# Acadia Community Advisory Council Minutes

May 16, 2022

6:00pm – 8:00pm via Zoom

**Present:** Tanya Surette, Kelly Brenton, Linda Wheeldon, Birdie Bezanson, Erica

McGill, John Hubert, Clarence De Schiffart, Jen Moore, Greg MacKinnon, Gemma McLeod, Ann Sylliboy, Jacqueline Greenough, Janice Graham-Migel, Alison Arthur, Christina Toplack, Ron Lehr, Andrea Noylander, and Wanda McDonald

**Regrets:** John Moore, Patricia Wentzell, Charles Desmond Shepard, and Janet Dyment

**Congratulations to Dr Kelly Brenton who successfully defended her dissertation!**

**Congratulations to Dr Birdie Bezanson on her renewed contract for another year with the counselling program!**

**6:00 – 6:10pm: Welcome & New Introductions [Kelly]**

 Land Acknowledgement

 No new introductions

**6:10 – 6:30pm: Updates from the Program**

**Programmatic Changes Approved – 2022 Cohorts [Tanya]**

-Program changes discussed in the fall were approved

Counselling for Social Justice and Culturally Responsive Mental Health and Crisis and Trauma are now required courses, along with a blended Human Development & Learning with Counselling Across the Lifespan.

 -Moved Research Literacy to Research Design

-Gregg noted moving to Research Design puts our students in a better position if they to choose thesis route

**Update on the strike [Birdie]**

-Tanya provided update as Birdie’s mic was not working

-All students stayed in practicum

-thanks to our Director, Janet Dyment, Dean, Corinne Haigh, and Ron Lehr, for supporting this

-acknowledgment of Linda, Tanya, and Kelly’s work to ensure that all students were on track when EDUC 5066 resumed after the strike

-all students will complete their year on time

**Professional Seminar Series [Birdie & Kelly]**

-Jan 26 – 28, **Trauma Informed Practices** with Lori Gill (virtual)

-CCPA credits were available

-well received and attended

-a number of attendees went on to do the second part with Lori Gill

-Introductory & Intermediate Supervision Seminar (Tanya provided update)

-Introductory – Thursday evening virtual and full day Friday in person (4 attendees)

-Intermediate - Thursday evening virtual and full day Friday in person (15 attendees)

-Both Intro/Intermediate were very well received

-John expressed his appreciation with both seminars

-Supervision Seminar will be offered based on need going forward

**6:30-7:00: CACEP Site Visitors Report & Acadia’s Response [Tanya]**

**Virtual site visit by Bill Borgen, Blythe Sheppard and Tom Strong**

-we have received report but are still waiting for the final decision, we will continue to be accredited until the decision comes

-Tanya provided a power point that is attached to the minutes that outlines the contents of the report

-Erica spoke to the Work Integrated Program which will provide some administration support to our program; fully funded by the Province at this point

-Clarence queried if this group could play a role in advocating for the needs of the program based on the report

Note: Clarence would like to be part of the advocacy group

-Ron noted the challenge in faculty compliment as additions affect compliments in the greater education and that programs across campus are competing for tenure tract positions

-Wanda identified Dal and Memorial may have valuable input to a community clinic

-Christina wondered if alumni might be a source for funding a community clinic

-Jen was curious about Dept of Health and Wellness; could there be funding from that source

-Linda noted that there is Federal and Provincial funding available

Note: Wanda would be pleased to be part of any brainstorming with other group members

-Christina noted that there is a plan through MSI to provide mental health services from a variety of professionals and it would be important to advocate for counsellors in that

Note: Christina would be happy to be part of this advocacy

-Tanya acknowledged the role of advocacy this group could provide

-Janice noted CCPA provided advocacy training we could access

Note: Janice noted she would like to be part of an advocacy group

**7:00-7:45: Current Context of School Counselling in Nova Scotia - [Linda]**

 **How can Acadia and the Advisory Council could be useful to support**

-we are aware that school counsellors are leaving position and there is a deficit in all boards across Nova Scotia

 -Jacqueline noted the document she inherited 9 months ago was very similar to previous documents

-she acknowledged that counselling was being underutilized

-there is a desire to “elevate and celebrate” school counsellors

 -the essence of the document is to ensure that counsellors are able to respond to what is happening in schools with Tier 1, 2 and 3 interventions

-hoping to have all school counsellors registered to CCPA and have that funded by the BoE (school counsellors are not required to be certified and/or registered at present)

-noted this was seen as a good first step to try to change the prevailing attitude toward school counsellors

-would like to see a complex case conferencing group/format to provide more case management

-hoping for a September rollout of the document

-Jen noted she works extensively with schools and supported the need for school counsellors being responsive

-queried if there needed to be inhouse supervision for school supervision

-she supported the case management

-Andrea noted she was no longer in the role school counsellor

-noted that roles are very different from school to school

-there are many mental health clinicians in schools, and we do not know who is doing what/when – uniformity of practice is needed

-she noted the challenges in the hierarchy that is created in schools with mental health clinicians

-John wonder why the BoE would start with CCPA rather than NSCCT

-questioned why professional clinicians can not share information in the best interest of the client/student

-Jacqueline noted that starting with CCPA might have been motivated by money and CCPA sets the code of ethics

 -acknowledged/appreciated John’s input

-Jacqueline 320ish school counsellor’s positions with more coming

-HFx has 33 open; Chigneco 10 to 15 position to fill

-Kelly noted the research suggests that role ambiguity and lack of supervision contributes to school counsellors leaving the profession

-we need to consider supervision as a way to support our school counsellors

-Jaqueline noted the ration is now 1 to 400 down from 1 to 500

-Clarence noted that in his conversations with school counsellors they feel that what they want to do/were trained to do is not what the school wants/allows them to do

-Jacqueline noted the challenges with trying to shift from the guidance counsellor model to the school counsellor model

**7:45-7:55: Program Resourcing – Admissions & Admin Supports [Kelly]**

**Update on new admission process**

-prior to the strike core faculty reviewed 10 admission files using the rubric to ensure consistency

-this practice validated the ability of admissions team to use rubric to reduce subjectivity

- Ron Lehr, Clarence De Schiffart, and John Samarah joined Linda, Birdie, Kelly, and Tanya (core faculty) in the admission process to ensure we could admit a full complement of students

 -hired admin support to do GPA and other time-consuming duties

-130 applications to 73 interviews with all members of the admission team agreeing

-pre interview session with all interviewees, i.e., “reality check”, outlining commitments

-noted this reduced the number of applicants asking for feedback when they were not successful in being offered an interview

-school of education colleagues paired with core faculty to do interviews

-20 full time and 20 part time offers went out (major accomplishment!)

-we have communicated to our Dean and Director that this process worked very well and drastically reduced the strain on core faculty and we are hopeful that going forward this will be the process

-currently at 39 acceptances; waiting on one to respond

**7:55 – 8:00: Closing [Tanya]**

**Date of Fall 2022 Advisory Council Meeting –October 17, 2022**