

INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
WORKING GROUP

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS:

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Working Group Champion

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Recommendation Title: Data Collection on Analysis & Transparency

Problem Statement/Issue

The Instructional Faculty working group has come to recognize the primacy of collecting quantitative and qualitative data in a systematic manner. Specifically, we recognize the need for baseline data collected prior to previous DEI efforts, data collected after DEI interventions, and longitudinal data that could document the outcomes of DEI efforts through time. Thus, we propose a transparent systematization of previous and existing DEI evaluation efforts **to demonstrate the effect of DEI-related change efforts and initiatives on faculty and staff persistence, as well as in their self-reports of belonging, mattering, and thriving at JMU.**

Additional challenges include the apparent disconnect of campus-wide studies (e.g., Climate Study, COACHE studies of faculty job satisfaction, *Great Colleges to Work For*, etc.) from the Task Force’s process and anticipated outcomes. Archived studies may be effective in establishing baseline and/or longitudinal data, which could be used to evaluate JMU’s progress (or lack thereof) in DEI efforts. Additional questions motivating this recommendation include:

- How are persistence data, as well as inquiries into faculty thriving, used to inform hiring and retention efforts (e.g., mentoring)? Has this changed through time?
- How are COACHE data utilized, over time, to demonstrate gaps and opportunities relative to DEI work? Can future COACHE surveys include task force-related interventions as dependent variables, with related open-ended qualitative questions?
- In what ways will the University Climate Study fortify a “baseline” scenario that launches task force interventions? What DEI-related data should be collected longitudinally?

The current process for working group recommendations incorporates potential redundancies in evaluation and assessment. Typically, each recommendation incorporates an evaluation plan, which may lead to unnecessary duplication and an oversaturation of evaluation efforts. In lieu of a separate evaluation plan for each recommendation, we recommend the development of reliable, meaningful, and systematic evaluations that span multiple recommendations.

Recommendation, Rationale and Success Measures continue on following pages.

WORKING GROUP
LEADERSHIP



David Owusu-Ansah,
Leadership Council



Cynthia Bauerle, WG CC



Cara Meixner, WG CC

Recommendation:

The purpose of this recommendation for transparent systematization of DEI evaluation efforts is **to demonstrate the effect of DEI-related change efforts and initiatives on faculty and staff persistence, as well as their self-reports of belonging, mattering, and thriving** at James Madison University. We also call for transparent explanation of how historical and extant measures will be utilized to track progress, establish suitable baselines, and inform longitudinal efforts. This effort would reside under the leadership of a senior administrative designee, preferably a vice provost, who would be responsible for the initiative's success.

Specific steps that could address these initiatives include:

Chronicle existing efforts. Regarding transparency, we ask for the designated vice provost (and analyst team indicated below) to create a dashboard, or other unifying method, that effectively communicates university-wide DEI data collection efforts, analyses, implications, and action steps to members of the campus community. Such a dashboard could be accessed via a JMU log-in, perhaps with subsets of aggregated data made available to external constituencies. The dashboard should also map current evaluation and assessment projects to task force recommendations.

Appoint a trained analyst and analytic team to this project. We recommend appointing a trained analyst (e.g., a senior faculty member) with expertise in quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis, to lead this effort. This individual would report to the designated vice provost. Such a role may be structured similarly to that of Dr. Sarah Brooks' appointment as *Special Assistant to the Provost for Strategic Planning*, or similar. Typically, the labor associated with such roles is compensated through a stipend,¹ course release, or combination thereof. Such a position would be contracted by academic calendar year, preferring a 3-year rotating term agreement, with provisions in place for part or full-time summer work—the latter being important in the initial year. Within the first year of implementation, it may be important to assign other staff analysts or resource specialists within the Office of the Provost to help initiate the system and collect and import relevant data. Possibly, the lead (trained) analyst would also serve as a conduit or liaison to university-wide data collection efforts like COACHE, Climate Study, etc. Integrally, this person should have some level of expertise in decolonial methodologies, to include action research, such that the actual collection and analyses of data do not recreate or perpetuate harm.

Appoint a guiding coalition. We recommend establishing a guiding coalition, chaired by the trained analyst, that will devise and communicate a plan for overarching data collection and analysis across Task Force initiatives for tracking persistence, belonging, mattering, and thriving throughout the JMU community. Such a coalition would also research evidence-informed outcome measures (i.e., beyond those utilized in COACHE, Climate Study, etc.) and establish a safe, credible methodology for collecting qualitative narratives. To be clear, the guiding coalition reports to the lead (trained) analyst, who then reports to the senior administration designee (i.e., vice provost).

¹ The stipend per semester for a full-time, 10-month faculty member would be calculated by Mr. Jason McClain in (a) consideration of similar roles within the Office of the Provost and (b) the faculty member's base salary. The cost of a course release averages \$3,500. Just as grant-funded summer work is estimated through a base salary conversion formula, we imagine similar would be determined based on the analyst's rank, discipline, and experience.

Rationale:

As the Instructional Faculty working group progressed in our work to identify and develop DEI recommendations for actions that could impact the instructional mission of the university, it became apparent that we needed access to “baseline” information about previous DEI efforts by the university and the effects and outcomes of those efforts. We also recognized that several workplace “climate” studies had been conducted by the university, and therefore data must exist that could frame the past and current JMU climates with regards to diversity, equity, and inclusion. **The principal reason for wanting this existing data is to adequately characterize the past and current workplace environment at JMU for the viewpoint of instructional faculty and other employees.** We recognized that it would be impossible to assess and evaluate any progress from DEI recommendations that our committee might make without knowing the current “starting” culture and environment.

In addition, our committee recognized that this need for data on the past and current DEI culture at the university would likely be important for recommendations from other Task Force committees, and that there was no need to duplicate these data collection efforts. Thus, we developed this recommendation to collect existing data and formulate a plan to collect longitudinal data throughout the implementation of the variety of Task Force recommendations and implementations. We envision that these data collection efforts will be longer term, in order to collect multi-year data to assess the impacts of DEI implementations.

Success:

The success of this recommendation to collect existing data and develop new data collection efforts could be measured by:

1. Obtaining access (through a central or common portal) to existing JMU datasets on workplace culture and narratives from instructional faculty and other employees;
2. Identifying and hiring an analyst that is experienced in quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis, who also would have expertise in decolonial methodologies, including action research;
3. Implementation of data collection and analysis strategies moving forward that are useful to DEI recommendations by this Instructional Faculty working group (and other working groups that desire existing data and data for assessment of future implementations of DEI efforts);
4. Establishment of a guiding coalition that could promote these data collection efforts and monitor their success. This coalition would also develop other measures for assessing the success of this effort, as necessary.