

Spring 2014 Town Hall: Minutes

In attendance: Sue, Isabella P, Jeannie Ann, Camilla, Martin (Sodexo), Carolyn (MASO), Jennifer McCleary (CBCD), 32 students (both 2nd year and 1st year)

1. Welcome and Introduction (Mia): 5:40 PM

A warm welcome to Andrew Chiang, our new Academic Director!

2. Review of Fall Town Hall (Mia): 5:41 PM

Biggest takeaway: building issues, study room temperatures, report the room and contact Sodexo, specific issues from professors in the Fall

3. Learning Commons (Jeannie Ann): 5:41 PM

The space is supposed to be for you, created the space to be more collaborative, the TV screen and the tables, the power outlets, collaborative, moveable whiteboards, task lighting for computers

Would you like the space to be book-able? Jeannie Ann will send out a quick survey to help with Library services, popular reading and wish list of the perfect journals

4. Academic Program Update (Sue McCracken): 5:43 PM

Congratulations on MBA Games! Looking forward to hosting and supporting the event, hope everyone is reading the MBA Bulletins that go out, Specialization session is on Thursday, March 20th, followed by pizza with Dean Len Waverman in a more informal setting

Course evaluations are now done online, that is now continuing into this semester, response rates are dismally low, have asked instructors to provide time in class to do course evaluations, they should be letting you know ahead of time so you can bring the technology to do so, please take them seriously

Parking issues: there have been several announcements about parking in the building next door, complaints, they will start towing, they are not pleased about using the parking space, there has never been free parking here, we've made it easier to pick up your parking passes, appeal to our ethical standards, you are required to pay

MBA Redesign focus groups: faculty and students are involved, looking to change the MBA program, has been pretty much the same for a number of years, one of the things we're looking at is what happens during Transition Week, adding extras to the term, some input into initiatives, come and see Sue if you have some great ideas to share, the faculty is open to hearing your thoughts on changing up the program, Sue has drop-in hours and an open-door policy for an hour a week, she will gladly listen to the good and the bad

5. CBCD Update (Jennifer McCleary): 5:51 PM

Pretty quiet in terms of student visitors, except for Rank and Match Day, RMs are actually doing site visits this week, starting next week, CBCD will open up more time slots on Monday and Thursday, send a message to CBCD for appointments and bookings, want to make sure you have the support you need regardless of your program (Full-Time students are invited to come in), last date is actually mid-June to secure a position

March 17th: St. Patrick's Day, sadly - no green beer, please wear some green, selling green buttons at the Concierge Desk, Sodexo will create an Irish stew for the day, possible bake sale and green cupcakes, all proceeds to MBA Games, any activities and ideas for staff and faculty to get behind

Senior student focus groups: one is for Full-Time-Accelerated, and the other for MBA Co-op, want to garner insights for experience to date, invitation will be in next week's bulletin,

6-8 students right after exams in April, if you're interested, please send an email to Jennifer McCleary, if by chance it doesn't work out on that particular date, at least you'll get responses, at least 2-3 initiatives can be incorporated by the Fall term, please take the opportunity to share, point out the concerns and bring some suggestions to the focus group (this is more important), come to represent your colleagues

This will be Jennifer McCleary's last time delivering the CBCD update, she is now the Director of Student Experience, all student-facing departments, we can integrate the experience inside and outside the classroom, personal and professional development, collaboratively, all teams together will graduate as strongest ambassadors of the program, our job is to understand what impacts you from the moment you're drawn to DeGroote, through your years here, till you graduate, will start with the Associations of both MBA and undergrad, Head of CBCD will be recruited within the next 2-3 weeks, think big!

6. MASO Update (Isabella): 6:00 PM

Melanie Walker is our counselor and she will be away next week, email her at bewell@cogeco.ca

Final exam schedule was posted 2 weeks earlier than last term, we have been listening to get the schedule out ASAP, worked with Registrar's office to ensure that each student has a reasonable number of exams per week, have to wait until Drop-and-Add is over (January 19th this term), April 12th-26th is the scheduled time

SOLAR Registration timing has been changed with regards from feedback over the last couple months, no one was in the office at 12 AM, changed to 8:30 AM start

Specialization sessions on March 20th from 3-5PM, for Part-Time students, we will be hosting these sessions in September and January as well for those receptions

