



December 15, 2017

To: David L. Eaton
Dean, Graduate School

Rebecca Aanerud
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Planning

Jill Purdy
Interim Executive Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs

From: Anne Clark Bartlett
Dean, School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Science

RE: Academic Program Review Response

Dear Colleagues,

The School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences leadership, faculty, staff, and students have considered the report from the Review Committee on our Decennial Review. We appreciate the expertise and insights of the Committee and welcome its findings and recommendations. We agree with the report's view of our strengths, resources, and challenges and are already implementing the most critical of the committee's suggestions. We will stage the implementation of less-critical items for action in the near future.

As Dean, I am very proud of what faculty and staff have accomplished in response to the Review Committee's report. Response Team Leaders Dr. Riki Thompson, Dr. Peter Selkin, Dr. Libi Sundermann, and Ms. Arlyn Palomo designed a highly collaborative and inclusive process for gathering feedback and worked tirelessly to consult with all SIAS constituencies. This report outlines our progress and our plans to address the areas brought up by the Review Committee's report, specifically 1) School vision & organizational structure, 2) Faculty & staff experiences, and 3) Student experiences.

SIAS-Wide Recommendations

Vision of SIAS

The committee noted that "SIAS has well-crafted mission, vision, and values statements on its website," which include our focuses on interdisciplinarity, diversity, and local and global citizenship and community. SIAS plays a central role at UW Tacoma as the home of the liberal arts and sciences, necessary to all students for their general education and for their growth as local and global citizens. The academic program review process has led to deep conversations between faculty and students about how SIAS serves our student body. We agree with the committee's suggestion that administrators and faculty revisit our mission, vision, and values statements and better "explicitly integrate" them into "the life and culture of the school." We understand this to involve being more mindful in articulating our vision in school-level decisions, and in coordinating faculty, staff, and student endeavors to support our school's mission. Those efforts are underway as part of UW Tacoma's current academic planning process, during which we will connect hiring priorities, scheduling, and curriculum to an

academic plan based on UW Tacoma's and SIAS' missions. This work began with an affirmation exercise at the SIAS retreat in September 2017 and continues as a faculty-wide discussion in divisions.

Out of the aspects of SIAS' mission mentioned above, we would like to consider at greater depth the role that our interdisciplinarity plays and can play in student experiences (other aspects of our mission are discussed in the section of this response titled "Undergraduate Experience"). SIAS faculty already contribute significant effort to provide an interdisciplinary undergraduate education. SIAS' support interdisciplinarity is achieved through our curriculum at all levels, from the Core curriculum to the majors. Many of our degree programs bridge traditional disciplines, some examples include: Ethnic, Gender, and Labor Studies; Arts, Media, and Culture; and Environmental Studies. Nonetheless, we understand from the review that we can do more both to evaluate and to support interdisciplinarity on campus. For example, the committee commented that our school needs to connect undergraduate students more effectively with their divisional and school identity and with interdisciplinarity as a "shared learning goal." We understand this to imply that the undergraduate experience to which SIAS contributes encompasses more than coursework, and needs to be considered more broadly in terms of a "common vision" for both learning *and* social factors such as a shared identity. We see this review as an opportunity to focus on evaluating how well our shared identity translates to students, to understand how faculty and staff contribute to interdisciplinary student experiences in SIAS, and support projects at the division and school level that enhance students' interdisciplinary experiences. We will put in place some of the committee's recommendations regarding connecting students with SIAS' vision over the next year. The recreated role of SIAS' Associate Dean of Student Academic Support and Success and SIAS' deep involvement in the Core Program, currently led by SIAS faculty member Deirdre Raynor, are places where we believe these connections may be effectively strengthened.

Structure

We concur with the committee's recommendation to make it a top priority in SIAS to "engage in a coordinated, transparent, and strategic planning process to address the structural inefficiencies of the School." Issues related to "instituting a culture of faculty governance at all levels, including divisional, that enhances meaningful participation" were discussed at the SIAS retreat in September 2017, and are being handled through the Structure Task Force.

The Structure Task Force, whose data collection work began last year, has moved from collecting data to developing possible solutions. The Task Force now has an official charge to "assess the organizational structure of SIAS", and to propose and evaluate models for the school's structure. Their charge includes investigating changes to the division of labor between the division and school levels in SIAS that may be possible if the SIAS structure remains the same remains the same. The Structure Task Force is charged with answering the following questions:

- How would the models affect personnel decisions and voting, including tenure and promotion, hiring, reappointment reviews, and annual reviews?
- What authority/autonomy would divisions (or departments) have in the proposed structures?
- If divisions (or departments) were organized differently, how would resources and staff support be reallocated to support a new structure?

