

A-Dean Working Group (ADWG) Final Report 2023-24 AY

Membership

Chair(s): Elizabeth Oldmixon, Amy Thelk, Audrey Burnett

Members: Melinda Adams, Karina Kline-Gabel, Siân White, Scott Gallagher, Demetria Henderson, Cheryl Mast, Oris Griffin, Bryan Zugelder, Kevin Apple, BJ Bryson, Doug Hochstetler, Linda Plitt Donaldson, Jeff Tang, Afzal Upal, Mindy Capaldi, Steven Whitmeyer, Wren Stevens, Fawn-Amber Montoya, Felix Wang, Andrea Adams, Bill Hartman, Carolyn Schubert, Stefanie Warlick-Burrow, Sarah MacDonald, Laura Ryman Michael Stoloff, and Scott Paulson

Charge: The A-Dean Working Group (ADWG) is charged with providing faculty members working at the A-dean level the opportunity to share knowledge, collaborate to develop effective strategies for college/unit-assigned activities, and provide feedback to academic leadership on problems and emerging issues.

The A-Dean Working Group serves their charge by:

1. Fostering peer-to-peer learning and strengthening relationships across colleges/units through regular meetings and collaborative problem exploration
2. Exploring challenging division-wide problems and emerging issues identified by the deans, vice provosts, and provost to provide possible solutions

A mid-year report was submitted in December 2023. This report communicates activity for spring 2024.

Summary of Current Semester Activity: The ADWG met three times during Spring 2024. Meetings were scheduled when agenda items were apparent. A-Deans were invited to contribute ideas each month for discussion items.

Meeting 1 – January 8: During our opening meeting, we had an open discussion regarding the faculty and staff morale issue, including the myriad factors impacting such. Surprisingly, not everyone around the table felt that morale has been negatively impacted across the board. We also discussed topics for the semester based on our survey responses, and Elizabeth announced the AUH/A-Dean seminar series topics for the semester.

Meeting 2 - February 12: Michael Stoloff and Paula Maxwell presented on the new Graduate School policy re: accelerated programs, which officially started last year. Siân White also presented a concern from CAL re: communication from faculty in terms of final exam expectations (e.g., time limits, arrival times, penalties for lateness, etc.).

Meeting 3 - March 11: Malika Carter-Hoyt's presentation on the 30+30 Awareness to Action Inclusive Future Tour and related DEIA issues, ideas, and suggestions. JY Zhou

from CGE discussed their strategic plan and asked A-Deans for feedback (and to gather feedback from our respective units). We asked both guests what A-Deans could do to support them.

Future Work Planned:

- At our first Fall 2024 meeting we will welcome any new A-Deans to JMU and explain roles of A-Deans in different colleges and units.
- For 2024-25, an expected ongoing discussion item concerns A-Dean role changes brought about by changes in university leadership.
- Dr. Gilpatrick Hornsby will attend the first ADWG meeting of 2024-25 to communicate about CFI initiatives to support faculty and will solicit feedback from the ADWG members at that time.
- Dr. Michael O’Fallon will meet with ADWG to impart information about JMU policy process and handbook updates.
- Ongoing discussion of faculty Workload report as appropriate.
- Report and update about CRM.
- A discussion topic brought up late in spring semester was about A-Dean workloads and management of priorities. We will continue this discussion in 2024-25.

“You must do the thing you think you cannot do.”

-Eleanor Roosevelt