencies in partnerships and agreements.
3. Inadequate Funding Model which recognizes the lack of support provided by the university for some of the positions within SPCE. This lack of funding put undue stress on the budget as a self-sustaining unit.

Barriers to Advancement with Current Model

The disjointed model of Economic Development has become a barrier to the vision and focus of the initiative. Within Research and Scholarship there is a specific goal to align with APLU, gain the IEP designation, and advance community partnerships. However, currently within SPCE the vision is overshadowed by the need to repair current relationships and a limited connection with faculty and research. Continuity, shared vision, and a holistic focus for Economic Development is needed to advance our efforts. In addition, the current model does not support the advancement of continuing education. Trying to force shared vision and focus for economic development and continuing education presents the challenge of no one vision being achieved. Amongst the unit there are shared limited resources that cross continuing education and economic development due to open positions, lack of vision and leadership shift. Continuing Education could realize its full potential and community impact without the shared focus on economic development. These findings are supported within the 2019 APR in which reviewers stated, "The team did not see PCE as the appropriate home for

coordinating the economic and community development work of JMU”. In addition, it was stated that, “... the visiting team believes that PCE is not well prepared to be responsible for certain areas of economic development such as tech transfer and research initiatives. These activities are being handled by other offices at the University. Noting this, the question remains how best to coordinate this activity among multiple players across the campus that consider their respective roles to include economic development.” In addition, the task force notes the same barriers in 2022.

Models of Continuing Education

There are currently no peer institutions with a similar Continuing Education structure as James Madison University. None of our peer institutions note a focus on Economic Development within Continuing Education however, many of them have a focus that embraces online education, non-degree seeking education, and career training like JMU. Amongst these institutions are Virginia Tech, George Mason, Longwood University, Norfolk State University, and Old Dominion University to name a few. Full report of Virginian and North Carolina public institutions can be found [here](#). There seems to be a growing trend in global continuing education studies which really puts the focus on online education at the forefront of the program. Institutions leading in the global continuing education field are Harvard Extension School, Georgetown School of Continuing Studies, Purdue Global University, University of Maryland Global Campus, and Washington State University of Professional Education.

Models of Economic Development

There are currently no peer institutions with a similar structure to JMU’s current SPCE structure. It is not a higher education trend for Economic Development to be housed with Continuing Education. Current trends include Economic Development as a centralized or a decentralized unit. In addition, several public institution models have research alignments such as Marshall University, Ball State University, Bowling Green State, Cleveland State University, Old Dominion University and University of North Carolina Charlotte. In addition, a selection of public institutions with a research focus has IEP Designation which is a noted goal of James Madison University. Amongst these institutions are Bowling Green State University, Cleveland State University, East Carolina University, Ohio State University, University of North Carolina Charlotte, and Virginia Tech. Further date on Economic Development models including R2 institutions can be found at [ED Model Data](#).

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is recommended that the School of Continuing and Professional Education (SPCE) be realigned without the inclusion of Economic Development and housed under University Studies, where Dr. Fletcher Linder will operate as the school's dean. It is further suggested that SPCE should be led by an Associate Dean with the added title of Director of SPCE, which aligns with current models for Continuing Education. This individual would be required to attend to the day-to-day operations of the school, serve as the main point of contact and expert on the school's focus and vision, and elevate the school’s presence and impact on the Shenandoah Valley. This recommendation supports the notion that SPCE will fully operate as a school focused on continuing and

professional education. A name change should be considered to elevate the school's presence and impact on the Shenandoah Valley to fully capitalize on this moment.

