

October 26, 2016

4:00-6:00 pm

4-02 SUB

MINUTES

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Approval of agenda
3. Purpose of DAC:
 - Create a space where DoS can spend time with students from diverse backgrounds to get opinions/feedback etc. We're here to listen, answer questions, address concerns
 - Committee composed of students representatives and those from a call for participation in mid-September
 - COSA: continues to exist, being organized separately.
 - Main intention of DAC to be majority of students on Committee
4. Standing Items
 - 4.1. Update from the Vice Provost and Dean of Students on current items:
 - Development of Sexual Violence Policy--should be ready to present a draft and info docs to GFC in November
 - 47 recommendations that are being implemented through four working groups
 - Transition out of University
 - Currently, there is a lot of effort put into transitioning INTO university, but less focus on transitioning out/anxiety of leaving school
 - Student Group Procedure
 - Will be consulting in order to update it
 - Mental Health Initiatives
 - There are many services on campus to support students, but the University needs to make students aware, ie. more promotion required.

Questions

- For many students, there is a stigma associated with using mental health services, often for cultural reasons. How can students encourage our peers to access services?
 - DoS: often people feel isolated and are trapped in their isolation--they won't reach out, and this is a concern.
 - One of the ways to remedy this, is to ensure that these services know that when students are connecting with them, they must listen and be aware of these student hesitations. Students might not go to the applicable service right away, but if that service can help refer them to the proper place, then services can connect and support the student.

- Transitioning out of university, what kind of initiatives are being done?
 - DoS: Universities always have wonderful initiatives going on across campus everywhere, which is good, but it can often mean that groups are often working in isolation. Many units and faculties do great work in helping students in transitioning out--we need to learn from them and coordinate efforts. We need to create a context in which this can happen, and the Office of the DOS is a central unit that is working on this
 - Current examples:
 - writing aid services--finding out what exists on campus and coordinating successful initiatives
 - The Career Centre, which secures government grants for internships and co-ops, providing professional development/work experience

5. Discussion Items

5.1. National College Health Assessment, Melissa Visconti, Healthy Campus Unit

- Background: Conducted February 2011, 2013, 2016
- Coordinated by the Health and Wellness Services and funded by the DOS
- 64-question survey looking at alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use, sexual health, weight, nutrition, and exercise, mental health, personal safety and violence--self perceived health
- Why important? Survey has provided us with a baseline--participated in three NCHA surveys and starting to see trends
- Issue identification and service delivery
- How do we share survey results with students?
- 5000 students invited to participate (national recommendation). Inclusion criteria--enrollment in at least one course
- 936 respondents- a 19% overall response proportion
- 45% of students describe their health as very good or excellent
- Academic wellness: Top three factors affecting academic performance are Anxiety, Stress, Sleep
- Emotional Wellness
 - 35% respondents received services from a therapist/psychologist
 - 19% received mental health services on campus
 - 77% would consider seeking help from a mental health professional

Community connections

- 80% agree or strongly agree that the UofA has a sincere interest in the wellbeing of its students
- 76% agree or strongly agree that their faculty has a sincere interest in the wellbeing of its students
- 69% of respondents feel they are part of the UofA community

Questions and Comments from the DAC

- *How many schools do this in Canada?* Over 40 schools across Canada
 - *What time of year?* February, before and during reading week
 - *Have you considered doing the survey at another time of year since Feb is stressful for everyone?* Yes--something we will look into for 2019, however this is a time when no other surveys are administered
 - Note timing of survey in results so students know data was collected around mid-terms--unsettling data makes more sense in context
 - Group activity
 - NCHA data dissection (Circle data you would like students to be aware. Under-line data you would like further clarification on. Any further feedback, please share with Melissa via email.)
- 5.2. DoS Communications, Students Feedback: Sarah Coffin and Jenna Clarahan, DoS
- DoS Comms Survey: What is the best medium of getting communication out to students?
 - Suggestions include: Student digest email, adding a phone number on ONEcard, pamphlets to be handed to student leaders and then they can trickle the information down to their students, during orientation, or even open house, classroom presentations, personal interactions Street posters, bunching similar services together, eClass- in the side-bar area
 - *What is the least effective way?* Twitter
 - More information about services: Ex. what's it like attending the PSC
 - *Are we correct in assuming you just want information to be to the point?* Yes--depends on the means of communication
- 5.3. Student Mental Health (discussion points)
- Accessibility
 - International refugee students--depending on cultural norms, standard services might not be helpful for them.
 - Instructors
 - Professors need to know how to learn to receive disclosures
 - DoS: We need to have a disclosure centre, where students can go, disclose, and then the centre will pass on information to the professors. Would prevent students from having to disclose to multiple individuals.
- 5.4. Gender Inclusivity and Anti-oppression/Intersectionality
- Accessibility
 - Many people have never heard of The Landing

- LGBTQ students, especially trans students, aren't receiving support they need, this makes it an unsafe environment for them
 - Sexual Assault Centre indicates that they are welcoming of all identities on their promo materials--more services should do this
 - DoS--lots of education to do on this issue
 - This is a case where students are helping us build a climate/ culture in which people can be who they are and be accepted
 - For student services, it's a frontline training issue, that we are constantly working on--staff attend P.D. workshops
 - Have to help individuals be receptive, because even with the best education, if individuals are not receptive it doesn't help
 - University wants to do the right thing, everyone is on board
- 5.5. *Eating in library study areas
- 5.6. *Undergraduate research in the arts
- 5.7. *Promoting a safe long term environment
- 5.8. *Residence rental rates

*Agenda items were been tabled until the next DAC meeting-November 30, 2016

6. Roundtable

Next Meeting November 30, 2016, 4-6 pm, 4-02 SUB
Send agenda items to sarah.wolgemuth@ualberta.ca