**EDI Committee Meeting 2**

**Agenda**

25 November 2022

Zoom (primarily) and in-person in MCML 394B

* Welcome, Land acknowledgment, & Introductions 1:00-1:10p

* Teaching and Learning Culture Policy - discussion 1:10-1:30p

What should we revise? What have we not included that we should? Discussion of the evolving Teaching and Learning Culture policy, from the previous Studio Culture Policy work done last year. After this round of input and revisions, we hope to take it to SALA community for more consultation or to SALA Meeting for approval (if we feel it is ready).

* Equity Audit - discussion 1:30-1:45p

Have we identified all the possible consultants? Can we discuss the scope in more detail?

* New business? 1:45-1:55p

* Discuss next meeting date/time/location/content 1:55-2:00p

**Minutes**

In Attendance: Sara Stevens, Noora Hijra, Sara Jacobs, Tamara Ross, Roxane Grégoire, Robyn Adams, Ksenia Pauch-Nolin, Nyah Lemarre, Arevik Petrosyan

**Teaching and Learning Policy**

SS:

The policy started out as a response to students who'd had poor experiences, particularly in studio reviews, and so we were thinking about how to reform the culture of studio reviews at the school. The more we worked on it, the more we thought it ought to be about all of the teaching and learning that happens in the school and not just limited to that. The ambition here is to have a document that becomes a value statement/position statement within the whole of the school that would be a foundation. Once the school agrees to this document, we build pieces off of that. That would be handouts that could go out to studio reviewers when they come in, or for different people who engage with the school. Have we covered in it the things that we need to include? Are there things that we should add? Are there things that are too much?

NH:

The current document specifies that it's up to instructors to brief the guest crits on how to be inclusive. Is the Committee planning to produce some documents to support that or to basically be able to hand out to guest critics? Otherwise, the responsibility falls to the instructor and different instructors will vary, right?

SS:

That's true, when I was doing this last round of revisions we talked about faculty versus students or faculty, staff, administrative staff, and students. But we have this huge category in the school of adjuncts coming into the school for discrete periods of time. I tried to separate out those adjuncts from the full-time faculty. Faculty are often part of these conversations we have about policy and how or what our approach to teaching is etc. Yes, I think we definitely want to build more material from this that would be applicable to the specific situations and different audiences. I also feel like a chain of responsibility would also be important so that it doesn't become something that falls through the cracks. So, that's  why I had framed it this way, but I'm interested to hear if we feel like we should still reconsider or if there's another way we could approach it.

SJ:

I know you also sent the ones from last year or two years ago, and there was some feedback they were a little bit too prescriptive. But, there was something that I really liked about, giving specific examples of what common studio review behavior may look like and then offering an alternative. I think I could also see instructors saying “well of course I already do this” depending on how it is disseminated and communicated. “Of course I'm thinking about well-being.” Or “of course I'm creating a respectful environment” without really understanding some of the nuances to that. I wonder if we could define some terms or give some examples within the document. For example, I think you replaced the word ‘professional’ with ‘respectful.’ I think ‘professional’ assumes some very narrow perspective. So providing some context for why we say ‘respectful’ vs. ‘professional.’ and some of these terms that are often used. I think that the kind of comic book style document is useful for breaking those things down a bit more.

SS:

Yeah, that's super helpful, and I think that is the next step. The first step is to get us all to agree to this, and then we can build those things off it. It's kind of an internal focus document for the school to accept and agree on. From that, we can develop the stuff that must be shorter and pithier and more engaging for the audiences we want to reach.

SJ:

That makes a lot of sense to distinguish between like a longer internal working document and one that keeps the main objectives.

SS:

I did specifically take out the term professional, because I think it can reinforce what existing old norms are in a field without allowing us to think about why we're doing things in a certain way. It can lead to a lot of problematic gatekeeping. I used respectful, in part because of UBC’s Respectful environment policy around anti harassment/bullying. But maybe there's a better word even than that that.

TR:

That was a good choice to take that out. I think I think to Noora's point, there may have to be something that goes out in a smaller form. We send stuff out about getting parking reimbursed, and how to apply for the studio fee subsidy and all that kind of stuff and so this could be something else that goes out in a smaller form.

