

James Madison University

In Brief: Located in the heart of Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, JMU is recognized for its broad range of liberal arts education. More than 14,000 students attend JMU, which offers primarily bachelor's and master's degree programs.

The text in red following each measure is the institution's optional narrative about the measure.

Mission

Describes the institution's core values and priorities

JMU's mission statement approved by the Board of Visitors is:

"We are committed to preparing students to be educated and enlightened citizens who will live meaningful and productive lives."

Profile Measures

Descriptive statistics about the institution

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Enrollment by Geographic Region within the Commonwealth

Enrollment by Full-time/Part-time Status

Enrollment of New Undergraduate Transfer Students by Age Distribution

Enrollment Projections

Degree Inventory

General Fund Appropriations Per In-State FTE

New Undergraduate Enrollment by Domicile

System-Wide Measures

Fourteen measures of operational efficiency and academic quality

The Student Experience

1. First-year Student Retention Rate

The first-year retention rate, that is the percentage of first-time, full-time students that start in the fall and enroll the following fall, indicates how well institutions retain students from the fall of their first year to the fall of their second year, thus allowing them to progress toward their goal of earning a baccalaureate degree. Traditionally, this has been called freshman-to-sophomore retention, however those terms refer to specific numbers of credit hours earned and thus it may be misleading. First-year student retention is probably more accurate.

First-year Student Retention Rate

2000-01**90%****Peer Group Average****82%**

2. Number of Transfer Students from Virginia two-year colleges

The number of transfer students from two-year colleges (Richard Bland College and VCCS) in Virginia assesses how accessible an institution is to transfer students from two-year institutions planning to earn baccalaureate degrees.

Number of Transfer Students from Virginia two-year colleges

1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	Five-Year Average
231	253	210	257	261	242.4

Number of Transfer Students from Virginia two-year colleges with Associate Degrees

1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	Five-Year Average
156	147	141	164	183	158

3. Size Distribution of Undergraduate Class Sections

The distribution of undergraduate class size is a strong set of indicators that describe the learning environment in ways that simple student-to-faculty ratios do not, without placing perhaps undue emphasis on class size. Smaller class sizes may be indicative of higher academic quality, whereas larger class sizes may be indicative of increased institutional efficiency. Excludes labs, discussion sections and independent study courses which are often smaller in size.

Size Distribution of Undergraduate Class Sections

Number of Students	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001
2 - 9	0%	0%	10%
10 - 19	0%	0%	26%
20 - 29	0%	0%	28%
30 - 39	0%	0%	14%
40 - 49	0%	0%	7%
50 - 99	0%	0%	11%
100+	0%	0%	4%

As reported in Fall 2001 to US News.

4. Percent of Lower-Division Enrollments Taught by Full-time Faculty

A complementary measure to the class size measure above is the percentage of lower-division courses taught by full-time faculty. This measure indicates the number of full-time faculty versus

adjunct faculty teaching lower division courses. A higher percentage of courses taught by full-time faculty is assumed to be a positive indicator of academic quality, whereas a lower percentage of courses taught by full-time faculty may be a positive indicator of fiscal efficiency, since part-time faculty are generally less expensive than full-time faculty.

Percent of Lower-Division Enrollments Taught by Full-time Faculty

	Fall 1997	Fall 1998	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Five-Year Average
Sections	74%	76%	76%	74%	76%	75%
Sub-Sections	78%	75%	75%	75%	71%	75%

5. First-Time, Full-Time Graduation Rate after Six Years

This measure is an indicator of how well institutions serve undergraduate students in achieving their presumed goals for higher education -- namely, a bachelor's degree -- within a reasonable amount of time. The calculation is based in federal methodology and is required to be published by all Title IV eligible institutions as a response to Public Law 101-142 The Student-Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act.

First-Time, Full-Time Graduation Rate after Six Years

Four-year Average	Peer Group Average Four-year Average
80%	61%

Six-year graduation rate for first-time freshmen at four-year institutions. Average of the four freshmen cohorts included in the IPEDS GRS (1992-1995 entering classes).

