

Employee Advisory Committee
James Madison University
February 4, 2015, 1:00pm, Taylor 303

The James Madison University Employee Advisory Committee met Wednesday, February 4, 2015 at 1:00pm in Taylor 303. Committee co-chairs Kristin Gibson and Karen Gerard presided. Members present were Everette Clemmer, Steven Harper, Laura Hickerson, Paul Mabrey, Tisha McCoy-Ntiamoah, Vivian Ferris, Jesse Horneber, Rodney Lam, Amber Weaver-Shifflett, Kathy Sarver, Tom Tao, and Shea Tussing.

The 12/3/14 EAC Meeting Minutes were unanimously approved.

President Alger

Kristin welcomed President Alger and gave an overview of the EAC accomplishments for the year, including implementing the University Committee Nomination Process, planning the President's Address to the Staff, presenting a successful proposal for the start of a Staff Emeriti Association, providing feedback for the Compensation Advisory Council, the University Policy Committee, and the University Planning Team, and has drafted committee guidelines. President Alger thanked the group and encouraged us to continue to communicate with Maggie Evans. Mr. Alger answered several questions from the committee. Maggie encouraged the group to send any feedback at any time to president@jmu.edu – they do review this account regularly!

Welcome: Shea Tussing

Due to shifting responsibilities in HR, Tara Roe is no longer a member of the EAC and we welcomed Shea Tussing from HR to the committee.

Recognition Leave, Rick Larson

Rick Larson and Maggie Evans asked the Employee Advisory Committee to provide a recommendation regarding a potential proposal to change who has authority to give recognition leave. Recognition leave is a reward/incentive that can be given now to acknowledge the great work an employee has done. Only classified staff are eligible for recognition leave. Currently, the state allows up to 5 days of recognition leave to be awarded. JMU gives the authority for up to two of those days to the President and up to three of those days to the supervisor. The President has typically given those days for recognition to the entire university around holidays, to lengthen a break or for similar purposes. While the supervisor can give up to three days of recognition leave, data from the last year found only 21 employees actually received their two additional days of recognition leave. The potential proposal would give authority for all five days of recognition leave to the President. The justification is that the days are intended to reward employees, especially in an environment where monetary recognition is limited. While there is no promise that the President would award all five days, the intent and belief is that he would find ways to award all five days each year to recognize the work of JMU employees.

The EAC members committed to speaking with their colleagues and would provide feedback on the proposal to Maggie and Rick within one week.

Staff Emeriti

Tina Updike met with Diane Yerian, Director of Human Resources, on January 14th to brainstorm about the year-long pilot project to get the Staff Emeriti Association up and running. Diane is very supportive and enthusiastic about the project and will provide staff support, some funding, and help get a web page going. She requested that Tina put together a Steering Committee of five to seven members to meet with her to work on Mission and Goals and next steps. Tina sent a message to all Staff Emeriti asking for volunteers to serve on this committee.

EAC "Bylaws"

Kristin and Karen met with Maggie to discuss the EAC Bylaws. Maggie made two suggestions for changes. 1) Call them "Guidelines" rather than "By Laws". Since the EAC is an advisory committee and not a board operating from a constitution, using terms that are more "board-like" in nature could send the wrong message. The committee is appointed by the President to provide advice, guidance and feedback. 2) Appointments for the committee and leadership roles sit with the President, just like all other University Committees on campus. Kristin and Karen made edits to the "Guidelines," which we aim to finalize at the March meeting.

Employee Appreciation Day 2015

Last year's EAD co-chairs (Everette Clemmer and Jennifer Dellinger) have agreed to serve again, and they are in the process of getting the committee together to start planning an event similar to last year.

Compensation Advisory Council

Kristin and Rick shared progress of the CAC. Notes from last meeting's minutes were shared. The climate memo reflecting sentiments of various employee groups was distributed to the vice presidents (VPs) on December 11. The CAC is working to implement a procedure for communicating with constituents. Updates from several work plan items were shared. Feedback was solicited from the EAC regarding tuition remission and employee perqs. EAC members noted that tuition remission would be a nice benefit, but feel the priority lies with salary increases. EAC members added an item to the employee perqs list: free meals for children under 5 at dining halls on campus. EAC members can look out for a CAC website in the coming months.

LGBTQ Employee Group

Paul Mabrey shared that there is an initial membership drive for a JMU LGBTQ Employee Group. Per the proposed process, this membership drive will continue through February when a call for nominations for the first Steering Committee of this group will be made. Per the proposed by-laws for this group, nominees and those voting for steering committee members will be those who have formally registered as members. To read more about the process, the membership confidentiality statement, and for paths to sign up as a member, visit <https://www.jmu.edu/lgbtfacultystaff/member/index.shtml>. Remember that it is very important that we reach out to as many corners of campus as possible to ensure as much inclusion in this process and membership as possible. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please contact the group email at: lgbtqatjmu@gmail.com.

Faculty Senate

Concerns were voiced regarding the security breach. EAC members voiced concern about the extent to which information was compromised (ex: should employees be worried about their children's information as well?).

ERGs

Tiffany Brutus has served on the Steering Committee for ERGs that Renee Reed spoke about at one of previous meetings. There will be three ERGs piloted: Veterans, Tapestry/Multicultural and We Care(Parenting and Care Giver group). More details to come soon.

FAST Parking

A part-time faculty member voiced concern via the eac@jmu.edu email box over parking fees, specifically as they relate to parking sporadically on campus at Memorial Hall for the employee fitness program. EAC members encourage the faculty member to ensure she is aware of the part-time faculty parking rate options with parking services, to utilize the bus service or carpool with other employees participating. Kristin and Karen will follow up with that staff member.

A photo was taken of the group to update the website to reflect the new membership. The meeting adjourned at 3:15pm.

Next Meeting: March 4, 1pm, Taylor 303

OUR MISSION:

As an advisory committee reporting to the President of James Madison University, the Employee Advisory Committee fosters open, honest and productive communication between employees and the university administration with an emphasis on matters of concern to all employees. The EAC fulfills its mission by assuming additional responsibility for the following activities:

- facilitating staff employee participation on University Committees and Commissions through publicizing University Commission & Committee Nominations,
- sponsoring the annual JM-U Appreciation celebration,
- maintaining the EAC website to communicate the committee's activities with the campus community.