



Employee Advisory Committee

2025-2026 Annual Year-End Report

Mission of the EAC

The JMU Employee Advisory Committee (EAC) reports to the President of the university in order to foster open, honest and productive communication between employees and the university administration with an emphasis on matters of concern to all employees. The EAC fulfills its mission by assuming additional responsibility for the following activities: providing feedback and advice to the Senior Leadership Team regarding issues that impact JMU employees and facilitating two-way communication with the campus community through electronic and verbal methods; facilitating staff employee participation on University Committees and Commissions.

2025-2026 Key Activities

- The Employee Advisory Committee (EAC) met on the first Wednesday of the month throughout the academic year.
- The EAC met with President Jim on July 1, 2026, his first official day at JMU. This meeting set the tone for his desire to work with the committee and his commitment to supporting University employees.
- The committee participated in the University Strategic Planning process with Dirron Allen at the September and November meetings, as well as a special session with the Strategic Planning committee and President Jim in February.
- At the February meeting, David Kirkpatrick facilitated a meeting between the EAC and the United Way, who made a presentation of a financial literacy program they have available that could be offered to JMU staff. The committee invited representatives from Human Resources to attend the presentation, and after, made a recommendation to HR to consider formalizing a partnership to add this program as a benefit for employees.
- Matt Roan made a presentation to the EAC in May about the Intercollegiate Athletics program, including how they recognize employees at various sporting events during the year. The committee expressed a desire to provide additional opportunities for employees to attend sporting events throughout the year.
- The committee finalized changes to their website, including a new form for employees to submit feedback, as well as establishing a one-page document to share with all employees to explain who the committee is and how we represent them.
- Co-chairs Christina Myers and Chris Ouren represented the EAC on the Compensation Advisory Council and Dukes Remembrance Day committee as well as representing all employees at the Inauguration of President Jim.
- Committee members hosted a table at Employee Appreciation Day to highlight the work of the EAC and talk with employees about how the committee can support them and their work.

Tentative Plans for 2026-2027

- Monthly meetings to continue the first Wednesday of each month:
 - Sept. 2, Oct. 7, Nov. 4, Dec. 2, Jan. 13, Feb. 3, Mar. 3, Apr. 7, May 5.
 - Meeting locations will be moved around campus to allow employees to join the meetings to express ideas, concerns, etc. to the committee
- Attend various meetings across campus (divisional meetings, Faculty Senate, etc.) to share information about the EAC and how we can support employees.
- Work with the newly established Division of Marketing and Strategic Communication to increase the visibility of EAC across campus and increase feedback from employees.
- Request an update from the Office of the President on the status of the prior year's recommendations as well as direction on how the EAC can support Senior Leadership.
 - Recommendations that are accepted by Senior Leadership should be communicated to the EAC so that there is no overlap in responsibilities.
- Invite presentations from campus leaders on a range of topics such as Advancement, campus planning, strategic plan, etc.
- Have at least one update from the Compensation Advisory Council.
- Continue to advise senior leadership and make recommendations as needed.



2025-2026 EAC Members

Last Name	First Name	Employee Type	Department
Carter	Amethyst	Classified	University Events
Dirks	Jim	Classified	Human Resources
Inman	Crystal	Classified	Community Engagement & Volunteer Center
Koon	Mindy	Classified	University Studies
Leblanc	Joe	Instructional Faculty	Psychology
Lovegrove	Caitlin	Wage	Financial Aid & Scholarships
McAvoy	Colleen	AP Faculty	Financial Aid & Scholarships
Morgan	Rob	Classified	IT-Computing Support
Myers	Christina	AP Faculty	Academic Enhancement
Ouren	Chris	AP Faculty	University Health Center
Purington	Sandra	Classified	WRTC
Snyder	Kelsey	AP Faculty	Residence Life
Tam	Mary	Instructional Faculty	Chemistry/SMLC
Wilson	Kerri	AP Faculty	Admissions
Yang	Henry	AP Faculty	Libraries

Division	No.	Classification	No.
Academic Affairs	6	Administrative & Professional Faculty	6
Access and Enrollment Management	3	Instructional Faculty	2
Administration and Finance	2	Staff	6
Advancement	0	Wage	1
Intercollegiate Athletics	0		
Office of the President	1		
Student Affairs	3		
Total	15	Total	15

- EAC members who left the committee in 2025-2026:
 - N/A
- EAC members who have indicated they will not be returning for 2026-27:
 - Caitlin Lovegrove (Leaving the University)
- The EAC has one opening to fill for the 2026-27 academic year.

EAC Recommendations for 2025-2026

We would like to respectfully submit these recommendations to the Office of the President for James Madison University EAC:

1. We recommend adding the Vice President of Communications and Strategic Communication, in addition to the Vice President, Chief of Staff, as an additional liaison between the EAC and Senior Leadership of the University. This would align with the setup of the Compensation Advisory Council, which takes direction from both the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs as well as the Vice President of Administration and Finance. The committee would plan to invite the liaison's to at least one meeting each semester and solicit recommendations from Senior Leadership that the EAC could report on, as well as provide opportunities to provide direct feedback from university employees to the Vice Presidents.
2. We recommend that the University explores increasing the number of opportunities that allow employees to bring families and guests to campus for events. Exposing those who are not current members of the JMU community to campus can increase their likelihood of returning for future events. Specific examples that the University should consider include:
 - a. Bringing back the Family Picnic at the start of the academic year, inviting families to attend in addition to employees
 - b. Increasing the number of athletic events that offer free or discount tickets to employees and their guests.
 - c. Providing additional discounts to events at the Forbes Center, especially for student performances, so that employees can experience the arts and support students that they may interact with as professors, advisors, etc.
3. We recommend that the President and his leadership team be available for pop-up appreciation events throughout the year, events that are geared to both specific audiences and all JMU employees. This may include something like an ice cream day on the quad during fall break, handing out free coffees prior to departmental meetings, or visiting various departments/offices to say thanks to folks working and to help make personal connections.
4. We recommend that the University works with the local school districts in an attempt to align Fall and Spring Break dates to allow maximum flexibility for employees with partners, spouses, and/or children in the school system. As the largest employer in Rockingham County, JMU employees contribute a large portion of students in both the Harrisonburg City and Rockingham County School Districts. Aligning the breaks would allow employees to be able to take leave at a time of greater personal need while simultaneously being at a time where there would be less impact on the university as JMU students would not be in session. Fall Break is typically set by JMU in alignment with the football schedule, so the consideration would need to be with the already-established school district calendars. Conversely, usually JMU sets their academic calendar at least three school years in advance and typically considers Spring Break to be on or around the ninth week of the semester. The local school districts are setting their academic calendars roughly 18 months in advance and would have more flexibility to align with the already established JMU academic calendar.