6. Average Time-to-Degree for Undergraduate Degrees

A complementary measure is the average time-to-degree for undergraduates pursuing baccalaureate degrees, which indicates the amount of time (in years) a student can reasonably expect to invest in order to graduate from a given institution. This measure also reflects such institutional characteristics as course availability as well as student characteristics.

Average Time-to-Degree for Undergraduate Degrees

Grad in 1996-97	Grad in 1997-98	Grad in 1998-99	Grad in 1999-00	Grad in 2000-01	Five-Year Average
4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2

7. Percentage of Living Undergraduate Alumni who Donate Annually

A final measure related to the student experience is the percentage of living undergraduate alumni that contribute to an institution in a given year which assesses the commitment alumni have to an institution, presumably based on positive experiences and favorable outcomes due to their education. It also assesses the institutions' ability to realize a potential financial resource. This measure compares each institution's FY2000 data to the two-year (1999-2000) average of their

faculty salary peers.

Percentage of Living Undergraduate Alumni who Donate Annually

2000	Peer Group Average
14%	17%

System-wide Measures - Facilities and Operations

8. Classroom and Laboratory Space Utilization

This measure assesses how many hours a week an institution offers courses in its classrooms and laboratories and the extent to which those classes and labs are fully occupied. The 'weekly hours of room use' represents the average number of hours that classrooms or laboratories are used for courses. The 'weekly hours of station use' represents the average number of hours that available seats within classrooms and laboratories are used by students in courses. The 'percent of occupancy' is the result of dividing the station use hours by the room use hours.

Although utilization rates vary from institution to institution based on its facilities and academic offerings, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia has recommended that institutions should, on average, use their classrooms 40 hours per week at an occupancy rate of at least 60 percent for an average station use of 24 hours per week. Similarly, for laboratories, the Council recommends that, on average, institutions should use their lab space 24 hours a week with 75 percent of the lab stations for an average station use of 18 hours per week. Utilization rates serve as one of several criteria for assessing institutions' requests to construct new or renovate existing facilities. Fall 2000 data will be added later in Summer 2001 as the final data become available.

Classroom and Laboratory Space Utilization

		Fall 1996	Fall 1998	Fall 2000
Classrooms	Weekly Hours of Room Use	37	40	36
	Percent of Occupancy	76.0%	72.0%	72.0%
	Weekly Hours of Station Use	28	29	26
Laboratory	Weekly Hours of Room Use	26	29	27
	Percent of Occupancy	77.0%	80.0%	75.0%
	Weekly Hours of Station Use	20	23	20

9. Percentage of E&G Spending on Instruction and Academic Support

Dollars spent on instruction and academic support as a percentage of an institution's total E&G expenditures assesses the focus an institution places on instruction as opposed to other

'educational and general' activities, such as administration, departmental research, and public service.

Note: Not all institutions were able to obtain peer comparison data for this measure due to delays in processing the IPEDS by NCES into the Peer Analysis Tool. As these data become available, ROIE will be updated.

Percentage of E&G Spending on Instruction and Academic Support

FY2001	Peer Group Average
67.7%	60.4%

10. Percentage of Management Standards Met

The percentage of management standards met is an assessment of how well the institution manages fiscal affairs by assessing five specific management practices relative to commonly agreed upon standards. The five practices are: 1) institution receives unqualified opinion from the State Auditor of Public Accounts; 2) institution has no significant management comments in the audit report; 3) institution meets the financial reporting requirements established by the Virginia Department of Accounts directive; 4) institution's percentage of accounts receivables outstanding more than 120 days are less than 10%; and 5) institutions' prompt pay percentage is 95% or greater.

Percentage of Management Standards Met

FY1997	FY1998	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001	Five-Year Average
100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

11. Programs eligible for specialized/professional accreditation that hold such accreditation

This measure informs the consumer of the programs with specialized accreditation and the agencies responsible for such accreditation. Some of these accreditations are important to graduates of the programs in question in terms of licensure. Other such accreditations are simply indicators that the program follows a prescribed set of standards for subject area or management practices.

