



February 23, 2018

James Madison Community:

Over the course of the last few months, James Madison students, faculty, and staff have been among the strongest voices on campus against our Administration. This is a testament to the strength of our college, and of our commitment to creating a more just, equitable, and fair University. In an effort to continue this work, a group of Madison faculty, staff, and students met on Wednesday, February 23rd to discuss our priorities as a college. After the forum, James Madison College Student Senate came together to outline what the Madison community can do to improve cultural issues both within Madison and across campus. We write this letter to summarize our thoughts and to communicate them to the broader Madison community. While there remains important work to be done on the campus level, the priorities outlined below deal specifically with ways we can improve the climate of our college to better comport with our values and set an example for the broader University. These actions, we believe, will create a better and more inclusive Madison.

At Michigan State, students are expected to adhere to the Spartan Code of Honor, a pledge dealing primarily with issues of academic dishonesty. We believe it is time for a James Madison Code of Honor, specifically outlining the principles we expect all Madisonians to abide by. The code should be at minimum present in course syllabi, and would represent a point of common agreement that unites us as Madisonians. The purpose of such a code is not to silence disagreement or stifle the free exchange of ideas that is a core feature of our college; instead, it is intended to establish a standard of kindness, conscientiousness, and respect that will serve to guide us in the future.

Further, we believe that it should be a priority of the college to provide counseling services to its students. Madison students live and study in Case Hall. Especially with the backlog at the University's main counselling centers, having a counselor located in Case and dedicated to Madison students would be a valuable resource, and would represent a concrete step the college could take to assist survivors and students alike.

As well, we believe the college should supplement the University's Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence (SARV) during and after JMC Live It. At a university level, SARV is often mismanaged and a poor resource for students. As a college, we already have an extensive program for incoming students. Incorporating material on consent, sexual assault, and related topics would be an intervention for all students that would give us increased control over that programming and make for a safer community.

Finally, we believe that the college should expand JMC Live It. As a residential program, we should have a role in working with students to acclimate them to the college and to our community expectations. Currently, that role amounts to

three hours on the first day of classes and an assortment of mostly-optional support programs. Extending Live It into the academic year would help to foster discussions on gender, race, and other issues, and cultivate a college more consistent with our values.

James Madison College is not separate from the broader university. It is an integral part of it. Our campus activism must therefore extend into the college, seeking to shape it into a more perfect version of itself. We believe the interventions we outlined above represent concrete steps towards that goal, and are all immediately actionable. While this is not the end of what must change within Madison, it is a respectable beginning.

Sincerely,

James Madison College Student Senate