



May 31, 2023

To the Oakland University Senate Steering Committee:

This is the end-of-year report for the Student Academic Support Committee, 2022-2023.

Chair: Tara Diesbourg

Committee members: Robert Uptegraff, Betty Tonui, Erin Dwyer, Nick Lauer, Stephen Bazinski, Caitlyn Thayer, Dan Arnold, Shane Lewis, Lori Marsh, Jessie Hurse, Kristin Landis-Piwowar, Andrew Romano (*student rep*), Murryum Farooqi (*student rep*), Richard Holler (*graduate student rep*)

Meetings: We met monthly, on the second Thursday of the month from 10/13/2022 to 4/18/2023. The 12/8/2022 meeting was moved to 12/1/2022 due to its conflict with final exams and the holiday break.

In our initial meeting, we discussed what the focus of this committee should be for the 2022-2023 Academic Year. Last year, this committee had begun work on raising awareness of the student services offered on campus, and consolidating where the links to these resources were displayed. Unfortunately, we ran out of time to complete this work, so the committee decided to carry this work forward this year. We also decided to investigate the feasibility of an academic forgiveness/attendance policy.

Originally, the committee considered redistributing our survey from last year, to increase responsiveness, however it was brought to our attention that similar surveys already exist. So, we reached out to Mary Lewis to discuss the resources surveys that she distributes to students each year to review her results. We decided to focus on the resources that were underutilized, or where awareness appeared to be lacking. Instructor office hours stood out as one such service, along with mental health services and the Academic Support Center. The idea of a “Please BUG me” campaign was discussed, to reinforce to students that taking advantage of these services is not a bother to instructors and employees, but rather that it is entirely welcomed.

We recruited Cheryl Russell from UCM to help with the messaging and delivery of this campaign. After reviewing Dr. Lewis’ results, and lengthy discussions regarding appropriate messaging, we were able to come up with the following graphic to display on the digital screens around campus during finals week (Figure 1). A similar message was displayed to all students on the Moodle Dashboard during finals week. In October 2023, when SASC meetings resume, we will review the



Figure 1: Graphic displayed on all digital screens on campus during finals week. Similar messaging was also displayed on the Moodle Dashboard.



number of clicks on the links provided, and the number of times that students scanned the QR code in Figure 1. This will give us some idea of the effectiveness of these means for communicating information for future initiatives.

Our second initiative for the year was to investigate standardized Academic Forgiveness and Attendance policies. We quickly abandoned the standardized attendance policies, with the understanding that faculty would not likely appreciate being told how they should run their courses, and that such policies require substantial administrative or faculty oversight which could cause logistical nightmares. We redirected our attention to Academic Forgiveness Policies, whereby students who change majors partway through are not penalized for doing so. The grades from their former major that do not affect their progress to their degree in their new major, should not count towards their GPA, and should not affect their ability to earn scholarships or proceed to graduate school. Therefore, a policy was reviewed and revised by SASC, and by a unanimous vote, was approved to be read before UCUI and Grad Council. Unfortunately, the school year ended before this process could be completed, but Kristin Landis-Piwowar has been tasked with following it through in the 2023-2024 Academic Year.

The SAS Committee has discussed plans for the upcoming year, beginning with reviewing the success rate of the finals messaging that we developed this year. We look forward to using our findings to improve the messaging surrounding the availability and accessibility of information related to OU Student Resources in the coming year.

Please Note: We would like to make Cheryl Russell (or another UCM representative) a permanent member of the Student Academic Support Committee moving forward. Since we rely so heavily on UCM for communications, it is important that an expert in this area is included in any conversations surrounding their use for promoting student success. We also request that the Steering Committee review our Committee membership to ensure that the appropriate departments are represented. Shane Lewis is listed as an EVPAA designee, however, with Undergraduate Admissions moving from Academic Affairs to Student Affairs & Diversity, we now have three members from SA&D, and no members from EVPAA.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tara Diesbourg".

Dr. Tara Diesbourg
Assistant Professor
Public and Environmental Wellness Department, School of Health Sciences