- How would any proposed reorganization lighten the service load of faculty and administrators without compromising faculty governance or interdisciplinarity?
- What is the sustainability of the proposed models (which include keeping the status quo) given projected growth of SIAS faculty and students over the next ten years or more?

Results of the study will be brought to Faculty Council in Winter quarter of 2018, and will result in changes that will be discussed and voted on by the SIAS faculty in Spring 2018.

Communication and decisionmaking

We agree with the committee's assessment that we need to establish and follow best practices for communication and transparent decision-making, not only between the administration and faculty and staff, but also among the various groups that comprise SIAS. Faculty, staff, and administration need to solicit meaningful input during decision-making processes, and need to communicate how that input will be used. This has been a particular challenge given SIAS' rapid growth and the development of the administrative and shared governance apparatus that accompanied the transition from a program to School. Further, that has been complicated by leadership changes at all levels. SIAS has taken steps to improve communication and to make sure that decisionmaking processes are transparent, including:

- All faculty meetings now include a Dean's update and Q&A period.
- Attention to ground rules and best practices in SIAS faculty meetings and minutes. The practice of reviewing those ground rules at the beginning of meeting has been reestablished.
- Most frequent meetings between Shared Leadership, Council of Chairs, Divisional faculty and staff.
- Scheduled updates on searches and faculty achievements by the Associate Deans
- Monthly listening sessions with the Dean and undergraduates.
- Promoting timely, two-way communication between Faculty Council representatives and division faculty

Faculty and staff conversations surrounding this response also identified several paths toward solutions to the transparency-related issues raised during the program review:

- Not only do faculty and staff need "sufficient information and time to address 'action items,'" but faculty, staff, and administration need to establish and abide by a shared understanding of the roles, rights, and responsibilities of all SIAS members. Some of these rights and responsibilities are part of the SIAS bylaws, whereas others are norms. As the SIAS faculty online resource page ("Hub 2.0") is updated, we expect to collect documents related to this issue.
- In contrast to graduate students, several of whom serve on the MAIS Steering Committee as representatives, it is a challenge to solicit input from undergraduate students, who do not identify as "SIAS students." Along with student representatives (ASUWT senators), we have begun discussing ways to improve communication between SIAS students,

faculty, staff, and administration. Although we do not yet have a solution, holding the discussions has been a useful first step.

- SIAS has a set of ground rules for respectful communication. These need to be reinforced, not just at meetings but as part of everyday interactions. Faculty, staff, and administration need to be held accountable to the rules that we set for ourselves. In particular, the “abusive and hostile” tone in meetings experienced by minoritized faculty members needs to be changed. This issue has been flagged for attention at the Dean’s Diversity Council.

Service workload

We agree with the committee’s suggestion that faculty service workload needs to be lowered immediately, and are taking steps to do so at several levels. A faculty conversation about service workload, initiated at the Fall 2017 faculty retreat, provided a baseline for changes that are currently being addressed jointly by SIAS Faculty Council and the Associate Dean of Faculty Development and Academic Initiatives. Over the coming academic year, SIAS Faculty Council will be clarifying the definition and norms for service (the “faculty conversation about appropriate service load expectations” described in the Academic Program Review). Faculty Council has also discussed ways to develop individualized contracts for teaching, similar to current practice at UW Bothell, that may give faculty the flexibility to accommodate the high service demands at UW Tacoma. At the same time, Associate Dean Chris Demaske is investigating best practices for recognizing and rewarding service, which we expect to alleviate some of the morale problems related to undervalued service that were discussed in the review. One issue Demaske expects to address is that of the visibility of service by members of underrepresented groups. The Academic Program Review identified the lack of “efficiency” in implementing and building on the work of shared governance committees as a main factor contributing to the high workload in SIAS. While we do not yet have specific solutions to efficiency problems such as repeated committee work and the historical lack of action on committee recommendations, SIAS Faculty Council and administration are now addressing those problems. We also note that much of the recent service workload has been dedicated to search committees for lecturer conversions (from temporary to permanent) and hiring in a period of growth, which may not be representative of future workload. Although many of these changes are independent of SIAS’s structure, the review committee’s personnel-related suggestions (e.g. lessening personnel-related workload by delegating decisions to divisions) for the most part cannot be addressed in the current structure, and so await the findings of the Structure Task Force.