We could also have a short video that everyone who comes in has to watch that explains “here's an appropriate way to do a crit,” and “here's a non-appropriate way.” and so on.

SJ:

That actually reminds me of the What I Learned in Class Today videos with the indigenous initiatives that UBC put together. It’s a really, really great set of 30 second to 1 minute long videos of indigenous students using their experiences set up what you might do instead or offering alternatives. I think all of those are available on their website.

SS:

I'll add that as a resource for us.

TR:

I wondered if those ABC's in the document are in the right order. There might be a better way we want to frame. Also because some of them have some similar text within them below, if they're clumped or they're put together, there’s a “didn't I already read this?” kind of thing. It comes later but but there's a point where it says “for design reviews, students will arrive on time, be prepared, and be engaged.” Shouldn't this be for everyone? Later, “guests are encouraged to share their knowledge and and be engaged,” but everyone in that room should be engaged. The same thing with “Supportive Community.” That the students will support and lift up each other, but everybody should be striving for that right?

One other thing is, there was something that came through as feedback from a student around a little clarity in marks. There's a section about understanding evaluations, and just being clear on like if I if I come to you and I've got a 70. What's in 80? What does a 90 look like? Being a little more exact and less nebulous about that.

And, this notion of holidays, like giving people the UBC holidays. There’s so many holidays that UBC doesn't acknowledge. I know you can't do that for everybody. I was thinking about trying to enact something here where staff get six days off a year for holidays, that don't need to be taken on specific days. So they could choose to work Christmas Day if they have Rosh Hashanah or something like that, right? But I know that trying to do that within the structure of the school term is difficult.

SJ:

I thought that was already a UBC policy for students, that students can miss class for religious observance?

TR:

They can take it off but, like if you miss a studio for that, how is that actually accepted? So, I think here there is a point that says allowing rest during and observance of UBC holidays, but I don’t think that accounts for the fact that people might be off for other reasons.

SJ:

I mean it’s protected under UBC guidelines for students. Maybe that needs to be clearer for instructors that that does need to be a day off then.

There's a few things in here that feel needed, and also ambitious. I'm looking the Health and Wellness  section. The first point about sort of a balance of work, rest, food and sleep, and sort of this focus particularly, I think, on sufficient sleep and mental health. That's great as a statement, but it feels like just a statement. How will it happen?

SS:

I know I feel that at different points too. Who's responsible for making sure that really happens? Who's overseeing that? What if a student feels like they're not able to? Who do they raise that to? I feel like if we can agree to these as values then we can start enforcing them. And this is like step one, but maybe there's a way we could state that in a different way in this document. You're right it doesn't follow through with any chain of responsibility, the way some of the others do.

SJ:

It could be connected to marks in some way, like I know in my classes, I've tried to specify how long someone should spend on something, and it’s also in the assignment that outlines the metrics for grading. There should be a relation, if they spend that much time on it, they should get a whatever a B plus is. I found it doesn't work very well, even if I say “this should be a one hour study/concept model” people will spend more time on it, even if I emphasize that it’s okay to spend less time on this. Having tried a few different techniques to think about what workload is and how it could be realistic with schedules and how that relates to them, and still being able to feel like someone gets a good grade and feels good about the work that they're doing.

RG:

Yeah, I don't think there's an answer, most students here are very perfectionist and getting the B plus won't work for a lot of them.

NH:

Unless you make it pass/fail, which then mitigates that issue because there is no grade. Of course, then that raises other issues around instituting pass/fail, which we don't need to get into right now.

SJ:

But plenty of other design schools in North America do a pass/fail model, and so there is absolutely precedent for it.

NH:

I'm personally absolutely in favor of doing/pass fail. There’s just complications around students who want to go into further studies needing to show universities their grades and not having a GPA.

RG:

Yeah, in GP right now we have pass/fail for most of the assignments with two or three assignments that are graded. I think it really helped people put more attention towards the things that are graded and looked at more thoroughly.

SS:

It's also something that usually falls along a line between, our graduate students and professional programs who are for the most part, not imagining applying to universities again, are much more open to the idea, but students in undergraduate programs, especially a kind of pre professional program like BDes, it's much less appealing because they are thinking they're going to be applying to graduate schools later on.

