

FOSTER LISTENS RECAP

Undergraduate Listening Session-April 18, 2023

The Foster Leadership Team [Frank Hodge (Dean), Christina Fong (Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs), Michelle Purnell-Hepburn (Associate Dean, Inclusion and Diversity), Andy Marzano (Associate Director, UDS), Megha Arora (office of the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs)] met with 5 undergraduate students. The format of the listening session is described [here](#). Following is a summary of broad themes discussed, specific questions and answers, and follow up action items assigned to members of the leadership team.

SUPPORT & RESOURCES FOR IS MAJORS

Foster students interested in technology often go to Engineering or iSchool for resources, programming and events. Can Foster support IS majors by providing access to more resources and courses that focus on developing technical skills like coding & databases? Foster students are competing with CS majors for internships and jobs, and CS classes focus more on both theory and building technical skills.

WHAT'S BEING DONE? HELPFUL RESOURCES AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- Please [click here](#) to learn more about the IS major and associated coursework including classes on data analytics, coding and databases. In addition, [this website](#) helps to detail career opportunities associated with the IS major. The IS major is designed to prepare future business leaders in information systems and emphasizes the integration of business and technology; this is different from the CS major.
- Additional resources available to IS majors and Foster students interested in exploring information systems include:
 - Foster has an [Excel](#) and [R](#) certificate programs available to students.
 - Business Information Technology Society ([BITS](#)) is a Foster registered student organization that provides members with a valuable edge for starting careers in the field of Management Information Systems, including application development, security/risk management, IT consulting, and other areas of business such as accounting, finance, marketing, etc. BITS is not limited to Information Systems nor business school students.
 - ISOM department maintains a budget to send students to IS related case competitions.
- Over the 22-23 academic year, Foster Career Services has provided a variety of technical-focused workshops and events, including a SQL for Business Skill Building Workshop and Day in the Life: Product Management Career Paths

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Alumni Panel. Additionally, Foster Career Services hosts a wide range of Information Systems-focused career guides, recorded webinars, and skill building resources available asynchronously via the [Foster Undergraduates Canvas Course](#).

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

- ISOM Department Chair Yong Tan works with IS faculty and core course coordinators to continually evaluate and update curriculum to meet student needs.
- Department is considering offering info sessions for IS Majors to help address student misconceptions about the IS major and related careers.
- ISOM department is currently working on creating a video to help students learn more about the IS major.
- Next academic year, Foster Career Services looks forward to continuing to provide a variety of additional Information Systems-focused career events, including a Business in Tech Networking Mixer this upcoming Fall Quarter.

FOSTER LIBRARY

Foster's number of Bloomberg stations has decreased recently from 5 to 4, which means that often students who want to learn about the stock market are bumped off the station by those who need the stations to complete their assigned and required work. Also, Foster library opens at 10am but NYSE opens at 6am PST, therefore students cannot access Bloomberg terminals when the market first opens.

WHAT'S BEING DONE? HELPFUL RESOURCES AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- The reduction from 5 to 4 terminals was the result of a partnership between Foster, UW Tacoma Milgard School of Business, and UW Bothell business school. The agreement involves tri-campus cost-sharing and terminal allocations, with Foster the primary stakeholder.
- To avoid getting "bumped," Foster students are encouraged to use the [Bloomberg terminal reservations system](#) maintained by the Foster Library. Reservations are not required, but students with reservations have priority over "walk-up" users.
- Foster Library recently expanded its [hours](#) at the beginning of spring quarter, now opening most days at 9 a.m. Opening earlier would require more expanded staffing — something that budget and the labor market won't allow. (Even before the pandemic, when staffing was more robust, the library opened no earlier than 8 a.m.)

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

- Jason Sokoloff, Head of the Foster Library, will monitor Bloomberg use and availability. If demand is increasing or availability decreasing, he will report to the key Foster decision-makers.
- The key decision-makers for the Bloomberg terminal logistics — number of workstations, location, access, etc. — are the Foster Finance Department (Jarrad Harford, faculty chair) and Foster IT (Mick Westrick, director).
- Jason Sokoloff and the business librarians are continually evaluating opportunities for alternative financial databases that are not restricted to designated terminals in the library. While a valuable source, Bloomberg offers no off-campus access options and limits the number of on-campus terminals.

ADVISING

Having more information as a first year student about how to plan a dual degree would be helpful. How do advisers build comfort in advising students who are double majoring? Advisors don't seem totally familiar with the process and there is some gray area that could be clarified.

WHAT'S BEING DONE? HELPFUL RESOURCES AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- [Click here](#) to learn more about the advising services that are offered to Foster students, including drop in appointments,
- Foster academic advisers can work with students to discuss how an additional degree program fits with their interests and goals inside and outside of business. Students who are double majoring are encouraged to meet with both advisers associated with their majors to ensure that their plan meets all current requirements. In addition, Foster advisers are empowered to reach out to advisers across campus to support students who are pursuing dual degrees.
- Foster advisers meet quarterly with other academic advisers around campus to stay up to date on program and degree requirements, offerings, and processes.