Diversity

A principal recommendation made to SIAS by the review committee was to “incorporate a strategic School-wide plan for increasing diversity at all levels.” The SIAS Dean’s Diversity Advisory Council began meeting in November 2017 and includes 12 members with representation from each division and staff. This Council will serve as the primary body for strategic diversity planning for SIAS and their charge contains a direct and immediate response to your recommendations. The Diversity Council’s charge focuses on issues of increased diversity as well as equity and inclusion for students, faculty, and staff.

At present, SIAS realizes that despite our stated commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion, our school has much work to do to achieve our goals. The first step, as your report suggested to us, is to ensure that the Diversity Council, as SIAS's centralizing and guiding body for diversity (and equity and inclusion), does rapid and expansive work to address pressure points with a goal to "increasing diversity [and equity and inclusion] at all levels." Their charge (in addition to points noted elsewhere) includes:

- Making SIAS more welcoming and inclusive
- Effectively increasing hiring/retention/advancement of underrepresented minorities in faculty, staff, and administrative positions
- Enhancing awareness and redressing micro-aggressions, inequities, bias
- Protecting and supporting vulnerable students

Your review also made recommendations specific to increased faculty diversity. This is an ongoing project, and in terms of hiring, SIAS has instituted more checkpoints and increased discussions about recruitment. The Dean's office is more involved in the search process to ensure that we are recruiting the most diverse pools of applicants. The Diversity Council will continue to address these concerns and work to "effectively increase hiring/retention/advancement of underrepresented minorities in faculty, staff, and administrative positions."

In addition to increasing and supporting diversity, SIAS faculty note a "moral obligation" to our students, faculty, and staff to provide equity and inclusion on our campus and in our learning environments. We made a statement in 2015, as your report reminded us, that "diversity and inclusion are essential to academic excellence."

Your review, however, noted reports of hostility and intolerance in faculty meetings tied to faculty and staff experiences and morale. The Diversity Council will address "enhanc[ing] awareness and redress of micro-aggressions, inequities, bias" and SIAS faculty note this should be focused on existing issues in SIAS, as well as improving our climate as a whole. A number of faculty commented on hostility and intolerance as related to campus (not just SIAS) climate issues. Regardless, SIAS faculty have made clear to the response team that finding immediate solutions to hostility and intolerance in our school and across campus are a top priority. Thus, our attention to increasing diversity must be paired with immediate attention to problems with equity and inclusion in our school's community. As a school we must continue to strive to improve equity and inclusion for student, staff, and faculty. We believe the formation of the Diversity Council is a crucial step for aligning and organizing our objectives, reviewing faculty/staff/student-raised concerns, and communicating them to the Dean and Shared Leadership, while at the same time keeping our school's goals in line with those of the UW-system Diversity Blueprint.

Recommendations specific to the MAIS Program

The Review Committee's recommendations for MAIS were focused on cultivation of core graduate faculty, mentoring students, and incentivising faculty engagement in the program. While we agree with the points raised in the report, solutions to some of these problems are related to structural issues. As our school looks to usher in new graduate programs, structural issues need to take into account the role of graduate studies as integral to the mission of the

School. The recommendation to “consider allocating additional resources to support the above recommendations” needs to be taken seriously and we concur. SIAS cannot exercise its role as the core academic unit on an interdisciplinary campus without strong, vigorous and well-resourced interdisciplinary graduate programs. Key elements of the review committee’s recommendations, including enhanced mentoring and compensation for faculty engagement are underfunded. Current resources are not adequate to implement the existing policy that aims to compensate faculty, let alone recommendations suggested.

This year the Director of MAIS is leading a collaborative assessment of the program, which will include attention to budgetary issues and consideration of alternative curricular models as our school develops an Academic Plan. A vital phase of the assessment will be to update our curriculum and emphasize how it aligns with the needs of our students. We will also compare our program with national trends in interdisciplinary programs in preparation for a full faculty discussion in SIAS about the direction of graduate programs within our School.

The MAIS Steering Committee has been tasked as the primary body for the assessment of the MAIS which has already begun with an internal campaign to better inform faculty about the program, clarify programmatic changes, and address misconceptions in SIAS. The confusion about who we are and what our degree offers reflects the lack of clarity that we need to address¹. In recent years, MAIS has become more visible on program-related social media, such as the Masterly Musings blog and the MAIS Facebook page, but lack of visibility and integration at the School level continues to add to the challenges of supporting the program, and most importantly, our students. To increase visibility of MAIS at the school and/or campus-level, the Steering Committee recommends promoting the work of students and faculty via the UWT and SIAS webpages, divisional newsletters, and SIAS weekly kudos.