Accreditations and Programs

AACSB International Association for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business	accredited	
Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration	no	
Accreditation Review Commission on Education for Physician Assistants, Inc.	accredited	associated with licensure
Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools Allied Health Education	accredited	
Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications Journalism and Mass Communications	no	
American Chemical Society <i>Chemistry</i>	accredited	
American Chemical Society <i>Biochemistry</i>	accredited	
American Chemical Society <i>Chemistry Education</i>	accredited	
American Chemical Society <i>Materials Chemistry</i>	pending	
American Occupational Therapy Association	accredited	associated with licensure
American Psychological Association Professions <i>Scientific Psychology</i>	accredited	associated with licensure
Association for Advancement of Health Education	accredited	
Association of University Health Education Programs in Health Administration	accredited	
Center for Credentialing Nursing Education	accredited	associated with licensure
Commission of Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs	accredited	associated with licensure
Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education, the accrediting agency for the American Dietetics Association	accredited	associated with licensure
Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs	accredited	associated with licensure
Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech Language Pathology of the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association	accredited	associated with licensure
Education Commission on Accreditation on Social Work - Council on Social Work (baccalaureate level) (combined)	accredited	

Educational Standards Board of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association	accredited	associated with licensure
Foundation for Interior Design Educational Research	accredited	
National Association of School Psychologists	accredited	associated with licensure
National Association of Schools of Art and Design	accredited	
National Association of Schools of Music	accredited	
National Association of Schools of Theatre	accredited	
National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education	accredited	
National League for Nursing	no	
Society for Public Health Education	accredited	
Virginia Board of Nursing	accredited	associated with licensure
Virginia State Board of Education	accredited	associated with licensure

12. Debt Service to Expenditures Ratio

This ratio assesses an institution's total capacity to handle debt by comparing the institution's debt service commitments for facilities to its total expenditures. The Commonwealth uses this ratio as an indicator of fiscal health when reviewing requests for new debt-financed capital projects. Currently, the Commonwealth recommends that debt service not exceed seven percent of expenditures.

Debt Service to Expenditures Ratio

FY1997	FY1998	FY1999	FY2000	FY2001	Five-Year Average
4.2	5.0	4.6	4.4	5.0	4.6

Faculty Support and Productivity

13. Research and Public Service Expenditures per full-time Faculty

The total research and public service expenditures per full-time faculty assesses the average research and public service productivity (in terms of dollars expended) per full-time faculty. **Note:** Peer data for this measure are only available in alternate (odd-numbered) years. In order to avoid confusion and ensure apples-to-apples comparisons, institutional data will be updated on the same cycle.

Research and Public Service Expenditures per full-time Faculty

FY1999	Peer Group Average
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\$8,806**\$27,073**

14. Student Credit Hours Taught per FTE Faculty

Total student credit hours taught per full-time equivalent faculty assesses the average teaching productivity of faculty. One should be aware that this measure is often at odds with measures of class size. Further, it may tend to overshadow the fact the faculty have other responsibilities beside teaching. The measure itself is the number of credit hour courses multiplied by the number of students in each course, both undergraduate and graduate. It directly conflicts with a previous measure, number 'Size Distribution of Undergraduate Courses' because smaller class sizes are seen as indicative of higher academic quality, whereas larger class sizes (this measure), are seen as indicative of increased institutional efficiency. A university is always balancing these two measures to be most effective AND efficient.

Student Credit Hours Taught per FTE Faculty

Fall 1997	Fall 1998	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Five-Year Average
279	273	267	252	254	265

Institution-specific Measures

Measures contributing special insights and context to the understanding of the institution and what it values

Every student who attends James Madison University (JMU) must complete two years in our General Education (www.jmu.edu/gened/) program, regardless of their major. So, all eleven of our learning measures take place in the General Education program since this experience is common to all JMU students. We use these student learning data in three ways:

- 1) Competency** - all JMU students must pass these measures before advancing to their sophomore year.
- 2) Value Added or "change over time"** - these measure differences reported over two occasions: as entering first year students and after course completion.
- 3) Course versus No Course Comparison** - sophomore level students who have completed the required courses are compared to sophomores who have not yet completed the required General Education courses.

