

Agenda of the AMS Education Committee
Oct 27th, 2015

Attendance

Invited: Samantha So [chair], Veronika Bylicki [councillor], Daniel Lam [councillor], Ryan Grubb [councillor], Jeff Pea [councillor], Jamiu Abdsalami [councillor], Hannah Xiao [member-at-large], Adrian Cheng [member-at-large], Ava Nasiri [executive] Dario Garousian [guest]

Present: Samantha So, Daniel Lam, Adrian Cheng, Jamiu Abdsalami, Dario Garousian, Ryan Grubb

Regrets: Ava

Recording Secretary: Samantha So (Chair)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:06pm.

Agenda Items**1. Approval of Agenda**

Moved: Daniel

Seconded: Jamiu

Carries unanimously.

Note: Quorum was not met.

2. Approval of Minutes of July 22, 2015 (with edit to Jamiu's last name, clarify Daniels)

Moved: Ryan

Seconded: Daniel

Carries unanimously.

3. Appointment of a Vice-Chair

Postponed due to lack of quorum and therefore lack of candidates.

4. Adrian: Discussion on Access and Diversity

Proposal: A project based off of speaking to Access and Diversity advisors who feel that they are disconnected from the students they serve. As well, the students have some discontentment with service.

Discussion:

Perhaps we should start with a survey asking what advisors and students think of the service? The AES states a very small percentage of discontent with Access and Diversity as a service... We should arrange a meeting with A&D to discuss this further – where do the advisors see a gap between themselves and students, and how does that carry over into a discrepancy in perceived contentment?

University is increasing investment in student experience services, like Access and Diversity and Mental Health, etc. Access and Diversity is seeing more office space (an entire office for the service itself) and 2 more advisors hired... they may fix this themselves after this is finalized and implemented.

There may be more a problem with the approach rather than disconnect – it takes too long to be able to help. It may be too focused on the medical model – ie, medical documentation, “proof”. The university’s investment is increasing the focus on servicing students, but I think the biggest issue is accessibility rather than connection.

Question: This is a project proposed from consulting advisors/employees, but how about students utilizing the service?

Students who have spoken to Adrian have voiced concerns over the ease of access to the service, as well as dissatisfaction.

Defining “Disconnect”

> Not helping to improve the social experience of using the service and the general social wellness of students using the service. “Too cold, not understanding.”

What if the two new advisors would give students more time to connect to their advisor?

Some information from the AES:

- Not enough students that identify as having a disability are registered with/know of/use Access and Diversity.

~74% of students who are registered = content

~5% = neutral

~15% = dissatisfied

Action: Look into how many people are registered with AD

Surveys only do so much (sample size is good, but not big enough).

Something we could look into: Forum or having a conversation/consultation with people who use the service.

Look at better advertising this service – the AES recorded usage numbers are dismal.

Also, working to fight against the stigma – some people may not seek help because they don't like having people know they have a disability.

Suggestions:

Online forms?

These are difficult to get people to fill out. But distributed at the office itself! Hits target audience. It would be worrisome that there may not be a form like this for the service already. Check if there is one – we could use the information from that instead of circulating forms.

Idea: Advertise in-office for forum/consultation.

Action items: Check if they have a form. Look into ACCESS AND DIVERSITY POLICY (73)

5. Updates from the VPAUA's Office [Dario]

INTERNATIONAL TUITION INCREASES!

Currently looking into the definition of diversity.

Diversity = international students, but what about socioeconomic class?

Where can we follow up with the sessions? How about the student leader meetings?

If it does happen (the increases, which is very probable), where is money going? They have released a breakdown of where they're allocating money (it is a "reccomendation"). Not voted on yet.

REALISTIC GOAL: Lobby to have the allocations to happen in a way that benefits students, not just the institution.

Exam Prep Database

Working on filling it. Not all profs are too cooperative, departments also not so cooperative, all have their own services.

Supplemental Learning

>One (great) system is run by EUS. Supplemental courses run by TAs to help guide you through tough concepts – like supplemental discussion blocks outside of classes. Helping you do problems, collaborating between students and TAs.

Not a part of course registration – run by the undergrad society.

Are the TAs paid for this?

No. So it may pose a bump for instating this program in other faculties.

Most of these course are for first and second year course.

UBCO has this system – but they have a smaller student population and larger teaching population.

Undergraduate Research

Opportunities (outside co-op) are but there, but difficult to find – opportunities you don't have to PAY to find.

AMS looking into building a database for research opportunities. Looking into a platform to present to university.

EUS – Materials program: Profs present their research focuses at a session at beginning of term, students pick the ones they're interested in – no students are turned away.

If we could implement this within more departments, it would be great. Likely it would only work with smaller departments – ex, biology would not work.

Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting is TBD.

Adjourn

1. Moved Jeff, Seconded Jamiu

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:10pm.