

# School of General Arts & Sciences

## School Meeting Minutes

**Date:** February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018      **Time:** 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.      **Location:** B3150

**Attendees:** Silvana Macdonald (Chair), Barb Bond, Clive Russell, Amy Bowen, Kathleen Barnett, Thomas Randall, Caleigh McKnight, Sara Slater, Chris Cole, Julia Godawa, Susan Hyndman, Devon Code, Suzanne Hooke, Tanya Stewart, Julia Godawa, Andrew Bohart, Jack Roe, Bill Templeman, George Fogarasi, LeeAnn Fenlon, Trudy McFadden, Natasha Beads, Rebecca Christensen, Troy LeGresley, Beedahbin Peltier, Angela Pind, Christopher Shields, Fred Wood

**Regrets:** Helen Bajorek-MacDonald, Paul Bedford, Tracy Finlay, Thomas Jenkins, Liz Stone, Paige Wearing

**Recorder:** Cristina Sad (Academic Administrative Assistant)

An emergency meeting was called by Silvana Macdonald to address some issues brought forward by faculty. She conveyed that it is important to hear what other faculty are experiencing and take this opportunity to find solutions to support each other and our students, so that strategies can be put in place. Silvana informed that Judith Limkilde was also chairing a meeting on the same topic and that some faculty were attending.

Faculty indicated they are experiencing the following issues:

- Classrooms are full
- English language proficiency
- Domestic students are frustrated and are at a point of behaving in ways that are potentially discriminating
- Email from a counsellor suggested teacher should provide accommodation to students who have English as a second language
- Faculty are feeling lost for not being able to deliver outcomes they worked hard to deliver
- Faculty are spending a lot of time with individual students
- Union representatives have been talking to Sonia Crook and Tony Tilly, and anyone who wants to hear them
- Faculty want to help students who need their help, but other students are suffering
- Suggestion to screen students, but a solution is needed this semester, supporting each other and students
- May/June intakes will probably have the same issues
- Suggestion to have a max cap on classes
- Some faculty have the majority of international students. They are frustrated, asking for help
- Union representative clarified that Fleming was not the only college to accept more offers, however they chose not to take students from the waiting list
- Some ideas were brought forward:
  - Draw for international students
  - One-year GAS pathway
  - Create some Gen. Eds. or computer courses
- Faculty are struggling with students who they feel will not achieve the course outcomes
- Students are not going to be successful because they may not have strong skills in languages
- There may be many students who do not pass. They should not receive a passing grade unless they meet the learning outcomes
- Students were directed to Tracey McConnery for ESL help, but they did not look for her
- Students who do not pass COMM201 this semester will be taking it again. We need to have a solution in place, maybe a parallel course. The problem is we do not have resources to evaluate

students in the first 2 days of class, but after 2 weeks. Only then students can be streamed into another course. The literacy piece is very important

- Silvana will have a side-meeting with COMM faculty to discuss the possibility of a parallel course. She'll communicate with Sally about COMM needs
- Suggestion to hire ESL teachers for International students
- Another issue reported was cheating. Students are warned but they continue to cheat
- We do not have a tool for catching plagiarism
- Students take pictures of books, instead of buying them. Copyright issue?
- Indigenous Studies faculty shared that they teach another culture but that Indian students have no clue of who they are but they can identify with some of our issues
- Suggestion to find peer mentors in the upper level so that they can make connections. Also, connect with Tracey McConnery to find them a tutor. There are a lot of cultural barriers
- Orientation helps but we have students joining as of last week and still do not have a timetable.
- Suggestions for Math labs:
  - Extra people to answer to questions during lab. Maybe an upper student who speak their language and has technical skills
  - More time with students
  - Group work is not traditional in India
  - HIM program had Indian students who did fairly well. These are some of the students helping at Orientation. We should take advantage of these students as mentors
  - More invigilators to support tests and control cheating
  - Testing Center needs more people. Students are cheating during assessments
- Silvana will speak with Red Keating about the Testing Centre issue
- Silvana indicated that it's up to the faculty to direct students to work together
- Suggestion to create a "Start Program" for international students. The program would have instructor volunteers and the reading comprehension of students would be evaluated through a test in the first year. General skills, remedial reading skills, practical pragmatic skills would be offered for the full year

Silvana informed that IELTS score should be increase to 6.5. We can make strong arguments by providing writing samples of students in COMM.

Suzanne Hook will bring forward some of the concerns to AUCC.

- Suggestions for COMM labs:
  - extra labs for WordPress
- In the spring, cap size will be reduced as a measure to control over capacity in the future
- An issue about bedbugs was brought by students in the Testing Centre. This is a Health and Safety issue
- Food banks for international students, tutoring services, hiring graduated students or Indian teachers were additional suggestions given

Silvana thanked faculty and Susanne Hook, Union President, for attending the meeting.