



COLLEGE OF
BEHAVIORAL & SOCIAL SCIENCES
THE SOLUTION

Dean's Student Advisory Council
College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
University of Maryland

DSAC Annual Report
2018 - 2019

May 20, 2019

Chair: Nancy Jin

Advisors: Blessing Enekwe, Associate Dean Katherine Russell

Executive Summary

The Dean's Student Advisory Council (DSAC) is a representative and advisory body of fourteen students which implements proposals to improve the student experience within the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSOS), as well as advises the Dean and Associate Dean regarding students' concerns and ideas. The DSAC committee members represent students from each major and program within BSOS. Dean Russell has found the DSAC to be an invaluable resource for gauging student feedback to BSOS policies and to proactively seek out student concerns and fresh ideas.

This report provides a comprehensive overview of the DSAC's activities in the past academic year. The council's leadership is structured with one Chair that leads the Council and three Vice Chairs that each lead a committee as follows: Committee of Programming, Committee of Student Services, and a Committee of Academics. The DSAC leaders for the 2018-2019 academic year were:

Fall 2018 - Spring 2019

Chair: Nancy Jin

Vice Chair of Academics: Vardaan Dua

Vice Chair of Programming: Alix Brooks

Vice Chair of Student Services: Al-Hafis Adegun

A comprehensive list of the council's members, including their majors and respective constituencies may be found at the conclusion of this report.



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Programming Committee

The committee plans, organizes, and manages all of DSAC's events. The committee plans at least one major event each semester, and collaborates with the Dean's Office Staff to make reservations for campus buildings.

BSOS Annual Student-Faculty Dinner

The 12th Annual BSOS Student-Faculty Dinner was hosted by the BSOS DSAC on October 30, 2018. The event was catered by Good Tidings at Samuel IV Riggs Alumni Center. The goal of this event was to facilitate productive conversation between students and faculty within each department of the college. The BSOS DSAC invited faculty, staff, and students in the college and worked together to successfully plan and execute the event. The BSOS DSAC wrote faculty biographies to send out to students, organized spreadsheets, and helped to set the room on the day of the dinner. The dinner had a large turnout and most of the students and faculty that were surveyed were very pleased with the dinner. Events like these are critical because there is often a large disconnect between faculty and students throughout each department.

Coffee & Donuts

The BSOS DSAC sought to use Coffee and Donuts as an initiative to brighten students' days throughout the semester. This event fosters a sense of community in BSOS by giving students an opportunity to take a pause in their day. Further, this event informally connects BSOS students with BSOS DSAC members. Students can voice their concerns or learn more about other BSOS DSAC initiatives. This 2018-2019 academic year, The BSOS DSAC held a Coffee and Donuts event towards the end of the Fall 2018 semester and another one during BSOS International Week in the Spring 2019 semester.

TerpsVote Table



The BSOS DSAC teamed up with the UMD civic engagement TerpsVote Coalition to help BSOS students get out to vote. The table right outside Tydings Hall featured BSOS DSAC volunteers and TerpsVote volunteers, all working to help fellow Terps make plans to vote. Volunteers at the table also spread the word about other resources for Terps when planning to vote. These resources include shuttle buses to early voting locations and free stamps and envelopes for absentee ballots.

First Look Fair Tabling with Ambassadors

The BSOS DSAC had a table at the First Look Fair. The goal was to spread the word about DSAC as well as upcoming BSOS events. We discussed the Rainbow Room, the welcome ice cream social, and other upcoming events for BSOS students. BSOS students took flyers for upcoming events and BSOS DSAC was able to make connections with the BSOS Ambassadors as well.

100 Days Until Graduation

The 100 Days Until Graduation event was held in Riggs Alumni Center at the beginning of the Spring semester in February (100 days before graduation). The event was co-sponsored with BSOS Alumni Chapter Board and encouraged seniors and alumni to network together, enjoy their final semester at Maryland, and have a lasting impression of BSOS Alumni Chapter Board. The event included free food, games such as Blackjack, Life Size Jenga and Connect 4, beer tasting, and a raffle that included Maryland Basketball game tickets and a diploma frame.

