

FOSTER LISTENS RECAP Undergraduate Listening Session-Spring 2024

The Foster Leadership Team [Christina Fong (Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs), Michelle Purnell-Hepburn (Associate Dean, Inclusion and Diversity), Tarah Moore (Associate Director, UDS), Megha Arora, office of the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs] met with 2 undergraduate students. The following is a summary of broad themes discussed, specific questions and answers, and follow up action items assigned to members of the leadership team.

ISSUE IDENTIFIED: Foster can be difficult to navigate for students of color. Some students are unaware of or feel unwelcome in the UDS community.

WHAT'S BEING DONE? HELPFUL RESOURCES AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- UDS holds quarterly mixers and uses social media to advertise that these events are welcome to all.
- Ongoing efforts from UDS for community building includes regular UDS mixers, groupMe, newsletters, and Instagram to celebrate and highlight community, events, etc.

WHAT CAN WE DO NEXT? PROPOSED STEPS FORWARD AND ASSIGNED LEADS

- Tarah Moore will share feedback with the UDS team and discuss potential solutions including areas below:
 - Explore ways to improve UDS communication channels for greater awareness to the community
 - Explore collaborative efforts with other Foster and broader UW departments for events and programs
 - Develop intentional events around welcoming new and current students within the UDS community

ISSUE IDENTIFIED: Sometimes students feel they need help advocating to receive DRS accommodations from faculty. How are faculty trained on DRS matters?

WHAT'S BEING DONE? HELPFUL RESOURCES AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- Partnering with DRS and supporting students with disabilities is an ongoing conversation that has been covered in annual teaching best practices forum for Foster faculty in 2023, 2022, and before.
- Undergraduate faculty are reminded about DRS accommodations twice a quarter via email as well.

WHAT CAN WE DO NEXT? PROPOSED STEPS FORWARD AND ASSIGNED LEADS

- Students who are experiencing issues with receiving accommodations should reach out to their DRS coordinator, their academic adviser, and/or can complete a [Bias Incident Report](#).
- Students can report microaggressions they witness or encounter on the [Foster Listens microaggressions form](#).

- Foster leadership will continue to amplify and remind faculty of best practices in supporting students with disabilities. We continue to proactively explore solutions to make the process of granting equitable accommodations easier. For instance, Associate Dean Christina Fong is on a task force this year intended to propose new solutions for test administration with accommodations.

ISSUE IDENTIFIED: Course cases are sometimes lacking inclusive language, or students feel that faculty refer to disabilities in a flippant way. Student recommends diversifying case studies among many dimensions of diversity and using more inclusive language.

WHAT'S BEING DONE? HELPFUL RESOURCES AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- In 2020, Foster Faculty Council voted to amend student evaluations of teaching to include items specifically regarding inclusive teaching practices and to rate the extent to which instructor's course materials and content reflected a diversity of identities and/or acknowledged issues of equity when relevant to the course topic. See preliminary results in this [report](#).
- What happens to the course evaluations that students complete? This [video](#) provides useful context; student course evaluations are shared with the instructor, department chair, and Associate Deans. Each quarter, the Advisory Committee (Associate Deans, department chairs, and Dean) review course evaluations and discuss which faculty might benefit from more support and resources. In addition, student evaluations of teaching are factored into annual performance evaluations for all faculty.
- In Spring 2022, a new process was established with the UG Diversity Subcommittee to solicit student feedback on the Gamble Teaching Award, a major Foster award. At the Dean's discretion, the Gamble Award recognizes faculty developing and using business cases that include diverse protagonists and incorporate and encourage discussions of inclusion and diversity.

WHAT CAN WE DO NEXT? PROPOSED STEPS FORWARD AND ASSIGNED LEADS

- We encourage students to complete a [Bias Incident Report](#) or to report microaggressions they witness or encounter on the [Foster Listens microaggressions form](#). This helps us to identify how and when to support faculty learning and growth.

ISSUE IDENTIFIED: Foster Instructional Tutoring (FIT) does not cover all classes in Foster and is relatively limited in terms of classes, tutors, and availability. Student advocates for more funding or resourcing for that program.

WHAT'S BEING DONE? HELPFUL RESOURCES AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- Currently, FIT offerings are dictated by a balance between student demand, tutor expertise and availability, and classroom availability.

WHAT CAN WE DO NEXT? PROPOSED STEPS FORWARD AND ASSIGNED LEADS

- Aaron Robertson, Coordinator of FIT, and UPO will continue to monitor student demand and needs. When demand and needs grow, and can be matched with tutor expertise, we can advocate for more resources to grow and scale the program.

Q&A from Students

Q: Where does Foster funding come from? Why are our buildings much nicer than other buildings around campus?

A: Foster buildings are funded through generous private donations.

Q: Does Foster have any policies about what students can or cannot wear to the classroom?

A: No, there is no formal policy on dress code in the classroom.

Kudos from Students

Welcome Wednesdays was a successful and great idea. Likes the idea of open dialogue instead of ignoring something and it is important to build this hard skill.