

Faculty of Arts Student Forum

Meeting 1: 25 March, 2024

Minutes taken by Chandler (Student Programs)

## **Topic 1: Inclusivity in the classroom & on campus (lead by Jaharvi)**

### *Question 1: How have you experienced inclusivity in the classroom/campus?*

- Campus and Faculty is generally engaging and warm, and students feel valued
- There are opportunities to feel included
- One example of an Academic encouraging non-Western perspectives was that students could *not* pick AU, USA, or UK as an area of focus for a research project
- One example of tutor being accommodating of non-native English speakers was allowing students to write poetry in their first language, as long as there was a translation to accompany the piece
- Topics are too Australia leaning, and there is a lack of global perspective
- Academics seem to prefer Australian/domestic students to share their experiences (i.e. Lecturers needs to encourage a more global perspective and different stories)
- International students have noticed that domestic students form clicks and clubs (e.g. domestic students tend to stick together after high school); there is a need for more connections between domestic and international students
- Academics need to be more accommodating and actively seek to engage with non-Western cultures in the classroom

### *Question 2: How can the Faculty assist in making connections between students?*

- Students taking a Language subject tend to have more connection with international/domestic students because they're conversing in the same language
- Smaller tutorials are typically better for connections
- Domestic and international students tend to sit separately; Academics should facilitate students to sit together to learn different perspectives
- Events are the best way to get students to connect, and there aren't enough events being put on (as compared to other Faculties)
- There is not enough representation in the curriculum; usually there is mention that there "are other perspectives" but nothing is unpacked
- Content is too Australia/Western focused

- There could be guest lecturers/different readings/assessments that represent more backgrounds
  - If students aren't able to attend O-week, it's very hard to make connections
- 

## Topic 2: Careers in Arts

*Question 1: Have you accessed Faculty or University career sessions? What has your experience been?*

- Ask Alumni is a useful program to connect students with industry professionals
- Arts students are not prepared for entering the career workforce after Uni; there need to be more industry professional connections with current students
- Many recent grads are still not able to find jobs after Uni
- The Careers Fair (in week 2), had very few opportunities from Arts and even less for international students
- International students struggle to find work, which is compounded by higher tuition fees
- There need to be more fairs, opportunities, and internships with Australian companies, to better learn about the Australia working culture (for international students)
- The Faculty needs to offer more support around how to connect study with career opportunities after graduation
- There is insecurity around an Arts degree and finding a job, with the idea that you just have to "know" how to find work
- There should be major specific career events, and more events in general that connect students with people who are already in their career
- Students are typically just told to "go to Stop 1" to help build a resume or CV; there needs to be an opportunity to connect with someone in that field, and also a way to be aware of jobs in that field that may be available to them
- Careers Fair was very unhelpful (with one person even telling an international student to go live in UK and then return to AU with work experience)
- International students would benefit from visa advice (including working rights) and clearer options after graduation
- There is an opportunity to do an internship and have it counted as credit, but there is not enough exposure to this subject/not enough students know about this
- There is a need for more internship ideas from Course coordinators
- Students need career insight from guest speakers in their career field

### *Should there be more opportunities to discuss careers across faculties?*

- Careers Fair has nothing related to Arts (but Engineering and Science students get more opportunities) - this is not inclusive
- Internships list is usually not up to date or is just very unhelpful, with many students not even getting placed until week 4 or after census (and it's then too late to change enrolment)
- There is uncertainty around how to apply for jobs
- There needs to be more of an emphasis on building the portfolio (not just CVs and resumes) and how you go about finding jobs and networking with career professionals
- Academic advising is not helpful when the advisor knows nothing about the topic/studies something different
- Arts events are too general, especially when Arts is already so broad (means that there is limited tailored advice for students seeking support)
- Arts Psychology majors find that other Faculties (MDHS and Science) tend to get more support
- It's typical that there are no career opportunities in Australia as an international student
- Careers fairs are typically aimed at domestic Grad students
- There is a general expectation of international students to overperform/outperform their domestic counterparts for a chance at equal opportunity
- First year students are not given enough resources early on (first year students are often told "you don't need to worry about this now"), which then causes issues later in year 2/3 when students are time poor and have not been given enough info about internships and Careers
- The Uni doesn't advertise what they provide well enough (i.e. free resume checker tool); it's too difficult to find tools and resources

---

### **Topic 3: Transparency and Decision making in the Faculty**

#### *Question 1: How do you approach your teaching staff?*

- Academics often don't reply in time (i.e. emailing is not a reliable method to get response in time, so perhaps a portal online to prioritize assignments?)
- Academics take too long to reply to students, and some students aren't comfortable to reach out to their tutor

- Some tutors don't get any teaching training whatsoever (i.e. tutors aren't trained in how to communicate or teach effectively which isolates students, especially when the tutor is meant to be the first point of contact)
- There needs to be more transparency between students and Academics in the first few weeks of Uni regarding Academic Adjustment plans
- There needs to be more transparency around grade release and why grades are withheld
- Some tutors don't know what students are being taught in their lectures because the tutor is not watching the lecture (gap in learning)
- There is an obvious disparity between the quality of teaching between tutors and lecture staff
- If lectures goes over time, the recording stops and things are missed
- There is a resistance from Academics to give feedback on grades, and feedback is usually unhelpful when given

*Question 2: Are the channels of communication with the Faculty open and easy to navigate?*

- Students are constantly getting referred to other people and services
- One Academic didn't want to upload a copy of the lecture because they thought it was their copyright (so students could not access material on their own)
- Some Academics are really helpful and some are not (luck of the draw)
- LMS material isn't always updated by new Academics
- There need to be more resources for students studying a subject online

---

**Additional Notes:**

Professor Lesley Stirling FAHA, Dean, Faculty of Arts

The Dean apologises for leaving the Forum slightly early. Prof. Stirling thanks students for their participation and thoughtful comments, which will be considered carefully.