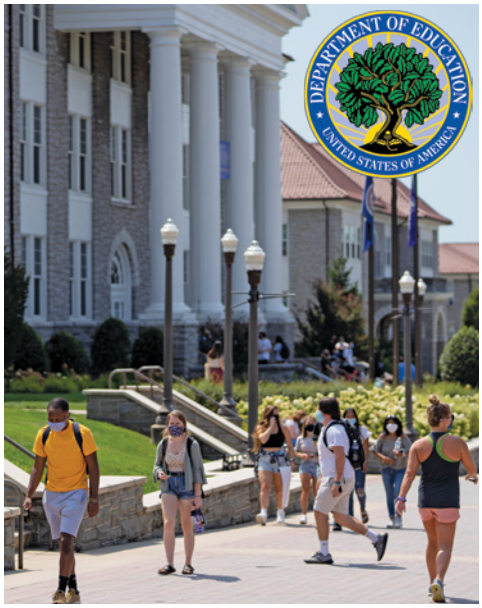
JMU News
Winter 2021



JMU ranked Virginia's "Best College for Getting a Job." Again.

For the second year in a row, JMU is ranked Virginia's "Best College for Getting a Job." This annual ranking is based on Department of Education College Scorecard data and statewide job placement numbers compiled by Zippia 10 years after graduation.

JMU prides itself on cultivating graduates with not just technical skills, but who can also think critically, reason ethically, work well on teams and communicate proficiently through a variety of platforms. "This ranking is a direct result of our strategic decision to build a curriculum and a highly engaged experience that blends the best aspects of big research institutions with those found at smaller liberal arts schools," said JMU President Jonathan R. Alger. "Such a blend creates an experience that instills JMU graduates with a demonstrated proficiency in skills and knowledge that cuts across majors."

Research has proven this approach works. A report conducted for the Association of American Colleges and Universities in 2018 found that business executives and hiring managers place a high priority on graduates' "oral communication, critical thinking, ethical judgment, working effectively in teams, working independently, self-motivation, written communication, and real-world application of skills and knowledge."

"It is for these reasons that employers love hiring JMU graduates," Alger added.

Focus on student career success

While nearly 80% of college students report that increasing their prospects for employment after graduation is their No. 1 reason for enrolling in higher education, research finds that fewer than 20% reach out to career services on their campuses for advice on finding a job. Gallup concluded in the same study that students who do seek career-services support are far more confident that their field of study will lead to a good job than their peers who do not. Why the disconnect?

Obviously, not all students are alike, nor are college campuses. But a universal truth would seem to suggest that university leaders ought to take a new approach: integrate career services with where students live. And as the university named Virginia's "Best College for Getting a Job," JMU ought to lead by example.

Research shows conclusively that students and their families embarking on their college search first seek out information about academic majors. Whether a university offers a major in their field of interest is the No. 1 factor in deciding whether to apply to a particular institution. JMU web analytics bear this out: users of search engines most often arrive at JMU webpages that provide overviews of the academic majors in which they're interested. So why not expose them to real-life career opportunities right there, before they've even arrived on campus as students?

> **"More universities need to take an institutional-level approach to career education."**
>
> **—CHRISTINE YIP CRUZVERGARA ('05)**

Handshake, an online community with more than 400,000 employer partners and 900 university partners, enables students to find internship and job opportunities, and is widely available to students across the nation—if they go to the career services website, find Handshake, sign up and log in to the system. But at JMU, we feed these career opportunities live to public webpages corresponding to academic majors.

Christine Cruzvergara ('05). (Bottom): The entire Handshake team.

According to Christine Yip Cruzvergara ('05), vice president for higher education and student success at Handshake (and proud JMU alumna), "More universities need to take an institutional-level approach to career education. It's inspiring to see senior leadership and academic colleagues champion an initiative that further drives student career success. As a product of the Virginia public education system, it's wonderful to see this level of commitment."

One of the important byproducts of this approach is that students see that a particular academic major can lead to many different career paths. Shortly after introducing the live Handshake feeds to public websites, the number of JMU students signing in to Handshake jumped by 35%. That's the sort of focus on outcomes that one would expect from Virginia's "Best College for Getting a Job."

WSJ ranks JMU highly in outcomes, engagement

James Madison University ranks No. 109 in outcomes and No. 111 in engagement in the 2021 *Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education* College Rankings of the top 797 schools throughout the United States.

