Board of Visitors Meeting
November 13, 2026

BOARD OF VISITORS

ITINERARY
November 12-13, 2026

Thursday, November 12

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee - Meeting Room 3
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Governance Committee – Meeting Room 1
1:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.	Academic and Research Excellence Committee - Highlands Room
1:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.	Finance and Physical Development Committee - Meeting Room 3
1:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.	Student Affairs Committee – Ballroom B
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Athletics Committee – Ballroom B
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Enrollment and Marketing Committee - Meeting Room 3
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Philanthropy and Engagement Committee – Allegheny Room

Friday, November 13

8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Full Board Meeting – Board Room

THE VISITORS OF JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY
THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
BOARD MEETING AGENDA
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2026
8:30 a.m.

1
CALL TO ORDER

2
***CONSENT AGENDA**
Approval of Minutes: September 18, 2026 and October 12, 2026

3
PRESIDENT'S REPORT
James Schmidt

4
***COMMITTEE REPORTS**
Audit, Risk and Compliance – Jeff Bolander
Governance - Heather Hedrick*
Academic and Research Excellence – Nicole Palya Wood*
Student Affairs – Kay Coles James
Finance and Physical Development – Steve Smith
Athletics – John Lynch
Enrollment and Marketing - Jack White
Philanthropy and Engagement– Nicole Palya Wood

5
FACULTY SENATE UPDATE
Melanie Shoffner, Speaker, Faculty Senate

6
STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD UPDATE
Gram Sher, Student Representative

7
STRATEGIC INNOVATIONS: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE FUTURE OF JMU
Fletcher Linder, Interim Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

Part I: BUILDING JMU'S AI STRATEGY
Yasmeen Shorish, Associate Dean, Libraries and Special Advisor to the Provost on AI
Michael Swartley, Interim Associate Vice President and CIO, Information Technology

Part II: PREPARING LEADERS FOR AN AI-ENABLED FUTURE
Mike Busing, Dean, College of Business
Greg Gabriel, Lecturer of Computer Information Systems
Jeff Driscoll, Lecturer of Computer Information Systems
Alysa Brown, First year student, Marketing BBA

8
CLOSED SESSION*

9
ADJOURNMENT

***Action Required**

Call to Order

Board of Visitors Meeting
November 13, 2026

BOARD OF VISITORS

Consent Agenda



THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
THE VISITORS OF JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

Volume LXIII No. 1

Minutes of the Meeting of September 18, 2026

The Visitors of James Madison University met on Friday, September 18, 2026 in the Festival Conference and Student Center Board Room on the campus of James Madison University. David Rexrode, Rector, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

PRESENT:

Bolander, Jeff
Caudle, Larry
Fiorina, Carly
Galati, Tom
Hedrick, Heather
James, Kay Coles
Killeen, Jessica
Lynch, John
Reddix, Angela
Rexrode, David, Rector
Smith, Steve
Thacker, Nikki
White, Jack
Winn Bryan, Lisa
Wood, Nicole Palya

Kirkpatrick, David, Secretary
Sher, Gram, Student Representative to the Board, 2026-27
Shoffner, Melanie, Speaker, Faculty Senate, 2026-27

ALSO PRESENT:

Schmidt, James, President
Hutchins, Christine, Vice President, University Marketing and Communications
Langridge, Nick, Vice President for Philanthropy and Engagement
Linder, Fletcher, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Miller, Tim, Vice President for Student Affairs
Moore, Towana, Vice President for Administration and Finance
Roan, Matt, Director of Athletics
Tongen, Anthony, Vice President for Research, Economic Development, and Innovation
Wood, Melinda, Vice President, Access and Enrollment
Vass, Mary-Hope, Assistant Vice President, Communications and University Spokesperson
Knight, Jack, University Counsel

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion of Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Hedrick, the Consent Agenda was approved which included the minutes of April 24, 2026, June 18, 2026, and August 26, 2026.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

- President James Schmidt presented information on the following (Attachment A)
  The first-year class consists of 5,037 students, 1.1% above the target with a total fall enrollment of 23,167.

- JMU continues to shine in national rankings, including dining, which Princeton Review ranked No. 3 nationally and No. 1 in Virginia.
- The search for a new provost is moving forward with three finalists.
- Since July 1, JMU donors have committed $10.6 million compared to $4.2 million at this same time last year, more than double the inked commitments.
- In memory of former Board of Visitors member Leslie Flanary Gilliam, her family has committed $3.5 million toward the rededication and renaming of the College of
- Health and Behavioral Studies building as Gilliam Hall.
- TimelyCare is expanding to faculty and staff at no cost. The platform provides 24/7 mental health support, counseling, health coaching, and other well-being resources.
- Discussed pathway to R1 status and how JMU will be distinctive and not sacrifice undergraduate teaching or our signature undergraduate experience.
- The General Assembly awarded JMU $115.3 million to expand facilities for the College of Health and Behavioral Studies, $1 million for the Fast Flex Nursing pathway, $28.75 million to renovate and expand Johnston Hall and $1.7 million for furnishing and equipping the building.
- Looking to the next legislative session, JMU's number one priority is seeking at least $8M to enhance compensation competitiveness.
- JMU will seek additional support to address growth in nursing, engineering, and real estate education programs.
- Capital requests for the 2027 legislative session include planning and design monies for the College of Business Addition; Physics and Chemistry Addition; and the renovation of Moody Hall.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee

Jeff Bolander, Chair, presented the report of the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee. The minutes of the April 23, 2026 meeting were approved. (Attachment B)

Mr. Bolander reported on the following topics from the committee meeting:

1. Audit and Compliance Annual Report;
2. Audit and Compliance Budget*;
3. 2026-2027 Internal Audit Plan*; and
4. The committee then went into a closed session discussion

On motion of Mr. Bolander, seconded by Mr. Steve Smith. the Audit, Risk and Compliance report was accepted.

Governance Committee

Heather Hedrick, Chair, presented the report of the Governance Committee. The minutes of the April 23, 2026 meeting were approved. (Attachment C)

Ms. Hedrick reported on the following from the committee meeting:

1) Board Meeting Structure;
2) Board Manual and Roles & Responsibilities; and
3) Board Retreat Discussion

On motion of Ms. Hedrick, seconded by Mr. Tom Galati the Governance report was accepted.

Academic and Research Excellence Committee

Nicole Palya Wood, Chair, presented the report of the Academic and Research Excellence Committee. The minutes of the April 23, 2026 meeting were approved. (Attachment D)
Ms. Wood reported on the following topics from the committee meeting:

1) Divisional Update;
2) Research, Economic Development and Innovation Divisional Update;
3) International Education and Study Abroad;
4) Developing New Programs; and
5) Ideas and Potential Topics for Future Meetings

On motion of Ms. Wood, seconded by Ms. Carly Fiorina the report of the Academic and Research Excellence Committee was accepted.

Student Affairs Committee

Kay Coles James, Chair, presented the report of the Student Affairs Committee. The minutes from the April 23, 2026 meeting were approved. (Attachment E)
Ms. James reported on the following topics from the committee meeting:

1) Madison's Story: Transitioning to Off Campus Life;
2) Student Affairs Report;
3) Student Government Association Report;
4) Student Representative to the Board of Visitors Update; and
5) Student Conversations

On motion of Ms. James, seconded by Ms. Nicole Wood the Student Affairs report was accepted.

Finance and Physical Development Committee

Steve Smith, Chair, presented the report of the Finance and Physical Development Committee. The minutes from the April 23, 2026 meeting were approved. (Attachment F)
Mr. Smith reported on the following from the committee meeting:

1) Financial Review;
2) Bond Rating Update;
3) 2025-2026 Receivables Write Offs;
4) Workforce Planning;
5) Budget and Government Relations Update;
6) Six-Year Plan Update;
7) Strategic Plan Discussion; and
8) The committee then entered a closed session discussion

On motion of Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Tom Galati, the Finance and Physical Development report was accepted.

Athletics Committee

John Lynch, Chair, presented the report of the Athletics Committee. The minutes of the April 23, 2026 meeting were approved. (Attachment G)

Mr. Lynch reported on the following topics from the committee meeting:

1) NCAA, Conference, JMU;
2) Legislative and House Settlement;
3) 2025-2026 Strategic Plan Accountability Measures and Athletics Strategic Planning;
4) Student Athlete Academic Success and Landscape Challenges;
5) Development Report;
6) Front Porch & Front Door; and
7) Future Agenda Items.

On motion of Mr. Lynch, seconded by Ms. Heather Hedrick, the Athletics report was accepted.

Enrollment and Marketing Committee

Jack L. White, Chair, presented the report of the Enrollment and Marketing Committee. Mr. White reported on the following topics from the committee meeting:

1) Welcome to the Inaugural Meeting;
2) Enrollment Landscape;
3) National Brand Study; Beat System Implementation;
4) Joint Enrollment/Marketing Planning; and
5) Topics of Interest for Future Meetings
    a. Rankings and Distinction Strategy
    b. Financial Aid and Scholarship Strategy
    c. Why Strategic Enrollment Management is Important
    d. Brand Awareness Campaign Opportunity

On a motion from Mr. White, seconded by Mr. Steve Smith, the Enrollment and Marketing report was accepted.