Cultivating a Cohort of Graduate Faculty

We completely agree with the committee’s suggestion to cultivate and recognize a cohort of MAIS faculty. While there are some initial steps we can take immediately, such as creating an updated list of those who serve the program, followed by a campaign to recognize faculty through SIAS communication channels as well as MAIS promotional materials and online spaces, to create real change we must solve the policy issues that relate to graduate faculty status for lecturers and compensation for supervising graduate (and undergraduate) student projects. The committee’s recommendation to “instigate a system to ensure that the work of graduate faculty mentors and capstone advisors is evenly distributed amongst the pool of trained and committed faculty” is related to the policy issues about who can teach and supervise graduate student work. For the first decade of the graduate program SIAS had few lecturers and tenure track faculty were voted into the Graduate Faculty as a matter of practice so most SIAS faculty were also MAIS faculty. With the loss of team-teaching in MAIS, a shift in faculty mix to approximately half tenure-track and half lecturers, (and no clear policy about Graduate Faculty status for lecturers), faculty engaged in the program and/or willing and able to mentor students has decreased with much of the mentoring work falling on the shoulders of a handful of faculty who are dedicated to the program. In order to identify a cohort of MAIS faculty we need to solve the policy issue of graduate status for lecturers and compensation. While we currently have an

¹ The MAIS program grants a Masters of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies (MAIS), not a Masters of Interdisciplinary Arts and Science (MIAS). It is not uncommon to hear MAIS inaccurately called MIAS; even the committee report misrepresented the name of our graduate program.

accrual system to compensate faculty for supervising student projects through course releases, concerns have been raised about this system in terms of the process, equity, sustainability, and when/if faculty receive related course releases. Moreover, practices within SIAS continue to be murky and need to clearly note that dedication to MAIS is not service and should be documented on annual review materials appropriately². The committee's report confirmed the urgency of resolving these policy concerns, not only for our graduate students, but also for morale in SIAS. Related policy issues have been placed on the Faculty Council agenda for immediate action.

Supporting Graduate Students

We completely concur with the committee's recommendations to "assign a faculty mentor to every new graduate student in MAIS for their first year" and "by the end of their first year, Graduate students should choose/be assigned a Capstone advisor." Historically, students were on their own to find committees and students have stated that "faculty not responding to students requests to work together is frustrating and makes it difficult for students to graduate on time." Moreover, it is difficult for students to figure out who can work with them because we have a poor online faculty directory. Over the past few years, MAIS has created a system to connect students with faculty mentors before admission to the program. As of 2015, the program did not plan to admit students for whom no mentors were available. For the current cohort, students were assigned a committee based on agreements made by faculty to supervise, but we noted that we needed to improve our follow up with both students and faculty and added procedures this year to connect faculty and students during the week of orientation, as well as confirm mentor's stated commitment. We completely agree with the committee's recommendations to assign mentors so that students are not left to struggle to get support and will continue to work with students and faculty to improve our system.

As part of the agenda to assess the MAIS this year, the Steering Committee will work together to find a system that best serves our students and allows for us to check in along the way and make timely adjustments to mentoring relationships as needed. Moreover, though this review process we noted that our assessment needs to be ongoing for more than curriculum and needs to collect information on student experiences and maintain our alumni network and to "instigate formal and systematic assessments of student learning in relationship to program goals and student satisfaction in terms of mentorship, intellectual engagement, and preparedness for future career trajectories" into the process.

Faculty/Staff/Student Experiences

Undergraduate Experience

We appreciate the review committee's reminder to return our focus to students. While the review committee's concrete suggestions (e.g. those related to advising and course equivalency) are well taken, we focus this response on the improvements to student experiences in ways that are related to identity and belonging within SIAS. One response that has been taken has been to

² The compensation system counts thesis/project supervision as teaching since it ties the work to course release (not service). The guidelines for promotion and tenure clearly state that supervising graduate students counts as teaching and, in some cases, research, yet the SIAS community discourse around mentoring has not shifted to reflect these recent changes.

establish the position of Associate Dean for Student Engagement, now filled by Associate Professor Erica Cline. That position has a charge that includes coordinating high-impact practices for teaching and learning, and a position as a liaison between campus-wide student services and SIAS. One way to engage students with both aspects of our school's vision is through high-impact educational practices, which an SIAS committee evaluated in 2016³. The group found that all majors in SIAS require students to participate in at least one high-impact practice (HIP) as part of their degree, but suggested coordinating within-division and whole-school HIPs to promote interdisciplinary learning.

