

Attendance: Alexa G, Amrit S, Andre C (DoS), Andrew A, Angie M (Library), Arveen D, Clint G, Chelsea P, Denise M, Eileen S, Gavin P (ISS), Harikrishna R, Jade L, Jane L (RO), Jessica H, Katherine Z (DoS), Katie K (SU), Leah H, Lindsay J (Library), Madelynn S, Rashed A, Sarah W (DoS), Sridhar P (GSA), Tyler Z, Yashita S, Yousuf Iqbal

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Standing Items

a. Updates from the Vice Provost and Dean of Students

- Lots of focus on academic restructuring.
- Academic restructuring will not have as great an impact on student services as SET. SET affects how we can deliver services.
- Main DoS involvement in restructuring is Student Services Centre (SSC), in partnership with Registrar's Office.
- Phase 1 will be a navigation centre, later down the road, focus on co-locating resources.
- Expecting that new Covid restrictions will require prioritizing of services/work when some staff face the challenge of having children out of school and at home.
- Students may be in a situation where they can't do everything they want to do and have to prioritize. If students need help making arrangements to balance work, reach out.

b. Experience with online delivery

- Problems with online proctoring.
- A lot of stress related to managing technical difficulties.
 - Cameron Library has [individual study spaces that can be booked](#) to ensure secure internet connection. Booking is 24-hour in advance but can reach out on [Library Ask Us](#) to ask to book in advance to ensure a spot.
 - UofC and U of Lethbridge have online assessment policies. Something the UofA is contemplating. UofA has a more unstructured approach which can be beneficial but also create problems.
- Different delivery methods can be stressful.

- Not inherently bad. It can be good to be exposed to new ways of learning and assessment, but new to students and instructors and a lot of mental stress for all involved to engage in new methods
- Even partial course load is requiring full-time work.
- Graduate students needing to finish programs but facing challenges finishing requirements.
- Graduate teaching opportunities seem limited right now. Raised this issue with the Dean of ALES.
 - Issue is discussed at Dean's Council too. Significant value to graduate students to have experience. Deans try to determine a good ratio of classes taught by grad students.
 - Graduate students who are also international students are facing significant mental health challenges. Feeling isolated while facing significant academic stresses.
 - TA challenges because flexibility given to students around deadlines is causing a pile-up of grading at the end of the semester.
 - Have a conversation with the instructor about priorities. Academic responsibilities need to be prioritized. Look for ways to provide the feedback that students need without doing a full assessment immediately.
 - Grades will be submitted late given the realities of the situation and flexibility given.

Flexibility

- can be given in graduate assignment deadlines too.
- 1st-year undergraduate perspective that they didn't even know what would be a reasonable timeline for expecting feedback. Interesting to hear the perspective that TAs/Instructors are worried about getting feedback to students in a timeline manner.
- What measures are being taken to ensure academic standards are not being compromised?
 - Institutions around the world are facing the same challenges. UofA standings should be in line with those of other institutions. Institutions helping each other, not trying to compete.

4. Roundtable

- Registrar's Office reported that the [Supplementary Bursary Program](#) has not received as many applications this year. This is money for students in need that does NOT need to be repaid. Trying to get the word out to ensure that students know how to access this support. The RO provides a [tip sheet](#) to help students with applications.

5. Adjournment

Next Meeting January 27, 2021.