



Atlantic Association of College and University Student Services

2010-2011 Annual Report



"Transitions"

*Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS
May 29 - June 1, 2011*

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2010-2011 AACUSS Executive

2010-2011 Executive Officers

Marc Braithwaite	President & Conference Co-Chair	Dalhousie University
Tamara Leary	Past- President	UPEI (2010) U of C Doctoral Candidate (2011)
Anne Forrestall	President-Elect	University of New Brunswick
Sean Ryan	Treasurer	St. Francis Xavier University
Sandra Badcock	Communications Officer	Memorial University
Anne Bartlett	Secretary	University of Prince Edward Island
Verity Turpin	Conference Co-Chair	Dalhousie University

Divisional Representatives

Rice Fuller	Counselling	University of New Brunswick
Erin Dorey	Housing	Memorial University
Sara Rothman	Generalist	University of New Brunswick
John Mayich	Financial Aid	Cape Breton University
Natasha Clark	International	Memorial University
Diane Tinkham	Health	Mount Saint Vincent University
<i>Vacant position</i>	Career/Employment	
Gayle Churchill	Chief Student Affairs Officer	Mount Allison University
Heidi Lafford	Accessibilities	Mount Allison University

President's Report

Overview

The Student Services profession is evolving rapidly at a time when our students are requiring new and/or specialized supports services. At the same time, College and University administrators are under intense pressure to reduce operating budgets within Student Services departments. In recent years, we have experienced notable staff turnovers with many new student services professionals bringing new and exciting ideas to our campuses. This is the time when the AACUSS membership must reach-out to one another to share new ideas, offer genuine support and propose creative solutions to the challenges ahead for our profession and, more importantly, the students we serve on our diverse campuses.

Conferences

In 2010, we were very fortunate to have our membership gather for two well organized and well attended conferences:

University of New Brunswick (Saint John) – *Energize: Mind, Body and Spirit*
May 30 – June 2, 2010

Mount Allison University – *Professionals: Wellness for Optimal Productivity*
November 4-5, 2010

In 2011, the membership will once again come together for the Spring and Fall Conferences:

Dalhousie University – *Transitions*
May 29 – June 1, 2011

Nova Scotia Community College (Waterfront Campus, Halifax)
November 2011

We are pleased that the Student Services team at University of New Brunswick (Fredericton) has enthusiastically offered to host the 2012 Spring Conference. We encourage the AACUSS membership to not only attend each and every one of these national quality, professional development opportunities, we are confident your team of Student Services professionals will step-up and host a future conference for your colleagues in the Atlantic region. We are particularly proud of the team at the Nova Scotia Community College who have jumped at the chance to get more involved with AACUSS in 2011. If you are curious as to when your campus last hosted an AACUSS conference, please check-out the AACUSS website for details. Is this your time to bring AACUSS home to your community?

Notable Work

In 2010-2011, the AACUSS Executive Committee met both in person and for teleconference meetings. Meeting dates included: June 2, 2010, September 21, 2010, November 4, 2010, January 18, 2011, March 22, 2011, May 10, 2011 and May 29, 2011.

This past year, AACUSS conducted a membership survey lead by UPEI's Tamara Leary. The results of this survey have been heard loud and clear by the association: AACUSS must continue to make progress in providing professional development opportunities for divisional members; delivering these professional development opportunities must be cost effective; there is clearly a desire for the membership to continue the important conversations across the AACUSS divisions. In the year ahead, AACUSS will dedicate even more effort in responding to the feedback gathered from this membership survey.

One of the most important developments for AACUSS this year is the proposed stipend being offered to the Secretary position on the Executive Committee. This pilot initiative to be proposed to the membership at the 2011 AGM could have tremendous benefits in taking AACUSS to "the next level" as an even more professional association. The Secretary is the "organizational glue" that binds the association together and allows it to reach for and achieve greater goals for its membership. The AACUSS executive will be asking for your support for this new initiative.

At this year's AACUSS Spring Conference hosted by Dalhousie University, we encourage the membership to engage in the Annual General Meeting and to participate in the discussion regarding the proposed amendments to the AACUSS Constitution and By-Laws. These amendments, lead by Tamara Leary (Past-President) with the support of the Executive Committee, bring forward important changes to the AACUSS organization governance.

