

SUBJECT	Policy I-12: Changes as results of VPAUA Review
MEETING DATE	April 22nd, 2020
MOTION	BE IT RESOLVED THAT the AMS Council accept the proposed changes to Policy I-12: Policy on the Academic Experience Survey.
PREPARED BY	Julia Burnham, Vice-President Academic and University Affairs
DOCUMENTS	1. Policy (I-12) on the Academic Experience Survey

DESCRIPTION & RATIONALE

The Alma Mater Society (AMS), which representatives of all UBC Vancouver students, proposes 3 recommendations to amend the internal AMS AES Policy. Currently the policy faces weaknesses in structured decision making processes in terms of consultation and development for the yearly AES. Additionally the policy does not currently reflect realized practices and further needs to be amended to provide flexibility and to align with such practices.

#1: Adding a new definition of “Stakeholder ”

Rationale: Implementing this will allow for a flexible, inclusive, equitable and as necessary, broader interpretation of who can be included in the various processes of re-designing and implementing the AES by the AUA office.

#2: Bolster Question Proposal Processes via Structured Decision Making Principles

Rationale: Adding an additional subsection in section 1 that outlines the process the AUA will take (utilizing SDM principles) for weighing and considering question proposals, such as developing a criteria, and weighing process that is communicated to constituencies sending in proposal.

#3: Minor Amendments for Language Clarity and Flexibility

Rationale: In order to “bridge the gap” between theory and practice for this policy’s various timelines, word choices, and minor alternations needed to be considered throughout the document, such as discarding specific committees and instead addressing identified stakeholders. This will allow for greater

flexibility in some places, and greater clarity in others, balancing the need for changing and evolving future contexts, scenarios and circumstances.

Implementing these changes in the AES policy will help strengthen and align it as an internal AMS policy that is more structured, and committed to the values and mission the AMS of UBC holds.

BENEFITS Reputational, Financial, Sustainable, Social	This revised AES Policy will allow for a more robust and realistic consultation process for the AUA Office.
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RISKS Financial, Operational, Reputational	N/A
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COSTS Financial, Resources, Lifecycle	N/A
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TIMELINE Implementation Timeline	Changes will be implemented for next year's Academic Experience Survey.
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CONSULTATION Internal & External Groups	<p>The AUA Office oversaw an internal review of the Policy and consulted with the Advocacy Committee.</p> <p>The Policy was approved via an email vote on April 17th, 2020.</p>
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ATTACHMENT #1 – Policy (I-12) on the Academic Experience Survey

Title & Number (I-12) Policy on the Academic Experience Survey

Effective Date:

November 8, 2017

Approval Date:

November 8, 2017

Policy Type:

Internal Policy

Review Date:

This policy shall be reviewed every three (3) years.

Responsible Body:

Advocacy Committee

Authority:

AMS Code of Procedure Section II, Article 11(1)

“Council may create external and internal policies as well as combined policies.”

Purpose and Goals:

This policy mandates the Vice President, Academic and University Affairs to hold the Academic Experience Survey once a year in the second term of the Academic Winter Session. It also outlines the process for the formulation of questions, and implements a standardized timeline for the survey’s development and distribution. This policy also mandates the two membership surveys the AMS is allowed to conduct, and how additional surveys may be conducted.

Applicability:

This policy applies to the annual Academic Experience Survey organized by the Vice-President, Academic and University Affairs. This policy also applies to how many membership surveys the AMS may run every year.

Exclusions:

This policy does not apply to how other AMS membership surveys, including the Nest Experience Survey, are conducted.

Definitions:

For the purposes of this policy and in all other policies in which they are not otherwise defined:

<i>Academic Experience Survey</i>	Questionnaire distributed with the purpose of gathering data on students' experiences at UBC.
<i>Membership Survey</i>	Any survey sent to the AMS Membership, on behalf of the AMS.
<i>Stakeholder</i>	Any group, external or internal to the AMS, (constituencies, staff, specific offices, units etc.) that has a stake in the construction and implementation of the AES.

Policy:

1. The Vice President, Academic and University Affairs shall organize and conduct a survey once a year in the second term of the UBC Winter Session.
 - a. The Vice President, Academic and University Affairs shall, a minimum of two months before the survey's intended release date, send to the VP Academic Caucus, each AMS constituency, and other identified stakeholders an invitation to submit questions for that year's iteration of the survey.
 - i. The call for questions shall request the proposed questions be placed in ranked order, with a rationale attached to each proposed question. This will help to ensure that questions are justifiable, and identified in a priority sequence from each stakeholder
 - b. The Vice President, Academic and University Affairs shall also consult with the Advocacy Committee, other AMS executives and relevant staff members well in advance of the survey's launch date.
2. After having collected the data, the Office of the Vice President, Academic and University Affairs shall present to Council briefly the important statistics as collected in the survey.
3. The office of the Vice President, Academic and University Affairs, with consultation from relevant departments in the AMS, shall write a report outlining the data and final recommendations based on the data collected.
 - a. Such recommendations shall also be presented to University leadership and every effort shall be made to incorporate the recommendations into advocacy efforts for the following year.

