

**Committee on Student Services**  
**Monday, February 1, 2021 – 2:00-4:00 PM**  
**Venue: Zoom**

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**Attendees:** Brooklyn Frizzle, Fabrice Labeau, Jonathan Britt, Martine Gauthier, Rick Hink, Darlene Hnatchuk, Ffion Hughes, Valerie Orsat, Bassam El-Khoury, Nancy Czemmell, Darshan Daryanani, Maheen Akter, Mustafa Fakih, Samer Salameh, Lina Di Genova, Aimee K. Ryan.

**Regrets:** Lucyna Lach, Marie Prémont-St-Jean, Rosella De Stefano.

**Guest:** Vera Romano

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**1. Welcome and Land acknowledgement**

**2. Approval of Agenda**

Approved – unanimously

**3. Approval of Minutes**

Notes from the last meeting

Approved unanimously

**4. Senate discussion (45 minutes)**

Questions prepared by the working group:

- I. Reflecting on the student academic experience during COVID-19, what strategies have worked well to maintain a strong commitment to student academic success and what could be improved?
- II. What steps should be taken to promote a sense of shared responsibility within the University when it comes to ensuring student excellence and well-being?

Denouement at Senate:

- Short presentation to provide context, data, and insight into student mental health.
- Breakout rooms
- Dialogue with all of senate.

Deadline to modify the questions is today

Suggestion on the questions:

- “academic excellence” to clarify it is about Student academic success.
- “optimizing student success and wellbeing” instead of “ensuring” in terms of expectations.
- The idea of promoting, optimizing may focus discussion on the meaning of optimizing, moving excellence out.
- Ensure the questions are properly framed to promote discussion between all stakeholders.

- It is about everyone understanding their role in this.

#### The presentation

- Shortened version of qualitative results from October Student Success Survey.
- Clear link between academics and wellness, impact of policy and the classroom brought to forefront by COVID.
- Student wellbeing and mental health, as shadow pandemic, safety measures impact on mental health, isolation, pressure, distress coupled with an erosion of coping mechanisms.

Collectively modifications were made to the presentation.

#### Suggestion on the presentation:

- Document shared with Senate so it can be consulted in break out rooms.
- Document not shortened but only briefly touched upon.
- Shortened, synthesized the statements, and elaborate verbally.
- Summary slide of comments to be shared.

Speaking rights requested for:

Martine Gauthier, Lina Di Genova, Vera Romano.

#### **Introduction of new EDI advisor, Cynthia Nkamicaniye (10 minutes)**

##### Goal of the position

- Improving student experience, creating inclusive and friendly space for students.
- Working with all S2 areas impacting student experience.
- Inward facing position to improve, process, practices and procedures to ultimately improve services to students.
- Focus on training, HR practices, client focused, pathways through services and different needs.

Cynthia Nkamicaniye:

##### Approach

- Looking at the experience in detailed view using diverse student persona journeys, within student services but beyond as it plays in.
- Pain point perspective.
- Who has the power to change issues?
- Are the issues population specific? Then focus our efforts appropriately.
- Student voice will be critical as we validate the student experience.

##### Questions

Darshan Daryanani: How can we reassure students these practices will be implemented? What changes are we expecting?

Martine Gauthier: Accountability. Student Service Strategic plan EDI embedded and articulated clearly in the plan. The strategic plan will be on our website. Impact measurements.

Mustafa Fakhri: Avenues where students can contribute?

Martine Gauthier: Service advisories and looking at alternate structure. Importance of capacity to be heard through different mechanisms.

Vera Romano: Issues of inclusivity and diversity are at the heart of care. We have been thinking through these as we develop our programs this will allow us to scale up. Deeply interconnected to service delivery.

Cynthia Nkamicaniye: Continuous student consultation not to misinterpret information.

Martine Gauthier: In support of the Provost Anti Racism Action Plan, Lina Di Genova and her team are developing culturally appropriate tools/methodology of inquiry.

Lina Di Genova: Students are co-creating the tools, paid contribution (for equity) black alumni hosting the working group.

## **5. Update on CSS mandate (25 minutes)**

Presentation was shared

Martine Gauthier: A gap, reporting up to Senate on student wellness. Fear is that S2 is identified as responsible for student wellness. S2 responds to what is going on beyond our control.

Darlene Hnatchuk: If CSS expands to wellness, then it goes beyond Student Services. Two ways to go. Tighten up the mandate and look internally or, propose broadening the mandate of CSS.

Vera Romano: Confusion that student wellness is only mental health. For a community approach to wellness and Mental health, we hit jurisdiction barriers. How to implement change beyond Student services.

Brooklyn Frizzle: Reframe the issue of wellness to a shared responsibility. A rebranding of the committee requiring a shift to a new entity. Dissolving or substantially updating. This committee and S2 are isolated in the governance context (no interaction with policy or other committees).

Where are we most useful?

Martine Gauthier: Reporting back for what purpose? What other ways can CSS be useful to inform Senate? CSS becomes an advisory committee to the executive director.

Bassam El-Khoury: How can CSS be more effective and help students in better ways. Advising and shaping on policy. How can we contribute to student success?

Vera Romano: If we transform into a wellness committee, we include the whole of SLL and TLS. For the link between academics and wellness, with out the right stakeholders, the impact is limited, and reach will be questioned.

Brooklyn Frizzle: Not about CSS getting a bigger mandate, distancing ourselves from the current structure, looking at our membership to include the academic side to support a wider mandate. Opportunity to be part of student facing policies.

Martine Gauthier: SLL wide committee, first things buy in from DPSLL, student facing policies are held in the Dean of Student office (ODOS) making that bigger connexion is an interesting approach.

Brooklyn Frizzle: Next steps Darlene to speak on direction and to DPSLL as well as services outside of S2 to expand beyond current constraints.

Darlene Hnatchuk: How can we be more effective?

Ffion Hughes: If the services could present reports on their unites to have that link.

Brooklyn Frizzle: Receive and consolidate the reports to take it to inspire policy revision. The infrastructure already exists.

Vera Romano: If the mandate expands, the micro level could be focused on the individual advisory boards.

Martine Gauthier: Getting into the operations discussions of the services will need to be let go. Missing at senate is information about the student experience. It is not an informed approach to the student experience. Data driven, S2 has that capacity or could be mandated by CSS to look at the student experience to inform Senate. Mandate to report the information twice yearly and the information from national surveys.

Brooklyn Frizzle: These are realistic to add to a new mandate. Reports on student experience are something that senate does have an appetite to receive. Needs to be done with out S2 being the fulcrum.

Martine Gauthier: Starting this year S2 will be doing an annual report to consolidate the information across services, to enable Student services to tell a holistic, data driven story about the student experience and services.

## **1. Other Business**

## **2. Adjournment**

**Next meeting: March 15, 2020, 2:30 -4:30. Location TBA.**