

**University Council on Teaching
Meeting of Monday, October 18, 2021
12:00-2:00, CTE Seminar Room**

Meeting Minutes

University Council on Teaching Meeting of Monday, October 18, 2021 12:30-2:00, Zoom Meeting

Attendees: Kathleen Bailey, Billy Soo, Patricia Tabloski, Anna Karpovsky, Daniel Daly, Julia Devoy, Jacqueline Lerner, Kristin Heyer, Jessica Black, Sarah Castricum, Shaylonda Barton, Stacy Grooters, Sylvia Sellers-Garcia, Peter Pinto

The meeting began with a presentation on the experiences of students in regards to BC approved advising. An undergraduate representative of UGBC presented in front of the committee in order to provide an accurate reflection of both the data collected by the UGBC and the summary of UGBC's findings.

The week previous to the UCT meeting, UGBC conducted a survey evaluating student experience in advising. This survey was offered to all students through a voluntary manner outside. Overall, UGBC noticed frustration from many of the students who completed the survey, though the majority of frustration seemed to stem from MCAS students in particular.

The general goal of UGBC in conducting this survey was to understand the current advising situation that students are facing so that the BC academic experience can best help students find meaning and succeed.

Regarding advising itself, UGBC provided a list of general goals for advisors:

- focus on cura personalis
- provide a more holistic approach to advising
- know the core curriculum
- know their degree requirements
- know the BC community
- know the different opportunities on campus
- know their expectations
- know their student

The UGBC survey consisted of an online survey using google form that was conducted on O'Neill quad from 10am-2pm. It consisted of 11 questions and was completed by 116 students.

Key findings from the survey:

1. MCAS was the primary school represented in the survey
2. There was a strong mix of classes from 2022 and 2023
3. Primary majors represented: Finance, Political Science, Biology, Economics, Accounting, History

4. Students studying Finance and History rated their experience 8+ more often than others
5. Lower ratings came from Chemistry, Biology, Lynch School, IS
6. There was a wide range of ratings across majors

Key Questions/Responses

Question 1: Who do you primarily rely on for academic advising?

Answer: 1/3 responded "Friend", 1/3 responded "University Advisor", 1/3 responded "Faculty member who is not advisor"

Question 2: How often do you meet with your advisor?

Answer: Majority of responses were "Only once a semester." However, 17% responded "Never met with advisor"

Question 3: How long do you meet with your advisor?

Answer: Approximately 1/4 responded "no face-to-face meetings". A range of 10-15 minutes was the most common answer.

Question 4: Are you interested in regular mental health check ins from your academic advisor or academic apartment?

Answer: Approximately 50% of students responded "Yes"

Question 5: What was the best part of your advising experience?

Answer: 62 students responded "Nothing." However, many other answers demonstrated meaningful relationships between students and their advisors.

Question 6: What was the worst part of your advising experience?

Answer: 47 students did respond to the question. However, there was a theme across many answers that demonstrated an issue with the responsibility of the student to reach out to their advisors.

Question 7: How would you recommend improving advising?

Answer: There were 66 responses from the students. Answers included: a more involved selection process where students fill out a survey and were matched to specific advisors, make advisor meetings mandatory and more frequent, incorporate career preferences and search advice

The UGBC student representative then presented themes that UGBC and UCT could undertake to improve advising:

1. The advising process needs to be reformed so that it is more individualized
2. Students should understand their responsibilities in advising. However, they should not be expected to learn every aspect of advising on their own. The process and responsibilities of the advisor and advisee should be clearly articulated.
3. Faculty needs to be better equipped to handle questions regarding career aspects for students in their major
4. The one-on-one relationships between advisor and advisee needs to be strengthened

The UGBC representative then concluded her presentation and took questions.

A committee member asked: Regarding the mental health question, would this be a direct mental health check in or more of a non-academic check in where mental health can be brought up by either the student or the faculty?

The UGBC representative answered that both would be preferred but a single check would be most feasible. The check in does not need to be a space where students must present all their serious mental health issues. Students who do need serious resources could be pointed to UCS or other providers by their advisor, assuming the advisor is adequately aware of mental health resources. A considerable number of students have gone to UCS to seek help and have had difficulty navigating the online site. Some students have even complained of waiting 3 weeks for an appointment.

Another committee member inquired how students have claimed to have never met with their advisor if an advisor meeting is required to register?

The UGBC representative answered that many students simply receive an email with a code to register without the advisor sitting down on a personal basis.

The meeting ended with an updated on the Center for Teaching Excellence and canvas updates. Over the next year or so the quiz feature on canvas will be restructured. Hopefully, students and faculty will be able to use it next fall. Functionality will be the same but the look and feel of the quiz feature will be significant enough that we expect some time for users to adjust. The CTE will be discussing this update in their newsletter in order to provide a heads-up for faculty. Additionally, the CTE will be doing specialized outreach to specific departments for people who are especially interested.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter Pinto