KPN:

I am thinking about grad school and the point made about showing your GPA and stuff and even with applying for scholarships and stuff, I've needed that information. I really like the idea of the mixed model.

NL:

I agree that I think the mixed could be good. I don't think I've had anyone talk about or do the pass/fail thing? But it could be good for directing a focus on what's more important. There's some stuff that's like “we'd like you to do this to develop your idea or something,” but then it can draw your focus to something else instead of having it as a progression thing. But I like the mixed idea.

AP:

I also haven't had any experience with the pass/fail system, but in our structures class, our instructor is allowing us to re-submit one assignment if we feel we didn't do well on it. I think I like that model.

SS:

These could also be really great ideas for future documents to build off the policy. I’ve thought “alternative formats for studio reviews” would be a great one to do. If we can't go full pass/fail, here are ways to experiment. Or, there’s a thing called un-grading, as a movement in pedagogy, that's basically imagining alternative practices for student evaluation that are much more constructive and can also help to kind of manage the stress and the workload aspects of coursework. Maybe also, classes where some work is pass/fail and some is graded, or where you can redo an assignment. Things like that.

TR:

It requires the entire faculty to speak together on this. You could have a few classes or one or two profs who go this route and then others who aren't. I think that was one thing that I had about the Time Management/School/Life/Work balance section. It seems very one-class-centric. They have other classes and to also keep that in mind and other pressures. It must be a more holistic look at what people are putting on and a coordinated effort. This group is taking all these classes and this one has the assignment here. Could we have this one here, and this one here, and that that kind of coordinated effort versus all at the same time?

SS:

Yeah, there's some amount of that that happens, one of the challenges that we run into is that the curriculum is tight. Any flexibility that we offer students makes that system fall apart right as soon as you're off the regular track. In my history class, I have BDes students and MArch students who have deadlines at different times, so when I pick them, it gets more complicated. But it's true, I think that the Curriculum Committee has worked on this before, and the different programs have sent down directives from the top to coordinate your deadlines and do stuff like that.

TR:

I think bringing that out though in that section to talk about assignments. Students have a variety of obligations that might be other courses. You have definitely have BDes students taking courses in other faculties outside of SALA. Who knows what those faculty pressures are as well. So just being conscious of those other school commitments.

SS:

I'll do another pass at this, revising according to the things we talked about today and the comments in it. I think next is for me to start sharing it with other committees as a kind of first step before it goes to the full SALA for a review 'cause I think we might be able to build more support for it to get it through that hurdle of getting agreement from the whole SALA community faculty and staff. And just reach out if you have anything else that comes up for you later that we haven't had a chance to talk about. And I've already moved it on to the next phase.

**Racial Equity Audit**

SS:

We have a scope and we have a list of consultants and I kind of feel like maybe we should talk about the scope a little bit first before we talk about the consultants, but we could flip it.

TR:

Well, it might be valuable to approach a couple of the consultants and discuss with them the initial scope and weigh in on what we’ve done and our ideas for moving forward. Have them assist with what the scoping would be and a timeline etc.

SS:

The only piece that we haven't done that I think could also be part of that early stage is connecting with Greg Lockwood, who does a lot of the EDI related surveys within ApSci but also from the equity office across UBC. He's knowledgeable about that. We could get his input on the scope document and the list of consultants and then take it to a couple of consultants and get their input. I do still think that there's some pieces within UBC, we could do surveys before having a consultant do the rest.

TR:

Just with the rest of this group, for some of the consultants on this list I either know people at them that work there or UBC has worked with them before, so we would have contacts. My preference is to go with options where we know people there or we've worked with before and have that initial conversation with them, versus spanning out and trying something where we don't know anyone there or that UBC has never worked with.

SS:

Yeah, I think so.

NH:

Yeah, I agree with Tam’s proposal. It looks like Bakau is the only one that explicitly lists audits as part of their scope of work. Reaching out to them seems promising, then reaching out to others to see if they actually do audits would be a great place to start.

TR:

Yeah, I was thinking about trying someone else, but I think I think to get the ball rolling I am happy to reach out to them. I know Radius has done an audit with UVic, and I know somebody there.

