



# Graduate Program Director Assembly Meeting Summary

October 8, 2020

2:00 – 3:30 pm

Zoom

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## I. Dean Welcome

The Dean welcomed everyone and introduced the Provost.

## II. Provost Town Hall on the Future of Graduate Education

The Provost acknowledged the achievement of JMU's National recognition as a Carnegie High Research Activity University. Earning this recognition was a reflection of the quality of graduate programs offered at JMU and of the extraordinary efforts of the faculty. Given this, the Provost wants to develop ways to better recognize faculty for their service and dedication.

The Provost was intentional in preserving assistantships across the university during the current budget shortfall experienced by the university, which was created by the pandemic. In order to attract the brightest students, JMU needs to increase the stipend amounts for assistantships. Once the pandemic ends and the university is operating in the clear again, increasing the stipend awards will become a focus for the University. The Provost also expressed an interest in developing strategies that better support graduate education. On October 14, John Burgess, along with the Provost, will present on the *Future of Graduate Education* to President Alger.

At this point in the Town Hall, several questions were taken from the members:

Q – What ways does the Provost see in growing graduate education at JMU (program growth and college growth)?

A – It is important to survey the scene and for JMU to carve out their own niche in graduate education. This will require looking at emerging demands and needs. Continued collaborations between the Deans, Colleges and area partnerships will be valuable in identifying and addressing the needs. It will be important to give consideration to what programs are sustainable for JMU to offer.

Q – What efforts are underway in securing health insurance for graduate students, so that JMU will attract the best students?

A – Conversations have taken place with state schools about banding together in order to pursue health care options for graduate students. The Provost supports these efforts. Plus, she supports an increase in stipends for graduate assistantships.

Q – Are there opportunities to create new doctoral degrees, like a Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree, to help address pressing needs in the rural communities in our region?

A – Engagement with the community is a vital part of the mission of JMU. New degrees that address critical community needs should be considered.

### III. Approval of Minutes

The September 10, 2020, Graduate Council meeting minutes were unanimously approved via a voice vote.

### IV. Discussion Items

#### 1. Graduate Student Association

Ms. Sarah Gully, the Vice President of the Graduate Student Association (GSA) shared that the GSA provides professional and social opportunities to all past, present and future James Madison University graduate students. The Executive Board this year includes: Mr. Aaron Elders, President; Sarah Marie Gully, Vice President; Brandon Stanley; Ana Mae Morrow, Social Chair; and Anna Longaker, Treasurer. The GSA meets on the second Wednesday of every month from 7:15-8:00 p.m.

The GSA plans to offer both virtual and in-person programming this year. The GSA is looking for ways to partner with programs to create professional development events. Other events planned this year by GSA include: hiking Fridley's Gap, Brewery/Vineyard meet-ups, Netflix watch parties, THRIVE affinity group virtual cooking classes, Mental Health Night at the JMU Counseling Center and Pilates on the Quad. GSA will continue offering the Food Pantry this year.

The Graduate Student Association offers student grants that are not otherwise funded through travel grants or that may not be supplemented by departments. Students may use the funding for entrance into professional societies, to attend workshops that will benefit their academic career, and other creative learning opportunities. Amounts will be awarded based on the amount required for each specific request up to \$200.

#### 2. Temporary Policies S/U

Temporary Graduate School policies were developed in response to the COVID-19 crisis that applied for spring and summer semesters. Some of those policies have carried over into fall. Note that GRAD 597 will not be required this semester. There will be no enforcement of Continuous Enrollment this fall, and there is no need to request an exception. Information on the temporary policies can be found at: <https://www.jmu.edu/grad/temporary-graduate-school-policies.shtml>

The temporary policies that were extended into the fall semester does not currently include the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) grading system that was included in the policy from the spring. Language will be developed at the Executive Committee meeting on October 15, for offering the S/U grading option for fall. The policy will be emailed out to Graduate Council members for an electronic vote.

The S/U policy used in the spring allowed for all students enrolled in a class to have their grade adjusted from letter grades to S/U at the discretion of the course instructor and with the approval of the Program Director and/or the Academic Unit Head. The "satisfactory" grade fulfilled

degree requirements, but would not affect a student's grade point average. The policy also allowed at the request of a course instructor and subject to the discretion of the Graduate Program Director or Academic Unit Head, the course instructor could allow an individual student in their course to change their grading scheme to S/U. Discussion ensued about whether to exclude classes that are normally held online from being able to use the S/U grading system. Again, the matter will be further discussed at the Graduate Council Executive Committee next week.

