
**THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
THE VISITORS OF JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY**

Minutes of the Student Affairs Committee

The Student Affairs Committee met on Thursday, November 9, 2023, in Ballroom B of the Festival Conference and Student Center at James Madison University. Terrie Edwards, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Present

Edwards, Terrie, Chair
James, Kay Coles
Lynch, John
Stoltzfus, Michael

Others:

Allen, Dirron, Associate Vice President for Student Life and Involvement
Blyer, Kristina, Associate Vice President for Health and Well-Being
Cannella, Abigail, Student Representative to the Board of Visitors
Grossman Leopard, Jen, Director for Student Life
Hazen, Nate, President, Student Government Association
Miller, Tim, Vice President for Student Affairs

Approval of Minutes

On the motion of Kay Coles James and seconded by John Lynch the minutes of Nov. 9, 2023, were approved.

Opening Remarks

Terrie Edwards welcomed members and guests. Kay Coles James was welcomed and expressed her excitement at being part of the Student Affairs Committee.

Mrs. Edwards acknowledged the recent death of a student and asked that we surround our students during this time.

Student Affairs Update

Dr. Miller began his update with a moment of silence to recognize the recent death of Bernard Stapelfeld, a first-year student from Pennsylvania. He thanked Kay Cole James for being on the committee. Dr. Miller provided an update on mental health resources, which have been increased on campus over the past year. The university recently increased the number of TimelyCare Psychiatry visits available to students, as this is one of the greatest needs. The President's Council for Health and Well-being is looking at wholistic approaches to well-being on campus and will continue to look at ways to increase efforts.

JMU is working to protect and support all students amidst the division currently in this world. It is a challenging time, and Dr. Miller expressed that he is proud of the way students are engaging with these efforts.

The Student Affairs Strategic Plan is in progress with completion expected in January 2024. Dr. Miller plans to pull the committee into this work during the spring semester.

It was a great week for our athletic teams and we are enjoying the community that comes along with sports. Dr. Miller recognized the importance of honoring the positive and negative aspects of events that happen in our community.

Student Government Association Report

Nate Hazen, Student Government Association President, addressed the student death in his introduction. He expressed that one of the strongest aspects of the JMU student body is how we handle tragedy. Students take the opportunity to move past differences in order to help others. He acknowledged the men and women who are sacrificing and strategizing ways to make JMU a safe place for students.

Hazen has continued in his efforts to promote positive environments for the students of JMU to come together. The SGA has made significant efforts thus far towards promoting events that foster campus unity, along with emphasizing the importance of civic engagement. Along with this, Hazen has made it a priority to preserve a positive environment for the SGA Leadership Team to come together and continue to advocate for the Student Body of JMU.

Michael Stoltzfus acknowledged Hazen's exceptional work and efforts to make a difference.

Student Representative to the Board of Visitors Report

Abigail Cannella, Student Representative to the Board of Visitors brought Greetings. She acknowledged the death of the student and expressed that the money and resources for mental health are going to good use. Cannella noted that the increased resources for mental health have made a huge difference for our students and that we must continue to make these investments.

Cannella has worked toward her goal of accurately representing and communicating with the entirety of the student body at JMU. She has hosted monthly meetings for student leaders across campus, and has brought Towana Moore, Vice President of Administration and Finance; and Dr. Heather Coltman, Vice President of Academic Affairs to the September and October Presidents' Council meetings, respectively. Presidents' council Meeting recaps were provided for September and October. At both meetings Cannella has been able to identify student needs and concerns. Major concerns have been parking, building renovations, environmental considerations, retention and class registration.

She is utilizing social media to keep students informed, through both the official SRBOV account and the James Madison University account through a takeover, which reached about 83,000 people. Cannella also shared that she hosted a statewide Student Representative Conference and attended a SCHEV dinner with the Secretary of Education, Aimee Guidera. Upcoming events include the Student Representative Interest meeting for the 2024-25 term, the Presidents' Council meeting in November, and more monthly meetings in the Spring. Cannella closed by sharing her goal to set up the next student representative for success and to enjoy the remainder of her term.

Questions/comments:

Terrie Edwards: Other state universities, do they each have a student representative to the board? Yes.

Nate Hazen – Recognized the SGA members and expressed gratitude for their efforts and recognized the great work of Abby as someone without a full team behind her.

Student Life and Involvement Spotlight

Dirron Allen, Associate Vice President for Student Life and Involvement, offered the following: To students, you are valued, and you will make a difference in this world; To everyone else, you are loved and appreciated. He made the request that we continue building connections.



