

December 7, 2020

## **Fall 2020 - Semesterly Counselor Report From Vice President Academic (Navjot Singh)**

### **(1) Curriculum Committee (CC)**

CC continues to work to improve the PharmD program as each course goes through review. Student representatives on the committee include the first, second, and third year class representatives and the APSA VP Academic (standing member). I continued attending meetings over the summer, as I transitioned into my current role from second year class representatives. As CC meetings typically require 2-hours and overlap with courses, this semester Dr. Hall would meet with student representatives prior to CC meetings, to best optimize the 1-hour students could commit to.

I continued to review first and second year courses, and participate in discussions as new third year courses came through the committee. Over the summer, I provided the second and third year representatives with guidance in their approach to reviews. This semester, Dr. Hall provided all student representatives with an introduction to the course review process as this semester, the first year class representative actively participated in the formal process.

At each meeting, I provide an APSA update, thus I have shared resources APSA has created, upcoming events, and information regarding how the student body is coping with the challenges of this pandemic. Next set of course reviews will likely take place early 2021.

### **(2) Student Advisory Committee (SAC)**

SAC is composed of a faculty representative as chair, VP Academic, first, second, and third year class representatives. Over my experience with the committee last year, we noted that SAC turned into a support system for class representatives by providing a safe environment and a place where we can come up with solutions.

This year, all four class representatives gathered student feedback/concerns via their mid-semester/mid-rotation feedback forms. Years one to three compiled their feedback to share at SAC, and we recognized some opportunities for changes as we head into a new semester in 2021. We will be reaching out to professors at the start of the next academic year to help create a two-way communication to help facilitate the sharing of feedback and support both students and professors as we continue to learn to navigate a new normal.

Although the fourth year class representative does not sit on SAC, I did reach out to their representative periodically to gauge how the Class of 2021 is doing. My goal has been to have an accurate understanding of each cohort's experiences, thus I am able to accurately voice concerns at other committees (i.e. CC, CoFA, etc.). I hope to formally include the fourth year class representative as a part of SAC.

My role thus far has been to organize meeting dates, sharing my templates for feedback, and ensuring all representatives have a chance to discuss their concerns. A meeting can be called by any of the committee members.

### **(3) APSA's Awards Committee (AC)**

AC is chaired by the VP Academic, and is composed of: faculty representative, VP Social, VP Fundraising, VP Finance, and a representative from each four cohorts.

Over the summer/early this semester, I worked with our VP Finance to connect with last semester's award recipients and find an alternative way to deliver award prizes as the pandemic led to the cancellation of last semester's Blue and Gold event.

The committee worked with CAPSI to help with awarding the Guy Genest Award in November. This month, the committee members will be reevaluating the current APSA Awards and updating the applications for the 2021 year. AC is planning to meet next early January to discuss award updates, funding, and we hope to have the applications released early 2021.

### **(4) Professionalism Committee (PC)**

PC is chaired by the VP Academic, and is composed of faculty representative, APSA President, Past-President, VP Student Services, and one active APSA member who is not on council.

As VP Academic, I have presented a professionalism presentation to all of APSA Council/Officers and to the first years during orientation. Additionally, throughout the semester professionalism concerns and issues have been brought to my attention, and I have dealt with a number of concerns, planning courses of action moving forward.

An extension from last year's professionalism committee initiative, **Career Series** was officially launched and

four sessions took place this semester. Both Jadin Chahade (VP Academic 2019-2020), Ellen Dotty (Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (FoPPS) Development and Alumni Engagement Officer), and I have worked to organize and deliver over 10 sessions with various staff, alumni, and professionals. All upcoming event dates have been added to the APSA Google Calendar -check it out to see when we have our next session!

#### **(5) Academic Appeals Committee (AAC)**

As the VP Academic is a voting member of the faculty's AAC, I am not in a position to be able to provide students with advice heading into their appeals meetings. Thus, to continue Jadin's efforts, Jadin, FoPPS, and I worked over the summer and earlier this semester to release a [resource document](#) designed to assist students in preparing for their experiential education, provide tips to resolve concerns, and present steps to assist in the case a student receives a failing grade.

The resource document is available on myapsa.ca under "Academic Resources" and on eclass under "Student Services."

#### **(6) Race Against Racism Committee (RaR)**

APSA and the Alberta CAPSI chapter launched its newest committee and recruited members this past summer in light of recent events that highlighted the continual systemic racism that prevalent in our communities. Our focus has been to highlight the systemic racism that exists within the healthcare system, to provide students the opportunity to acknowledge our biases, and to continue to learn about the disparities that continue to exist.