Student to Student Economics Series

Student to Student Economics Series was a panel hosted by the BSOS DSAC to provide empowering and informative interactions between upperclassmen and underclassmen. The BSOS DSAC recruited six panelists with a wide breadth of experiences, academic focuses, and progressions through the economics major. The event included the Undergraduate Director of Economics who provided honest assessments of the department, as well as insights on students'



specific situations. At the conclusion of the event, students networked and exchanged contact information.

Maryland Day

The BSOS DSAC hosted a table for the annual Maryland Day event. The BSOS DSAC staffed and helped with their own table, a BSOS college-wide table, and an Economics department table. The BSOS DSAC used this event as an opportunity to showcase the events and accomplishments DSAC and BSOS has had over the last year.

Student Services Committee

The Student Services Committee improves student life through technology, alumni relations, facilities, and other non-academic issues. The committee aims to reach students, provide them with networking opportunities, and improve student life outside the classroom.

Sociology Career Development

The BSOS DSAC worked directly with the Sociology department to encourage students to think about life after graduation from an earlier point in their college career. To do so, the BSOS DSAC contacted Dr. Nicole Cousin Gossett and other professors in the sociology department who are interested in building career planning into their syllabus. The BSOS DSAC also developed an ELMS page to be utilized by the professors for students to learn about careers in sociology. This allows students to form a connection between what they have learned within the classroom to internship and job opportunities.

Film Series

The BSOS DSAC partnered with former Petey Greene UMD chapter President and DSAC alumna Sagen Kidane. This event included a screening of the movie Talk to Me at the Hoffman theatre in STAMP. The BSOS DSAC gave attendees an opportunity to learn about the mission



statement of the Petey Greene organization and sought to create a sense of community for members of the college that came and interacted at the event.

Academics Committee

The Academics Committee implements policies to improve student-faculty relations and academic procedures. The committee collaborates with the Directors of Undergraduate Studies to discuss campus-wide issues.

Anonymous Grading Initiative

The BSOS DSAC met with Dr. Russell, the Teaching and Learning Center, and BSOS faculty to discuss and design the best way to approach working with faculty on anonymous methods of grading. It also conducted research on how anonymous grading has functioned in other schools and what evidence there is as to why these methods are necessary. The BSOS DSAC also surveyed students to see how students felt about this topic, and if it would increase their trust in the grading process. A survey of 129 students found 70.5% of students agreed or strongly agreed with the attitude statement that anonymous methods of grading would increase their trust in the grading process, and just 3 students disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement out of the 129. The BSOS DSAC plans to continue these efforts in the 2019-2020 academic year.

Gateways to Graduate School: GRE Prep Workshop

The BSOS DSAC collaborated with the Minority Retention Group in the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences to organize an event on preparing undergraduate students from traditionally underrepresented groups for graduate school entrance exams, such as the GRE. In doing so, it worked with Sharon VanWright, the Study Skill Coordinator in the university's Academic Achievement Program. The Prep Workshop had a successful 47 student attendance.

CCJS Writing Proficiency Initiative



The BSOS DSAC met with Dr. Brooks, CCJS undergrad director, who expressed that CCJS students were not writing as well as they should be at the college level. Accordingly, the BSOS DSAC decided to compile a list of writing resources that could then be given to students to improve their writing. To do this, it met with the Writing Center and English Department. The Writing Center provided large list of materials: helpful websites, books, promotional materials for the writing center that could be passed along to students, etc. The English Department provided CCJS-relevant professional writing course recommendations. These resources were then compiled into a list that we hope to distribute to students, either through the CCJS blog or website, in the near future. Dr. Brooks also presented the list to the CCJS teaching committee at one of their monthly meetings.

Academic Dishonesty and Academic Integrity Proposal

The BSOS DSAC worked on designing a proposal that focused on spreading awareness regarding the university policies regarding academic dishonesty and integrity. In order to accomplish this goal, the BSOS DSAC extended a request to work with the Office of Student Conduct on this proposal. It has emailed the assistant director of academic integrity, James Bond. Due to his busy schedule, those emails have not been returned, so the BSOS DSAC plans to continue these efforts in the 2019-2020 academic year.

Rainbow Room

The BSOS DSAC collaborated with the Multicultural Association of Psychology Students in the Department of Psychology in co-facilitating the student group, the Rainbow Room. This is a group targeted at having a safe and open discussion regarding issues and complexities in the Queer and Trans Community. Weekly discussion sessions were held in the Fall 2018 semester.

