



Department of Educational Studies
Department Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 18th 2020 12:30pm to 1:55 pm (Zoom)

Present: C. Ahenakew, V. Andreotti, L. Andres, M. Edwards, M. Gleason (Chair), D. Kelly, H. Gill, G. Grosjean, A. Mazawi, A. Metcalfe, B. Opini, C. Palacios, K. Regmi, S. Rocha, C. Ruitenberg, S. Salgadoe, T. Sork, M. Stack, S. Stein, A. Taylor, W. Traas, R. Vanwynsberghe, P. Walter, J. Walker, F. Wang, T. Webb, T. Wisniewski, Y. Ronen

Absent: A. Abdi, J. Chan, J. Ellis, G. Neha, W. Poole, H. Wright, L. Zhang

On leave: G. Fallon, L. Roman

Announcement before agenda

The Department head acknowledged our presence on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people.

Approval of agenda – agenda approved.

Approval of minutes (May 2020) –minutes approved

Education Library Report (Wendy Traas)

There are many new resources available digitally at the library, so please see the report in the meeting package.

The libraries are closed and physical materials are not being lent out at this time. The library is working on a curbside pickup process. If your courses were reliant on print material please feel free to get in touch as to coming up with ideas on how to address this issue.

Questions:

Yotam: was advised that he could get physical items

W. Traas: they are working on contactless delivery systems, scanned materials, ebooks, online repositories, etc.

They are these resources will become available in July but no date has been set yet.

D.Kelly: wants to assign some movies that could be streamed and asked how would that work.

W.Traas: the staff in LOCR would be more likely to have an answer, she will follow up with D.Kelly

Head's report (Mona)

M. Gleason: I won't go into detail unless participants have questions.

Be prepared for Winter 1 teaching inquiries from students. Because of the transition to online teaching the planning process is starting much earlier than previous years. Thank you, Mark Edwards, our contact in the ETS/PDCE world and Kapil Regmi, our Departmental online faculty mentor for EDST.

Reconfiguring the Grad Advisor roles from last month's report.

C. Ruitenbergh: The purpose of circulating this document is to make sure that Tom and I have not forgotten any tasks that people are wondering about.

T.Sork: I want to thank André, he has been helping us to ensure that no issues fall through the cracks.

A.Mazawi: A point to keep in mind as we foster these roles: how do we preserve the wide participative base of the department and the autonomy of bodies like GPACC? And avoid a concentration of powers in EDST that preserves the vitality of the participative processes of everyone's input. To ensure these processes are kept open in many ways and avoid duplication of power structures within particular bodies when people wear different hats.

M. Stack: It would be interesting to have a conversation about the admin. roles and buyouts and perhaps have regular discussion about roles as they can change from year to year. It would be useful to have a fulsome discussion.

M. Gleason: Yes, I will make a note to have an open discussion about admin. roles in Winter 1 term.

A.Taylor: Is there more information about how our EDST Orientation will work this year? Sometimes we are not sure what to say to students. Each program area is struggling .

C. Ruitenbergh: G&PS is preparing for full online orientation. I imagine we will be supplementing that. There can be flexibility because of the virtual nature of our work online.

D.Kelly: We need to think about more than one big orientation as quite a few students are deferring to January. We have had to move up our EDD orientation to right now. Pre-recording may be of use for January.

M.Edwards: Consistent messaging about how to use online resources, in particular, Canvas is needed. We are noting in the first week that students are learning how to use the platform rather than the course materials.

M. Gleason: As per my report, students need to be reminded of processes and resources early and often.

<Online chat notes>

B.Opini: Yvonne said they will be preparing an orientation video about Canvas for B.Ed students with step to step instructors on how to navigate that platform; not sure if they will do the same for grad students as well.

K. Regmi: Online Faculty Mentor Team is organizing a Zoom session during the last week of June. I will send that info as soon as we are prepared for that.

C. Palacios: Canvas courses include an “I’m new to on-line learning” link with resources and videos (Canvas Basics, Practice Using Canvas, Accessibility and more).

<End of chat notes>

Deputy Head report (Lesley)

- Nothing to offer that supplements report, but happy to take questions.

No questions.

Graduate Advisor report (André)

- No comments - happy to take questions.

No questions.

GAA report (Yotam)

- Regarding orientation, the GAAs are putting together a welcome video and hoping to get a sort clip from everyone. We are happy to try to help if technology is an issue as faculty try to do this.

Announcements

A.Mazawi: Thank you to Carl Luk for helping with special issues of Post Colonial Directions in Education.

A. Taylor: thanks to those who have contributed to the blog and I encourage others to do so.

Forum discussion:

M.Gleason: Let’s talk about this idea of setting priorities for moving our equity agenda forward. We have started some small steps and I think it starts with the self-study.

T: Sork: I intend to put this as a standing agenda item in GPACC in September - not only the problem created by COVID but also racism issues. Tom will be chairing GPACC and Claudia will be attending GPACC.

R. VanWynsberghe: Looking back on EDST 314, this was a social justice course it was difficult to teach it may be of value to revisit or offer it again.

S. Stein: Compiling info is important to address the intellectual aspect of these issues. However, I have found that people can get on board intellectually but when it comes to shifting behavior ... I am wondering what spaces or structures we can create or already have for dealing with the emotional side.