4. The Vice President, Academic and University Affairs will review any external organization(s) that help(s) run the survey before, and/or within one month of presenting the data to Council. Working with Finance Committee, the Vice President, Academic and University Affairs will determine whether they wish to renew the contract(s) with the previous external organization(s), amend the contract(s) with the previous external organization(s), or terminate the contract(s) with the previous external organization(s). If the Vice President, Academic and University Affairs decides to not use an External Organization they must present a plan to Advocacy Committee on how they will run the survey themselves.
5. The AMS shall only run two membership surveys every year: a survey on the operations of the AMS, the AMS Experience Survey, and the Academic Experience Survey. Both of these surveys shall be released at separate times to encourage participation.
 - a. The Executive Committee may recommend additional membership surveys to Council. Upon recommendation from the Executive Committee, Council must vote to approve any additional membership surveys by majority vote.

Consultations:

The following groups have been consulted during the development of this policy:

AMS Advocacy Committee

Insights West

Executive Committee

History:

This is the second draft of the first version of the policy.

The AMS has been conducting the AES since 2012. Questions have varied inconsistently from year-to-year, limiting the ability of the AMS VP Academic and University Affairs to show change-over-time in data. The policy also seeks to minimize overlap with UBC's Undergraduate Experience Survey (UES). This policy differentiates the AES from the Nest Experience Survey, and the most recent drafting removes AMS-specific questions from the Appendix accordingly.

Related Policies:

No related policies

Appendix/Appendices:

- A. The following information will be requested in the survey on the following bases (wording of the questions required to gather this information shall be determined by the Vice President, Academic and University Affairs in consultation with the External Organization(s)):
 1. Once every year:

- i. Demographics (gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, domestic/international, full/part-time, graduate/undergraduate, faculty, year level, parent/guardian status)
 - ii. Time to complete degree
 - iii. Estimated expenses on textbooks and other course materials
 - iv. Frequency of experiencing discrimination (race or ethnicity, gender, age, religious Beliefs, Sexual Orientation, Disability/Ability)
 - v. AMS satisfaction statements (strongly agree to strongly disagree)
 1. I trust the AMS to spend my money wisely
 2. The AMS does a good job of representing students' academic interests to the administration and faculty
 3. The AMS does a good job of representing students' financial interests to the administration and faculty
 - vi. University satisfaction statements (strongly agree to strongly disagree)
 1. Overall, I am satisfied with my university experience
 2. Overall, I am receiving good value for my tuition fees
 3. The University cares about what students think about the cost of education.
 - vii. Campus community statements (strongly agree to strongly disagree)
 1. I feel safe on campus at night
 2. I feel a sense of belonging on campus
 - viii. Agreement with statements about personal finances
 1. Overall, I think I can manage my finances
 2. I worry about how to pay for textbooks and class materials
 3. I worry regularly about how to pay my tuition and other expenses
 4. I experience financial hardship related to my tuition and other expenses
 5. If I had an unexpected financial emergency, I would know how to access emergency funding
 6. I might need to abandon my studies at UBC due to financial reasons
2. At least once every two years:
- i. Reasons for not completing degree in four years
 - ii. Awareness, Use, and helpfulness of UBC Services for Academic Success
 - iii. Awareness, Use, and helpfulness of UBC Services for Mental Health/Well-Being
 - iv. Expected debt at graduation (No debt, Don't Know, Give an Estimate)
 - v. Current housing/living situation (including housing insecurity)
 - vi. Past year concern about sufficient food

- vii. Post-Graduation plans (job seeking, graduate school, professional program, continued employment, additional undergraduate school)
- viii. To what extent did you consider the following in selecting UBC (significant reason, somewhat of a reason, not a reason)
 - 1. Good overall reputation
 - 2. Provides high quality education
 - 3. Well-known and respected internationally
 - 4. Proximity to the City of Vancouver
 - 5. Attractive campus
 - 6. Proximity to home
 - 7. Excellent teachers/instructors
 - 8. West coast lifestyle
 - 9. Vibrant student life
 - 10. Prepares graduates for the workforce
 - 11. Fosters leading research and development
 - 12. Financial cost of tuition
 - 13. Supports experimental thinking and innovation
 - 14. Scholarships
 - 15. Athletics
- ix. Resources relied on for financial support
 - 1. Parents/other family
 - 2. Spouse/partner
 - 3. Part-time Employment
 - 4. Full-time Employment
 - 5. Scholarship, bursaries, or other awards
 - 6. Personal Savings or inheritance
 - 7. Student Loans (government)
 - 8. Student Loans (private)
 - 9. UBC emergency funding/financial aid
- x. Frequency of participation in textbook activities
 - 1. Bought a textbook or other course material and didn't use it, or rarely used it, throughout the term
 - 2. Went without a textbook or other course resources because it didn't seem useful
 - 3. Used and outdated version of a textbook or other course resource to avoid paying for a more recent edition
 - 4. Went without a textbook or other course resources due to cost
 - 5. Accessed a textbook or other course resource illegally from sources other than the bookstore
- xi. Sense of connection to the UBC Thunderbirds and varsity athletics