

Dean's Advisory Committee (DAC)

October 3, 2018
4:00 pm to 6:00 pm
4-20 SUB

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

2. **Approval of Agenda**

3. **Standing Items**

a. Updates from the Vice Provost and Dean of Students

Changes within the Dean of Students Portfolio

- Recently completed a re-organization of Accessibility Resources and the Academic Success Centre
- Establishing a new program within the portfolio: the ACCESS Outreach Team
- Restructuring of cost-recovery fees for some services. In every area that we give supports to students, there should be a layer of service that are accessible because students pay the MNIF. Where we provide more services than the MNIF covers, we then offer cost-recovery services. The restructuring was approached by asking ourselves what services should everyone have access to? What services would be cost recovery? What services should never have a fee?

De-Emphasis of Clinical Support Services

- AB government wants post-secondary institutions to de-emphasize clinical support for students and wants to emphasize prevention, education, and other non-clinical services. The UofA has already begun this transition and will continue to try to reduce barriers to access for students.
- Government has a 2 part plan to de-emphasize clinical Services:
 - Promote wellness services, education on campus
 - Have AHS increase clinical services in the communities around universities
- We're not eliminating our capacity for clinical services (because we need them), but are just emphasizing wellness services.
- University students have better access to clinical supports than they would in the community (outside the university)
- Will hours available to students at CCS decrease?
 - UofA has been successful at showing that CCS is not clinical. Psychiatry or anything with a prescription will likely be considered clinical

Budget

- We have some budget uncertainty - likely reductions in the next 3 years. DoS gets money from MNIF which fluctuates with enrollment, but our costs are also going up every year. We do have contingency plans for possible budget cuts. Important therefore for us to understand what our priorities are. Need is infinite, resources are limited. DAC is an important venue for the DoS to get feedback from students.

4. **Discussion Items**

a. ACCESS Outreach Team: Chris Avelar and Kathleen Gilliland

Recognizing both the increase in students needing general support and the challenges to providing broader access to service specialists, the DoS is developing a new program that aligns with the values of the [ACCESS Open Minds](#) project to address the needs of a growing population who might not require the support of a specialist. The academic year 2018-19 will be a pilot year for the launch of the service which will work to provide services offered by the Office of the Dean of Students to a greater number of students in a timely, informal manner.

The goals of the program are:

- To address students' needs and issues earlier and thereby mitigate the need for specialist student services.
- To provide academic support in general writing and math (foundational, pre-university) in addition to student wellness support.
- To increase access to student support outside of business hours and within a variety of student spaces across North Campus.

The team will work collaboratively across all units within the DoS portfolio with particularly strong ties to the ACCESS Open Minds Community Brokers. The two community Social Workers will refer students requiring ongoing follow-up to the ACCESS Open Minds team and will also provide ongoing support as needed. This will increase the capacity of the ACCESS Open Minds Community Brokers and extend their reach on campus.

Times: Each of the aforementioned tabling locations will happen once/week:

1. CCIS, Tuesdays 10-2
2. Tory-Business atrium, Wednesdays 10-2
3. PAW social street, Thursdays 10-2
4. Cameron wisdom corner, Tuesdays 4-8PM
5. Rutherford North, Wednesdays 4-8PM
6. Residence (likely east campus), Sundays time TBD

Academic Supports: Foundational/pre-university math support and writing support will be offered in two locations, days/times TBD. Support that is not foundational will be referred to the Decima Robinson Support Centre and the Centre for Writers, respectively. An e-class materials for math support are under development.

- a) CAB ACCESS Outreach office space
- b) East Campus village (will be a weekend)

b. Student Mental Health

Mental Health Barriers:

- Students ask - is my problem big enough and can they actually help me?
- Some students don't think they have an issue, but may have a small stressor
- Need students to trust their gut if they feel something is wrong or are uncomfortable
- Students often feel like they are alone or feel isolated.
- Students may feel like their problem is too big, and doubt that they will actually be able to get a solution. Or that their problem is not within the university (abusive relationship, problem with parents) so they may not think that the university can help
- Website of CCS - isn't clear how to access help.
- Having shame of accessing professional help - can address with education or outreach
- Names of services - students need to know what the commitment looks like to engage in that service (time commitment, if it's one time, will they get referred, etc). We need to set expectations of what happens at each service
- Be aware of culture differences and how each culture approaches mental health supports. Embed in orientations

- Providing services in a variety of languages where possible
- 211 has 150 different languages for the Distress Line, although not all languages are guaranteed to be available at all times
- Anonymous chat or phone number - Help navigating the services “click here”
- How do we help students who don’t realize they are unwell? Using HIAR has been successful
- Bringing the model of First Peoples’ House to everyone
- Hard to go into a service and talk to someone about issues that’s labelled
- Can you go through university without having a mental health breakdown? Important to change the perspective that you don’t have to have a crisis, school can be fun, breaks are good, can have a sense of community
- Peer led programs very important
- Learning help seeking behaviours in university is very important - building resiliency
- Idea of self-empowerment or helping yourself
- Ideas that were submitted after the meeting via email:
 - University-run mental health line
 - a crisis line for students and faculty
 - Supporting students and faculty with the stressors of the university and perhaps being able to direct them to proper supports. This is a way for individuals to ask for help without having to see anyone face to face; which can be a major reason individuals do not seek out help.

Advanced exam deferrals for documented mental health issues

- No waiting to the day of the exam in order to apply for the deferral (this may cause more distress)

Mandatory suicide prevention for (some/all) classes (ie. psych 104/105)

- A condensed version of the QPR training - a lot of information is provided online about suicide prevention, however, how many people are accessing it? This provides the opportunity for students to have this valuable knowledge without having to fit the QPR class into their already hectic schedules.

Mental health survey for staff and students - a way for us to gauge the mental health of the students in our university, specifically.

- How are they feeling in general about university
- How overwhelmed are they
- Did they think about suicide at all in the past year

Bi-monthly check-ins with students to see how they are doing

- Automated e-mail
- Not just an email outlining resources (because I think that already exists around finals), but a more interactive way for students to actually let us know how they are. This can be run by volunteers or committee members with experience dealing with various mental health issues (ie. volunteering with the distress line or experience with QPR training). This is also just an opportunity for students to feel like someone recognizes how hard university can be and that there's someone who genuinely cares for them enough to reach out and ask the simple question of "how are you."

5. Roundtable

6. Adjournment

Next Meeting November 7, 2018