M. Gleason: As Head, I want to take direction from you (the group). I think there is an interest in these spaces

V. Andreotti: Perhaps this is something that someone who has tenure could tackle, as this is risky work, or maybe an externally guided process.

A. Mazawi: It is good that we are entering this discussion. I see the question of indigenization, decolonization, white supremacy etc. as part of a larger problem of envisioning what we want to stand for in relation to the world we want to create. I notice an erosion of the thread of social justice within this department. Something that I have found useful is sharing my syllabi and asking for feedback on blind spots. I think we do have to recognize we have shifted within this department in a positive direction more recently and also see the work ahead of us. We will have better results if we focus on the culture that accompanies the positive changes that have taken place to date. This is a hopeful and inspiring process though I do understand the fear people have around it.

B. Opini: You don't just clean a cup on the outside, you clean it on the inside too. We need to look at how we treat others as a whole before we look at curriculum, etc.

M. Stack: We need to look at why it took widespread media reports for the university /department to issues statements about racism. We have colleagues that have brought these issues to our attention for many years - perhaps we do need an external party to help address that.

C. Ruitenbergh: I want to hear more from students and use the feedback about all different interfaces that they interact with regarding what makes them feel (un)welcome. I would like to take action not just record. I think we need smaller groups to address this work. Larger formal groups do not have enough trust to move forward in a meaning full /real way.

M.Marker: I wrote an email in reply to the document, we forget that we have competing interests even within the department. They may not be mutually exclusive but they are dialectical. We see competing conversations, one person's reclamation of homeland is the dispossession of another person.

<Online chat notes>

A.Metcalf: I want to say that I fully agree with Sharon. I am working on deep reorganization of my courses and also think that we should move across program areas to do this. The questions we might ask ourselves go to the heart of our material and epistemic contexts. A departmental budget committee founded in the principles of justice, with questions to the methods and implications of student recruitment and involvements, for example. How are we continuing to “profit” at the expense of destabilizing oppressive systems?

J. Walker: I like the move towards sharing syllabi within and across programs and to have conversations, feedback, in thinking about what we're valuing and what we're committing. There's so much individualism and privatization of teaching that we could start opening up ourselves up to thinking about what and how we are teaching our students as a department.

T.Wisniewski: One of the things that I recall coming up when we were doing this work a while back was the essential issue of building community among all of our colleagues, not just the ones who are like us. and I've been thinking a lot about this especially as we've dispersed due to COVID.

J. Walker: I don't think the two things are mutually exclusive--we look at ourselves as individuals, as a department, and how we treat each other--and how we reinforce social hierarchies by continuing doing what we are doing without much reflection.

S. Stein: One thing that my students and I have discussed this term, when discussing possibilities for decolonizing HE, is that people often turn away from looking at the depth of the problem - and our complicity in it - because we don't have the stamina and capacity to sit with things that don't have easy solutions, and that require us to confront our harmful desires. We talked about therefore needing to start this work by developing the stamina, and the intellectual, affective, and relational capacities we would need in order to stay with the difficulties and discomforts of unravelling colonial logics, infrastructures, and desires. So perhaps one question we can ask is: What kind of processes, practices, and frameworks could support us in the department (especially white faculty) to develop these capacities?

A.Metcalf : Building on what has been said, recognizing our investments and also recognizing our need to call out the benefits that we take from EDST that are not equal across the academic platforms. Thank you to all of you who have made yourselves vulnerable to us by reminding us of the work you are doing and continue to uphold in spite of the inequalities.

<End of chat notes>

S. Rocha: We can only do so much and all have many demands on our time. We have different demands and perhaps secrets that we don't want to discuss because of any number of commitments. I don't always have the energy or think that my energy is best spent within the plenary. I have commitments in other communities. If I feel psychologized and morally demanded to do things on the "inside of my cup," I won't. It's not misanthropic but because I have had those demands made on me repeatedly and been kicked in the head.

M. Gleason: I'm hearing a lot of interconnected ideas: working on the self and how we treat each other, kindness and lack of kindness; governance issues and how they allow an opportunity for change and self-direction. The heart and the head, intellectual work in relation to other kinds of work in our bodies. Understanding (or not) each other's work. Many of us have written about these issues. If we're going to do this work we need to have more trust amongst each other and we need to treat each other better. At the end of July, I will write to the Dean that I will not be doing a 4th year. We now have opportunities to think forward after next year as these are long term and serious issues but we need to start building and planning for now. I encourage people to start thinking about what part you would like to play in fostering real, lasting change. These are things that we should think about over the next couple of months and come up with priorities. I only have the credibility to move forward with these ideas in concert with you (the group).

H. Shan: I was terrified to be offered the role of coordinator, I survived it with the help of everyone and want to thank you all for your help and support. Thanks, Mona for the supportive community you foster. I would like to suggest that we concentrate on actions and deliberation to perhaps look at things around workload distribution, course buy outs, making everything transparent.

M. Gleason: Thank you all for your work stay well and healthy. I am extremely mindful of how much work it is to get all of our courses online.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Next Meeting: September 17, 2020.