The Associate Dean will be working on several projects related to the review committee's recommendations over the coming year. In conjunction with UW Tacoma-wide academic planning and strategic planning efforts, the Associate Dean will be assessing student retention and graduation in SIAS. Although retention and graduation rates are not addressed directly in the Academic Program review, these issues are primary considerations in a number of SIAS processes, particularly scheduling. We anticipate that these issues will be integral to the review process during the upcoming cycle. In collaboration with ASUWT Senators, SIAS is planning to implement an annual exit survey to all graduating seniors in SIAS. The survey will focus on the unifying characteristic of SIAS, our interdisciplinarity.

In addition, SIAS faculty, in partnership with the Office of Research, are presenting a panel discussion on best practices in internships to promote community engagement in November. We also worked with the campus Career Development Services to bring community partners to our Internship and Careers event in October. We are continuing to recruit community partners to provide student internship opportunities, most recently the UWT Autism Center, and we have recently reorganized to bring the Center for Urban Waters into the School, which will increase access of our students to their thriving summer internship program. To showcase our students' increasing involvement in undergraduate research and internships, we will be introducing an undergraduate and graduate student research symposium in Autumn 2018, complementing existing events such as the MAIS TacTalks, the UW Tacoma Environmental Research Symposium, the Global Honors colloquium, UWT Student History Conference, and the UWT student showcase. We will continue to emphasize involvement of students in the criteria for awarding SIAS Scholarship and Teaching grants to faculty, staff, and students. This encourages faculty to incorporate support for research students into their grant proposals. Student participation in research and internships is quite high in majors within SIAS that have a capstone requirement for the degree.

Advising

A number of recommendations aimed at improving student experiences related to advising and helping students transition from entry to graduation. The recommendation to "review the course equivalency process, including the guide, to ensure that the process and the tools serve the needs of transfer students in SIAS and UW Tacoma" was a concern brought up by our own advisors about the challenges presented by the tri-campus model. UW Tacoma must operate with equivalency guides designed for UW Seattle. This has been problematic since the two campuses do not have identical courses, course codes, or academic programs, causing transfer students additional difficulties in their credits being properly recognized. In response, this affects a student's Degree Audit in that advisors have to spend additional administrative time to manually

³ "HIPs Report Draft", <https://goo.gl/xy3VjY>

make exceptions for each student's records. This also negatively affects registration as it is the primary reason that students must request an add code to register into a course if they took the prerequisite at their previous institution and the system does not automatically recognize them as eligible, which also causes more administrative work for advisors. Unfortunately, Advising has been informed that it is not a realistic goal that UWT will have our own equivalency guide anytime in the near future. This problem will continue to create extra work and the potential for errors that can diminish the UWT student experience.

Another recommendation made in the review committee report to "establish common practices for advisors and advising milestones for students" is in reference to the handoff process from pre-major advising to program/major advising, which has been problematic and inconsistent for years. In November, SIAS advisors and Interim Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Jill Purdy, met in regard to this campus-wide issue. SIAS advisors created specific guidelines for when it would be appropriate to handoff a student to a program/major advisor. These guidelines include specific courses for majors that students should be currently enrolled in or have successfully completed as benchmarks to identifying their readiness into the major. Math and Science majors, for example, have a guideline explaining the importance of the math placement test early during the student's freshman year. SIAS advisors will be meeting with pre-major advisors in December to have a conversation about the handout/guideline.

In regard to the suggestion to "investigate the possibility of moving the advising staff closer to the rest of the school," we will address the geographical isolation of advisors. We agree that "allocating space to better include them into the life of SIAS would greatly enhance the experience of the advising staff, the faculty and administrators, and SIAS students."

The last recommendation of the committee in regard to advising was to support students in career exploration. We currently have an internship supervisor on staff and there is a specialized department on campus, the Career and Development Center (separate from SIAS), whose mission is to provide students services that are dedicated to career exploration. SIAS advisors collaborate closely with this department and strongly refer students to utilize their resources and services offered.