Philanthropy and Engagement Committee

Carly Fiorina, Chair, presented the report of the Philanthropy and Engagement Committee. The minutes of the April 23, 2026 meeting were approved. (Attachment H)

Ms. Fiorina reported on the following topics from the committee meeting:

1) VP Updates;
2) CHBS – Campaign Giving;
3) Funds Raised to Date;
4) Dukes Holding Doors – James Madison University Alumni Association; and
5) The committee entered a closed session discussion

On motion of Ms. Fiorina, seconded by Ms. Nicole Wood, the Philanthropy and Engagement report was accepted.

FACULTY SENATE UPDATE (Attachment I)

Melanie Shoffner, Faculty Senate Speaker provided an update from the Faculty Senate.

- The Faculty Senate held its final meeting of the 2025-2026 academic year on April 30, 2026.
- Committee reports and Senate discussion addressed topics related to support for and implementation of strategic plan initiatives (e.g., AI tools, the Madison Promise, Carnegie classification).
- The Shared Governance Committee developed guidelines for best voting practices; it has not yet been determined where these guidelines will be housed.
- The Senate Treasurer reported processing 25 requests to honor faculty bereavements during the academic year.
- The Faculty Senate will continue to address the following concerns in the 2026-2027 academic year: a) goal of reclassifying JMU as a research-intensive (R1) university; b) guidance for and mis/use of AI. The Senate will also help to facilitate the adoption of program learning objectives, where possible, for the new General Education curriculum.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD UPDATE (Attachment J)
Gram Sher, Student Representative to the Board, provided the following updates:

- Introduction
  - Senior, Political Science/Public Administration Double Major
  - Involved in Student Government Association; Center for Civic Engagement; ReScored Acapella and WXJM
- Updates
  - Students are busy with Weeks of Welcome; Greek Life Recruitment; Student Org Night; and Career Fair
  - Gram has completed Meetings with Students/Organizations; Meetings with Admin/Key Campus Partners; and Attended/hosted student-focused events
- Goals
  - Educate/inform students about board functions and how they can get involved.
  - Support Student Voices on Campus
  - Collaborate with students to relay any issues to the Board and other administration
- Question
  - Support current students during period of university growth

STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT PLANNING
Melinda Wood, Vice President, Access and Enrollment and Chris Orem, Executive Director, Planning, Analytics and Institutional Research, presented information on the following: (Attachment K):

- The era of easy growth is over: -13% and –7% projected decline in high school graduates nationally and in Virginia; Families are asking hard questions about the value and legislatures are asking about the role of higher education; The Madison Promise commits JMU to grow, become more selective, and rise nationally, which requires a deliberate, long-range strategy.
- Strategic enrollment planning at JMU: University-wide, every division at the table and has defined role in plan; Long-range roadmap through FY32, aimed at 2040; data informed: PAIR

evidence, net-revenue modeling, workforce needs; success = predictable, planned change in who we enroll.
- A disciplined four-phase framework: preparation and data analysis, strategy development, plan formation and goal setting; implementation and evaluation
- An end-to-end view of the student pipeline: high school and transfer pipelines; undergraduate; graduate and doctoral; Virginia workforce.

- What a student chooses and experiences: Shared outcome among academic affairs, student affairs, access and enrollment, administration and finance; 30,000 students by 2040 and the capacity to serve them well.
- What extends our reach and makes it possible: marketing and communications; athletics; philanthropy and engagement; REDI.
- Three phases of growth to 30,000: FY27-31 (1.5%/year); FY32-36 (1.7%/year); FY37-40 2.0%/year).
- Strategic anchors already in motion: direct admit nursing; CHBS expansion; new COB building; new program development pipeline.
- Three things to remember: Enrollment planning is now a university-wide approach and discipline; Programs, buildings and beds determine when and where we can grow; The plan is developed by May 2027 and implementation begins.

CAREER OUTCOMES REPORT

Myles Surrett, Associate Vice President, Career, Experiential Learning, Transitions and Accessibility and Libby Westley, University Career Center, presented information on the following: (Attachment K):

- Career Outcome: full/part-time work; internships or service programs; military service; graduate school.
- Career Outcomes overview: 95.3% of degree recipients have a career outcome.
- Local impact of JMU graduates: continued Virginia connection (68.3%); 121 undergraduate students started at JMU from the Shenandoah Valley in Fall 2021 247 - # of graduates from the Class of 2025 working full-time in the Shenandoah Valley; 263 - # of graduates from the Class of 2025 continuing their education in the Shenandoah Valley; 322% more students came to the Valley for JMU and stayed as residents afterwards.
- JMU teaching across Virginia, 2025: 257 JMU graduates indicated they are in a teaching profession and are employed in Virginia; 85.4% of JMU graduates who indicated they are employed in a teaching profession are teaching in Virginia.
- JMU nursing across Virginia, 2025: 78.9% of JMU Nursing majors indicated they are employed in Virginia post-graduation; 150 JMU Nursing majors indicated they are employed in nursing post-graduation in Virginia.
- WBLE: A work-based learning experience incorporates hands-on work in an applied context that increases knowledge and skills necessary for discipline-focused career readiness; 30.2% of students completed a WBLE for credit; undergraduate outcomes correlated to WBLEs: 96.7% with 1+ WBLE have a career outcome.

