

Resolution on External Challenges to Faculty Roles and Responsibilities

WHEREAS higher education as an acknowledged and valued public good has been recognized throughout the history of the United States;

WHEREAS the excellence of universities in the United States has been made possible by highly professionalized and committed faculty members who collectively have created one of the most honored systems of higher education in the world today;

WHEREAS faculty have educated, mentored, and supported undergraduate and graduate students who go on to serve as leaders in their communities, and in the economic, civic and cultural success of their states, the nation, and the world;

WHEREAS the faculty of James Madison University actively work for the well-being, intellectual and personal growth, leadership development, civic engagement, and preparation for meaningful lives of all students;

WHEREAS the faculty have built and continue to advance a climate of tolerance and respect for others in accord with the university's mission and vision as well as the laws and regulations of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the United States of America;

WHEREAS the faculty, students, staff, and leaders of the university face increasing external demands to turn away from the bedrock standards and principles of the university's mission and faculty's professional and institutional standards and obligations;

WHEREAS the academic freedom, professional standards, and beneficial impact of faculty research, teaching, and service at the university is increasingly threatened by demands for constraints on institutional and faculty commitments and expertise;

WHEREAS these external demands for constraints on academic freedom and challenges to curriculum, teaching, research, and professional practice are detrimental to the well-being of students, the university, its alumni, and its local, national, and global reputation;

WHEREAS the unprecedented nature of our current climate requires the JMU Faculty Senate to be alert to future action we believe may harm the mission of the University, to play a larger role in bringing information to the JMU community, and to do both in partnership with university leadership by leveraging faculty influence and knowledge;

Now, therefore, be it **RESOLVED** that the JMU Faculty Senate:

1. stands for the belief that higher education institutions were created to serve the public good;

2. stands in support of protecting and promoting diversity of experiences and perspectives, recognizing that free, robust, and open inquiry, discussion, and debate across a wide range of ideas and perspectives is essential in the pursuit of knowledge, the education of students, and the flourishing of a democratic society;
3. stands in support of a fundamental value: that as we continue to build a more diverse, more equitable, and more inclusive institution we become a greater, stronger, and more just university;
4. stands united with students, faculty, administrative leaders, staff, and any other members of the university community who are harassed online or on campus for carrying out their obligations to the university and our mission in accord with the laws, regulations and rules of this institution, the commonwealth, and the nation;
5. stands united with members of the university community who are unlawfully discriminated against on any grounds, including but not limited to those designated in the Virginia Human Rights Act; such discrimination is inconsistent with the mission, values and commitment to lawful treatment that are central to the organization and conduct of the university; and
6. calls upon the entire university community of students, alumni, parents, and corporate, governmental, and local partners to stand united with the faculty in defense of the mission and values of this university.