Membership

We are pleased to report that the AACUSS membership remains strong at 173 as of May 2011. It's encouraging that this number has remained relatively steady over the past decade, which is a great indication of confidence and support in AACUSS by our membership. At the same time, AACUSS is pleased to continue its support for our membership through the annual Student Services Awards, travel grants to members who need modest financial assistance and, finally, divisional grants up to \$250 each for facilitating professional development workshops and events.

Furthermore, the AACUSS Executive Committee benefited significantly from new members who enthusiastically stepped-up to fill the shoes of departing Executive Committee members, who, in most cases due to changing careers, had to resign from the Executive Committee. We experienced notable change-over with our divisional representatives but we never skipped a beat as new, young professionals answered the AACUSS call to get involved!

It is imperative that special recognition be given to the UPEI duo of Tamara Leary and Anne Bartlett. Tamara (Past President) and Anne (Secretary) are in their final year having served the Executive Committee with great enthusiasm and professionalism. AACUSS is stronger and on solid ground as a result of the contributions from these remarkable Student Services professionals.

The Year Ahead

In 2011-2012, the current President (who becomes Past-President to the Executive Committee) will bring forward details regarding a newly proposed AACUSS division (Student Recreation). Furthermore, we look forward to sharing with the AACUSS membership new developments with the American based Student Affairs Leadership Council as well as the popular Student Voice campus services assessment tools. We are confident that our incoming AACUSS President Anne Forrestall is ready and prepared to tackle the many challenges and exciting initiatives in the year ahead. AACUSS will once again thrive with Anne's outstanding leadership skills and solid commitment to our professional Student Services association.

Respectfully submitted,

Marc Braithwaite
AACUSS President (2010-2011)
Dalhousie University

Past President's Report

Dear AACUSS Colleagues,

It has been my pleasure to serve the last of my three president associated roles for the AACUSS Executive. As Past President I enjoyed facilitating the membership survey and look forward to sharing the results with the membership at this year's annual general meeting. Thank you to everyone who participated – your feedback helps the executive ensure the association's business is relevant to members' needs and expectations.

As Past President this year I also had the opportunity to chair the awards and grants committee. Many thanks to Diane Tinkam and Sara Rothman for their participation on the committee! There were several wonderful nominations for the various awards and grants. There is indeed a great deal to be proud of as a Student Services professional in Atlantic Canada.

I would like to thank past and present executive members for their continued effort on behalf of the membership; I enjoyed working with all of you!

Best wishes,
Tamara

Tamara Leary, Past President 2010-2011
UPEI (2010), U of C Doctoral Candidate (2011)

Treasurer's Report

Opening Balance June 1, 2010		\$20,137.50	
Income			
	Membership fees	\$6,450.00	
	AACUSS Spring Conference Profit 2010	\$8,166.34	
	AACUSS Fall Conference Profit 2010 (Bank Credit Adjustment)	\$125.00	
	o/s Receivables	\$240.00	
Total Income		\$14,981.34	
Expenses			
	Fall Workshop Expenses	\$125.00	
	Spring Workshop Expenses	\$480.49	
	Travel Grants	\$1500.00	
	Conference Grants	\$825.00	
	Awards Expenses	\$1,200.00	
	Website Maintenance	\$1,100.56	
	Divisional Meetings	\$417.95	
	Conference Calls	\$225.42	
	Banking Charges	\$53.10	
	Membership Reimbursement	\$70.00	
	o/s Payables from 09/10	\$1,018.08	
	o/s Payables	\$876.99	
	Administrative Expenses	\$3,274.06	
Total Expense		\$11,166.65	
Net		\$3,814.69	
GIC-Term Deposit		\$8,712.89	
Closing Balance May 31, 2011		\$23,952.19	

Respectfully Submitted,
 Sean Ryan, 2009-2011 Treasurer
 St. Francis Xavier University
 Revised version, Marc Braithwaite, President

Communications Report

Greetings from your Communications Officer! Although I have not met many of you, I am very eager and excited to meet you all at AACUSS 2011: Transitions at Dalhousie University in May.

The previous Communications Officer, Andrew Harvey, decided to embrace a new venture and return to school, in his absence, I was pleased to join the AACUSS Executive Team in January 2011. Since my arrival I have attempted to introduce AACUSS to social networking, including Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook. While these ventures will take time to attract followers, the ground work has been laid to create a place in social media for current and future AACUSS members.

