

# Establishment of Scientific and Public Health Advisory Team

## Office of the Provost

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To: AA WAGE Staff (STAFF-WAGE-AA-L@LISTSERV.JMU.EDU) <STAFF-WAGE-AA-L@LISTSERV.JMU.EDU>; Faculty Response List Serve <FAC-RESPONSE-L@listserv.jmu.edu>; PT Faculty List Serve <pt-fac-response-l@listserv.jmu.edu>; Staff Classified (Staff-Classified-AA-L@listserv.jmu.edu) <Staff-Classified-AA-L@listserv.jmu.edu>;

Dear Colleagues,

In consultation with Provost Coltman and academic leadership, the Office of Research & Scholarship launched the [Scientific & Public Health Advisory Team](#) (SPHAT). The SPHAT consists of 19 members possessing scientific and/or public health backgrounds and functions to inform JMU leadership of current scientific research and public health guidance related to COVID-19. The primary roles of the team are to:

- Provide strategic guidance informed by current and emerging research findings and public health guidance;
- Review and suggest modification to university planning based on current understanding; and
- Assist with accurate communication of findings and university plans (based on available literature, CDC, VDH, etc.).

As JMU leadership raises questions focused on modifying university operations to maintain a safe learning environment, Research & Scholarship will bring those questions to the SPHAT on a rolling basis for asynchronous review. R&S will share the feedback received from the SPHAT with JMU leadership, ensuring JMU decision-makers have access to the most current scientific guidance and best practices developed by other institutions.

The SPHAT is currently operating in a virtual environment utilizing a shared folder through JMU's SharePoint platform. The composition of the SPHAT is below.

First Name	Last Name	Title	Office/Center/Department	Organization
Heather	Armstrong		Environmental Health and Safety	SRI Shenandoah Valley
Gonzolo	Bearman	Chair of the Division of Infectious Diseases	Department of Internal Medicine	Virginia Commonwealth University Health System
Chris	Berndsen	Associate Professor	Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry	James Madison University
Amanda	Biesecker	Program Director and Professor	School of Integrated Sciences	James Madison University
Robert	Brent	Professor	School of Integrated Sciences	James Madison University
Audrey	Burnett	Associate Professor	Department of Health Sciences	James Madison University
Steve	Cresawn	Associate Professor	Department of Biology	James Madison University
Maria	deValpine	Professor	School of Nursing	James Madison University
Michelle	Doll	Associate Hospital Epidemiologist	Department of Internal Medicine	Virginia Commonwealth University Health System
Jonathan	Gass	Plant Manager	Merck Elkton	Merck

Krisztina	Jakobsen	Associate Professor	Department of Psychology	James Madison University
Bryan	Lewis	Research Associate Professor	Biocomplexity Institute	University of Virginia
Madhav	Marathe	Distinguished Professor in Biocomplexity	Biocomplexity Institute	University of Virginia
David	Onestak	Director	Counseling Center	James Madison University
Rakhee	Palekar	Principal of Public Health	Health Technical Center	MITRE
Andrew	Peachey	Academic Unit Head	Department of Health Sciences	James Madison University
Sam	Prins	Interim Dean	College of Science and Mathematics	James Madison University
Cindy	Prins	Assistant Dean for Educational Affairs	College of Public Health and Health Professions	University of Florida
Sharlene	Richards	Professor	School of Communication Studies	James Madison University

We want to thank all members of the SPHAT for sharing their expertise to contribute to JMU's educational mission. My thanks also go to Keith Holland and Ben Delp for their invaluable assistance in forming and working closely this strong and inclusive team.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Best,  
Anthony

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