

PhD Leadership Meeting Agenda
September 9th, 2020

Updates from the Deans 10 mins

1. Basil Hanss, Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Career Development
 - a. Had a great vacation :D
2. Matthew O'Connell, Senior Associate Dean for Curriculum, Recruitment and Admissions
-absent
 - a. Virtual interviews are still being planned and we will be seeking student participation.
 - b. Webinars have been extended in number this year, and are to take place in Sep and Oct. 1 webinar has been reserved for Student Groups
3. Bradley Gano, Associate Dean of the Graduate School
 - a. Rotation PIs was collected by Matthew; URL to follow:
<http://gradschool.mssm.edu/lab-rotation-availability/>

THAW- Denise Jurczynszak, Lauren Vetere 5 mins

1. Messages from and interviews with social workers
 - a. Working with social workers to add blurbs to THAW newsletters to make social workers more accessible/ put out messaging on how it's ok to seek help
 - b. Mostly one on one meetings, discussions ongoing on group support sessions
 - i. Students and postdocs don't seem to engage with group settings. Limited feedback so far, however
 - ii. One on One sessions to create bridge on group work
2. Accountability in STMH hiring practices
 - a. Dania is driving this – asking for a plan on how STMH plans to hire more diverse practitioners
 - i. Ask: Can they involve students in interviewing finalists? → No. These are individuals that will be treating students so they don't want student involvement.
 - ii. Students might be involved in the process of recruitment.
3. STMH services for out of state students
 - a. Dania and Maggie reached out to STMH about out of state students
 - b. Licensing issues where STMH practitioners can only practice in NY
 - c. Collaboration between THAW and Student Council
 - d. Looking into outsourcing to an outside counseling provider or navigator to connect students to providers
 - e. Basil to follow up on this process and find out how to make it more direct and effective (put students in need with navigator)
4. New Slack Channel
 - a. To address lack of communication between student council and THAW, new slack has been made.

5. BIPOC STMH group therapy
 - a. THAW has a support group run by social workers
 - b. STMH group therapy is being led by a white clinician, which is limiting engagement
 - c. THAW group is run by BIPOC social workers → Can we use this to increase engagement?

Curriculum Committee- Abigail Lubin, Guha Arunkumar 5 mins

1. 1 Course approval
 - a. After Neurocore Units 3 and 4, quantitative biostatistics course required in second year
 - b. Open to other students that have met the pre-reqs
 - c. Taught by Mark Baxter
 - d. Runs this spring (current second years)
2. 2 Course proposal
 - a. Tabled until next month
3. Is there an assessment of diversity in courses already standing?
 - a. Updated course evaluations at the end of the fall. Diversity comes up occasionally, usually driven by one faculty member. Mandate is curriculum, not student experience, however working on ways of holding all faculty on this committee accountable.
4. Are there plans to create a diversity training course?
 - a. None that Abby is aware of

Student Affairs- Sindhura Gopinath, Chris Guevara, 5 mins

1. General Updates
 - a. Started working on incorporating masters interests into initiatives
 - b. International Student Affairs: In process of setting up a leadership structure
 - i. Meet and greet event in planning (complicated by time zones with students not yet on campus)
 - c. Financial literacy workshop: New student working group on student council focusing on financial aid and literacy. Student Council filled in:
 - i. Student Council has a working group on how to reformat the entire financial aid department
 - ii. Goal: Representation from all programs (daisy has interest forms)
 - iii. New associate director of financial aid is onboarding soon
 - iv. Financial literacy services will be built into future offerings, but this may take some time.
2. Updating Links on the Student Portal
 - a. FAQ on student life – does anyone have any leads on how to edit the student portal? The information for current students page.
 - i. Basil will look into who has ownership of the portal. Would be Sophie Miller. Might be enrollment services → Who can actually edit this page?

Steering Committee- Katherine Meckel, 10 mins

1. Results of SEOS diversity survey
 - a. Justine Noell discussed diversity survey – 2018 comprehensive survey
 - i. Not a diversity survey – retrospectively parsed data based on racial/ethnic marginalization (self reported) – does not include all URISM individuals
 - b. Conclusion: There needs to be a better survey developed specifically on this topic
 - c. Concern: Will students feel comfortable even voicing any specifics with regards to their experiences due to the fear of retaliation
 - d. Consulting service to write the survey: With help from all PLM leaders, advocate for the benefit of a funded, higher quality survey → Also include exit surveys

Student Council- Daisy Hoagland, Camille Goldman, 5 mins

1. Student Activities Fair, First-Year Elections, Welcome Back Dinner
 - a. Open until the 15th (nominations) then 4 days of virtual elections
 - b. Activities fair will be virtual
 - c. Relatively successful socially distanced happy hours
 - d. Student council wide welcome back dinner with slotted food pick up times
2. September Steering: SNMA response and Mental Health (tentative)
 - a. Next Tuesday – update next PLM
3. September GBM 9/23 @7pm
4. DEI subcommittee formed after retreat on anti-racism
5. RBI chats for change – monthly dialogues focusing on racism and bias topics. Stuco will cohost one upcoming