SS:

That would be great, yeah, so do you want to reach out to Radius and Bakau and start there?

TR:

Yeah, I think so.

SS:

Yeah, let's start with those two.

**New Business**

TR:

An adjunct brought this up, and we’ve talked a lot about having more diversity in studio reviewers. For a lot of people this is a financial hardship, because it's not part of your job. You don't get paid to do it, or you're missing billable hours, or you have childcare to deal with and work with that. So, we proposed a pilot offering a fee. People would fill out an online request for a fee if you they felt they fell into this sort of situation. We brought up examples of “you need to take uncompensated time off from employment in order to participate in a review.” “You’re a community member, unaffiliated with a profession or group or agency that compensates you for this work” or” you have childcare or other care, support, and accessibility costs that you would need to otherwise find.” It's up to the individual, I didn't want to not do this because of the worry of the white dude from a big firm going “Yeah, I want 100 bucks for this." Let's turn it around the other way and say people will in most cases be honest. It's a nominal fee, $100, especially if you're here for a couple hours, that isn't going to cover that, but also in the survey there are questions about “what this will help you do?” “What kinds of things are you facing in order to say yes to come to a review and so we can sort of look at that at the end of the year and assess it and change as needed so. Anyway, I'll post this for you. Sara, did you want to add anything to that?

SS:

Well, just if you don't know, when reviewers come to campus, they don't get paid. So, this is people who are working in practice in Vancouver typically. But you might have studio reviewers that come if you're working in a particular neighborhood. There might be community members who come from different local organizations, this isn't supported work for them, but the reason why it's always been this way is because in the kind of gentlemanly world of, you know, professional codes of conduct written in the early 20th century, the idea was that the good architects are mentoring the young folks. It's a prestigious thing to get to be invited to a university, and so those systems have just been in place for so long that they've carried on. A lot of schools are starting to rethink this and starting to offer nominal fees such as this as a gesture to recognize that there is a lot that people are giving up putting that much time into mentoring younger students or early career folk. So this is a first step and we see it as an important one. And hopefully we’ll learn a little bit more about who can say yes to reviews as a result of this. We certainly send lots of requests out to studio faculties and lots of requests out and get a lot of rejections before they can find reviewers. Simply because people are incredibly busy, but also because they face these barriers, they're losing out on billable hours at their office, or their bosses tell them they can't come. We're hopeful that this will start to shift that culture a bit. And then we can make reforms to it later on, but this is a kind of pilot year. We'll do this for the fall term and the spring term also. And we'll reassess at that point.

NH:

I'm surprised something like this wasn't already in place. Sounds like a great initiative.

SS:

I feel like though it came from an adjunct very recently we've been having this conversation in this school for a long time. You know for faculty when we go to reviews at other schools and don't get paid. That's OK because I put it on my CV that I was invited and I participated, and it counts as part of my service work. it's easy for us as faculty to see this as like just part of my job but of course that's not the case for everyone.

TR:

As part of the course I'm taking, which is called engaging diversity and inclusivity in the workplace. I had to come up with a final project and my proposal plan was working with how to retain new diverse recruits that we're about to hire and how to look at rewarding differently. I look at three areas.

One is the support mechanisms, and the success mechanisms for the new hires. One is training for the current faculty, to make a welcoming environment but also how to continue carrying the work forward and not put it on the shoulders of the diverse hires coming in. A large part of that is through the audit and how can we measure where we are? What have the problems been in the past with retaining people and what they could be in the future, and then setting goals and targets to measure that. Like how we tell whether someone is happy here or is going to come in feeling supported or is going to be successful moving forward. We were talking to Sarah in the EDII Applied Science EDII group about, what kind of training can we get? What kind of training do we have already at our fingertips that faculty can have so we can start populating these areas with resources. Where we don't have resources we could go out and get them.

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The next EDI committee meeting will be held in person at 10 am on Thursday December 15, food and refreshments will be provided. The meeting will discuss the Community Engagement policy.

**Action Items**

Tam -

-Reaching out to Bakau and Radius about Racial Equity Audit

Sara S -

- Checking in with students to confirm in-person attendance for December Committee meeting.

Arevik -

-Add what I Learned in Class Today to resources