

1.1 Meeting Called to Order

The Chair, Celine Lorient, calls the meeting to order at 4:08 pm.

2.1 New Business

a. Student Concerns (4:00-4:15 pm)

- Student inquired about what student concerns mean. Speaker described that student concerns are meant to be broad to encourage discussion on anything that is student concern. Even if it is outside the scope of what the speaker can resolve, recommendations to people/resources who are best suited for that concern are identified.

- Student described a perceived pattern of lack of neutrality during clinical from faculty in Nuclear Medicine program. There is a tendency for them to side with the technologists rather than the students during conflict resolution, which makes it difficult to communicate and feel heard. Speaker asked to learn more about the scope of the concern. The student stated that as the community is close-knit, the faculty and technologist often have a personal relationship as friends outside of the clinical setting. Identified that their peers will follow the appropriate channels with the intent to resolve it internally. Joyce Lee recommended the SA Advocacy Team as a resource. Speaker offered to provide support if needed.

- Student brought up Nuclear Medicine workload, and concerns around the preparedness of faculty to teach the new curriculum. Connie Evans agreed that those are valid concerns and that she is working with faculty to improve their level of preparedness.

b. Transition Break (4:15-4:25 pm)

c. Intro & Questions for Panelists (4:30 to 5:10 pm)

- Kayla Di Bauda is a previous Chair of Health Sciences and Family Nurse Practitioner, Connie Evans is the Interprofessional Education and Collaboration Lead for the School of Health Sciences, and Tricia-Kay Williams is a registered counselor and CEO of Metamorphose Counselling. The speaker who acted as the moderator posed two questions to each panelist.

Questions for the Panel

- First question theme – Observation sharing to normalize mental health challenges
- Second question theme – Tips and strategies to cope with challenges or keep the resilience

First Question:

Kayla

- **In terms of mental health and self-care, what was the biggest challenge you or your peers faced during your studies at BCIT?**
- The biggest challenge was finding balance and prioritizing self-care. I learned that through doing my master's online that planning to study for 10 hours a day would not support my mental health. So, I made sure to take breaks every few hours. I had a routine to meet up with a classmate once a week to go on walks. I found that helped a lot.

Connie

- **In your practice, what are the most common mental health challenges affecting university students these days?**
- Being an educator at BCIT for 22 years, I have seen that there has been a rise in anxiety, social disconnection. Due to these concerns, students may find it difficult to seek help and talk to instructors directly.

Tricia-Kay

- **When students experience these issues, they tend to feel shameful or hesitant to open up about their challenges because specific biases or stigmas are attached to "mental health." What are the strategies to break our own or others' stigma and address these challenges?**
- The more we talk mental health the less stigmatizing it will become. Educating ourselves is a crucial first step in breaking the stigma.

Second Question:

Kayla

- **When you noticed your peers' challenges or struggles, how did you help them or any learning experience you gained while supporting your peers? Any suggestions for these set reps who are passionate about supporting the mental health of their group?**
- Through doing establish the Jack chapter at BCIT, the leaders were able to teach us calming strategies which I still use to this day in my practice as a family nurse practitioner. If mental health is your passion, as it is mine, I encourage you to get as

involved as you can. I find it a great opportunity that Celine and Josh, the Chair of Business and Media are wanting to bring back the Jack chapter.

Tricia-Kay

- **Based on your extensive counseling experience, what practical strategies or tips do you suggest to students coping with academic or personal pressures? Can you share your top 3 strategies?**

- 1) find the person you trust the most and talk to them. 2) try grounding techniques e.g., 54321 techniques. 3) seek mental health resources at your school. Counseling is covered by most students' extended health plans.

Connie

- **As an educator who has supported BCIT students for many years, what do you suggest that students should do when they experience any challenges in terms of their relationships with instructors or when they face academic issues?**

- I would suggest that students communicate when they aren't doing well to their instructors. I think that instructors would empathize if their students were not doing well and offer support where they can such as an extension referral to early assistance or counseling. Something I do that works for me is using mental wellness apps. I have one that child locks me from my phone when I have exceeded a certain amount of social media time. I find that writing things down that concern me before I sleep helps me to reflect on them later. Also, I will have my forest therapy guide certificate complete in early Spring and looking to lead-free forest walks around Guichon Creek for faculty and students.

3.0 Open Forum (5:10-5:30 pm)

Speaker asked about Kayla and Connie and how they helped make the Jack chapter a success.

We collaborated with other Chairs to attend their set rep meetings to recruit student leaders. We made sure that we had a balanced amount of junior and senior students. As well, we had shared responsibility for our chapter with the ones at UBC, UVIC, and UNBC. We also collaborated with Moscrop Secondary to help develop strategies for high school students transitioning to post-secondary at BCIT.

4.0 Meeting Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:37pm.