The Rector called for the board to move into closed session. Vice Rector Wood made the following motion.

"I move the Board go into closed session to discuss the following matters:

1. Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.1. of the Code of Virginia, to discuss personnel matters involving promotions, performance, retirements, hiring, resignation, salary adjustment and status changes of faculty members, university administrators and appointees;
2. Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.7., to consult with legal counsel pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the University;
3. Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.8., to consult with legal counsel for the provision of legal advice by such counsel;
4. Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.9., to discuss matters relating to gifts, bequests and fundraising activities, and contracts for services or work to be performed by the University; and
5. Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.29., to discuss the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining positions or negotiating strategy of the University.
6. Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.3, to discuss the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and the disposition of publicly held real property"

The motion was seconded by Ms. Hedrick and the Board moved into closed session.

Following the closed session, Mr. Rexrode then stated the following:

During the closed session, the board discussed only matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and only those types of matters identified in the motion for the closed session.

RECORDED VOTE: the following is an affirmative recorded, member by member vote:

Bolander, Jeff	Lynch, John
Caudle, Larry	Reddix, Angela
Fiorina, Carly	Rexrode, David, Rector
Galati, Tom	Smith, Steve
Hedrick, Heather	White, Jack
James, Kay Coles	Win Bryan, Lisa
Killeen, Jessica	Wood, Nicole Palya

Mr. Rexrode then asked if there were any motions to come forward.

On motion from Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Galati, the Personnel Action Report was approved.
On a motion from Mr. White, seconded by Ms. Hedrick, the Real Estate purchase was approved.

ADJOURNMENT
There being no further business, on motion of Ms. Wood, seconded by Ms. Fiorina, the Board voted to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned 12:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

_____
David A. Rexrode, Rector

_____
David C. Kirkpatrick, Secretary

THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
THE VISITORS OF JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

Volume LXIII No. 2

Minutes of the Meeting of October 12, 2026

The Visitors of James Madison University met for an all-virtual, special meeting on Monday, October 12, 2026, with all members participating through electronic communication. David Rexrode, Rector, called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

Bolander, Jeff
Caudle, Larry
Fiorina, Carly
Galati, Tom
Hedrick, Heather
James, Kay Coles
Lynch, John
Killeen, Jessica
Reddix, Angela
Rexrode, David, Rector
Thacker, Nikki
White, Jack
Winn Bryan, Lisa
Wood, Nicole Palya

Kirkpatrick, David, Secretary

ALSO PRESENT:
Knight, Jack, University Legal Counsel
Schmidt, James, President
Roan, Matt, Director of Athletics

CLOSED SESSION

The Rector called for the board to move into closed session. Vice Rector Wood made the following motion.

"I move the Board go into closed session to discuss the following matters:

1. Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.1. of the Code of Virginia, to discuss personnel matters involving the hiring of university administrators;
2. Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.8., to consult with legal counsel for the provision of legal advice by such counsel; and
3. Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A.29., to discuss public contracts involving the expenditure of public funds and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract where discussion in open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the University."

The motion was seconded by Mr. White and the Board moved into closed session.

Following the closed session, Mr. Rexrode then stated the following:

During the closed session, the board discussed only matters lawfully

exempted from open meeting requirements and only those types of matters identified in the motion for the closed session.

RECORDED VOTE: the following is an affirmative recorded, member by member vote:

Bolander, Jeff
Caudle, Larry
Fiorina, Carly
Galati, Tom
Hedrick, Heather
James, Kay Coles
Killeen, Jessica
Reddix, Angela
Rexrode, David, Rector
Thacker, Nikki
White, Jack
Winn Bryan, Lisa
Wood, Nicole Palya

Mr. Rexrode then asked if there were any motions to come forward.

On a motion from Ms. Wood, seconded by Mr. Caudle, the appointment of Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs was approved. The motion passed with 12 votes in favor and 1 opposing vote from Mr. Bolander.

Mr. Rexrode then read a Resolution regarding JMU's Athletics affiliation.

On a motion from Mr. Galati, seconded by Ms. Wood, the motion of the athletics resolution was approved. The motion passed with 13 votes in favor.