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Dr. Allen reviewed the mission and goals for each of his areas which include the Office of Student Accountability and Restorative Practices (OSARP), Office of Residence Life and Office of Student Life. The Student Affairs themes of learning, belonging, and health and well-being were identified as the focus for this area.

Jen Grossman Leopard, Director of Student Life, included an overview of her areas and talked about supporting students' basic needs, specifically food insecurity. There are currently three food pantry locations on campus, including a new location in Memorial Hall. She reviewed a list of partnerships that supply food and financial support for the pantries. Dr. Grossman Leopard provided an update to several programs including Underground Sound, which established a space for students to perform live music and outdoor movies in Bridgeforth in partnership with JMU VALOR.

Ms. Grossman Leopard reported that the number of student organizations has grown to over 400, with 46 new organizations since Jan 2023. She highlighted Big Brothers Big Sisters, Alexander Hamilton Society, and Student Veterans' Association as examples of organizations on campus. She reported on Adam's Law which went into effect summer of 2022 and requires hazing education for student organizations and all incoming students. This education was provided using the program, Stop the Haze. Through this program, 8,795 students were trained last year and 9,400 this year. Results are an increase in the number and quality of hazing reports from students. To foster fraternity and sorority safety, JMU is participating in a 3-year national research study called, "What Works". The study provides support for current programs and, long term, will establish a culture where students understand the dangers of hazing and know how to combat it. Current findings from the study were shared. Also highlighted was the important role of philanthropy within fraternity and sorority life and the organizations that benefit from this service.

Student Panel

- Hamid Elias:
 - Major/Minor: Economics Major | CIS Minor
 - Class Year: Senior Class of 2024
 - Current student involvement: Ethiopian and Eritrean Student Association, Muslim Student Association, RA in Grace Street Apartments.
- Dominic Nguyen:
 - Major: Information Technology
 - Class Year: Senior Class of 2024
 - Current and Previous Affiliations at JMU: Acacia Fraternity (President), FSL (Office Assistant)
- Katharine Little:
 - Major/Minor: Nursing Major, Medical Spanish Minor
 - Class Year: Senior, Class of 2023 (graduating in Dec)
 - Current Student Involvement: Founder and former president of the JMU Chapter of the Diabetes Link, Member of the Omega Zeta of Sigma Theta Tau Nursing Honor Society, Guest Lecturer in the School of Nursing, Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) leader
- Takiyah Monroe-Richardson:
 - Major: Elementary Education
 - Class Year: Junior Class of 2025
 - Current Student Involvement: DEIJA+ Chair for the 109th Student Senate, General Education Council-SGA Representative, Accessibility Committee- SGA Representative
- Angie Weiderock:
 - Double Major: Independent Scholars and Communications Studies double major (B.A.)
 - Class Year: Senior Class of 2024



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- Current Student Involvement: Underground Sound, Honors College, Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi, JMU Give, Concert band

The student panel shared their experiences with Student Life and Involvement. The main questions that guided the discussion were:

1. Ways that the JMU mission has prepared them. This included learning leadership skills, recruitment and retention skills, and personal development that has prepared them for current and upcoming roles, and employment.
2. The students shared career experiences they have gained including ways to be an inclusive citizen. They also discussed moving beyond boundaries to create space for all. They have learned how to manage diverse groups of people to come together for a common goal, and started new programs and initiatives that will have a lasting impact on the campus. They also have learned communication skills that remove barriers between them and peers, faculty, staff, and upper administration.
3. Their proudest moments include: extreme personal growth, relationship building among professors and staff, becoming self-starters and not being afraid to ask for resources. They have experienced growing organizations and ideas to unimagined heights and receiving awards and recognition for their efforts.

Questions/Comments:

Abby Canella: “a lot of the students are in multiple organizations. It is amazing that you all are doing so many things for and in the JMU community.”

Michael Stoltzfus’ comments: Thank you for your heart, energy, and efforts. Thank you for sharing with us

Terrie Edwards’ comments: Thank you for allowing yourselves to be stretched.

Action Item:

Terrie Edwards asked committee members to identify items for future meetings. None were identified, but the committee was asked to think about this for the future.

There being no further business, on the motion of Kay Coles James and seconded by Michael Stoltzfus the Student Affairs Committee meeting adjourned at 2:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terrie Edwards, Chair

Donna Harper, Secretary to the Board