URISM – Dania Figueroa Acosta, Marisa Goff, 10 mins

1. Update on students with disability specific initiatives
 - There has been a generous donor who has given a donation to the Disability Services Office at Mount Sinai for neuropsychiatric testing. These funds will be available to students who are eligible for financial aid (not necessarily receiving). Students need to reach out to the financial aid office for a letter and then discuss access with Christine Lowe.
 - Discussing revamping the website, would be good to have messaging regarding funds/access
 - Emergency loan finance program – announcement coming after logistics (not super public right now)
 - New student org for students with disabilities: DREAM (Disability Rights, Education, Awareness Mount Sinai), organizing events, will be at Students Activities Fair. Also open for postdocs and allies. No announcement yet.
 - Concerns from students regarding curriculum platform (Zoom). People with auditory processing disorders, migraines, etc. Was disability services consulted? Were students with disabilities considered? Deans: Zoom picked in an emergency context, AscIT have done some assessments, has connected with Christine Lowe. Need for follow up. Concerns re: transcripts (Otter), real-time closed captioning for discussions. Nice trial run with Google Meets
2. Changing the eGFR equation

- Petition went around this summer, eGFR used to determine kidney function, includes racial component that is highly controversial, petition to remove from MSHS. Issue is stalled. Want to show allyship and support.
- 3. Indigenous Peoples' Day Petition by ANAMS
 - Petition asking Sinai to recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day (individuals can sign). Opportunity to support members of the URiSM community. For questions, ANAMS president Denise Jones
- 4. Deans Nestler and Filizola meeting highlights
 - Meeting with each MTA director to see how each MTA is tackling diversity, equity, inclusion, anti-racism.
 - Advocating for deans to have benchmark for all invited speaker series. Incentivize and repercussions/conversation. Deans are on board. Logistics TBD. At department and MTA level, working with Eric Nestler
 - MTA directors want more transparency about mentorship, more involvement, incentivization, for PIs to take mentorship training courses beyond just implicit bias training.
 - Lots of issues with exit survey. Deans said they can commit to yearly review and reevaluation. Will be following up with questions to add.
 - Need to dig deeper than statements regarding URiSM student involvement in admissions/recruitment. Need to consider not just compensation but incentivization. How do we get students invested?
- 5. URISM fall mixer
 - October 15, 5pm
 - When we talk about the URiSM community, we're talking about more than just difficult challenges to overcome, but also about celebrating achievement and having fun.

Infection Prevention Updates – Josh, 5 mins

1. Deans Nestler and Filizola meeting highlights
 - Lack of understanding between admin and student body
 - Called meeting with deans, but sentiments conveyed were discontinuous with email subsequently sent out
 - Discussed distinctions between medical and graduate students in terms of policy/messaging
 - 100% efficiency not good messaging tactic
 - Distinction concerning essential workers: medical school determined that medical students were non-essential, and messaging/policy included graduate students
 - Tone deaf that everyone 100% fine, just get back to normal, disregards the massive and often direct impact on students, particularly Black and Latino students, who have been disproportionately affected
 - Lot of major obstacles, 'just get back to normal' seems too oblivious to currently morale and could be communicated better and more supportively
 - Deans were very receptive to addressing communication strategies towards the student body on topics of IP.
2. Data on prevalence testing to be releases shortly by IP

3. Working towards student representation in housing related conversations
4. Exploring the prospect of saliva testing for more regular testing

Feedback from the student body *Camille Goldman 10 mins*

More frequent testing – Josh will update on the monthly newsletter

6 person apartments only get 1-person fridge, Rose says buy mini-fridges, forward to housing

Looking for rotation info – URL from Brad

Administration communication

- 100% essential workers
- Hard to get into contact with grad admin: admin wants to address, needs more information. Some sort of FAQ may help. Admin will address.

Stipends

- 1st year issues, some have been paid, some not, some paid and then removed.
- For older years, yearly stipend issues. Announced early in year (Jan), supposed to occur in Jun/July, retroactively occurs in the fall. Affects most students. Grad school is aware.
- Concerns about first paychecks, coming to Sinai before being paid. When does first paycheck come in? Can we officially notify students about when the money is available? Esp students with low socioeconomic status. Also, reach out to Matthew if experiencing financial hardships/difficulties to connect incoming student to resources re: getting here. Info on direct deposit comes in too late to set up, need to inform earlier/during orientation.
- International students – how to set up US bank, who to contact. There had been a plan to have an extra intl student orientation before orientation, set aside because COVID/international policy issues that arose. Include some info in admissions portal, talk to IPO. If no bank account, can get physical paycheck from payroll.