RaR is co-chaired by CAPSI Senior and the VP Academic. Early this semester, I had the pleasure to share information regarding our launch with the J & J Pharmacy Podcast. This year, we held a virtual run over September 25-27th and we raised \$4 712.20 for our charity of choice, [Action Dignity](#). Committee members worked to highlight health disparities that exist in our healthcare system by creating infographics for sharing via instagram.

As VP Academic, I'll be working with our committee to help bring speakers to discuss their work with vulnerable populations next semester. The committee will be working to confirm dates and roll out other initiatives -keep an eye out for more information as we head into 2021!

#### **(7) Council of Faculty Associations (CoFA) - Advocacy Board**

As a member of the CoFA Advocacy Board, I brought forward three pieces of work to APSA's attention from the University of Alberta Students' Union.

1. *Hiring of the Sexual Violence Prevention Coordinator* - The SU VP Student Life and SU President brought forward statistics relating to campus sexual violence, and presented the plan to hire a Sexual Violence Prevention Coordinator (SVPC). This new position will work to identify gaps and provide support to those who have encountered sexual violence at the University of Alberta. This position will increase each semester's tuition by \$2-\$3 and I brought this forward to APSA Council for discussion, thus I sent a letter supporting the hiring of SVPC to the University of Alberta Students' Council.

2. *Course Workload Statement* - CoFA put forward a "Joint Call to Standardize Course Workload" and I shared the statement with APSA Council. As per council discussion and majority vote, APSA agreed to sign onto the statement.

3. *Online Proctoring Statement* - CoFA put forward a "Joint Call to End Online Proctoring" and I shared the statement with APSA Council. As per council discussion and majority vote, APSA agreed to not sign onto the statement.

#### **(8) Alberta College of Pharmacy (ACP) Council**

The VP Academic sits as a student member of the ACP Council. I attended all meetings over the summer and attempted to attend partial meets as possible throughout the semester.

Over the summer, I worked with the Class of 2020 and ACP to have their questions regarding licencing answered, as the pandemic brought uncertainty for the new graduates.

Most notable this year, as per Bill 30, as of April 1, 2021 council make up will require 50% public participation, thus the student position may no longer be a part of council. I discussed future possibilities for APSA and ACP to maintain communication with ACP Council President, Dana Lyons, and shared these with APSA's Executive Council as well. I will continue to remain updated on ACP Council initiatives and developments, by attending possible meetings or reading all documents/meeting minutes. My plan is to continue to keep APSA

updated as appropriate.

**(9) APSA's Mentorship Program (AMP) - Resource**

This year, with an all online fall semester, APSA decided to make AMP mandatory for all incoming first years, in hopes of trying to connect them to upper year students to help foster a sense of belonging among the student body. Additionally, in discussions with the faculty, we also expanded AMP to allow mentors to provide mentees with an opportunity to practice their patient interaction skills. Thus, I developed a resource, in collaboration with Dr. Sanghera and Teri Charrois, that discusses the role/expectations of mentors and provided them with further assistance in creating mock patient-interaction cases. The resource was shared with all AMP Mentors via email.

Furthermore, in discussions with class representatives and FoPPS, APSA will look at the possibility of opening up matching again in 2021 for current upper year students who also wish to have more mentors. More information will come as we revisit the idea in the new academic year.

**(10) Sexual Violence**

This year, I worked alonging FoPPS, Sexual Assault Centre, APSA President, and APSA member Lisa Zhang to help organize and find times for pharmacy students to participate in "Working for Change" presentation by the Sexual Assault Centre.

We have also been working on a resource since this past summer, designed to act as a quick guide for students to refer to for information and additional resources. Currently, we are working on finalizing the document and we hope to have it finalized and shared with students -more information to come!

**(11) Pharmacy Undergraduate Journal Club (PUJC)**

This year, I worked with APSA Member, Alan Min, to launch PUJC. New this year, we created a resource for students to refer to to help with planning presentations. Alan created a new 'journal bank' for students to refer to when searching for possible articles to present on. Additionally, we also launched a new initiative to help highlight the importance of Evidence Based Medicine (EBM) via our class email 'PUJC Presents' infographics. We have a 'Clinical or Therapeutic Queries/Questions' google form, where students can share a clinical question or an interesting clinical practice and PUJC members can answer the question/delve into background information and have it presented in class emails. We have also used the infographic to highlight student presentations.

This past semester, we had one PUJC presentation, and we have four potential presenters for 2021. If you are interested in presenting or tackling a clinical question/topic for a class email feature -please feel free to reach out to either myself or Alan Min!

**(12) Other**

- Working with Janice Kung: Janice, our librarian, and I have been working to provide an opportunity for students with a refresher when it comes to using our clinical resources. Janice will be working on providing an asynchronous opportunity for brushing up on skills in 2021, so we will share as we have more information to come!

Sincerely,



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