

Council on Student Services (COSS)

Minutes of Meeting #5

Tuesday, January 26, 2021

2:00-3:00 p.m.

Teams Meeting

AGENDA

Voting Members

Present

- David Newman, Executive Director, Student Experience, Student Life St. George
- Beth Ali, Executive Director, Athletics & Physical Activity, Faculty of Kinesiology & Physical Education
- John Monahan, Warden, Hart House
- Melinda Scott, Director, Office of the Vice Provost, Students
- Heather Kelly, Executive Director, Student Life Programs & Services, Student Life St. George
- Dianna Acuna, Association of Part-Time Undergraduate Students (APUS)
- Jaime Kearns, Association of Part-Time Undergraduate Students (APUS)
- Dermot O'Halloran, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)
- Dhanela Sivaparanr, Graduate Students' Union (GSU)
- Tyler Riches, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)
- Muntaka Ahmed, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)
- Lily Pan, (UTM QSS)
- Paul Kaita, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)
- Eesha Chaudhry Council on Student Services (CSS)

Absent

- Mark Overton, Dean of Student Affairs and Assistant Principal, Student Services, UTM
- Desmond Pouyat, Dean of Student Affairs, UTSC Lily Pan (VP External) Quality Service to Students (QSS)
- Lwanga Musisi, Graduate Students' Union (GSU)

Nonvoting Members

- Jim Webster, Director of Finance, Faculty of Physical Education and Health
- Serena Persaud, CAO, Office of Student Life
- Sherry Kulman, Chief Administrative Officer at Hart House
- Kaye Francis, Manager, Family Care Office

- Fran Dobbin, Director, Family Programs & Services

Guests

- Michelle Brownrigg, (HH)
- OPIRG Toronto
- Julian Oliveira
- Katherine Beaumont (SL)
- Tony Bowman (SL)
- Sandy Chang (SL)
- Arlene Clement (SL)
- Adam Kuhn (SL)
- Michael Nicholson (SL)
- John Hannah (SL)
- Michael White (SL)
- David Lowe (SL)
- Mahvish Wesley (SL)
- Tara Etherington (SL)
- Sarah Matias (SL)
- Natalie Roach (SL)
- Atifa Karim (SL)
- Kate Bowers (SL)
- Rachele Clemente (OPRIG)
- Julian Oliveira (APUS)

Chair

- Susan Froom

Secretary

- Kim Elias-Cartwright

Recording Secretary

- Kristin Radley-Jenkins

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Introductions

Chair welcomed the members and guests.

2. Meeting Called to Order

Chair called the meeting to order at 2:04.

3. Land Acknowledgement

The chair began the meeting with the Land Acknowledgement. Froom invites Eesha Chaudhry from CSS to read their land acknowledgement.

4. Approval of Agenda

Chair sought mover to approve agenda. Kearns motioned, Pan seconded. All in favour, none opposed, no abstentions. The motion passed.

5. Approval of Minutes from Meeting #4: January 20, 2021

Chair sought mover to approve minutes. Ali motioned, Kearns seconded. All in favour, none opposed, no abstentions. The motion passed.

6. Student Life Presentation

Froom invited Student Life to begin their presentation. Newman presented a summary of the vision and mission statement of Student Life (SL), with the support from their partners, including Hart House, UTM, UTSC, and Sport & Rec, students, and other university offices. Newman noted that “through our work and partnerships, every student will have the opportunity to actively participate in university life; find connection, community, and friendship; access support where and when it is needed; and experience leadership, independence and success”.

Newman shared that each of Student Life services and programs have Student Advisory Committees, adding that significant time was spent reviewing the various terms of reference to ensure they were robust. The committees included:

- Academic Success Advisory Committee
- Career Exploration & Education and Accessibility Services Advisory Committee
- Career Exploration & Education Guidelines for Student Engagement
- CCR Local Evaluation Committee
- Centre for Community Partnerships Advisory Committee
- Committee for the Allocation of Student Activity Space
- Feedback Loop for EDI Education
- Grad life Advisory Committee
- Health and Wellness Advisory Group
- Housing Services Student Advisory Committee
- Indigenous Student Services Advisory Committee
- International Student Experience Advisory Committee
- Multi-Faith Centre Advisory Council
- Student Initiative Fund
- Student Life Budget Committee

Newman provided a quick overview of the organization of Student life. Student Life is made up of four clusters.

- Student Experience
- Student Life Programs & Services
- Health & Wellness
- Global Learning & International Student Experience

Newman continued with providing more details of what was inside each cluster. Student Experience portfolio which is led by Newman and includes the Student Crisis Response progress team, as well as the Shared Services that support and serve across Student Life, also in some cases, the University more broadly. Also noting there are student led programs and services. Newman also points out the different services which include Academic Success and Accessibility, Career Exploration & Education, Centre for Community Partnerships, Student Housing, TCard Services, Indigenous Student Services and Student Engagement, which includes Multifaith Center and Student Success. Newman highlights Health and Wellness which includes Health Promotions. Lastly Student Life has Global Learning on Campus, International student Experience and Learning and Safety Abroad. Newman noted across these services there is On Location Services that are offered within the Colleges and Faculties throughout the St. George campus.