As I started this position relatively late in the year, I have not been able to compile an *AACUSS Talks*, however it is a venture that will hopefully be reintroduced in the near future.

I look forward to meeting everyone soon, listening to new ideas and marketing the opportunities AACUSS can bring to Student Services professionals.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Badcock, 2011 Communications Officer
Memorial University

Divisional Reports

Chief Student Affairs Division

Another busy year to report for the members of the Chief Student Affairs Division and one which included many changes. On September 20, 2010 a new CSAO representative was appointed to the AACUSS executive while in early January 2011 Tamara Leary left her position at UPEI and therefore her seat with the CSAO division. Laura Lee Noonan joined the CSAO as she resumed the position of Director of Student Services at UPEI. Other new members were welcomed to the division this year which is always good news.

The Fall Workshop held at Mount Allison in November offered an opportunity to meet as a division. Topics of discussion included Food Services, International Students, Retention numbers, and Email traffic. The Key Note speaker, Barb Fry had a great message which many of us could easily apply to our positions.

An all-day winter meeting was held on March 7, 2011 in Truro hosted by Keltie Jones at Nova Scotia Agricultural College. The meeting was well attended with brisk discussion on the following topics: Effects of Social Media, Marketing relationship to recruitment/enrolment management, Staff Evaluations, Placement of Student Exchange, Role of Student Assistants, Funds for hiring and Student Faculty Interns, Prayer Rooms, Record Management Systems, Co-Curricular Record, Relationship between Housing and Security Services, AACUSS Award Nominations Deadline, AACUS Spring Conference, and CACUSS 2011. The meeting wrapped up with a round table of 'what's new at your institution'

Over-all I would suggest the Chief Student Affairs Officers would agree 2010-2011 has been a busy and productive year. Working together, sharing best practices, and communicating amongst members via AACUSS assists with carrying the load of challenges in the field of Student Affairs!

Respectfully submitted,

Gayle Churchill
Mount Allison University

Counselling Division

Over the course of the past academic year members of the AACUSS Counselling Division continued to report high demand for counselling services on their campuses and a continuing trend of students presenting with more severe and complex problems than has been seen in years past. At UNB-Fredericton, despite having more people providing

counselling than we have ever had during the Winter semester (a total of 13 - 6 Counsellors, 5 practicum students, and 2 postdocs getting Psychology licensing hours), we still ended up with 90 students remaining on the wait list at the end of the semester. While more Counsellors would always be welcome, clearly this is only part of the solution to the problem of increasing demand for services. During the Winter semester there were reports from different campuses about working with international students from countries (in the Middle East and Africa) experiencing demonstrations and violence over the past few months.

Some concerns that were heard repeatedly from members of the Counselling Division included how to best serve students with serious and persistent mental health problems. Even the most well-staffed counselling centres likely do not have the resources to provide ongoing support to these students over the course of their academic careers, however at the same time many of us are concerned about referring these students out to community resources because of the perceived inadequacy of these services.

Another concern that has been discussed at different times over the course of the year was what are the best approaches to suicide prevention on campus and what are the best approaches to working with suicidal students. Finally, another issue that appears to be affecting many members is concern about the effect of budget cuts or restrictions on our ability to provide services to students.

Many of the issues mentioned above are being addressed nationally by a working group on Post-Secondary Student Mental Health which is a collaboration between CACUSS, the Mental Health Commission of Canada, the Canadian Mental Health Association, and others. The main purpose of this group is the development of a comprehensive framework document for promoting student mental health in post-secondary institutions. Input for this process will be sought from a wide range of different stakeholders and will include a day-long pre-conference Town Hall on post-secondary student mental health at the CACUSS 2011 conference in Toronto in June.

Submitted Respectfully,

Dr. Rice Fuller

University of New Brunswick, Fredericton

Financial Aid Division

The new US Direct Loan system took effect July 1, 2010 and caused a lot of headaches amongst members this past year. The new system in place was difficult to navigate through as well as the required checks and balances the Department of Education placed on them. There was a two-day overview training session held as part of the CASFAA conference in June, 2010, but did little to ease members' minds about the challenges that laid ahead. While there are still many problems with the system,

members made it through the year. The next challenge will be the required compliance audit by the US Department of Education on what was done over the past year. The US Department of Education seems to not be placing a lot of stock in what Foreign Schools are doing as they were lobbied to have a presence at the upcoming CASFAA Conference in June, 2011 and offered a 75 minute webinar to attendees – not really the impression you want your unsatisfied customers to be left with.