ADJOURNMENT
There being no further business, on motion of Mr. Caudle, seconded by Ms. Wood, the Board voted to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned 8:41 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

_____
David A. Rexrode, Rector

_____
David C. Kirkpatrick, Secretary

Board of Visitors Meeting
November 13, 2026

BOARD OF VISITORS

President's Report

James C. Schmidt

November 13, 2026

BOARD OF VISITORS

Board of Visitors Meeting
November 13, 2026

BOARD OF VISITORS

Motions from Committee



Electronic Meeting Policy Review

Jack Knight, University Legal Counsel

Electronic Meeting Policy Review

Board Manual Article XI.H

H. Meetings held through Electronic Communication Means The board may hold all-virtual public meetings following all the provisions set forth in 2.2- 3708.3 of the Code of Virginia. These provisions include:

1) The required meeting notice must indicate if the meeting is in-person or all-virtual.

2) Public access to the all-virtual meeting public is provided via electronic communication means and included in the public notice.

a. Contact information must be included to notify the university if the electronic communication means is interrupted or fails.

3) No more than two members of the board are together in any one remote location unless that remote location is open to the public.

4) The full board may convene an all-virtual public meeting (i) not more than two times per calendar year or 50 percent of the meetings held per calendar year; or (ii) not consecutively with another all-virtual public meeting.

5) All committees of the board may also hold all-virtual meetings in accordance with this policy and applicable law.

6) Requests for an all-virtual meeting shall be made to the rector, in consultation with the administration.

a. Such requests may be for such circumstances as emergency situations, when members are separated more than 60 miles from each other/location, difficulty in having quorum if held in-person, travel difficulties, or other types of situations allowed by law and deemed appropriate by the rector.

The board shall ensure that the meeting minutes contain all of the information required by law. Section 2.2-3708.3 of the Code of Virginia allows for an individual member to participate remotely under the following provisions:

1) The member must request permission to participate remotely and notify the rector or committee chair that:

a. The member has a temporary or permanent disability or other medical condition that prevents their physical attendance; or

b. A medical condition of a member of the member's family requires them to provide care or the member must provide care for a person with a disability; or

c. The member's principal residence is more than 60 miles from the meeting location; or

d. The member is unable to attend due to a personal matter and must specify the nature of the matter.

i. The member may not use a personal matter reason to miss more than two meetings or 25 percent of the meetings held per calendar year.

2) These provisions regarding remote participation of individual board members apply to meetings of the full board and to each of its committees separately

Board of Visitors Meeting
November 13, 2026

BOARD OF VISITORS

Curriculum Updates

Paula Maxwell
Associate Vice Provost for Curriculum

New Graduate Degree Program

M.S. in Data Leadership

- Purpose
  - To pair undergraduate degrees with complementary leadership fundamentals and data analytics decision-making skills, allowing leaders to make more competent, effective, ethical and impactful decisions

  - Graduates will be prepared to:
    - Use data to more effectively guide teams, inform policy and strategy, oversee data-informed initiatives, make evidence-based data decisions, and solve organizational problems across complex, data-rich environments

M.S. in Data Leadership

- Need for the Degree
  - Leadership positions need enhanced decision-making skills based on scientific evidence
  - Career growth challenges exist for many bachelor's degree holders due to a lack of leadership skills and analytical decision-making knowledge
  - Increased need for understanding AI as a decision-making tool – recognizing issues and opportunities associated with AI use

M.S. in Data Leadership

- Curriculum
  - Fully online (16 months) (Su, F, W, Sp, Su)

Required Courses	
LEAD 600. Foundations of Data Leadership (3)	LEAD 670. Technological Leadership for the Public Good (3)
LEAD 620. Systems Thinking in Data Literacy, Design and Analysis (3)	LEAD 651. Data Visualization and Interpretation for Leaders (3)
LEAD 630. Strategic Leadership Communications or SCOM 610. Strategic Communications (3)	LEAD 652. Optimizing Leadership with Big Data (3)
LEAD 650. Statistical Modeling for Leadership (3)	LEAD 675. Leading with Data in Cross-cultural Environments (3)
LEAD 660. Data Ethics and Ethical Decision-making (3)	LEAD 690. Data Leadership Capstone (3)
Total Credits	30

M.S. in Data Leadership

- Anticipated Enrollment
  - 15 students per year
- Funding Model
  - Self-sustaining through tuition funds (via School of Professional and Continuing Education)
- Resources
  - Direct Expenses and Overhead: $240K
    - Program director stipend, adjunct faculty salaries, marketing, travel, doctoral assistantship, overhead
  - Projected Gross Tuition Revenue: $273K / Net Revenue: $33K

M.S. in Data Leadership

- Duplication
  - Currently, no programs in Data Leadership in Virginia
  - GMU, ODU, UVA, VCU, VSU, VT, W&M – Data Science/Analytics – different focus
  - Nationally: certificate programs; growing interest in degree programs
- Relationship to Existing Programs
  - PhD in Strategic Leadership Studies

M.S. in Data Leadership

- Employment Demand
  - SCHEV finds no data available for Data Leadership
  - BLS: 35% growth in data science; ~6% growth for managers

