

SSD Council Minutes

August 15, 2016

Open Pre-Meeting

- Heather discussed the level of traffic in the SSD office, which was relatively high for summer.

Call to order: Heather at 5:14pm

Attendance: Heather, Patrick, Ravi, Terry, Guthrie, Katty

Reports

- **Chairperson:** Heather reported on the progress of planning for fall events. Heather also mentioned that she had been in contact with some individuals regarding preparations for fall peer-support groups.

Territories: Guthrie acknowledged the territories

Approval of the Agenda: Moved by Heather, seconded by Guthrie, carried

Approval of Minutes: Moved by Heather, seconded by Guthrie, carried. Patrick abstained.

Motions:

BIRT that \$1000 is allocated for an event relating to informing emergency personal about disabilities. Moved by Guthrie, seconded by Terry.

- Ravi and Patrick suggested that it would be most effective to seek out alliances with other relevant groups before approaching emergency services. Guthrie agreed and stated that it would be best to contact disability-led organizations first, in order to avoid issues of ableism.
- Guthrie moved to table, seconded by Terry, tabled.

BIRT that \$150 is approved for picture hanging equipment for our canvases from Art Day. Moved by Heather, seconded by Guthrie, carried.

BIRT that \$800 is allocated for membership at the university club. Moved by Heather, seconded by Guthrie.

- Patrick raised the possibility of recording that the board's intention is not to use SSD funds to purchase meals at the university club more than three times in the year, but instead to ordinarily use the space for informal discussions without catering. The board's consensus was in favour of this suggestion.
- Motion carried

BIRT \$200 is allocated for SSD business cards. Moved By Heather, seconded by Guthrie. Motion carried.

Discussions:

Office hours – evening hours like the idea

Given some students flexibility having some even hours

Peer support groups and mindfulness - LD and ADHD/ADD group were thought to be the most popular need.

Meditation workshop was talked about and having mindfulness materials for learning available.

Welcome days- (Enablement event on September 28th, Scavenger hunt etc.)

- Advertise at Uvic advising and math departments
- Movie night- A beautiful mind suggested

RCSD new name proposed “The Centre for Accessible Learning”

--- the SSD board has shared many concerns. Moreover, SSD members representing many students with a disability have also shared concerns.

- For instance, persons mentioned that, logistically, removing "disability" from the name make make it more challenging for UVic students to locate academic accommodations at UVic.

- A greater concern shared with us regarding the proposed name change is that it may promote a culture that suppresses narrative about disability and ableism. Some see this as reinforcing that "disability" is a negative word that should be silenced due to its stigma.

-Persons shared that disability should be at the forefront of discussion, and work should be done to have open and realistic discussions about how disability is navigated with all persons involved. Not discussing the word "disability" had connotations of approaches to call disability "differently-abled." One person mentioned this change was like a "Don't ask, don't tell" policy for disability that closets persons with disability. The board was concerned this change promotes ableism with an implicit agreement that accessibility means transforming persons into able-bodied individuals so they can be normatively accepted on campus.

-The board has worked hard to bring more awareness to disability and help people feel safe in having important discussion necessary for persons with disabilities to conduct the sensitive and detailed discussions that lead to inclusion and accessibility.

- Felt this name change was a step back and reflected a cultural shift framed accessibility as accommodations and the muting of discussions that would work towards genuine acceptance, tolerance, and inclusion.

-although it may be unsettling for many that persons with disabilities are acting in greater solidarity and are empowered with narratives that counteract oppression, but this has been true for every oppressed intersectionality and the only way forward is to keep talking about our needs, dreams, humanity, and pathways to employment and the positive qualities of life that all who work hard and follow the laws should enjoy.

-The SSD has been about normalizing disability, many people have them, we are all just people, we arrive at a university to gain supports, be ourselves, and be trained and/or educated for a life of employment and societal participation.

-There is nothing positive or negative about disability, it is a normal and everyday fact that many people have them, and those people are capable of being every part as human and as contributory as anyone else. Everyone needs accessibility and that looks different for everyone, but student with a disability, a subgroup of all people, come to the RCSD to get resources to succeed in their academic programs.

-We need recognition, support, and validation--even simplicity, but not camouflage, euphemisms, and obfuscation.

-A mature person and/or organization should be able to talk about disability without negative biasing judgments and feelings of superiority, hostility, or sympathy.

Promotion Tabling in September- People checking availability
Community lunch/ snacks – Sandwiches and pizza
Accessibility check list for events UVSS

Heather moved to adjourn at 7:00 pm