

**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
STUDENT RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**Friday, April 16, 2021  
11:30 AM - 12:45 PM  
Virtual via Zoom**

**Invited:** Gina Cervetti, Harish Ganesh, Helen Look, Jeannie Moody-Novak, Judith Beck, Mariah Fiumara, Yaacov Ritov, Amanda Peters, Kentaro Toyama, Jill Esau, Cindy Leung, Dunham Clark, MaryJo Banasik, Noah Zimmerman, Vincent Alessi, Jennifer Schrage, Martino Harmon, Charlie Koopman, Colleen Conway  
**Administrative:** Pam Morris

**Guest:** Nicole Banks, Interim Associate Dean of Students and Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life

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**1. Call to Order/Welcome/Approval of Agenda and Minutes**

Chair Cervetti called the meeting to order.

**2. VPSL Updates – Martino Harmon, VP for Student Life**

- Planning the return to campus for students and staff
  - Extension of workplace restrictions for 6 months per governor; however we have a need to return many of the front facing student positions for fall.
  - Vaccines are a critical component to the successful return to campus and to also remain safe.
  - Students are finding vaccines – a good sign.
  - UM is working with local pharmacies to get vaccines distributed.
  - Working hard toward reaching a high vaccination rate especially for those that will be living in student housing.
- Housing applications and processes are out to students. Looking at 1300 spots available. Housing assignments will be offered in June thru early August 2021.
- Discussions regarding requiring vaccine. Unable right now due to supply. Considering for students in housing. Can do it, but is it the right time?
- Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities amendment process has been delayed due to the pandemic. Student Life/OSCR – Meeting with CSG; will launch virtual kick-off via campus communications to invite community members to offer amendments to the SSRR. Amendments to be offered/approved/implemented in the Fall 21-Spring 22 timeframe.
- Have been holding events to bring community the community together. BB watch parties at Crisler were well attended and welcomed. Games on the lawn of the Union. Sip and stroll with cold drinks with Rec Sports are popular. Intermural sports games/tennis. 4/22-Giving out finals survival packs to students. Several end of year/graduation events planned following all COVID protocols to keep everyone safe.

**3. Presentation – Nicole Banks**

Support for Students as Caregivers (Understanding Current and Future Possibilities)

- Many students have dual roles as students and caregivers.
- They often connect with DOS looking for support as students on campus. Student parents or caregivers are often referred by financial aid, advisors and sometimes faculty, once a connection has been made.
- From the units that collect data we understand there is about 100 UG and 650 Grad students that are caregivers.

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- This population often is not visible. Most are looking for help in navigating administrative and school barriers and financial assistance.
- Common topics include:
  - Difficulty to register to classes early enough to plan schedules for caregiving
  - Emergency funding
  - Dependent care/school closures
  - Timely communication due to those they care for are ill
  - Lack of lactation support/family friendly activities
  - Food insecurity
  - Network with COUNTS - CEW+ website for Student Caregiver Resources:  
<http://www.cew.umich.edu/advocacy-initiatives/students-with-children/>

#### Q & A

- Did you see a difference during the pandemic vs. prior to. Yes, an increase in requests for emergency funding. Most requests involved are due to changes/lack of child care.
- Parents got the virus and students that needed to assist with younger siblings. They were needed to go back home and help with meals, worried about having wife to keep up at school.
- Student org for non-traditional students will take on to voice support to other orgs on how to be family friendly. Advocating for more inclusion for family-friendly events.
- Efforts to guide and implementing family-friendly events and support i.e. lactation rooms, etc.
- Students report that some lactation rooms are located in restrooms. DOS has worked with OIE to have better campus lactation rooms.
- Providing clear communication that those they are caring for are welcome to events including vaccines. These students are welcome to bring either their support person or the person that they are caregiving for.
- University is supporting employees taking time to get vaccine, but are students being supported the same way?
- Faculty has lots of guidance regarding athletes, religious, but not much surrounding student care givers. What does the administration think about that?
- Students might be afraid to approach faculty regarding caregiving and many may feel relieved to know up-front that faculty member is aware and supportive. Suggested to add verbiage in syllabi.

#### What can/should be addressed?

- Communication to students regarding what support is available.
- SRAC can champion for this with Faculty.
- Promoting services to students and awareness to faculty/advisors/other student front facing positions.
- We found that there is an increase in participation when events are virtual. It often removes barrier of getting to campus and the event.
- Asking for student caregivers on student advisory board.
- Messaging matters...welcome the family. Offer caregiving at event, if possible.
- Connecting to each other is important. Can we have early registration for practical reasons so that a schedule can be implemented?

#### 4. Due to Quorum Present - Approval of the minutes

- February minutes – approved as written
- March minutes – change live to love in #5 – approved as written.

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**5. Preliminary Brainstorm on Suggestions for Next Fall's SRAC Priority Items/General Questions for the Group**

- Graduate student support
- More and visible support to students as caregivers
- Moving from pandemic to a “normal” year takes much planning. This is a transitional year due to foundational elements with strategic planning. Job #1 – help students get back and settled on campus and rethinking the “new normal”.
- Review programs for veterans and active duty students. How are they doing and what we can improve on?
- Commuters – what facilities are available?
- FYE 20-21 – Which students missed what classic/annual/ceremonial event? How will they be supported?
- Appreciate the guest speakers at the committee meetings and appreciate the information that is shared and can be taken back to units.
- Reestablish what [campus] home is? Not sure how students will adjust with roommates/crowded classrooms, etc. Think of it as an opportunity. Aren't we all rediscovering what campus life is like?
- Students are still apprehensive about getting the virus. Fear is valid.
- We will still have virtual classes for students are more comfortable, but will have a hybrid approaches for many events.
- Explain the message to parents/family that virtual events and classes are just as valuable.
- Worries regarding students with autism – some resources have dissolved during the pandemic and looking at ways to reengage and offer support to this population.
- Making sure that we are supporting the various populations mentioned is an appropriate goal/focus of SRAC.
- This committee has done a great job on shining a light on the various populations. That is a great role for this committee.

**6. Wrap-up/Adjournment**

- SRAC Chair final reflections and acknowledgements
  - Dr. Harper reflected that SL should have more partnerships among campus resources as one of her regrets that she didn't have the vision/time to foster.
  - Public education must commitment to the private good, public engagement and community.
- Appreciation/Thanks you to the group - Gina
  - Dr. Harmon/Jennifer/Pam
  - Special thanks to folks that are cycling off the committee.
- Dr. Harmon
  - Thanks to Gina/Jennifer/Pam for assistance and coordination of the committee meetings.

To Gina: Leadership is pivotal. Gina, your framework, empathy, challenge, support and understanding of “the work” makes this work so much more productive! Thank you!

Mariah Fiumara made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Charlie Koopmann seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.