- Return on Investment: Master's in Data Leadership (no data available)
  - Median salaries data scientists: $120K
  - Median salaries managers: $105K

M.S. in Data Leadership

- Effective Date
  - Summer 2027, pending SCHEV approval

- Academic and Research Excellence Committee Action Requested
  - Approval of proposed graduate degree program: M.S. in Data Leadership

Board of Visitors Meeting
November 13, 2026

BOARD OF VISITORS

Faculty Senate Update

Melanie Shoffner
Speaker, Faculty Senate

BOARD OF VISITORS

Board of Visitors Meeting
12-13 Nov 2026

Faculty Senate Report
prepared 27 Oct 2026

Senate Meetings

The Faculty Senate held its first meetings of the 2026-2027 academic year on 3 September and 1 October 2026. Both meetings were conducted virtually.

Faculty Senators' University Service

Faculty Senators serve on 16 different university-level committees. These include the Academic Affairs Committee (Ying Jin, COE), AI Strategy Working Group (Jenn Davis, CISE), Employee Advisory Committee (Joe LeBlanc, CHBS), General Education Oversight Committee (Michael Hickman, CAL), Media Board (Elizabeth Price, LIB), and Reengineering Madison Steering Committee (Harold Butner, CSM). As appointed Senate representatives, Senators provide monthly updates of committee work and, as needed, bring items back to Senate for discussion.

Faculty Senate Engagement Mini-Grants

Each year, the Offices of the President and the Provost provide funds to the Faculty Senate in support of instructional faculty's work with learning, civic, and/or community engagement; these funds are awarded through the Faculty Senate Engagement Mini-Grants. This year, $50,000 was allocated. The Research & Scholarship Committee, currently chaired by Marshal Ben Selznick, reviews proposals to determine winners of these competitive mini-grants. This fall, 28 applications were submitted, totaling $111,716 in requested funds. Winners will be announced later this month.

Faculty Ombuds Search Committee

This academic year, there will be a search for the next Faculty Ombuds (formerly ombudsperson). The ombuds is a confidential resource for faculty who wish to discuss questions or concerns with an independent and neutral third party who is also able to provide information regarding university policies and procedures. Tracy Zinn (CHBS) as Speaker Pro Tempore is chairing this committee with AVP Elizabeth Oldmixon and the current Ombuds David McGraw as members.

Faculty Senate R1 Survey

To continue Senate efforts to engage with the strategic plan, Faculty Senators were asked to solicit feedback from their departmental faculty and complete a Senate survey on JMU's proposed move to R1 status.

The survey focused on gathering information from the faculty to better understand the perceived benefits and disadvantages of moving toward greater research activity and external funding, departmental interest in establishing new doctoral programs, and benefits and disadvantages of moving toward increased research doctoral degree production.

Of 47 senators, 43 responded to the survey. A summary of the survey's findings follows.

- Potential benefits of research expansion include
  - improvements to research infrastructure and research support
  - reduction of current teaching loads
  - more opportunities for students' research engagement
  - increased visibility and stature for JMU

- Potential disadvantages of research expansion include
    - stress on already overburdened infrastructure and resources
    - problematic time for reliance on external grants and funding
    - devaluation of JMU's established strengths in undergraduate teaching
    - increased faculty workloads
    - effects on campus climate
    - increased reliance on contingent faculty
- Potential benefits of expanding doctoral programs include
    - availability of doctoral students for research and teaching
    - increased faculty research activity
    - increased rank and exposure for JMU
- Potential disadvantages of doctoral expansions include
    - lack of infrastructure, resources, and funding
    - inequitable faculty workloads
    - diverted resources and funding for undergraduate education
    - feasibility of additional doctoral programs
    - disruptions to JMU's "brand"

The final question on the survey asked whether the department does or does not endorse efforts for JMU to become an R1 institution. Responses indicated that 10 departments do endorse efforts to realign as a research-intensive university; 28 departments do not. Five departments did not respond to the question.

An important takeaway from the survey is that, as faculty engage with JMU's efforts to implement the strategic plan, they also provide informed perspectives and important questions related to the implementation (e.g., action plans, timelines, budgets, resources) and implications (e.g., university identity, undergraduate mission, part-time faculty) of intentionally remaking JMU into a research-intensive university.

As of this writing, university leadership has not responded to the survey findings; additional information on the survey and connected discussion will be shared in the Speaker's oral report. We look forward to conversations taking up faculty views on the proposed R1 direction for JMU as efforts to engage in shared governance continue.

Respectfully submitted,



Melanie Shoffner, PhD
Faculty Senate Speaker
Professor, College of Education

Board of Visitors Meeting
November 13, 2026

BOARD OF VISITORS

Student Representative to the Board Update

Gram Sher
Student Representative

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Question

How can we navigate through the Madison Promise without breaking our promise to the students of today?



Where do we go from here?