Of our eleven measures, four are competency based: Information Seeking Skills, Basic Technology, Oral Communication, and Writing. For the other seven, student scores are reported on a common scale similar to the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). These measures are: American History and Government, Critical Thinking, Wellness and Human Development, Arts and Humanities, Quantitative Reasoning, Natural World/Science, and Global Experience. We use scores in all these areas to fine-tune sequences within the curriculum. Following are each measure in more detail.

Information-Seeking Skills Test - Competency

The Information Seeking Skills Test (ISST) assesses students' knowledge of, and skills in information retrieval, electronic databases, and the use of the Internet. To demonstrate their knowledge and skills in these areas, students must meet a standard that has been identified by JMU faculty as indicating proficient performance. [All JMU students must pass the ISST before being able to register for their sophomore year classes.](#)

Basic Technological Skills Tests - Competency

The Basic Technology assessment consists of three tests: word processing, presentation software, and technology knowledge. These tests represent a baseline competency of computing skills that is expected of all JMU students. For each test, JMU faculty have identified passing scores that indicate proficient performance. [To demonstrate competency, students must pass all three tests prior to being allowed to register for their sophomore year classes.](#)

Oral Communication Test – Competency

The Oral Communication assessment instrument is used to evaluate JMU students' knowledge in four areas: communication fundamentals, public speaking, interpersonal communication, and small-group communication. [A common standard was set by the speech communication faculty in the spring of 2002 which will be implemented for oral communication students in the future.](#)

Writing - Competency

Writing is assessed using a four-point holistic rating scale, in which a score of four represents excellent writing; two represents minimal competency, and one represents less than competent writing. Students submit a portfolio from their second semester writing course that includes their best two completed written works. [Spring 2001 first year students scored an average of 2.4 points.](#)

American History and Government – Value Added

The American History and Government Test evaluates students' understanding of the major themes and concepts that structure American life from history and government. [Students who have completed JMU's American Experience requirement \(US history or political science\) score, on average, 50 points higher than they did as incoming students.](#)

Critical Thinking Test – Valued Added

The Critical Thinking assessment is used to evaluate JMU students' skills in the areas of interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference and in their dispositional attitudes. [First year students scored, on average, 5 points higher than they did before having a course in Skills for the 21st Century emphasizing critical thinking.](#)

Wellness and Human Development - Value Added

The Wellness and Human Development Test assesses student learning in health, wellness, and human development. **Students who have completed some or all of their health and social sciences coursework score, on average, 102 points higher than they did as incoming students.**

Arts and Humanities – Course versus No Course Comparison

The Arts and Humanities Test is administered via computer and includes a number of multimedia and text-based stimuli. Students view specific artistic experiences, including watching a dramatic video, listening to recorded music, viewing artwork, and reading passages of literary and philosophical works. **Sophomore students scored, on average, 48 points higher than incoming first year students.**

Quantitative Reasoning Test – Course versus No Course Comparison

The Quantitative Reasoning Test measures students' mathematical, graphical, tabular, and statistical reasoning skills. **Students who completed two courses scored, on average, 26 points higher than incoming first year students.**

Natural World/Science Test – Course versus No Course Comparison

The Natural World/Science Test measures concepts in the natural and physical sciences and in scientific reasoning. **Sophomores completing three JMU Natural World/Science courses scored, on average, 47 points higher than incoming first year students.**

Global Experience Test – Course versus No Course Comparison

The Global Experience assessment instrument evaluates students' understanding of global issues of importance to the human community. **Students who have completed the Global Experience requirement scored an average of 38 points higher than incoming first year students.**

Competencies

Institutional reports of student competency in the areas of written communication and technology.