Newman provided an overview of some notable statistics and highlighted a few:

There was a large increase in a student engagement in Programs and Services over this year. Pointing out there was a 348% increase in online study hubs. There was also a 35% increase in unique students with Academic Success. In the fall term they saw 200% increase in demand for Career appointments. The number of students visiting Health and Wellness, is relatively similar to what they would have seen last year. There was also a large increase in off campus job board. Newman added some social media stats for Student Life including, 115K views on Facebook Live since March and also have almost 25K Instagram followers which marks a 50% increase.

Navi: Your mental Health Wayfinder:

Launched in September. Navi is supported tri-campus. Student Life played a role in project managing the development of the virtual agent.

- Student Mental Health Virtual Agent to help students navigate mental health supports.
- Uses IBM's Watson Assistant, a virtual agent that uses natural language processing to understand questions and provide accurate and relevant responses through a simple, anonymous chat function.

Student Mental Health Web Portal:

The Web Portal & Navi are intended to work together and help students navigate mental health resources. The web portal is used to help student's find mental health supports, and it was built around the stepped model of care for youth. It is a robust search and filter function that allows students to match their needs with the many types of supports available. Student Life played a role in developing content and support for design.

U of T MySSP:

- Expanded to all students.

- Real-time and/or appointment-based confidential, 24-hour support for any school, health, or general life concern.
- Available by chat or phone in multiple languages.

Tri-Campus Accessibility Letter of Accommodation:

- Streamlined and simplified tri-campus Transfer of Accommodation form for students taking classes across the campuses.

Peer Support Program:

- Partnership with Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work.
- Peer support offered in a one-on-one, drop-in, non-judgmental, confidential and accessible virtual space.

EDIA Initiatives

Newman began noting that this is a priority for Student Life, and have worked closely with the equity offices, with a strong tie to work through the Early Learning Centre and Family Care Offices, Sexual and Gender Diversity offices as well. Newman listed the EDIA initiatives:

- EDIA committee
- Equity Census
- Trans Career Guide "Your Journey: A Career Guide for Trans and Nonbinary Students"
- Accessibility Student Survey-with inclusion of identity based questions
- Accessibility/Career Monthly Newsletter
- Women-Identified Social Autism Association
- BIPOC Wellness Counsellor
- Black Students Welcome & Clubs Fair
- EDIA-A Workshops for Students
- (e.g. Accessibility and Language; Understanding & Responding to Microaggressions; Creating Inclusive Environments; Equity 101; Self Awareness as Foundational Work in Equity; Introduction to Anti-Opressive Practices; Allyship; Disclosure and Accommodation in the Job Search; Networking & Privilege Group Chat)
- Mentor Navigators (1:1s and drop ins) for First Generation, South East Asian, LatinX and Black, African and Caribbean students
- Interfaith Leadership Certificate
- Religious Literacy Training for Staff

Indigenous Initiatives

Newman stated that they are continually working around their commitments in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. They have undertaken a series of initiatives to support the Indigenous students and create a culture of

awareness. More recently, Student Life posted for an Indigenous Community Engaged Learning Coordinator.

A position has also been filled just a little less than a year ago, Indigenous Wellness Counselor that works in Health and Wellness, but is on location in First Nations House. Newman mentioned they have an Indigenous Career Intern and Career Peer Advisor. As well, recently established an Indigenous Student liaison to assist with students registering for accommodations through Accessibility Services.

Academic Resilience Program

Newman emphasized his gratitude to the COSS membership in supporting the introduction of this program last year. Hiring for the program was completed in fall 2020. The broad consultation phase began in October 2020 and is ongoing (will include student unions). The development of an emerging curriculum framework was established in November 2020. Lastly, early feedback sessions with students began fall 2020.

Academic Resilience Program: Guiding Pedagogy & Program Content

Newman mentioned the main focus is on learner development – this will not teach resilience, but rather build self-awareness to explore strengths and challenges with academic resilience as an outcome. It emphasizes process and community and driven by student need.

International Experience

- Secured \$100K in International Education Strategy funding to develop innovation and inclusion in learning abroad programming.
- Worked with program areas to support pivot to remote learning experiences.
- Launch of the Global Classroom Initiative.
- Secured ongoing funding to increase Immigration Advising team from 1 to 4.
- Supporting impact of pandemic on all international students' legal status in Canada

Covid-19 Response (quarantine program)

Student Life played a significant role in supporting 2100 + students since August. Through Housing Service, Health and Wellness and the International Student Experience areas, the quarantine program supports students coming back to Canada, which includes monitoring of physical and mental health. Students also receive transportation and accommodations, and have received COVID testing since October. Newman included what the program involves:

- Daily check-in with nurses
- Monitoring of physical and mental health
- Referrals for assessment
- COVID testing (since October)
- Transportation and accommodation

Other COVID responses include:

- Launched seven new workshops addressing COVID-related career strategies
- More than 1,100 students registered for our Graduate and Professional Schools Virtual Showcase
- Over the summer months there were more than 20,000 TCard appointments
- Seven new videos to orient students with disabilities, including strategies for online tests/exams
- Developed six new resources to support online learning
- Virtual learning abroad opportunities

Future Plans

- Student Life strategic plan, scheduled to launch in April 2021
- Development of a broader student advisory committee for Student Life, which will be in place by Summer 2021, and will borrow from the terms associated with the Hart House Board of Stewards and the Council on Athletics & Recreation
- Expansion of peer programming initiatives in several areas
- Continued development and adaptation of the Academic Resiliency Program
- Continue to build support around student mental health and EDIA initiatives
- Continued work in supporting student groups under the revised policy

Budget

Newman noted that he has shared the budget with representatives from UTSU, APUS & GSU during the past few weeks, and he greatly appreciates the comments and feedback. Newman began with noting he is presenting a balanced budget. Some areas where there are changes is the revenue line. Revenue is impacted by COVID-19 pandemic, including the likely outcome that certain changes may be permanent. The amount Student Life is able to bill through 3rd party billing from OHIP and UHIP is impacted due to some of the limitations on what can be offered, as well as the revenue normally used for space booking for interviews, career fairs, and other events are also reduced in our projections. Newman highlighted that there were no changes to the non-salary lines on our budget and the compensation changes are as a result of collective agreements and staff movements in roles.

To simplify the budget itself, as far as the sources of funding from last year to this upcoming year, Student Life is actually looking at a much smaller portion of the pie coming from student fees. Last year was 66%, and now it will be 62%. That is in large part due to the increased support that they received from some University funding.

Newman reviewed the pie charts illustrating the University support for programs and services which has increased dramatically since last year. Last year SL about \$8.5 million of the budget was from University support, and this year it is almost \$12 million.

Prior to last year, Newman noted that there was one Student Life fee, but as a result of the Student Choice Initiative changes, Student Life now has 2 fees: Health & Counselling

Fee and Student Services Fee. Newman outlines the UTI and CPI between Health & Counselling Fee & the Student Services Fee. The proposed fee increase for Health & Counselling fee for both full time & part time would be 3.01% and Student Services Fee increase for full time and part time would be 1.92%.

Riches requested clarification that the non salary expenses were not increasing. He asked would that then mean the funds raised by the fee increases would be going towards compensation. Newman verified this, confirming that the increases were only on the compensation side.

Kearns thanked Newman for the presentation and added that she is very impressed with the BIPOC Wellness Counsellor.

Ahmed thanks Newman and asked if Student Life have any plans to use the data from race based data collection. She had hoped that students affiliated with that data and the roundtable that's being set up, or rather how that data was being used. What was Student Life's plans to be a part of using that data to better implement or use it for programming services?

Newman thanked Ahmed for the question and shared that Student Life is keen on getting this data and using it, when and where appropriate adding that the good work in Accessibility Services has already been instrumental in informing their own work.

Froom noted that Student Life is doing a great job of reaching out to Students online adding that she that Student Life will be continuing to offer these services post-pandemic. Froom noted that she wanted to understand a little bit more about why Student Life is getting a reduction in 3rd party billing through OHIP. Newman noted that online services are here to stay adding that Student Life has learned so much during the pandemic and have learned it is very valuable to continue with online. Robb clarified that OHIP billing is limited because there are certain items that you can only bill for if you are seeing patients in person, so once more in person visits happen again, we should be in a position to bill more.

Kearns asked about whether COVID-19 testing will happen on campus. Robb stated that they have very little information at the moment. The only testing being done is on students who are part of the quarantine program. Health & Wellness has an agreement with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities that they would be tested after day five, and before they left quarantine. If the University is able to provide vaccines, it will likely be done in a tiered approach.

7. Other Business

Froom received a request for an update on the expansion of First Nations House & the Centre for Indigenous Studies to the first floor of the North Borden Building and the possible relocation of OPIRG and the Women and Trans Centre. Kearns asked about the timeline on the move out. Scott said that the Office of the Vice Provost Students has

been working with Arts & Science and also the UTSU. Scott indicated that the hope had always been that they would be able to move directly into the Student Commons, but unfortunately because of occupancy permits and delays and those sorts of things, it's not possible for that to happen before the construction actually commences on the board and building. They are working on a temporary solution. They are happy to work with Arts & Science and OPIRG. Scott also offered to have a separate meeting around this topic is needed.

Froom asked if they will have an operational space prior to moving into the Student Commons and that space being operational, and did they know when the Student Commons space will be useful for them?

Dermot noted that they are trying to get occupancy to the building as soon as possible. The UTSU is hoping to gain full occupancy in February. He also noted they have to make sure that the renovations are done so that people are actually allowed to operate in the building without needing to wear safety equipment.

Froom suggest that we add this topic for a brief discussion to next COSS meeting under "other business".

8. Adjournment

Froom asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Monahan motioned to adjourn, all in favour. Meeting was adjourned at 3:01 pm.