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

**Minutes of the Student Affairs Committee**

The Student Affairs Committee met on Thursday, April 18, in Ballroom B of the Festival Conference and Student Center at James Madison University. Terrie Edwards, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**Present:**

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

**Others:**

Alger, Jonathan, President  
Allen, Dirron, Associate Vice President for Student Life and Involvement  
Blyer, Kristina, Associate Vice President for Health and Well-Being  
Brenneman, Anne, Director of University Health Center  
Cannella, Abigail, Student Representative to the Board of Visitors  
Carter-Hoyt, Malika, Vice President, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion  
Hazen, Nate, President, Student Government Association  
Mann, Tia, Director of Health Promotion  
Miller, Tim, Vice President for Student Affairs  
Mitchell, Bruce, Associate Vice President for Accessibility and Belonging  
Molina, Rudy, Vice Provost for Student Academic Success and Enrollment Management  
Schoolcraft, Valerie, Director of Disability Services  
Walther, Annie, University Counsel

**Approval of Minutes**

On the motion of Kay Coles James and seconded by John Lynch the minutes of February 15, 2024, were approved.

**Opening Remarks**

Terrie Edwards welcomed members and guests. Terrie honored two directors in Student Affairs who are retiring in the coming months. Valarie Ghant has been at JMU since 2006 as the Director of the Center for Multicultural Student Services. She had many accomplishments during her tenure which included the establishment of the Intercultural Greek Council, educational programming, and the opening of The Yard. Next, Valerie Schoolcraft has served as the Office of Disability Services Director since 2009. Valerie has expanded the office to meet the increase in students needing accommodations, she has worked through countless legislative changes and established the Disability Advocacy Week.

President Alger joined the committee meeting. He shared a reflection on his past 12 years at JMU. He acknowledged seniors and noted that JMU is stronger than ever. He shared that he and his family will continue to bleed purple.

**Student Affairs Update**

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Dr. Miller began his update with an overview of trends from the Common App around applications nationwide. He shared that there has been an increase in international student applications with 53% of applicants from India and China. He provided statistics on first-generation students and how that demographic is predicted to grow in the coming years. As he talked about the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) updates, he thanked the Financial Aid Office and Brad Barnett for his leadership at JMU across the country.

He shared the value of education and how a bachelor's degree can impact starting salary and can create change for the student as well as their whole family throughout their lives.

He provided an overview of the breakdown of full-time staff and budget allocation within Student Affairs. As he wrapped up his presentation, he acknowledged and commended the significant contributions made by Student Affairs staff on a state, regional, and national level through publications, leadership roles, and presentations.

### **Efficiencies in Student Affairs**

Jonathan Stewart presented on various budget types within the departments, highlighting efforts over the past five years to streamline operations and reallocate resources across the division for greater efficiency. He shared that the division was able to do 100 salary adjustments and establish or repurpose 12 positions to address identified needs, all without relying on new or external funding.

Jonathan elaborated on initiatives in Student Affairs: innovation grants and educational leave. These opportunities allow Student Affairs staff members the space to create and continue their professional development. These initiatives are new each year and when successful, are embedded into Student Affairs, these initiatives are funded centrally.

He shared the work around assessment and the cycle of assessment work in Student Affairs. He reported on a rubric developed by his team and Center for Assessment and Research Studies that will likely be a national model for assessment and measurement.

He outlined the Student Affairs Program Review process, emphasizing the external review component. He shared that each department completes a program review, including an external review, every five years. This structure allows continued improvement within each department and the division.

### **Student Affairs Communication and Marketing**

Carson Lonett opened with an acknowledgement of the team, including recognition for Ann Simmons, who has served with JMU for 39 years and is retiring this fall. Carson provided a timeline on the creation and development of Student Affairs Communication and Marketing (SACM). She introduced Angela Ritchie who spoke to the multi-faceted approach with their communication strategy and an overview of project requests.

Angela continued and shared highlights of their work including Potty Mouth, Dukes Weekly, Campus Packs. Carson added information around their approach to communicating with students and families through a monthly newsletter that both populations receive. She stressed the importance of collaborating with families early on and shared appreciation to the Family Engagement Team who have been essential partners.

Carleigh Rittenhouse facilitated a student panel of four students who discussed how SACM has prepared them for life after college, how they've grown through their jobs in SACM, and their favorite projects. The students shared how they have made hobbies into future professions, grown in their work with clients, and the access they've received to important and special events.

### **Student Government Association Report**



**JAMES MADISON**  
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**April 18, 2024**

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Nate Hazen reflected on his year as Student Body President. He shared some of his memories and how much JMU has meant to him. He spoke about the improvements of the student body, SGA, and JMU. He shared appreciation for SGA members in the room and how they worked well together throughout the year. He also shared appreciation for President Alger, Dr. Dirron Allen, and Dr. Miller for their support throughout the year. He then introduced Brielle Lacroix, the 2024-2025 Student Body President.

Brielle shared an introduction, a tradition she started within SGA that described her intentionality with how she presents herself and how this day is meaningful to her.

### **Student Representative to the Board of Visitors Report**

Abigail Cannella, Student Representative to the Board of Visitors, began with a quote from Taylor Swift. She shared about her leadership and community at JMU and how much she has gained from the SRBOV position. She appreciated working with students and thanked her parents, who were present at the Board Meeting. Additionally, she thanked the administrators at JMU, her friends, and Dr. Miller for their support.

She shared a brief update on Student Advocacy Day in Richmond, success during an Instagram Takeover, and a video from students sharing what they wanted the Board of Visitors to know about them. She introduced Sydney Stafford, the new Student Representative to the Board of Visitors.

Sydney provided an introduction and shared she is excited to share what the BOV does and is passionate about sustainability and helping students be aware of resources.

All Board Members thanked Nate and Abby for their leadership and welcomed Brielle and Sydney.

Terrie Edwards asked for future agenda items for the committee.

There being no further business, on the motion of John Lynch and seconded by Kay Coles James the Student Affairs Committee meeting adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Terrie Edwards, Chair

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Donna Harper, Secretary to the Board