7. Open Forum

- Switching the time for registration works, but it's hard for those of us on co-op, some people were on the train, a bit of a struggle, there was no bulletins or communication about that, co-ops don't get bulletins while on co-op,
 - We will try to use Pam's distribution list next time for those on co-op
- Turnover with MBAA, significant lack of transparency of outgoing parties, this wasn't the Association that was voted in, is it possible going forward if the situation comes up again, we have more transparency and a public protocol, somewhat frustrated by the process
 - This is the first time it's happened in our constitution (was not there), took a few months for MBAA and administration and faculty to sort it out, we juggled around a by-election, going forward, the constitution will be reviewed, updates or suggestions would be welcome
 - (6:44 PM) Constitution is probably the biggest outstanding progress, MBA Games committees, then co-chairs for competing teams, corporate governance around clubs, approvals, policies, funding structures, documenting those transitions better, we lack a strong paper trail for a good knowledge transfer, more formalized process in place, we do a round-table to work as a team for each semester, open-door meetings to MBAA Wednesdays at 5:30 PM
- OB prof from last semester (6:08PM): horrible exam, Austin specifically passed it onto Sue, the professor is teaching HR again, part of the presentation was 'lame' – not very professional, morning class yesterday, they were called 'stupid', the test again was very difficult, we asked for many changes to be made with regards to the professor, Dr. Tuer
 - Sue had spoken to her about the midterm results, she was looking at ways to deal with the low midterm scores, opportunities to learn from that and to increase your mark, communication being conveyed may be interpreted differently, she seems very open to feedback, it is bothering her greatly, expectations need to be more clear on both sides

- Some professors really focus on regurgitating facts from textbooks, writing exams at the graduate level, maybe the focus should be more on the application side
- Parking: can it be bundled into our tuition fees? Possible having an opt-out, may increase parking sales, incentives for us as students, may simplify the whole process, there may be fewer parking violations, the perception will change, what do we pay for?, can proceeds go towards MBA Games?, on-campus interviews already have a negative perception because they have to pay for parking, can we get employer-partners a parking pass for the day?, if it's a McMaster parking lot, ice, slipping, falling and collisions, it needs to have the same level of upkeep (6:26 PM)
 - We definitely could investigate this, it will simplify things
 - We pay for upkeep of the parking lot
 - CBCD made an agreement off-site parking to be expensed, provide coffee, cookies and lunch, which has been the practice, from a budgetary perspective, more focus groups will be with employers, McMaster Security actually tickets cars
- Thank you for bumping up some courses from the summer for Full-Time
 - Carolyn sent out a survey and we had a great response
- Picking courses for next semester: big factor is going to be the professor, please let us know who's teaching
 - Can't actually post the names until the contract is signed, unions are involved
- What is the possibility of putting MBA students into the GSA Dental Plan? Probably a referendum amongst the three cohorts, spoke to David Millar about this earlier in the year
 - We can poll the student body to see if we are interested in it, successfully in the past for the health plan, has to pass by 50%, 20% of the student body has to vote on it, MBAA can look into that
- Room bookings: 3 hours make total sense, people book for 3 hours and not show up, they show up later and tell you to get out, difficult to police, 15-20 minute grace period, they should be booking it for the time that they are using it, people booking for the sake of booking,
 - You can actually book online now, Mary Lou has the email, Celine will put this into the Weekly, we'd like to have that online for students to see, translate the system from Main Campus
- Corporate events have encroached on club and student events to work, Sodexo tries to book student events with priority, RJC has become quite popular, is there any way we can increase the fees for booking out the event spaces?, looking at changing the events calendar to the screen at the front (6:39 PM)
 - The operational difficulty is catering with the academic program, the more events we host, the more revenue we generate to offset the operating costs, we don't have any issues with reserve bookings, you can book up to 12 months in advance, Sodexo is being as flexible as they can, book at the market pricing compared to the Burlington Convention Center
 - We can give people what they want if you have your schedule for Clubs out in advance, same with for MBAA Social Director, streamline those events and makes sure it's transparent
- Most international students want flexible bus passes, most local students can drive (6:44 PM)
 - GSA negotiates with McMaster GSA and for undergrads with the Hamilton Street Railway, it's an issue that's right across campus, all students have to pay for it regardless or not, they will not entertain the idea of an opt-in or opt-out system, they have the monopoly, once they had a referendum and now MBA students are out, GSA is in negotiations with HSR, we have asked them to please consider MBA students as opt-in and opt-out, located in Burlington as a bargaining chip, it is on the GSA's radar