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

- Tal Lev, Associate Director of Advising will continue to meet with Advisers around UW campus and facilitate cross-campus and cross-major collaboration to support students who are double majoring.

FIT

Foster students could benefit from Econ tutoring and increased support for QMETH from Foster Instructional Tutoring Services. Students are grateful for the amount of resources at Foster and found the FIT very helpful while taking the accounting series.

WHAT'S BEING DONE? HELPFUL RESOURCES AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- FIT currently offers free, in person and online tutoring in the following classes: ACCTG 215, 219, 225, 301; BECON 300; FIN 350; MGMT 200; OPMGT 301; Q METH 201. For location and details, visit the [Facebook page](#)

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

- Aaron Robertson works with Assistant Dean Vikki Day to monitor usage of FIT to ensure that this center is meeting the needs of students.

CURRICULAR CHANGES

- **Existing courses do not adequately cover issues of race, equity, wealth disparity. Course content is often focused on a small slice of the greater population which means graduates don't fully understand the markets that they want to serve. Courses need to build in more issues of ESG, social impact, to better prepare them.**

WHAT'S BEING DONE? HELPFUL RESOURCES AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- We note that similar themes were explored in the Winter Foster Listens session as well.
- In 2021, changes were made to the MGMT 430 case competition rubric to include examination of multiple stakeholders
- MGMT 300/MGMT 320 core classes are required to cover the Foster ID framework
- Foster ID framework is taught in Freshman Direct seminar
- New elective courses have been introduced- examples: MGMT 400 Corporate DEI, Special Topics courses related to Sustainable Finance. For the coming year, we are exploring a class on Interrupting Privilege on Black Capitalism, subject to faculty availability.
- 2022-23 Dean's Impact Scholar Teddy Johnson is working with faculty to create a portfolio of cases that highlight minority business leaders and DEI-related topics.

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

- Christina Fong will continue conversations, review curricular content with a DEI lens, and support faculty's efforts to integrate issues of social impact, justice, race, and equity into curriculum.

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- Michelle Purnell-Hepburn, along with Graduate Diversity Services is exploring offering quarterly interactive sessions to faculty on the Foster ID Framework, bias and microaggressions.

The Accounting for Business Professionals major is good because you get to learn about accounting without being on an accounting path and can personalize your learning. Foster should explore other similarly structured majors, such as data analytics or an IS minor.

- Thank you for this valuable input and feedback. As the Accounting for Professionals major is relatively new (introduced in 2021), Foster leadership will monitor enrollment in this major. We will also explore other ways to help students customize and specialize their degrees and educational experiences.

FOSTER CLIMATE AND CULTURE

- **Foster (and UW) classroom climate feels competitive; it is easy to feel behind and the curve creates more anxiety.**
- **Pressure is particularly high for students applying through the standard admit process; the lower division classes and those classes are very tough. It is important to maintain academic integrity with the curve, but feels it is unfriendly to prospective students, particularly those who didn't do running start.**
- **Can we make upper division courses available for students who want to major in business and work towards that degree even if they are not in Foster yet?**
- **Students who recently completed an internship came to appreciate the Foster classroom experience and felt very supported and encouraged.**

WHAT'S BEING DONE? HELPFUL RESOURCES AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- Foster does not require that courses be graded on a curve. Here is the information given to faculty teaching in the undergraduate program:
 - o The Foster School has established the following target medians for undergraduate courses:
 - Foster 200-Level UG: Target Median 2.9-3.1
 - Foster 300-Level UG: Target Median 3.1-3.3
 - Foster 400-Level UG: Target Median 3.2-3.4
- Traditionally, the median is the only support point in the distribution about which faculty have provided guidance. Please note that *the Foster Faculty Council has recently voted to endorse the principle that the dispersion of final course grades should reflect*

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the relative dispersion of student mastery of course content at an appropriately granular level. I sincerely appreciate you following these guidelines- in both the letter and spirit!

- Unfortunately, classroom size and capacity constraints prevent our ability to open most upper level classes to non business majors.
- Many upper-division Foster classes are open to non-majors, if all prerequisite courses have been met.
- Courses associated with the business minor have also been added to help increase access to Foster courses for non-business majors.
- Christina Fong and Vikki Haag Day facilitated a discussion with faculty teaching 200 level classes on increasing belonging in lower division classes in Fall 2021.

WHAT CAN WE DO NEXT? PROPOSED STEPS

- Foster leadership is committed to growing and scaling the business minor to increase access to Foster classes.
- The Undergraduate Programs Office is working on evaluating the admissions process to continually improve equity, access, and justice.