### 3. Letter of Recommendation Form and Background Check Questions

The letter of recommendation form used for graduate admissions has not been revised for many years and some programs have requested that it be revised. Similarly, the background check questions on the application form were last reviewed when Dr. Reid Linn was Dean. Some program directors would like to revise these questions. Additional questions are needed especially for those prospective students who would like to enroll in programs in which they will work with children or the elderly. The Occupational Therapy and Nursing programs use the Credential Assembly Service (CAS) to provide background information on their students.

The plan is to convene two working groups of Program Directors. The first group would review back-ground checks, and the second group would review the letter of recommendation form. Recommendations would come before Graduate Council before implementation. Dr. Andrea Knopp volunteered to serve on the Background Check working group. Dr. Stephanie Wasta, Dr. Christine Argenbright and Dr. Jen Almjeld volunteered to serve on the Letter of Recommendation Form working group.

### 4. Tuition Issues: Out-of-State Tuition, Tuition for Undergraduate-Graduate Classes

One of the biggest initiatives this year for The Graduate School is to help the university develop competitive out-of-state tuition models. Preliminary conversations have been held about JMU offering competitive out-of-state tuition models for graduate education. Some programs get out-of-state applicants, but found that only a few of the students will actually matriculate. The plan is to pilot four to five programs that will be highlighted for review by the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance.

One potential area for growth at JMU is to expand certificate offerings, especially if the 6 credit hours for the certificate were identified to satisfy a Bachelor's degree. The Graduate School is also requesting that graduate courses that satisfy a Bachelor's degree should be charged undergraduate tuition rates. In Virginia for 2019, 2,600 certificates were awarded but of that number only 29 certificates were awarded at JMU. A student completing an undergraduate degree might be more enticed to complete a certificate if 6 credit hours could be double counted with undergraduate tuition rates. Plus, that certificate is stackable with a Master's degree, helping the certificate program to serve as a bridge towards a masters. This approach to certificates could be a valuable recruitment tool for The Graduate School.

### 5. New THRIVE Grant Program

THRIVE in collaboration with The Graduate School, will be offering a new Developmental Grant Program through the Advancing Intelligent Minds (AIM) fund. The grant program is for students whose underrepresented background or socio-economic conditions create barriers to achieving their greatest academic success. The funding is to help graduate students gain

practical experiences or to conduct research scholarship, or creative activity relevant to the student's field of student. Recipients of this grant must propose to develop a tangible product (performance, project, publication or a scholarly document). Application submission will begin on November 20, and the review for funding will begin on November 30. Additional information will be shared with members through email.

#### 6. Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) Program

Dr. David Owusu-Ansah is interested in partnering with diverse and under-represented students who are enrolled in JMU doctoral programs and who are interested in careers in the academy. The PFF program would mentor and support these students. Graduate Council members were asked to forward names of doctoral students who would be interested in participating.

#### 7. CSGS Thesis & Dissertation Awards, Due November 11

Members were encouraged to nominate students and colleagues for the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) awards. Please submit nominations to John Burgess, Interim Dean of The Graduate School, ([burgessj@jmu.edu](mailto:burgessj@jmu.edu)) before/by Wednesday, November 11, 2020. Only one nomination per award may be sent from each institution. There are three categories for thesis awards: 1.) Humanities and Fine Arts, 2.) Mathematics, Physical Sciences, and Engineering and 3.) Non-Traditional Thesis/Project Award. There is also an Outstanding Mentor Award and an Outstanding Contributions Award available.

#### 8. Travel Grants

The Graduate School is continuing the Travel Grant program this year, with the possibility of students receiving grants for fees to present at online conferences. January 15, is the next deadline for submitting a travel grant application.

#### 9. Open Discussion

The plans are to hold the Three-Minute Thesis Competition, the Graduate Showcase and the Graduate Fair this year.

### **V. Conclusion**

Dean Burgess thanked members for their participation in the meeting. With no further business, the Graduate Program Director's Assembly Meeting ended at 3:29 p.m.



