

## **Your College Home: College of Arts and Letters**

### **Choosing a major/double majoring**

- You need 120 credits to graduate
- 41 credits for General Education
- CAL majors range from 33 to 49 credit hours
- BA/BS degree requirements range from 6 to 17
- Room to add a double major or a minor or multiple minors
- You can create your own plan of study that combines multiple interests
- Need help choosing a major? Check out all of the resources on the [JMU Advising page](#); as well, here is [a link to a set of questions](#) for exploring (and choosing) a major.

### **More about minors please!**

- While majors require between 33 and 49 credit hours, minors are like mini majors. They generally only require 18 credit hours.
- We have minors in one field of study (e.g. History, English, among others)
- We also have cross-disciplinary minors—these are minors that combine classes from different departments to allow you to study a region or topic from multiple perspectives. The minors listed on the handout are just the ones based in the College of Arts and Letters. There are many additional options across the university.
- Check out all of the minors at JMU! You can [find them listed in the undergraduate catalog under “programs of study.”](#)

### **Study Abroad**

- You can study abroad for a semester or participate in a short-term summer program. Check out all of the options on the Center for Global Engagement ([CGE Study Abroad page](#)).
- Semester options offered through JMU include Antwerp, Belgium; Florence, Italy; London, England; and Salamanca, Spain.
- You can study abroad for a semester or a full academic year at Oxford, Cambridge, or St. Andrews.
- Go to the study abroad fair! Representatives from JMU and non-JMU programs will all be there. You can explore different options and ask questions. It's a great way to learn about lots of different study abroad options.

## **Internships!**

- Most departments have internship coordinators and specific internship classes. You can register for these classes to get academic credit for your internship experience.
- The University Career Center has an Unpaid Internship Scholarship, which provides up to \$4,000 to cover expenses associated with an unpaid internship.
- The pre-law program also has a scholarship for law-related unpaid internships.
- Students participating in the Washington Semester program complete a full-time internship in Washington, DC.
- There are internship opportunities abroad as well.

## **Student Orgs and getting involved**

- When you arrive in August, look for information on Student Org Night. This is an opportunity to see the diversity of clubs and organizations offered at JMU (over 400).
- Most departments have associated student organizations and honor societies.

## **The CAL community**

- You are not just a member of your major department; you are also a member of the college. CAL areas of study are closely related, and you will take courses in more than discipline.
- Our alumni are an important part of this community. Each year we host the CAL Career Readiness Conference to connect students with alumni.

## **Undergraduate Research**

- What do we mean by research? Research involves the creation of new knowledge or the use of existing knowledge in innovative ways. There are lots of ways for you to get involved in research at JMU.
- You can join a research lab (there are several within CAL) or work one-on-one with a faculty member on their research projects. In some departments, you can earn course credit for research experiences.
  - [American Political Reform & Innovation Lab](#)
  - [Diplomacy Lab](#)
  - [Gender and Science Ethnography Lab](#)

- [JMU Archaeology Research Lab](#)
- [Terror Management Lab](#)
- You can get involved with publications like the [James Madison Undergraduate Research Journal](#) and [RhetTech](#).
- You can present your scholarship at the [Arts & Letters Undergraduate Research Conference](#).
- Also, check out the [First-Year Research Experience](#) (for first year and incoming transfer students), where you can work with a faculty member on a research or creative project and get paid for your work. Applications are usually due in November.

### **Working with my professors**

- All professors have office hours. These are times when the professor is available to meet with students. Their office hours should be posted on the syllabus. You can drop by their offices during these times. Many professors also offer virtual office hours, allowing you to connect with them via Zoom. Use this time to ask questions about course material, prepare for an exam, get feedback on an assignment or exam, and/or learn more about the professor's interests.
- If you are interested in the course topic and the professor's area of expertise, you can ask them about research opportunities, other courses that they're teaching, or recommendations about how to learn more about the subject matter.

### **Tips for Success**

- Go to class!
- Read your jmu.dukes email. All of it.
- Make use of your professors' office hours.
- Ask for help: If you're having difficulty with something, ask for help. There are so many resources across campus (your professors, your advisor, Madison Advising Peers, the Dean of Students office). Don't be afraid to use them.
- Get involved: It's the best way to meet people and get connected to the JMU community.
- Read Potty Mouth! IYKYK.
- Don't procrastinate: Generally, in college courses, you'll have fewer assignments than in high school. This means that you need to be responsible for keeping up with readings and working on assignments.

- Time management is essential! Utilize the resources offered in the [Learning Success Strategies](#) office to get help with time management, study skills, reading comprehension, note-taking, test-taking, and online learning.

### Unique Learning Opportunities

- [Washington Semester Program](#)
- [JMU in LA](#)
- So many study abroad opportunities! Check out the information on the [Center for Global Engagement](#) website.
- Career Treks

### CAL and Campus Resources

- If you have questions about scheduling and requirements, reach out to your first-year advisor.
- If you have a problem related to a class, **start by talking directly with your professor**. If talking with your professor does not resolve your issue, you should reach out to the head of the department next.
- [Learning Centers](#): The Learning Centers offer writing consultations, speech and presentation prep, tutoring, and more. Don't be afraid to use these resources.
- [Counseling Center](#): The JMU counseling center has first visit walk-in hours and emergency assistance.
- [Madison Cares](#) is a network to promote well-being and safety in the JMU community.
- Don't wait until senior year to focus on career planning and professional development. Check out all the resources and programming we offer on our [CAL careers page](#).