- It is recommended that the current division of efforts regarding Economic Development be streamlined. It is further recommended that Economic Development be separated from the School of Professional and Continuing Education. It is recommended that Research and Scholarship assume the responsibility to lead the Economic Development efforts that were once led by SPCE under the leadership of VP of Research and Scholarship. It further recommended that the division of Economic Development housed in SPCE be moved to Research and Scholarship. The current Associate Dean title be changed to Associate Vice Provost (due to the outward facing nature of the position adding Director to the title should also be considered) to coincide with the leadership structure in Research and Scholarship. It is recommended that the Associate Vice Provost for Economic Development coordinate with the VP of Research and Scholarship, the Provost's Office, and the President's Office to refine ambitions and objectives for JMU support of regional Economic Development. This recommendation aligns with state and national models for economic development in which research is a major contender in the work. This recommendation supports the vision to align with APLU and pursue a national designation for the university. In addition, this recommendation supports current efforts to build community relationships.
- It is recommended that SPCE Youth Programs lead the formation of a committee for the systemic coordination and implementation of youth programs. There should be a centralized person who convenes youth programs across the university to maximize alignment with institutional priorities, the sharing of information and infrastructure, opportunities for collaboration with faculty and/or academic units, and centralized marketing and promotion that will increase visibility and enable community members to easily access the range of youth programs that are offered.
- It is recommended that fiscal operations of SPCE be temporarily aligned under the leadership of Jason McClain. All SPCE fiscal staff should be assigned to Jason McClain to aid in sorting out the complexity of SPCE budget, aid in the transition of SPCE and Economic Development, fiscally plan and sort out the current budget complexities. It is recommended during the temporary oversight fiscal practices are developed to ensure the budget is accurately maintained. It is recommended that Provost Heather Coltman determine when fiscal operations oversight returns to the School of Professional and Continuing Education. It is recommended that the College of Education work closely with Jason McClain regarding budget articulation and transition as it relates to COE programs and funding.
- It is recommended that SPCE collaborate with The Graduate School (TGS), and College of Education to perform an audit and evaluation of the current framework for admission, support, and completion of graduate program constituents. To address the evaluation's findings, a new framework should be outlined to include strengthening processes and existing relationships. The goal is to collaboratively create structures and metrics towards meeting mutual Academic Affairs strategic priorities. In addition, it is recommended that the challenges of unsupported efforts by The Graduate School be evaluated and addressed with Jason McClain, College of Education, TGS and SPCE.

- It is recommended that the recommendations outlined above take place in July of 2023 to allow for a 6-month transition period, an additional review, and articulation of SPCE budget. This recommendation also acknowledges the July 1 contract end for the current interim dean. It is also recommended that the College of Education and any other college that has programs and resources with oversight by SPCE be involved in the transition process.

Future Work Planned:

- The committee should be dismantled, and a transition committee should be considered.

Table of Appendices

Number or Title	Brief Description
APPENDIX A	SPCE Task Force Recommendations Final Report



Office for Inclusive Strategies
and Equity Initiatives

SPCE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION

PRESENTED BY

Jason McClain, Dr. Keith Holland, Dr. Linda Thomas, Dr. Mark
L'Esperance, Dr. Scott Paulson, Jolie Lewis

PREPARED BY

Dr. Narketta Sparkman Key

School of Professional and Continuing Education Task Force Final Report

Introduction

The School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE) has had a significant impact on the Shenandoah Valley and our JMU community. Many have come to know SPCE for their adult and youth programs. Administrators across the university have nothing but wonderful things to say about their collaborations with the SPCE. Many of them discussed wanting to maintain their relationship and develop them even further, however, there are some opportunities for growth. Universally all stakeholders want to see SPCE grow into the next level of community impact. The current model of SPCE does not align with other institutions in the state of Virginia or with peer institutions in our region. This report will outline opportunities for growth found in this task force's investigation and further supported in the 2019 APR. It will outline current models of continuing education and economic development and note the challenges faced by our current model. This report will conclude with recommendations for advancing SPCE.

Current SPCE Structure

SPCE current structure includes Economic Development, Lifelong Learning, youth programs, Adult Degree Program, professional development, Shenandoah Valley Partnership (SVP), and Shenandoah Valley Technology Council (SVTC). Under the current structure the school is led by a dean in which an interim dean is currently in place. There are two assistant deans and two associate deans. There are 6 vacant positions in the school, and there is a focus on filling them. Amongst the vacant positions are two housed in Economic Development, the specialist and project coordinator positions. There is one vacant position within youth programs which is a program assistant position. As noted above the dean position is also empty. There is an administrative assistant position for Shenandoah Valley Technology Council (SVTC) that is currently empty as well as a building coordinator position. In addition, SPCE supports 3 full-time and 17 part-time faculty/staff across colleges. Outside of this they have contracted marketing, recruitment, and retention services for several of their programs. The school is currently structured to support both Economic Development and the many initiatives found in continuing education. The current organizational chart can be found [here](#).