Written Communications

Definition of the Competency

Competent writing is thoughtful, clear, focused, persuasive, and generally effective. Writing samples should provide evidence of clear purpose, awareness of audience, complex thought, well-developed ideas, organization, critical use of sources, control of conventions, and engagement with the subject matter.

Standards of the Competency

Writing samples are evaluated holistically on a four-point scale (4=excellent, 1=less than competent). Overall competency is demonstrated by an average score of 2.0.

Methodology

Through a process of random sampling, four students are selected from each section of the second semester writing course and asked to assemble, in consultation with instructor, a sample of completed work from the course. Two trained faculty, who teach in the writing program, independently rate each writing sample (based on the holistic scale). If scores differ by more than one point, a third rater also evaluates the sample and an average score is computed for each student.

Results	(Competency = average of 2.0 or higher)	
N, % excellent:	52 (avg. 3.5 or higher)	12%
N, % competent:	365	84%
N, % less than competent:	71	16%

Summary

- On a four point holistic scale, the average portfolio rating was 2.43. The departmental goal was an average of 2.5.
- Eighty-four percent of portfolios received an average score of 2.0 or higher.
- Portfolios from one of the four concentrations (package B) were rated significantly lower than portfolios from other packages. This may be due in part to self-selection of weaker writers into these courses.
- Results are close to department's expectations, but a small amount below.

Summary Scoring Guide

4 The writing expresses complex thought, focus, persuasiveness, and effectiveness. As a whole, it demonstrates:

- Clear purpose
- Awareness of audience and occasion
- Complex thought
- Development of ideas with details
- Organization
- Engagement with the subject matter

- Critical use of sources
- Control of conventions with few lapses

3 The writing expresses clear thought and is generally focused, persuasive, and effective. As a whole, it demonstrates:

- Clear purpose
- Some awareness of audience and occasion
- Clear thought
- Developed ideas
- Organization
- Engagement with the subject matter
- Critical use of sources
- Control of conventions with some lapses

2 The writing is generally unfocused and is mostly summary, but may demonstrate some reflection. As a whole, it demonstrates:

- Some sense of purpose, audience, and occasion
- Underdevelopment of ideas
- Some organization
- Uncritical use of sources
- Frequent lapses of control of conventions, though they do not significantly impede meaning

1 The writing lacks focus and reflection. As a whole, it demonstrates:

- Little awareness of purpose, audience, and occasion
- An absence or underdevelopment of ideas
- Disorganization
- Absence of sources or use of sources that are not relevant
- Lapses in control of conventions that impede meaning

Sample passages:

Excellent (This paper received an average score of 3.5)

Humans have the privilege of being the only living creatures in existence who possess the ability to convey thoughts and emotions. In a time when people struggle to be recognized as unique, an individual can search for non-conformity through the contents of a sentence. Writing can be a search for truth. An individual can discover the truth of his or her soul and personality through the simple act of writing. Writing can soon turn into the act of reading. Reading is a window into other people's ideas and feelings. The connection to others can be made through reading. Human beings can better understand each other and the world around through the process of reading. A single piece of paper with the writer's thoughts can easily become a map for self-discovery. Absorbing the words of others through reading can lead to compassion and understanding.

Competent (This paper received an average score of 2.5)

Most people are still intrigued by the amazing technological innovations that are so prominent in our society. Since so many new and complex computer materials are being thrown into the world, it seems almost impossible to keep up, but some people do. These people are those who have the

topnotch computer equipment and sit at their computers all day transformed by what their computers have to offer "With the growing importance of the Internet in everyday life, more and more people are accessing various on-line sources each day" (Ferris). Nowadays, almost anything can be done from your home computer. The Internet offers shopping, weather forecasts, movies, newspapers, interest groups, chatting, and the list goes on and on... it never stops. Many people find the World Wide Web irresistible because it "is informative, convenient, resourceful, and fun" (Ferris). So the Internet does not look too bad from a superficial standpoint, but when considering the negative effects it has on human life, people may start to reconsider. The Internet has been proven to cause Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS), Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS), and mainly Internet Addiction Disorder (IAD). While stuck in this "technological trance," these computer users do not realize the physical and psychological effects their computers have on their lives.

