

Dean's Advisory Committee (DAC)

September 30, 2020

4:00 pm to 5:20 pm

Google Meets

Attendance: Aiman N, Alexa G, Amrit S, Andre C (DoS), Angie M (Libraries), Anirudh S, Arveen D, Blessie M (CC), Chelsea P, Denise M, Eileen S, Emily G (CC), Everett H, Gavin P (ISS), Harikrishna R, Helen V (DoS), Jade L, Jane L (RO), Jessica H, Katherine Z (DoS), Katie K (SU), Leah H, Lindsay B (DoS), Lindsay J (Libraries), Madelynn S, Mahmud A, Sarah W (DoS), Sridhar P (GSA), Sunny P, Tyler Z, Yashita S, Yasmin H

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Approval of Agenda

3. Standing Items

a. Updates from the Vice Provost and Dean of Students

- Academic Restructuring and SET Initiative are underway and will necessitate big changes. Need student feedback to help ensure we (the University) does the best job possible with the restructuring process. Will be a topic of discussion throughout the year at DAC.
- SU has a [TikTok](#) about academic restructuring.
- Concern raised that CSJ will lose their own administration - Andre responded that ARWG is looking at options to preserve Faculty identities. Potential of 3 Divisions and CSJ, Augustana, and Native Studies would remain autonomous. There are discussions happening to ensure that these 3 Faculties would still have a voice and not be overpowered by large Divisions.
- Similar concern raised about Native Studies and services for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students - Andre commented on the importance of maintaining autonomous First Peoples House as other student services may merge.

4. Discussion Items

a. Students negatively impacted by functions of online delivery

Everett

- Not just problems with remote learning, also some benefits like asynchronous learning.
- Some problems include time zones, connectivity, home environments that may have distractions, staying motivated, maintaining social connections and mental health, zoom fatigue, getting locked out of zoom after losing connection.
- Difficulty forming teams for projects due to time zones, inability to meet for coffee and discuss - potential to create tip sheet for working in teams, remotely. **ACTION ITEM.**
- Difficulty ordering/holding CSJ Library materials for pick-up on North Campus. Didn't get materials in time to complete projects - Angie and Lindsay (from Library) responded, acknowledging that holds are taking longer. Would like to learn more about CSJ-specific examples to figure out solutions. Jade to email Angie.
- This issue (impact of remote learning) will be added as a regular agenda item throughout the year.

b. Winter 2020 Grading System

Hari

- Lack of grades, how will that affect scholarships, further program application, etc.
- Will be an “asterisks” on everyone’s transcript moving forward because institutions have handled the winter semester grading differently. Colleagues at various universities, government agencies, etc. are treating this issue intelligently. Please bring issues forward so we can follow-up.
- Jane (from RO) provided feedback:

Graduate students - Follow up with FGSR about specific situations like the students who started in Winter 2020 term

- *GPA Calculation* The GPA will not count the courses that received CR/NCR in the calculation of the GPA; however, the credits will be counted in the credit total.
- *Admissions/Scholarship.* For graduate students applying for further programs or for scholarships, it is important to remember that GPAs are only one component of the criteria that institutions and funding agencies consider when assessing applications. Given the global nature of this COVID-19 situation we expect that other institutions will be understanding of the notation on transcripts.
- *The U of A is able to provide a standard letter from the RO with an explanation. We encourage graduate students to ask their referees to provide specific details about students’ abilities and skills and to address the institutional decision to offer CR/NCR.*

Undergraduate students

- *Admissions: No Winter 2020 semester courses from any schools will be used for GPA calculations for admissions for any ugrd programs. Courses where CR was awarded will be used to meet pre-req requirements.*
- *For the 2020/2021 undergraduate awards assessment*
 - *GPA eligibility was based on the applicant’s Fall 2019 coursework and credit load eligibility was based on the Fall 2019/Winter 2020.*
 - *We added flexibility for students with renewable scholarships by reducing the renewable GPA requirements to a 3.1 GPA (vs. a 3.5 GPA).*
 - *For students that still did not meet the GPA eligibility, we also communicated directly to them that courses taken in Spring 2020 and Summer 2020 would be included if completed (normally we only assess on Fall/Winter).*
- *The U of A is able to provide a standard letter from the RO with an explanation.*

- Hari will follow up with Jane who will connect with FGSR.

c. EDI Initiatives - BIPOC Faculty and Deans

Yasmin

- Held for next meeting.

d. Student Services survey:

Blessie & Emily

a. <https://baseline.campuslabs.ca/uoa/sndrdpilot2>

- Errors raised on intro, Q3, Q4 option of other, Q6 could have option of partner/significant other, Q 42 (What activities would you like to see to help connect...select all) only allows you to select 1, Q 49 (about diversity and inclusion...says optional) why is it optional since all questions are said to be optional?
- If you make selections and go back, you lose answers - if answers cannot be saved, warn participants.

- Q31 list of services - take out "University" for UHC, UPharmacy, ULibrary and add them into alphabetized list
- Q re how many years in program, but what if you've transferred programs? Ask for both time at UofA and time in current program.
- Potential to include Faculty-specific student supports or GSA and ISS virtual front desks?
- Logic re if you answer yes to feeling discrimination leads to 3 questions including "any other comment" question which is meant to be final question of survey regardless of answer to discrimination question. With it following the discrimination question, seems related to discrimination. Can it be separated onto a different page? Or make language clearer so respondents don't just think it is an opportunity to share other comments regarding discrimination.
- Potential to get a copy of answers sent to respondents or to download answers? Anonymity is priority but will investigate options with Campus Labs (survey company).
- Need for mental health strategies.
- Q31, Multifaith Prayer space could be added as a separate option from interfaith

5. Roundtable

6. Adjournment

Next Meeting October 28, 2020