

Academic Advisory Meeting

Meeting Minutes

March 23, 2021

Present (via Teams): Andrew Hakin (Chair) and Lynne Delorey (Recording Secretary)
Andrew Beckett, Dan Belliveau (via Teams), Karen Brebner, Gord Cunningham, Tim Hynes, Richard Isnor, Sandy Iverson, Murray Kyte, MJ MacLellan, Jeff Orr, Gina Sampson, Larissa Strong, and Elizabeth Yeo

Regrets: Janice Landry and Kerry Prosper

A. Hakin opened the meeting at 9:00 am and welcomed Advisory Committee members. The minutes of February 23, 2021 meeting and the agenda for March 23, 2021 meeting were approved as circulated.

Dr. Hakin brought forward the concern of the presence of racism on campus. He referenced a February 26, 2021 meeting with a group of Black students, staff and faculty who voiced their concerns. K. Wamsley and E. Yeo were also in attendance. At the meeting, the students provided examples of racist behaviors that they have experienced on campus and questioned what StFX was going to do to stop it. They indicated that their concerns were brought forward several years prior but that to date, there has been little change. A. Hakin, K. Wamsley and E. Yeo committed to the attendees of the February 26 meeting that they would meet again in one month to share a plan of action. This meeting is scheduled for March 24, 2021.

A draft action plan presentation has been developed and A. Hakin initiated the presentation with the Academic Advisory group for their feedback. The action plan will be presented by the Executive Committee at the March 24, 2021 meeting. Some highlights include:

- Acknowledgement of racism on campus
- Ways we can do better include:
 - Greater diversity in our staff and faculty
 - Improved policies/procedures to address racist behaviors.
 - Access to Black counselling support
 - Education on racism
 - Improved communication
- Some changes already in place or in progress include:
 - Revised job descriptions and classifications for Diversity Engagement Centre staff
 - Creation of a new lounge and study space at the Diversity Engagement Centre
 - Creation and integration of anti-racism modules (Fall 2021)
 - Addition of new administrative position in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion which will help to transform the learning environment and decolonize the curriculum.
 - Creation of culturally relevant pedagogy leads for all faculties.
- Next steps include the creation of a President's Action Committee on Anti-Racism (PACAR)
 - Co-chaired by Kevin Wamsley, Academic Vice President & Provost and Robert Upshaw, External Advisor to the President.
 - A call for applications will be circulated with committee work to begin by May 1.
 - Representation from students (3), faculty (2), staff (2) and community (1) as well as an Indigenous Elder and the VP Students

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Roundtable Discussion:

Highlights of roundtable discussion include:

- We have been challenged by students to take and communicate actions. We must take time to listen and enter a dialogue.
- Acts of racism continue to trigger further emotional trauma, but we need to be engaged to learn how we can change.
- We have been building relationships over the years and need to demonstrate our progress. We need to show our measurables, i.e., say what you have done and what the impact was.
- Demonstrate that racism is everywhere by highlighting the holistic and systemic nature of racism. Engagement rather than consultation needs to be done.

Wrap up.

Andy Hakin thanked everyone. He reassured and reinforced that a collective effort is necessary to create change. We need to be accountable to our students. Every aspect of the student experience is being affected by racial issues. We need to address.

The meeting adjourned 10:30 a.m.