## Graduate Program Director Assembly Meeting Graduate Council Voting Members

### Sign-in Sheet

October 8, 2020

2:00 - 3:30 pm

[WebEx](#)

Last Name	First Name	Academic Unit	Joined Zoom Meeting
Almjeld	Jennifer	Writing, Rhetoric, & Technical Communication ( <b>WRTC</b> )	Yes
Bandalos	Deborah	Psychology - Graduate	Yes
Brantmeier	Noorie	Learning, Technology, & Leadership Education	Yes
Carr	Ben and Julie	Hart School	Yes (Julie)
Dabback	William	Music	Yes
Dorne	Rachelle	Occupational Therapy	Yes
Dyche	Jeff	Psychology - Undergraduate	Yes
Hefner	Brooks	English	Yes
Heydari	Hossain	Computer Science	Yes
Hickerson	Corey	Communication & Advocacy	Yes
Knopp	Andrea	Nursing	Yes
Mayhew	Fred	Political Science	Yes
McCartney	Holly	Early, Elementary & Reading Education	
Nichols	Nancy	Accounting	Yes
Nye	Susan	Kinesiology	Yes
Rout	Ayasakanta	Communication Sciences & Disorders ( <b>CSD</b> )	Yes
Rutherford	Matthew	Business Administration	Yes

Sloan	Margaret	School of Leadership	Yes
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Stevens	Alexis	Mathematics	Yes
Van Norman	William (Bill)	History	Yes
Wasta	Stephanie	Educational Foundations & Exceptionalities	Yes
Webb	Angela	Middle, Secondary and Mathematics Education	
Wightman	Bill	School of Art & Design History	Yes
Wunderlich	Roshna	Biology	Yes



## Graduate Program Director Assembly Meeting

### Graduate Council Guests

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The Graduate School Representatives Non-Voting Members		
Full Name	Title	Joined Zoom Meeting
John Burgess	Interim Dean	Yes
Michael Stoloff	Associate Dean, Admissions and Recruitment	Yes
Laura Ryman	Interim Assistant Dean and Director of Graduate Student Services	Yes

Guests			
Last Name	First Name	Academic Unit	Joined Zoom Meeting
Anderson	Robin	Graduate Psychology	
Apple	Kevin	Associate Dean, College of Sciences & Mathematics	Yes
Arndt	Chris	Dean's Office, College of Arts and Letters	Yes
Atkins	Karris	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	Yes
Bell	Pamela	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	
Bourne	Mary Lou	Research and Scholarship	
Davis	Marcus	Dean's Office, College of Science & Mathematics	Yes
Doss	Cheryl	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	Yes
Escalona Berbetty	Boris	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	Yes
Gaines	Briana	Coordinator, THRIVE, Dean's Office, The Graduate School	
Gallagher	Scott	Associate Dean, College of Business	Yes
Gully	Sarah	Graduate Student Association, Vice President	Yes





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Last Name	First Name	Academic Unit	Joined Zoom Meeting
Holloway	Steven	Libraries & Educational Technologies	
Kiely	Michelle	School Counseling Program	Yes
Klein	Michael	Associate Professor, WRTC	
MacDonald	Sarah	Dean's Office, Professional & Continuing Education	Yes
Maxwell	Paula	Dean's Office, College of Health & Behavioral Studies	Yes
Michael	Lynette	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	
Miller	Yvonne	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	Yes
Shackelford	Kristi	Office of Vice Provost for Academic Development	
Stevens	Wren	Interim Associate Dean, College of Visual & Performing Arts	Yes
Tang	Jeff	Dean's Office, College of Integrated Science and Engineering	
Wang	Felix	Center for Global Engagement, International Programs	
Way	Henry	Interim Associate Dean, CISE, ISAT	
Zugelder	Bryan	Associate Dean, College of Education	Yes



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<b>Program Directors</b>			
Last Name	First Name	Academic Unit	Joined Zoom Meeting
Blake	Charles	Program Director, Political Science-European Union Policy Studies	Yes
Brown	Kathryn	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	Yes
Collins	Roger	Program Director, Educational Leadership	Yes
Diop	Corinne	Program Director, Art History, Studio Art (MA and MFA)	Yes
Dredger	Katie	Program Director, Middle Education & 5 <sup>th</sup> year Middle Education MAT	Yes
DePaolis	Rory	Program Director, Communication Sciences & Disorders	
Evans	Amanda	Program Director, Clinical Mental Health Counseling	Yes
Frye	Jamie	Program Director, Athletic Training	
Gilligan	Tammy	Program Director, School Psychology	
Weniger	Gerald	Physician's Assistant Studies	Yes



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Name of Guest Not Included on List Above			
Last Name	First Name	Academic Unit	Joined Zoom Meeting
Argenbright	Christine	Nursing Department, Associate Professor	Yes
Coltman	Heather	Academic Affairs, Provost and Senior Vice President	Yes
Nasser	Saman	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	Yes
Rose	Liz	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	Yes
Will	Sheree	Dean's Office, The Graduate School	Yes