

ASCENT

LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Are you ready to prepare for the next step toward leadership and unlock your potential? The Talent Development ASCENT Leadership Program is designed for employees who are not necessarily in supervisory positions but are eager to grow into leadership roles. This 12-month immersive experience will equip you with the foundational skills and mindset needed to become an influential leader and drive meaningful change at JMU.

Why Choose ASCENT?

Comprehensive Leadership Training	Dive into core leadership principles through ASCENT's foundational curriculum. Explore self-awareness, communication, decision making, collaboration, and ethical leadership to build the skills and confidence to lead with purpose at JMU.
Expert Facilitators	Learn from seasoned JMU professionals and innovative leaders who bring real-world experience and insights. Our facilitators are dedicated to helping you develop your unique leadership style and navigate the complexities of modern leadership.
Interactive and Engaging Sessions	Participate in dynamic sessions that go beyond traditional lectures. Engage in hands-on activities, group discussions, and practical exercises that bring leadership concepts to life. You'll not only learn about leadership but also practice and refine your skills in a supportive environment.
ASCENT Cohort Book Club	As part of ASCENT, participants join a virtual book club centered on Kouzes and Posner's <i>The Truths of Leadership</i> . Between monthly sessions, small teams lead chapter discussions that spark dialogue, connect lessons to program themes, and strengthen cohort connections through shared learning.
Leadership Profile & Growth	Discover your leadership strengths through CliftonStrengths, Emotional Intelligence 2.0, and other assessments. Capture your insights in a personalized Leadership Profile that will continue to guide your growth long after the program ends.

Program Structure

ASCENT meets on the second Monday (first Monday in December) from 1:30–4:30 pm. July is a break month with an optional mid-program debrief. Participants will also take part in virtual book club meetups between in-person classes.

Eligibility Criteria

Open to employees interested in developing their leadership potential, regardless of whether they currently supervise others. No previous leadership experience is required, but active participation in all activities is expected.

Introduction to Program	January 11, 2027
Begin your leadership journey: Meet your cohort, explore your leadership style, and begin shaping a personal guide and leadership portfolio that will anchor your growth throughout the program.	
Emotional Intelligence	February 8, 2027
Know yourself so you can lead others: Discover how your emotions, triggers, and strengths influence your leadership and learn to use self-awareness as the foundation for effective relationships.	
CliftonStrengths for Leaders	March 8, 2027
Lead with your strengths: Gain a deeper understanding of your full CliftonStrengths profile and explore how to leverage your natural talents to lead with authenticity and purpose.	
Values & Vision	April 12, 2027
Clarify the <u>why</u> that guides your leadership: Identify your core values and begin crafting a personal vision statement that connects your leadership to meaning and direction.	
Growth Mindset & Adaptability	May 10, 2027
Stay flexible and resilient in shifting environments: Practice seeing challenges as opportunities to learn and develop strategies for staying resilient in the face of change and uncertainty.	
Communication Fundamentals	June 14, 2027
Make your message clear, heard, and understood: Build confidence in expressing ideas with clarity, listening actively, and adapting your communication style to diverse audiences.	
Mid-Program Debrief (Optional)	July 12, 2027
Pausing to reflect, recalibrate, and re-energize: Reflect on your progress, share insights with peers, and realign your goals for the second half of the program.	
Trust & Psychological Safety	August 9, 2027
The currency of leadership, credibility and safety: Learn how to create an environment where trust thrives, people feel safe to share ideas, and accountability strengthens relationships.	
Collaboration & Relationships	September 13, 2027
Building bridges across teams and differences: Explore strategies to work across personalities, departments, and perspectives to create stronger partnerships and collective success.	
Creative Decision Making and Problem Solving	October 11, 2027
From stuck to solutions: Discover tools and approaches to think differently and generate creative options. Learn how to break free from common traps and move forward with clarity and confidence.	
Conflict Awareness & Resolution	November 8, 2027
Turning differences into constructive dialogue: Recognize conflict styles and practice tools for addressing challenges early, turning tension into opportunities for growth and understanding.	
Ethics, Integrity, & Civic Engagement	(1st Monday) December 6, 2027
Leading with credibility and responsibility: Examine how values and ethics guide decision making, strengthen credibility, and shape your role as a responsible leader within the JMU community.	