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Committee Recommendations

SPCE Task Force began its review on September 29, 2022, and completed its review in December of 2022. Utilizing interviews, review of artifacts and external data the committee makes the following recommendations:

1. It is recommended that the School of Continuing and Professional Education (SPCE) be realigned without the inclusion of Economic Development and housed under University Studies, where Dr. Fletcher Linder will operate as the school's dean. It is further suggested that SPCE should be led by an Associate Dean with the added title of Director of SPCE, which aligns with current models for Continuing Education. This individual would be required to attend to the day-to-day operations of the school, serve as the main point of contact and expert on the school's focus and vision, and elevate the school's presence and impact on the Shenandoah Valley. This recommendation supports the notion that SPCE will fully operate as a school focused on continuing and professional education. A name change should be considered to elevate the school's presence and impact on the Shenandoah Valley to fully capitalize on this moment.
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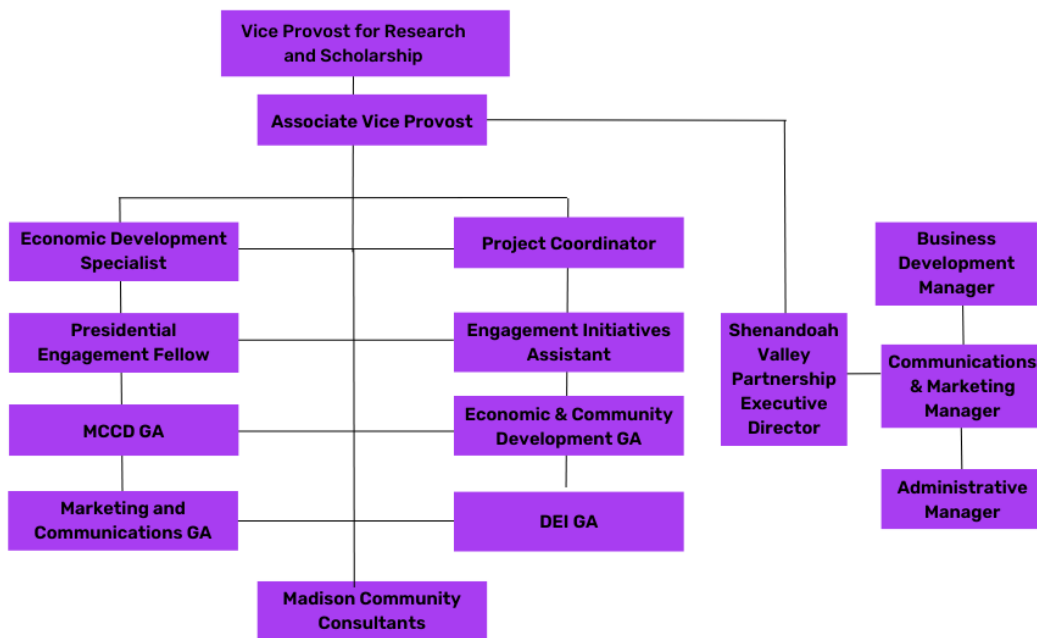
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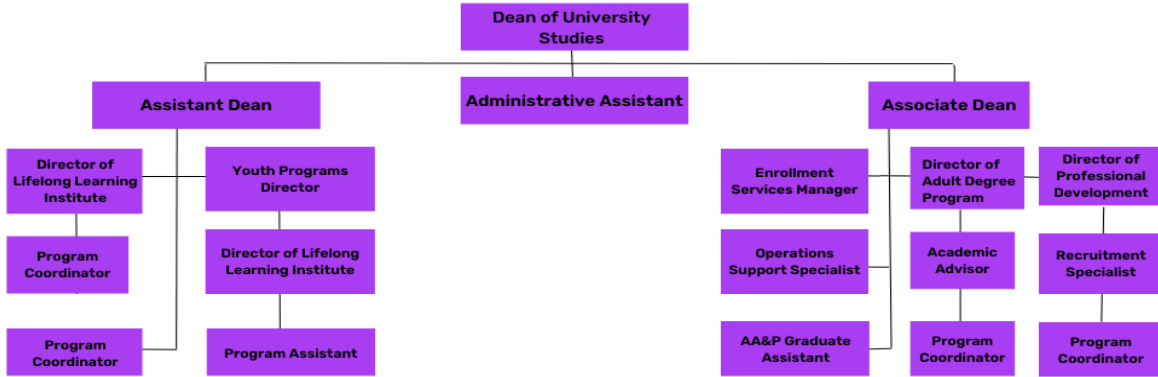
July 1 contract end for the current interim dean. It is also recommended that the College of Education and any other college that has programs and resources with oversight by SPCE be involved in the transition process.

Suggested Organizational Chart for School of Continuing Education, Research and Scholarship and Academic Affairs Fiscal Office

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



CONTINUING EDUCATION



SPCE TEMPORARY FISCAL REALIGNMENT

