



Student Advisory Board
Monday, October 5, 2020
6:15 – 7:00 p.m. MT
Videoconference Meeting via Zoom

Participants

Jeremy Haefner, Chancellor
Anit Tyagi, Co-Chair, *College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics*
Thomas Walker, Co-Chair, Director, Student Affairs & Inclusive Excellence
Abdulrahman Osama Ayad, *Ritchie School of Engineering & Computer Science*
Kelly Bonk, *College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics*
Amina Bouayad, *Morgridge College of Education*
Marianne Hughes, *Korbel School of International Studies*
Alex Niederberger, *College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences*
Benjamin Schwartz, *Ritchie School of Engineering & Computer Science*
Atresha Singh, *University College*
Joules Snopek, *Daniels College of Business*
Mia Sundstrom, *Daniels College of Business*
Todd Adams, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs
Claire Brownell, Director, Office of the Chancellor

Student Advisory Board members Haley Clark, Victoria Feliciano, Corey Fluke, Erik Frederiksen, Breigh Jones-Coplin, Victoria Martinez, Lauren Sanchez, Shubham Sapkota, and Matt Underwood were excused.

COVID Discussion

Mr. Tyagi welcomed members of the Board to the meeting and invited them to share reactions regarding DU's COVID approach. The Board expressed general support for the on-campus COVID testing process; transparency regarding campus cases as posted on the DU dashboard; and communications regarding protocols/prohibition on large gatherings. One student expressed concern regarding the process for required testing for a residence hall. Chancellor Haefner reported on wastewater testing and how that informs our COVID protocols.

Chancellor Haefner asked students to share how they are socially engaging with each other, noting his concern for rules and protocols that could contribute to mental health challenges. Students living off-campus noted their social challenges, particularly if their classes are entirely online. A discussion ensued regarding Zoom fatigue, both for academic and co-curricular events. Students reported that sports and use of outdoor space has mitigated social isolation, and they expressed concern that winter weather may inhibit outdoor and social activities.

From the academic perspective, Ms. Snopek shared that the in-person attendees of her hybrid/hyflex graduate courses have been dwindling as more students choose to attend the courses online. Chancellor Haefner thanked Ms. Snopek and noted this is helpful information as Winter Quarter courses are being planned, particularly at the graduate level. Mr. Schwartz inquired about the possible reopening of the RSECS innovation labs. Chancellor Haefner will follow up.

A discussion ensued regarding DU Wifi and difficulty connecting at various campus locations. Students shared their happiness with the reopening of AAC, Beans, and the Ritchie Center.

Finally, Ms. Bouayad inquired about discontinuing single-use, plastic To Go options from Sodexo, noting that these items conflict with DU's sustainability efforts. Vice Chancellor Adams will follow up with Sodexo.

Pioneer Discussion

Chancellor Haefner invited members of the Board to share their perspectives on the Pioneer name. He noted that he is talking with many stakeholders. Student feedback included:

- A consensus among members of the Board that they understand why the name is offensive to many members of the DU community.
- A concern regarding institutional non-response, particularly because the issues has been under consideration for a long period of time.
- A suggestion that Chancellor Haefner let the community know that he is still meeting with stakeholders.
- An understanding that alumni have an attachment to the name Pioneer.
- A suggestion to rename DU the "Bricks." Concern was expressed regarding possible marketing and branding issues.
- A consensus that current students and recent graduates likely support a name change.
- A comment that DU should not hide from DU's history, and work to use the name within a historical perspective.
- A remark that the word Pioneer is in direct opposition to DU's diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.
- A suggestion to center the voices of our indigenous students, faculty and staff; using the word is retraumatizing to members of our community.
- A concern that recent graduates will not make gifts to DU until the name is changed.
- A suggestion to reinvent the word to mean trailblazing or exploring.
- A comment to tie the word Pioneer to the public good by modifying it.
- A remark that the Pioneer nickname is often left unexplained, and therefore people usually assume it is being used in one way.
- A comment that the alumni perspective seemingly carries more weight than the perspective of current and prospective students.

Chancellor Haefner thanked the Board for their honest and constructive feedback. He noted the need to educate on both sides of the issue.

Closing Remarks

Mr. Tyagi thanked the Board for their careful and thoughtful engagement. Chancellor Haefner thanked members of the Board for their perspectives. He asked for another meeting in early November to discuss Winter Quarter plans and invited Board members to share any other comments with him via email.

Notes prepared by:

Claire Brownell

Director of University Protocol

Office of the Chancellor