What does a perfect execution of the Madison Promise look like to students?

- Ensure that we increase our services as we increase our enrollment
- Limit the amount of construction at one time, while continuing to ensure that resources are still available for all students
- Measurement: Student Satisfaction



Goal for this year

- Student perspective on the Madison Promise
- Three questions
  - How will this affect students' movement?
  - How will this affect prospective students' views?
  - What happens to the students who use that space?



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Strategic Innovations: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of JMU

Fletcher Linder, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

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Building JMU's AI Strategy

Yasmeen Shorish, Associate Dean, Libraries, and Special Advisor to the Provost on AI

Michael Swartley, Interim Associate Vice President / Chief Information Officer, Information Technology

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AI Strategy Working Group

New cross-divisional AI Strategy Working Group formed to codify principles and identify work to facilitate governance



Yasmeen Shorish
Libraries • Co-Chair



Michael Swartley
Interim CIO • Co-Chair



Chris Orem
Planning, Analytics and Institutional Research



Will Brown
Student Affairs



Luther Vucic
Philanthropy & Engagement



Dennis Lo
Department of English



Kevin Warner
Athletics



Emily York
School of Integrated Sciences



Keith Holland
Research, Economic Development & Innovation



Kelly Ball
Admissions



Jennifer Davis
Faculty Senate



Trey Secrist
University Marketing & Communications



Edward Tomlinson
Student member

Guiding Principles for AI use at JMU

- Principles provide clarity and alignment with university mission, while allowing for the flexibility of application across disciplines and work types
- Compiled based on local needs and effective practices in higher education
- Provide a framework to assist in developing or reviewing policies, as necessary
- Living guidance that may evolve over time, based on community needs

AI Gateway: Broader AI access with Institutional Controls

Why it matters:

- Equitable access for the entire JMU community
- A choice of large language models to serve different needs
- Data protection and cost controls

What we will implement:

- A shared interface to multiple AI models using the Cloudforce solution nebulaONE
- A pilot initially to validate user needs, assess controls, and prepare support for broader adoption

Preparing Business Leaders for an AI-Enabled Future

Mike Busing, Dean, College of Business

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A Historical Perspective – AI in the College of Business (CoB)

§ Fall 2024	Prevention and detection mindset; campus-wide rollout of Copilot, including paid versions for power users
§ Fall 2025	Formation of CoB committee
§ Spring 2026	Board member survey and subsequent discussion
§ Summer 2026	Summer research and teaching grants and charge to CoB leadership in academic program reviews
§ Fall 2026	Execution in classes, Framework for Professional Use, TSR for OpenAI and Claude, future focus to include AWS GenAI Certificate and Emerging Technologies Laboratory

Presenters

Greg Gabriel

- Lecturer of Computer Information Systems

Jeff Driscoll

- Lecturer of Computer Information Systems

Alysa Brown

- First-Year Student, Marketing BBA
- Virginia Beach, VA

COB 204: Computer Information Systems

- Foundational three credit hour requirement for all seven BBA majors and the CIS minor
  - Open to General Business minors and Health Services Administration majors
- Conceptual emphasis on systems, data, infrastructure, security and the business role of technology (2021 course objectives)

Fall 2026

- ~1,000 students
- 15 sections
- 8 instructors

Typical Students

- First or second year
- Majoring in Finance, Business Management or Marketing
- Ninth or tenth grade for ChatGPT public release

The “Digital Native” Assumption

- Lifelong technology exposure does *not*
  - Establish readiness for business course work
  - Imply information literacy or computing competence
- Instructor observations indicate uneven college preparation in use of

Generative AI

Informed, ethical and effective use in professional contexts

- Single prompt; no iteration
- No source verification

Business Tools

Proficiency with leading productivity and collaboration apps

- Documents & spreadsheets
- Professional email

Computer Literacy

Understanding and managing academic and professional workflows

- Finding & organizing files
- Local vs. cloud storage

Faculty Work Already Underway

Expanded classroom practice since 2024

- Deeper conceptual AI coverage
- Project integrating M365 skills, various AI use cases, and career development
- AI as a thought partner across assignments
- Approval received to implement Claude and ChatGPT as a course requirement

Resources under exploration

- LinkedIn Learning, Google AI Professional, AWS Generative AI Practitioner

Evaluation of a common applied approach

- Jeff Driscoll's Four A's framework

Solving the Strategic Issue

"What thinking did you outsource, what judgment did you retain, and can you show the difference?"

AI can make student work look fluent before understanding develops.

