

Meeting Minutes

ALSS Academic Council Meeting

September 22, 2015

Attendance: Matthew, Josh, Catriona, Nicole, Alex, Alexis, Gia, Aashish, Daniel, Benj, Erica, Kristy

Regrets: Alyssa, Megan

I. Welcome, introductions, and congratulations to 1L Reps

- Introductions
- Matthew explains what the Academic Council is and what our role and responsibilities are in the law school.

II. Confidentiality issues

- The Academic Council may handle sensitive information and confidentiality is very important. For example, members of the Admissions Committee may have access to personal information about future law students.
- Matthew urged all members to please exercise professional judgment to keep sensitive issues private and confidential.

III. Secretary and treasurer

- Call for nominations for Secretary and Treasurer.
- Alexi volunteers to be treasurer.
- Alex volunteers to be secretary.

IV. Committee appointments

- Matthew explains the workload, time commitments, and the nature of work for each of the committees and requests that each member sends him an email with what their top 3 choices are. There is discussion around specific projects for certain committees this upcoming year, including implementing experiential learning.

V. Project teams:

- a. Mid-term feedback (3 team members)
 - Matt explains this is a project where students in the middle of the semester can provide feedback to their instructors to allow them to adjust teaching style, reading load etc. if need be and they can alter certain elements for the rest of the semester (as opposed to only having a final year/term review).
 - Matt is in discussions with Prof. Benedet and the goal is to roll out feedback in the Fall 2015 term; sometime in mid-late October for semester courses; and mid-November for full year courses.
- b. Faculty Mixer (3 team members)

- Matt explains: Happens every year. Takes place in the forum. Students from all years connect with professors with research interests that students are interested in. A way for students to look for research assistant positions, looking into courses that they hope to take later on.
- c. Syllabus database & course guide (3 team members)
 - Josh speaks to the syllabus database and course guide proposal. This would be a supplementary database to the CANs database. Strategies for studying for certain professors or certain courses. Upper years would contribute to it each year. Syllabus guide is important in course selection, textbooks etc.
 - Syllabus database:
 - Nicole speaks to strengths of the syllabus idea, course selection, topics and reference textbooks.
 - Matt speaks to the strengths for course selection, as well as for people who have not taken the course to use the database as starting points for external research for their own projects or through their work while in law school or in the future. Suggestion that the faculty/administration might take this on in a voluntary manner like the exams database. This might get along the confidentiality issue that some professors have issues with.
 - Aashish raises the idea to propose this to faculty council.
 - Course guide:
 - Problems around confidentiality and professors having issues with things about them or their course being posted online in an open forum.

VI. Any Other Business

- Kristy speaks to an Access and Diversity concern regarding exams done through A&D: are they delivered to the professor in the same format as other exams done through ExamSoft? If not, there may be a concern that “blind marking” may be compromised. Discussion and note that this may be brought to the Examinations Committee to learn more about how exams are processed.

VII. Next meeting

- Thursdays will be the go to day for Academic Council Meetings. Tuesdays only as backup.