BSOS ENSP Concentration Choosing Aid

The BSOS DSAC developed a proposal to help aid students in choosing their ENSP concentration. Historically, students have expressed concern and dissatisfaction with the guidance and support in choosing a concentration. The BSOS DSAC sought to remedy these



concerns by contacting Annette Spivy the ENSP 101 professor with a proposal to include a section of the curriculum to be on concentration choosing. At this time, there are no plans to continue this effort for the 2019-2020 academic year.

Sub-committee: BSOS International Week

The BSOS DSAC decided to continue with this tradition that was developed a two years ago for the third installment of BSOS International Week. The program had the same mission as the two years that preceded it – to celebrate international backgrounds of students in the College and promote BSOS departments and organizations which seek to tackle worldwide issues. This year, the week-long program featured 14 events with partnerships between 10 campus organizations. A major contributor to the event was the Year of Immigration. Other organizations that were involve include the Global Communities Student Association, START, Global/Federal Fellows Program, Education Abroad, LGBT Equity Center, Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace, Persian Flagship Program, and the International Student Union. Most of the events were well-attended. Promotional channels for the week included print media, social media, TV announcements, and the BSOS newsletter.



Campus Partnerships

DSAC collaborates with a variety of different organizations on campus to advance our mission and support theirs. We often work with the Alumni Chapter Board, the SGA, the BSOS Ambassadors, and the University Career Center– to name a few.

Undergraduate Student Government Association (SGA)

The BSOS DSAC collaborated with the undergraduate SGA to promote initiatives of mutual interest on campus. Such cross-organization support included the SGA’s TRAIN scholarship program, the development of new academic programs, support to BSOS facility improvements, and BSOS International Week. Several of the council’s members held leadership positions in the SGA this past year as well.

BSOS Open House Events

A few DSAC members participated in campus-wide Open House events for prospective BSOS students. Council members spoke on student panels with other BSOS student leaders, including BSOS Ambassadors, to share their experiences in the college.

Pre-Law Office

The BSOS DSAC worked with the Pre-Law Office to promote their graduate school admission exam practice sessions. The marketing was primarily directed towards prospective law students.

First Look Fair

DSAC members helped staff the BSOS table at the First Look Fair to market student leadership opportunities in the college and provide information on the academic majors and programs housed in the college. The First Look Fair is the first involvement event on campus, allowing students to learn about campus organizations and services during the first weeks of the semester.



Council Members

Al-Hafis Adegun

- Vice Chair of Student Services
- Major: African American Studies
- DSAC Constituency: African American Studies

Victor Agbar

- Committee: Student Services
- Major: Government & Politics, Economics
- DSAC Constituency: Living and Learning Representation

Alix Brooks

- Vice Chair of Programming
- Major: Anthropology
- DSAC Constituency: Anthropology Representative

Evan Brooks

- Committee: Programming
- Major: Environmental Science and Policy
- DSAC Constituency: Environmental Science and Policy Representative

Joined DSAC during the Spring semester

Shelton Daal

- Committee: Student Services
- Major: Sociology
- DSAC Constituency: Sociology Representative

Vardaan Dua

- Vice Chair of Academics
- Major: Psychology
- DSAC Constituency: Psychology Representative



Gideon Epstein

- Committee: Programming
- Major: Government & Politics
- DSAC Constituency: SGA Representative
Departed from DSAC after the Fall semester

Ariel Golightly

- Committee: Programming
- Major: Geography & Geographical Sciences
- DSAC Constituency: Geography & Geographical Sciences Representative

Nancy Jin

- Council Chair
- Major: Government & Politics
- DSAC Constituency: Government & Politics Representative

Elena LeVan

- Committee: Academics
- Major: Psychology
- DSAC Constituency: At-Large Representative

Catherine Li

- Committee: Academics
- Major: Environmental Science and Policy
- DSAC Constituency: Environmental Science and Policy Representative
Departed from DSAC after the Fall semester

Kathryn Obisesan

- Committee: Programming
- Major: Economics , Government & Politics
- DSAC Constituency: Economics Representative

Paden Tranter

- Committee: Academics



- Major: Criminology & Criminal Justice
- DSAC Constituency: Criminology & Criminal Justice Representative