Below competent (This paper received an average score of 1.5)

"Quality is what your customers tell you it is' has been a common but too simplistic throw-away line in some quarters of 'the movement' for some time" ("Award," 1). What this quote is trying to say is that businesses are now the ones to decided what quality is. The idea presented in the previous quote has come along with the creation of the Internet. The creation of the Internet has made an enormous impact on our society. While there are many positives that the Internet brings there are also a lot of problems. Most people know about the problems with pornography and Napster's current condition. One problem that many people do not know about is weblining. What exactly is weblining? Weblining is the process by which businesses use certain information to rate people on how good of customers they would be. Weblining may seem fair to the companies that use it, but it is a process people need to know about and help eliminate it.

Technology/Information Literacy

Definition of the Competency

Computer skills are built into the freshman general education Cluster One requirement, which includes an emphasis on technology used for interpersonal communication and information retrieval. Students are expected to prepare papers and presentations, communicate via e-mail, search the Internet, and achieve a level of information literacy.

Standards of the Competency

To demonstrate competency, students will successfully complete the Tech Level I test and the locally developed Information Seeking Skills Test (ISST). The Tech Level I consists of three subtests in the areas of word processing, presentation software, and general knowledge. The 53-item ISST is composed of four subtests that deal with different content areas: reference sources, database searching, Internet, and ethics. This test also deals with two cognitive levels: application and knowledge. The reliability of each Tech Level I test as measured by coefficient alpha was .73 for general knowledge, .81 for presentation software, and .78 for word processing. The reliability was .87 for the ISST.

In fall 1999, Cluster One faculty were involved in standard setting workshops to determine passing scores using the Bookmark standard-setting procedure for all technology tests. The participants represented General Education, Carrier Library, Speech Communication, History, College of Business, and the Writing Program. This same faculty had defined the

set of basic competencies necessary for the successful completion of this General Education Cluster One requirement. For the Tech I level tests to demonstrate competency, students are expected to attain (at least) the following cut-scores: Word Processing, successfully complete 17 out of 20 tasks; Presentation software, successfully complete 15 out of 20 tasks, and general knowledge, correctly answer 27 out of 35 questions. Overall competency is demonstrated by a combined score of 59 out of 75 tasks/questions on the Tech Level I exam. For the ISST, the recommended cut score for Meets the Standard was 42 items correct. For the Advanced cut score, the recommended cut score was 48 items correct out of 53.

Methodology

All freshmen must successfully complete the Tech Level I and ISST tests by the end of the freshman year or a registration hold is put on their records. In addition students scores on the technology tests become part of their academic record, e.g., as a "milestone". Computerized testing is offered in designated assessment labs and students can repeat the tests as many times as necessary to pass. Support materials, tutorials, and short-term classes are available on-line to assist student in preparing for and passing the multiple-choice tests.

Tech I and Information Seeking Skills Competency Tests:

Passing rates for first-year students who entered JMU in Fall 2000

	Information Seeking Skills Test	General Computer Knowledge Test	MS WordTest	MS PowerPoint Test
% who passed by December 2001	91%	98%	98%	98%
Number who passed (out of 3118)	2,849	3,049	3,054	3,057

- JMU students are required to pass all four of these technology tests before advancing to the second-year. The percentages below 100% generally reflect the percentage of students who dropped out (or stopped out) of JMU after the first year.
- 28% passed the Information Seeking Skills at "advanced" levels.
- The passing standards were set by committees of faculty members representing a variety of departments across the university, using CTB/McGraw-Hill's Bookmark standard-setting method.

Summary

Click [here](#) for a list of James Madison University's peer institutions.

James Madison University's web site is: www.jmu.edu

