

Points of Conversation from January 16, 2007, meeting with Dan Sellen,
Graduate Coordinator, Department of Anthropology.

Attendees in addition to Dan Sellen; Jennifer Campbell and Emily Court,
Co-Presidents AGSU.

1) The need for clear and concise communication about and between the
department, committees, AGSU, etc.

-too many emails reference past communications, or re-emphasize points that
have been revisited many times and are no longer pertinent to the
advancement of the current issue or agenda.

-Emily and Jennifer and the need to ensure that we cc each other on all
communication, also the need for all information coming to us to be cc'd to
both of us. Ensuring that no one is left 'out of the loop', keeps the
communication concise.

-Suggestion to think about ways that the students can signal to Dan, via
their emails if the email pertains to personal communication, communications
of interest to all, or specific AGSU related communications. Something for
us to think about, are we comfortable with doing this, and if so how can we
make this happen. Perhaps, some identifier in the subject line of emails?
More student discussion required.

2) Discussion on the community objectives and how these are being met
by the department as well as by the AGSU.

-suggestion for the AGSU to use the end of term survey as a means of gauging
student perceptions of how community incentives are succeeding, failing, or
could be improved on the part of the department and the AGSU.

-the ongoing problems with the scheduling of multiple events, more
specifically the scheduling of colloquia.

-Good practices need to continue, the use of the departmental bulletins,
high attendance at AGSU and department sponsored events, let's not ignore
the things that work, but change some of the small things that do not.

-Importance of involving incoming students early on, so that they feel
welcome and that this university is interested in them and can foster their
development, and they in turn can help to foster the department. The
feedback loop.

-the need for student tri-campus involvement

3) Meetings with Dan, how students should contact him

-Dan is available by appt should students wish to arrange a meeting with him

-If more than one student is interested in having an information session or
brown bag about a specific issue or concern then Dan is willing to have such
a session. Likely no more than once a month.

-Students interested in such a session can email Emily or Jenn and we will
then organize this in consultation with Dan, about time and place etc.

-Emily, Jenn and Dan, would like to have informal meetings, perhaps a half

hour over coffee once a month to discuss any new issues or just to catch up on respective progress etc.

-Jenn and Emily will both be absent at varying points in the next two months, a separate note about this, including the dates of our field work and the contact information will follow in an email after the AGSU meeting on Friday, Jan 19th, 07.

-Dan will be sending an introductory email out to the students listing how he can be contacted and his availability for meetings.

4) Graduate Expansion/Incoming Students

- The general concerns of the students about graduate expansion and how they are similar to the concerns already being raised by faculty in discussions about these decisions. We still feel that the choice made is the best, but we are all cautious about the outcome and wary of some of the potential failings. It is important that communication about these issues remain open.

-involvement of incoming students in the modification and tailoring of graduate courses to be offered in the upcoming year.

-department discussion of earlier admission, and then letting the faculty know which students have been offered acceptance so that they can tailor their courses to these students interests and offer tentative course descriptions. This would allow students to have some idea about the course that will be offered.

-Valuable to let potential students know what courses are being offered as this could affect the 'best' student's decisions to come here.

-the need to encourage the early interaction with students and advisor, again, this will attract the best students and will also decrease the number of surprises that the student faces when they first arrive. Also advisors should be more aware of the offerings being made by other instructors so that they can make suggestions about what course are being offered and what second or third options could be.

-in line with the previous, we need to review what materials that are being sent in the mail out to incoming students. It might be nice to include information about grants and funding, even for ones as far in advance as the departmental sources that become available in the winter semester. This would encourage students to think about these responsibilities early and to not be overwhelmed when they arrive.

-Suggestion of the AGSU involving itself in the creation of some additional material for the mail out. We would also like to see the inclusion of the AGSU web address in the mail out so that students can also contact us and ask questions in a less formal and less intimidating environment.

5) Graduate Documents

-Email to Dan the following AGSU documents

The AGSU Constitution

Committees, Reps and Protocols/Mandates of Behavior

Link to the AGSU website

- Graduate Policy/board protocols: Grad Board and Grad Policy committees. Generally (one of) the President(s) sits on those (that's in our constitution), and there is one person who sat on it last year (that's not). In the event of co-presidents one president sits on the Grad board and one on Policy along with the rep from the previous year. Emily sits on Policy and Jenn sits on board. If one or the other can not make a meeting then the other can fill in, but will only vote as per the protocols of committee behavior, and when thoroughly informed of the position of the AGSU in response to the vote called.

6) AGSU website

-the need to get the AGSU website linked to the departmental website
-Contact information needs to be kept current, specifically so that incoming and interested grad students can contact the AGSU for information.
-AGSU plans to upload student information and associated website links to the AGSU page. This is supposed to be on the main departmental page but this is not quick in coming so we will do this and then if the department wants to move the information the pages can be migrated. Likely to organize this by subfield and then alphabetical, need to discuss this further with Amber, the AGSU communications coordinator.