CONNECTIONS WITH ALUMNI

Students really appreciate the opportunity to meet with alumni who can help them connect their coursework to future career relevance, create opportunity, and open doors for them. Students are really appreciative of how Foster administration supports events, case competitions, and panels that help students learn from industry leaders. Students wish they could experience more events with alumni speaking who are in industry and working and have life experiences.

WHAT'S BEING DONE? HELPFUL RESOURCES AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- Many Foster RSOs engage alumni in their events.
- Foster Career Services engages alumni for industry-focused events
- Foster Career Services and the Alumni Office run the Undergraduate Alumni Mentoring Program (contacts are Kristin Anderson & Tarah Moore)
- The Foster Alumni webpage, <https://foster.uw.edu/foster-alumni/>, is a main source of collecting the most up-to-date information on our alumni. From here, the information is shared with Career Services, our Resource Support Organizations [RSOs], and used to invite our alumni to participate in activities including: the Undergraduate Mentoring

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Program, the Recruit a Foster Undergraduate Program, as well as events like case competitions, mock interviews, the Celebration of African American Alumni Achievement, and the Latinx Alumni Reception.

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

Michelle Purnell-Hepburn & Andrew Krueger, Director of Alumni & Media Relations will be planning a “Welcome BBQ” for Black and ally-centered students in late September, inviting Foster Alumni with the intent of creating an engaging environment to get to know each other in a casual environment.

The Alumni Team is in the midst of exploring a regular LGBTQ gathering and a South Asian event.

Michelle will also explore working with the outgoing Fritzky Chair and the Consulting & Business Development Center to create small, intimate, fireside chats with alumni and students in the upcoming academic year.

FRESHMAN DIRECT SEMINAR

Students enjoyed several aspects of the Freshman Direct Seminar (incorporation of DEI concepts, opportunity to learn about peers and form longer connections, learn about how to interact with team members and people with other identities, the case competition). Can these concepts be integrated into more required classes? Can this class be open to more students, not just freshman directs? Can we increase the number of credits of the class?

WHAT'S BEING DONE? HELPFUL RESOURCES AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- We are glad to hear about these positive experiences and will pass along your feedback.
- MGMT 300/MGMT 320 core classes have recently been updated to include the Foster ID framework which was covered in the Freshman Direct seminar.
- Please note that [this website](#) describes many opportunities for non-Foster majors to engage in our community; the Foster Leadership Academy is modeled closely on many of the concepts from the Freshman Direct seminar.

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

- Christina Fong will continue to review curricular content in required courses to integrate the ideas into curriculum when relevant.
- Vikki Haag Day will continue to oversee the Freshman Direct seminar and lead the Undergraduate Program's efforts to incorporate these concepts into co-curricular and curricular domains for more students.

FOSTER LISTENS

This session did not have many juniors or seniors, RSO leaders, nor many Black or brown students. What can Foster leadership do to hear more about their experiences?

WHAT'S BEING DONE? HELPFUL RESOURCES AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- We note that similar themes were explored in the Winter Foster Listens session as well.
- Personal invitations to the Foster Listens session were sent to transfer students, Foster Freshman Directs, and URM students. Foster Listens sessions are open to all and advertised widely.
- Undergraduate Program Office maintains a system of Canvas announcements to keep students involved about events and opportunities.
- Undergraduate Diversity Services also uses groupme, social media, and weekly newsletter to keep students informed.

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

- Michelle Purnell-Hepburn will explore ways to leverage social media for outreach and communication with students. She will explore how we might increase outreach to nontraditional students, and also discuss and amplify Foster Listens at events such as the Welcome BBQ for Black students, Latinx Celebration in October.

FOSTER CAREER SERVICES

Students entering the workforce feel prepared and grateful for support from FCS in helping to identify job opportunities and internships. Does Foster have enough career coaches to serve all students?

WHAT'S BEING DONE? HELPFUL RESOURCES AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

- The EY Center for Career Advancement offers undergraduate business majors a variety of services including: counseling, exploring careers and seeking positions, guidance in establishing an experience portfolio and resume, networking opportunities, and skill development through a variety of workshops and events. Please [click here](#) to learn more about services offered to undergraduate business majors.
- Foster Career Services serves both undergrad and one-year masters programs. FCS has 3 career coaches dedicated to undergraduate business students along with 4 career peer coaches handling all drop-in coaching for undergraduate



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business students. Additionally, the Center has 2 employer relations representatives working with employers and alumni to craft programs and events where students engage with industry professionals throughout the year.

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

- Director Andy Rabitoy will continue to monitor usage rates for coaches and attendance at events. We are continually thinking about how to offer services that best meet the needs of our students. If you have suggestions or questions, please feel free to contact bzcareer@uw.edu.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

What support does Foster offer to student entrepreneurs?

Please visit the [Buerk Center for Entrepreneurship](#) to learn more about events, courses, and programs for entrepreneurs.

Thank you for engaging with Foster Listens! We encourage you to explore the [Foster Listens website](#) and look out for information about our next Foster Listens session for Undergrads in Winter 2024!