Ranked No. 281 overall, JMU is among 15 public and private Virginia colleges and universities that made it into the WSJ rankings, which aim to assess student success and learning.

"Outcomes," as defined in the rankings, are based on an institution's graduation rate, the value added to graduates' salary, debt after graduation and academic reputation. The category, which accounts for 40% of the overall rankings, considers an institution's record on delivering successful outcomes for its students.

Making up 20% of the overall rankings, "engagement" factors student engagement, student recommendations, interaction with teachers and students, and the number of accredited programs to determine ranking. The category focuses on how well an institution informs, inspires and challenges its students.

The remaining 40% of the overall rankings are determined by resources (30%) and environment (10%). Factors in resources are finance per student, faculty per student and research papers per faculty. Environment factors are the proportion of international students, student diversity, student inclusion and staff diversity.

Exponential surge in Fulbright selections

This year, 49 JMU graduating seniors and alumni applied for a Fulbright U.S. Student Grant. Of those 49, 31 were announced as semifinalists, with finalists chosen later in the Spring 2021 semester. JMU's Fulbright applications are up by 345% compared to the Fall 2015 Fulbright cycle. This uptick is not limited just to Fulbrights; it is consistent with all national fellowship application data. Over the past five years, JMU has had a 196% increase in national fellowships applications and a 438% increase in winners and alternates. JMU also has three Critical Language Scholarship semifinalists this year.

Additionally, the JMU Honors College has had a 7.7% increase in four-year completion rates over the past five years.

FULBRIGHT

Couple's gift names Hartman Hall

James ('70, '00P) and Carolyn ('00P) Hartman of Rockingham, Virginia, have made a substantial gift to name a new building in the College of Business.

Hartman Hall, which adjoins Zane Showker Hall to constitute the CoB Learning Complex, delivers much-needed additional space and state-of-the-art technology for students in the nationally recognized business school.

Jim Hartman entered Madison College as a transfer student in 1968 and went on to earn a Bachelor of Business Administration degree while working part time for his father's trucking company. He and Carolyn recently sold the business, which allowed them to make the commitment to the CoB.

The university plans to celebrate with a grand opening in Fall 2021.

Some photographs were taken before the COVID-19 pandemic began. In the imagery you see on these pages, life looks much different than it does during the pandemic.

NATIONAL RECOGNITIONS

JMU is the "Most Innovative" school in the South, according to *U.S. News & World Report*.

BEST COLLEGES U.S.News MOST INNOVATIVE 2020

Among America's favorites

■ In the *Wall Street Journal* and *Times Higher Education's* 2020 U.S. College Rankings, JMU was No. 2 on the list of most recommended universities in the nation. Other schools in the rankings include Notre Dame (No. 3), Stanford (No. 6) and Virginia Tech (No. 9).

JMU alumni report a 97% satisfaction rate.

■ Gallup research finds that JMU alumni live lives of greater meaning and purpose than their peers graduating from the top 100 schools on the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings.

■ JMU earned the No. 2 overall ranking and the top spot on Instagram in the 2020 Higher Education Social Media Engagement Report compiled by Rival IQ, a social media analytics company. JMU ranked No. 4 in 2019, No. 1 in 2018, No. 3 in 2017 and No. 7 in 2016. Rival IQ surveyed all 357 Division I colleges and universities on social media between June 1, 2019 and May 31, 2020 on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Using that data and a weighted formula, an overall engagement ranking was generated for each school.

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Return on investment

■ JMU continues to hold a place in *The Princeton Review's* annual recommendations of the nation's best colleges for academics, affordability and career prospects. The university is also included in "Colleges That Pay You Back: The 200 Schools That Give You the Best Bang for Your Tuition Buck," which is an expansion of *The Princeton Review's* list. JMU has been listed in the books since 2009.

The Princeton Review®

■ *MONEY* magazine has identified JMU as a great investment based on educational quality, affordability and high-earning alumni in its "Best Colleges for Your Money" list. Of the 727 colleges included in the list, JMU ranks No. 25 in the Best Public College in the Nation category and No. 9 in the Best Public College in the South category.

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■ High graduation rates and low costs are among the factors landing JMU on *Kiplinger's Personal Finance's* top 100 "Best Values in Public Colleges" list for 2019. JMU placed 31st on the list of four-year public schools that combine outstanding education with economic value.