- The issue is not only whether AI was used; AI is ambient
- Student judgment must be visible; students need a process for framing, grounding, revising and accounting for its use

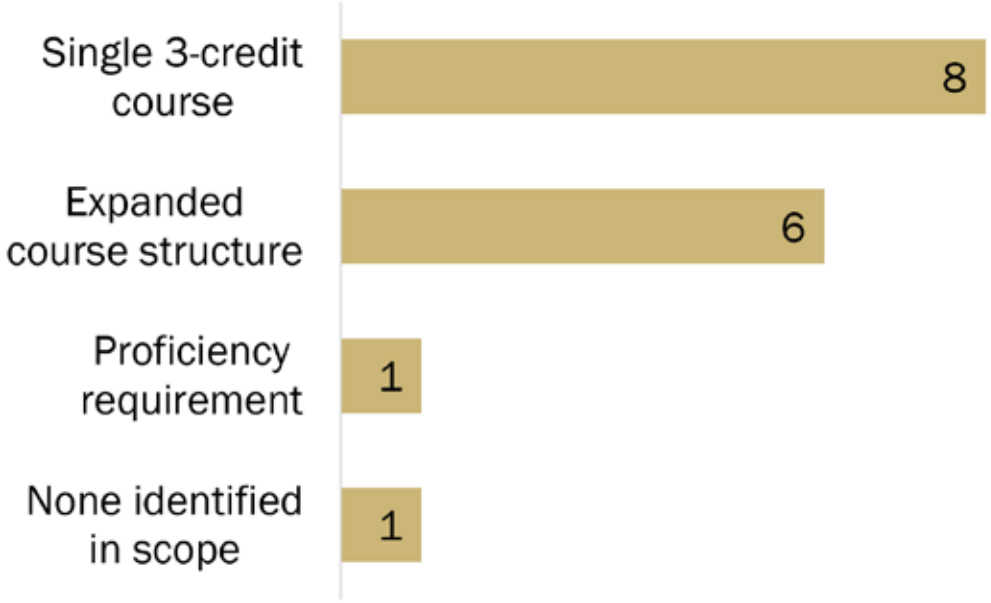
The Four A's Framework – At a Glance

"AI output is not the product. It is material for human judgment."

	Student Move	Evidence Produced
1 Ask	Frame the task before using AI	A purposeful AI request
2 Anchor	Check the response against knowledge and sources	Marked claims and verification
3 Adapt	Keep, change, toss, revise or loop	A judgement-based next step
4 Account	Own the final work	Disclosure and responsibility statement

Study: Competencies & Course Work

Core Business Technology Approaches at 16 Peer Institutions



Noteworthy Trends

- Earlier preparation
- More applied course work
- AI integration

Proposed Competency Additions

Similar competency gaps observed in industry and academic studies

- AI-enabled professional practice
  - Concepts, purposeful use, and verification
- Productivity and collaboration
  - Business tools and professional work
- Computing and information literacy
  - Files, workflows, information, and security



Ernst & Young Is Giving $100 Million in Bonuses to Staff for 'Human' Skills

Firm is one of a number of companies trying to foster the critical thinking, judgment and other traits needed to better work alongside AI

By Allison Pohle
Aug. 31, 2026 at 12:00 pm ET

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.



Technical Skills Aren't Enough— Why Soft Skills Lead To Higher Salaries In The AI Boom

By Liz Elting, Contributor. ⓘ Liz Elting is a billion-dollar founder who covers w...

Published Oct 30, 2025, 07:45am EDT

Forbes

Human judgment and accountability must be integrated into every technology competency.

The 4 A's in Context

Rubric Dimension	Shallow / Performative (Fails Assessment)	Assessable Evidence (Passes Assessment)
1. Identification of AI Output	Generic/Vague: Identifies an entire category of work ("ERD relationships").	Technical & Specific: Pinpoints exact flawed logic ("Many-to-Many relationship between Order and Product without a join table").
2. Quality of Anchoring	Superficial Citation: References a broad source without context ("Chapter 3").	Traceable & Grounded: Cites precise section and rule ("Section 3.2...normalization").
3. Evidence of Human Judgment	Cosmetic Adjustment: Reports non-essential editing ("tweaked the labels").	Structural Intervention: Demonstrates active problem-solving ("rejected the AI's direct query and manually added the Order_Line entity").
4. Demonstrable Domain Knowledge	Unclear: Could easily be faked or auto-generated by another AI prompt.	High: Proves student understands relational database design rules independently of AI.

Long-term Course Evolution

Today	Near-term Expansion	Future Growth
3 credits	**4 credits**	**4 + 3 credits**
§ Objectives prioritized for phased implementation § Continue learning platform and method testing within the existing course structure	§ Integrated course (4 cr) or lecture with lab (3+1 cr) § Fully incorporate proposed competencies and performance expectations § Implement undergraduate teaching assistant (TA) program by Fall 2028	§ Explore a two-course progression to accommodate emerging technologies § Scope, major focus and sequence to be determined

Preparing Business Leaders for an AI-Enabled Future

Any Questions?

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Closed Session

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Adjournment



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