
Learning Opportunities and Resources

Academic Advising and Career Development

Wilson Hall, Room 301, MSC 1016
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Web site: <http://www.jmu.edu/aacd>

Academic Advising and Career Development coordinates academic advising for all freshmen, and undeclared students; assists students in choosing or changing their major and deciding upon a career direction; and provides a variety of job search programs and services.

Academic Advising

Academic advising is vital to student success. The adviser assists students in shaping their educational experience to meet specific intellectual, personal and career goals. Advisers do not decide the student's goals or program, but help students learn how to develop appropriate goals, make good choices that enhance learning and personal growth, and succeed in and out of the classroom.

During summer orientation, all new students are assigned to faculty or professional advisers who discuss with them the university's various programs of study, academic policies and procedures, advanced placement/exemption testing, and registration procedures. At that time, students plan their course of study and register for fall semester classes. Advisers continue to work with freshmen until midway through the spring semester, at which time freshmen that have declared a major are assigned to advisers in their academic unit. Students remaining undeclared are assigned to a professional adviser in Academic Advising and Career Development. Freshmen must declare their major by the beginning of their sophomore year. Refer to page 26 for information on declaring a major.

JMU students are responsible for the educational choices they make, both short and long term, but they can make those choices in a supportive environment. Effective academic advising is a relationship between student and adviser. Students must be aware of their own interests, values and goals; knowledgeable about relevant policies and requirements; and willing to take the initiative to seek assistance when it is needed. Advisers should respond to the student as an individual, be aware of student progress, and help the student make connections between academic choices and career possibilities.

Career Advising and Decision-Making

Academic Advising and Career Development assists students at various stages of the decision-making process for choosing a major and career. In addition to the availability of professional staff to help students with decision-making issues, other programs and services include:

Career and Life Planning Course (IS 202)

The career and life planning course is for freshmen and sophomores who want to explore the relationship between academic majors and career fields, identify their major and career interests, and learn effective decision-making strategies for choosing a major and a career.

Major and Career Decision Program

The Major and Career Decisions Program is a series of workshops designed to help students pick a major, decide on a career direction, assess career information, and resolve personal issues interfering with their ability to make career plans. Topics covered include career assessment, values, interests, abilities and career information.

Academic and Career Resource Center

The resource center provides information and assistance related to choosing a major and career planning, internship/summer jobs, employer directories, job search tools and career trend information. Resources include books, printed materials, handouts, databases, career software and Web-based information via the resource center computer lab. Information is organized on a self-help basis so that students and faculty may browse at their leisure. Staff members are available to answer questions and help students use resource materials.

Employment and Job Search Services

On-Campus Interviewing

Business, industry, government and educational employers come to JMU throughout the year to conduct job interviews with graduating seniors and students seeking internships. Information about the interview program, participating employers and interview sign-ups are available on the Academic Advising and Career Development Web site. To interview, students must attend an Introduction to On-Campus Interviewing workshop and obtain a Web password from the on-campus interviewing coordinator in Sonner Hall. To help students prepare for these interviews, mock interview sessions with employer participants are held at the beginning of each semester.

Resume Development

A Web-based resume development program is available which allows students to prepare their resumes online. Students must obtain a Web password from the on-campus interviewing coordinator in Sonner Hall. Resume writing workshops and other related services are available throughout the year.

Career Fairs

The office sponsors a number of career fair events each year to provide students with the opportunity to interact with employers and obtain employment-related information.

Job Vacancies

A number of national job vacancy publications are available in the resource center, which provides information about job opportunities in a variety of career fields. Web-based job vacancy listings are also available.