Kiplinger's PERSONAL FINANCE

■ More students at JMU reported they "made the right choice" when selecting a college than at any other school in the country, according to *The Wall Street Journal* and *Times Higher Education*.

■ JMU's College of Business is consistently ranked among the top 40 business programs by *Bloomberg Businessweek*.

Bloomberg Businessweek

JMU ATHLETICS

■ Enjoying arguably the most successful era in department history, James Madison Athletics ranks among national leaders for competitive excellence across all sports. According to research compiled by the department, JMU's 2015-20 winning percentage of .656 across all sports ranks 14th nationally among all 353 NCAA Division I institutions. Go Dukes!

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■ JMU was recognized by Forbes as a Best Employer for Women in 2020. Forbes surveyed a sample of 75,000 U.S. employees working for companies with at least 1,000 people in the U.S. Factors included diversity in top executive positions.

Factsheet

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY is a comprehensive university that is part of the statewide system of public higher education in the Commonwealth of Virginia and is named for James Madison, father of the U.S. Constitution and fourth president. Established March 14, 1908, the university offers programs on the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels, with its primary emphasis on the undergraduate student. JMU provides a total education to students—one that has a broad range of the liberal arts as its foundation and encompasses an extensive variety of professional and preprofessional programs, augmented by a multitude of learning experiences outside the classroom. The university has been a coeducational institution since 1966.

JMU is located in the heart of the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia along Interstate 81, approximately two hours from Washington, D.C., and Richmond, Virginia. The campus is easily accessible from I-81's Exit 245. The nearest airport is Shenandoah Valley Regional Airport (SHD) in Weyers Cave, 20 minutes south of campus.

MISSION: We are a community committed to preparing students to be educated and enlightened citizens who lead productive and meaningful lives.

SCHOOL COLORS: Purple and Gold

NICKNAME: Dukes

MASCOT: Duke Dog

ATHLETIC AFFILIATION: NCAA Division I, Colonial Athletic Association

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APPLICANT DETAILS (Fall 2020)	
Freshman Applicants	24,413
Freshmen Enrolled	5,194
Transfer Applicants (All 2020)	2,673
Transfer Enrolled (All 2020)	1,084
TOTAL APPLICANTS	**26,786**

ENROLLMENT (Fall 2020)	
Undergraduate	19,943
Graduate	1,946
In-State	77%
Out-of-State	23%
Female	58%
Male	42%
TOTAL ENROLLMENT	**21,889**

DEGREE PROGRAMS OFFERED	
Undergraduate	76
Master's	53
Educational Specialist	2
Doctoral	8
TOTAL	**139**

DEGREES CONFERRED (2019–20)	
Undergraduate	4,713
Graduate	878
TOTAL	**5,591**

STUDENT/FACULTY RATIO (Fall 2020)	16:1

FACULTY AND STAFF (Fall 2020)	
Full-Time Instructional Faculty	1,099
Part-Time Instructional Faculty	249
Full-Time Classified Staff	1,423
Full-Time Administrative and Professional Faculty	595

CAMPUS/BUILDINGS (698 acres)	
Academic	39
Administrative	23
Athletic	24
Residence Halls	33

TUITION AND FEES (2020–21)	
UNDERGRADUATE (per year):	
In-State Tuition	$7,250
Out-of-State Tuition	$24,150
Comprehensive Fee	$5,080
Room and Board	$11,588
GRADUATE (per credit hour):	
In-State Tuition	$499
Out-of-State Tuition	$1,231

BUDGET (2020–21)	
Total Operating Budget	**$628,417,188**

A gem of a collection

JMU has received a rare mineral collection valued at more than $16.8 million from the late Peter L. Via of Roanoke, Virginia.

The collection, currently on display in the JMU Mineral Museum, is well known within the mineralogy community, but until now very few people have been granted the opportunity to view it. It features 378 specimens from 24 states and 39 countries.

"This collection definitely has a lot of wow factor in it," said Lance Kearns, the museum's curator whose relationship with Via led to the gift. "You walk into the room, and you're immediately taken by the bright colors, the shapes, the luster."

The Peter L. Via Collection makes the JMU Mineral Museum an important destination for serious mineralogists and casual visitors alike, and expands the museum's role in STEM education and outreach.