

COSAM Accountability Committee Meeting Summary
April 20, 2022

In attendance- Kimberly Mulligan, Melissa Halford, Melinda Lanius, Vanessa Falcao

1. Department Updates:

a. Mathematics and Statistics

- i. The department is currently working on ways to contribute to the welcoming of new graduate students, faculty, and staff into their department. This includes thinking about how the DEI committee can welcome the new graduate students in the fall.

b. Chemistry

- i. Outreach at Lanier High School for the Women in Science event and Brewbaker Technology Magnet for Tech Time in Montgomery went well. They had great attendance and students discussed that they would be more willing to consider Auburn. They would like to do more events like this in the future.
- ii. Chemistry is hosting a picnic for the entire department (undergraduates, graduates, faculty, and staff) in May as a part of their efforts to increase inclusion.
- iii. Chemistry is updating their website to list all faculty without separating them by tenured vs. nontenured.

c. Physics

- i. Is in the process of forming subcommittees (DATS; Departmental Action Teams) for the DEI committee to help with their strategic planning and goals
 1. Would like to determine a way that everyone (faculty, staff, and students) has access to all information (at least one department wide town hall each year?)
 2. Would like to see more tenure tracked faculty on the DEI committee
 3. The website is being updated to include information about the DEI committee such as their charge, who is on the committee, etc.
 - a. Chemistry suggested they use Teams to establish roles and responsibilities.
- ii. **Driver Diagram-** American Physics Society Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Alliance (APS IDEA) assigned a task of creating a Driver Diagram, which is a visual display of a team's theory of what "drives," or contributes to, the achievement of a project aim. It starts with a goal and then you include different factors that impact your goal. All the things that feed into the goal (good or bad) are on the left and what you can do to impact the goal are on the right. Physics Driver Diagram focused on communication, which they think is the underlying issue of many of the problems that have been identified in the department.
 1. Would like to create more opportunities for informal conversation. Low resource options (or low-hanging fruit) ideas includes:
 - a. Bring back their colloquium snacks
 - b. Math had their first annual whiffle ball game of grad students vs. faculty; they also have weekly teatime.

- c. Chemistry has coordinated several events over the year that take place at different times so that people can find at least one they can attend.
 - d. Department-wide meetings to update everyone on what is happening
 - e. Considering starting a Women in Physics Group
 2. They would love additional ideas from the group to create a culture that prioritizes communication.
- iii. Grad students indicated they would be interested in having a Conflict Resolution Training, particularly around issues with students due to COVID.
 1. Chemistry has created Instructional Division made up of teaching faculty, lab coordinators, and research faculty that teach large lecture classes which has assisted graduate students with issues such as this. This group may be able to host some workshops for the college.
 2. There are issues outside of the lab that graduates students need training in however, they do not take advantage of the resources when they are offered. We need to figure out a way to learn what types of trainings would be of interest to the students and how to encourage them to participate when they are made available.
 - a. There was a suggestion that GPOs may be the best group to reach out to the students and get feedback.
 3. Additionally, COSAM OIED, ADR, and the Dean have been talking about ways to better utilize the time we have with the new graduate students at the beginning of the semester. This year we will host a half-day COSAM-wide orientation for new grad students with plans to cover Title IX, research ethics, mentorship, taking care of your mental health, as well as getting to know your peers.

2. Final Thoughts:

- a. In addition to the COSAM-wide graduate student orientation, this year COSAM is organizing a college-wide faculty retreat and we will host another college-wide staff professional development opportunity in August prior to the start of the semester.
- b. What can we do for postdocs? We will have 17 new postdocs joining the college in the fall. We have to create opportunities for them to be integrated into the college and create community. The Auburn University Chapter of the National Postdoc Association will be sponsoring a welcome event for new postdocs.

Next Meeting- May 18, 2022