

Vision Team 7: Creating an Innovative Campus Community

“Friendly Campus”

Understanding that innovation, partnership development, and interdisciplinary work happens best when people are brought together, and when they feel supported and recognized in their boundary-crossing work, physical and organizational development should happen with a focus on the human **experience**. JMU should therefore be the “Friendly Campus”. More specifically this means:

- Buildings and public spaces should be designed with accessibility, intimacy, mixing, and organic development in mind. Connection should be emphasized.
- Systems and procedures should emphasize ease of use and reducing frictions to the end goal.
- A sense of belonging and a spirit of recognition should permeate space design, and the evaluation and reward structures wherever possible.
- Build the reputation of JMU and our campus as place of partnership and mutually beneficial activity.

Madison District - Reimagining central campus

The Madison District will function as a **student success facilitator and relationship-building environment**, ensuring students experience JMU as a connected, supportive “home university” while also serving as a welcoming gateway to the Harrisonburg community and beyond. Advising access, wellness programming, community marketplace activation, and flexible learning spaces will be embedded directly into the Madison District facilities and daily campus life.

The Madison District includes: Relocated and expanded student union, hybrid academic spaces, football stadium expansion, Village and Lake residence housing areas, and the JMU bookstore.

Madison Inspires – Creating innovative living and learning experiences for JMU students

The Vision Team recommends establishing a university-wide **JMU Living Lab Institute** that formally connects academic programs, operational units, students, faculty, current and new initiatives, and external partners through structured applied projects embedded directly in campus systems.

Under this model, the university develops a structured pipeline converting real institutional challenges into coursework integration, undergraduate and graduate research, internships, practica, capstones, and faculty applied research initiatives.

Example initiatives within the larger JMU Living Lab include: JMU Arboretum, JMU Lab School, Institute for Innovation in Health and Human Services, Army and Air Force Air/Space Training Center and proposed TEMPO Institute, and the JMU Farm.

The Living Lab Institute elevates the university’s physical campus and affiliated educational environments into a defining institutional learning asset while strengthening interdisciplinary collaboration and improving operational performance through research-informed solutions.

Madison Connections – Creating structures that foster innovation and integration

The current systems at JMU make collaboration across the University and with outside entities more difficult than necessary. Significant investment is necessary to reorganize and expand current structures to provide the necessary support for offices within JMU to collaborate with other units from across campus as well as external partners. Similarly, significant attention should be paid to policies and practices (e.g. workload allocation) to encourage engagement in interdisciplinary endeavors.

Key initiatives includes a single office that serves as an integration point between internal and external partners, strategies to maximize current and future space use, creation of a unified event management office and experience, and exploration of how to schedule time for campus and external partners to collaborate.