Faculty Experiences

The committee's recommendations related to faculty experiences and morale led to fruitful discussion in SIAS Shared Leadership. By simply discussing what each division was doing, Shared Leadership found further opportunities to collaborate (and not compete), to share divisional resources and join forces for future events. SIAS currently hosts or participates in a number of interdisciplinary lecture and speaker series that work to build community across divisions (as well as in the local community), including the Brown Bag Research Series, Scholarly Selections, Teaching Forum, and the Think & Drink Series. In addition, addressing faculty morale specifically, Dean Bartlett has offered to host more frequent SIAS faculty social events to enhance collegiality in more casual settings and the first such event marked the end of our Fall term.

Faculty morale depends on other factors besides community, and we are currently investigating other changes in practice, culture, and structure to improve morale. The goal of many of these changes is to ensure that faculty understand that their work is valued and that their service results in action. Some changes in culture are addressed above under *Communication and Decisionmaking*. Additional recommendations were made to redevelop formal faculty mentoring programs for junior faculty which Associate Dean Demaske implemented in Fall 2017 for all

levels of faculty, not just junior faculty. This new program includes both group and one-on-one peer mentoring and includes an assessment mechanism to improve the process as needed. This peer mentoring is meant to help faculty reach their full potential in all aspects of their work in SIAS, including work geared toward successful promotion, and uses current best practices for peer mentoring.

The formation of the Structure Task Force, and the process of “skinny academic planning,” will allow SIAS to better assess how we might enhance faculty experiences and morale through research, teaching, and collegiality. Although funding will likely continue to be a barrier in some of these efforts, SIAS can use creative means to “prioritize community building within and across divisions in SIAS.”

Staff Experiences

Staff have echoed the concerns of faculty in that extra levels of leadership cause more filters of and barriers to communication. The lack of guidelines and lack of communication in policy changes that affect staff were especially concerning. While there have been positive steps forward to improve processes, there are areas where attention is still needed.

The Committee’s recommendation to provide more opportunities for professional development to staff missed the point of staff’s concerns, which exacerbated staff’s frustrations about not feeling heard. The professional development concern was not about the opportunities available, but rather the inconsistent support to pursue and attend professional development opportunities. The fact that professional development opportunities depend on the supervisor causes “classism”. Moreover, there is no standard policy regarding opportunity or financial support provided to all staff. This lack of consistency was also noted in terms of staff upper-management’s different communication styles and level of adherence to policies, which create inequities across the department. The overall feeling amongst the staff is that there is a lack of “team” approach with staff decisions on processes and procedures. Staff have also expressed that they do not feel comfortable in bringing up issues. Some have expressed that they feel the environment created by staff leadership within SIAS is not inclusive of staff feedback, despite the campus strongly advocating for inclusivity campus-wide.

Staff also shared strong concerns with faculty that there is a sense that leadership in SIAS - including staff leadership - is always scrambling. This creates a ripple effect that causes a lack of communication and transparency about policy and processes, which in turn diminishes staff’s ability to work effectively and hurts morale. This has been further exacerbated by the interview procedures and analysis used in the academic program review. There are severe issues that are negatively impacting morale that are related to the management of the staff. However, this report is not the appropriate place to air those concerns in detail. We appreciate that the review process has created opportunities to deal with problems in the program and these have been placed on the Dean’s agenda.

In asking for staff feedback on possible steps towards improving processes and morale, a number of suggestions were provided, although some staff felt strongly that there is no solution to provide that will be heard or will implement effective changes throughout upper leadership.

- Some staff commented that upper-management within SIAS that oversee staff should make more of a concerted effort to provide staff with the opportunity to provide open communication.
- Staff recommend that an official manual of policies and procedures be developed with staff buy-in and adhered to at all levels.

- Staff leadership is encouraged to make more of an effort to make staff feel appreciated by learning the history of processes and recognizing the contributions of staff members to those processes and advocating for SIAS staff members.

The APR Team will request an intermediary to come in and work on specific staff-related issues. Staff would like to request that a mediator come from outside UWT because they would bring a fresh perspective and come from a neutral perspective. We imagine this sort of support as looking similar to the intervention that SIAS sought out when transitioning to a school when Ruth Johnston was brought into help with our structure issues.

Closing

In closing, we would like to thank the Academic Program Review Committee for their thoughtful review of the School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences. As should be clear from this response, we have taken the Decennial Report as an opportunity to initiate the deep and sustained conversations about key issues that ideally would have been addressed collectively in the original report. In addition, we are attending more closely to the collective strengths and accomplishments that may not have surfaced during the original review process. This response demonstrates the collaborative engagement among the faculty, staff, and students of SIAS that will drive our forward momentum and our vision and strategy for the future of our School.