The Nova Scotia Department of Education embarked on a series of public input meetings across the province looking for feedback and suggestions on ways to better the student loan system in the province. From this increases were made in several areas – cost of books per course went from \$100 - \$150 and students part-time earnings went from \$50-\$100 per week. They also introduced the availability of loans during co-op work placements. While the impact will be minimal on students while in the work placement as they are earning money, the income earned during the co-op term (previously identified as the pre-study period) will become study period income and will NOT impact students' loans for the next academic term.

There is a reintroduction of the Service Advisory Council (SAC) through the Canadian Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (CASFAA). The SAC is a group of stakeholders who will have meetings directly with Canada Student Loan Program to discuss, from our perspective, changes desirable for the program and, from their perspective, the impact of changes they are considering.

As I only joined on as Financial Aid Representative in January, this report may lack a lot of concerns my predecessor would have brought forth.

Respectfully submitted,

John Mayich
Cape Breton University

Generalist Division

As the AACUSS Generalist Representative, I respectfully submit this year-end report. Communication amongst division members as a group has not been robust; however I have been quite encouraged by the amount of individual email communication received as Division Representative. New members have been eager to get involved and returning members have enthusiastically shared both via email and during divisional meetings. The topic of discussion with the most “legs” has been the consideration of the creation of a new division within AACUSS to serve those within the field of academic support. Members have indicated a lack of such organization elsewhere and a real need for the sharing of expertise and experiences specific to this field. I recommend that this be explored further.

A real boost to Generalist Division moral was the adoption of the *Transitions* theme for the annual conference to be held at Dalhousie University later this month. While it's possible that Dalhousie may have already been thinking along these lines, *Transitions* was suggested after the Generalist meeting during the Fall Workshop at Mount Allison University and we intend to take full credit for our brilliant suggestion.

The most recent membership information indicates that within our division:

- We have 35 members, up from 27 a year ago
- from 9 institutions, plus Student Guard Insurance
- 7 members in this division are from UPEI and 9 are from Dalhousie – more than any other institution – no doubt spurred by the AACUSS conference hosting duties

I look forward to seeing my colleagues at the upcoming conference in Halifax.

Sincerely,

Sara Rothman

University of New Brunswick

Health and Wellness Division

For the 2010/2011 year, there were 12 active members in the Health and Wellness Division, which is the same number as last year. I have communicated with members via e-mail prior to each Executive conference call, and after each one with an updated report. I also received phone calls and e-mails from members who had individual concerns they wished to discuss.

Members had a very busy year with all of the usual problems, and many also saw an increase in mental health issues. Numerous members, particularly in Nova Scotia, report difficulty in obtaining emergency access to psychiatric services, which makes it challenging in meeting the needs of their ill students.

Concussions are a “hot topic” these days and some members indicated their health services are taking the opportunity of the current press coverage to reemphasize to students and coaches about the importance of appropriate action when injuries occur.

I have communicated to the members that I will not be returning as Health and Wellness representative for 2011/2012 as I would like someone else to have the opportunity of being involved in the Executive of this great organization. I am delighted that Derrick Enslow from Dalhousie University has agreed to take on the role of Health and Wellness representative for next year.

It is always a pleasure being involved in AACUSS, and I appreciate having had the chance to work with all of you.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Tinkham
Mount Saint Vincent University

Housing Division

It is hard to believe that a year has passed! Time flies when you are having fun I suppose. This year I have tried to keep in contact with the Housing Division membership, sending reminders for AACUSS deadlines, promoting contributions to *AACUSS Talks*, sending out articles of interest, questions from division members in regards to 'best practices' and policies, and as always, promoting new members to join our wonderful association. I also 'cold emailed' a few Housing/Residence Life Offices who, in the past, had active membership in the Housing Division. This email encouraged them to become a member of AACUSS, share their ideas and connect with other Housing Officials throughout the region. We have 24 active members in the Housing Division (up from last year this time) with over half of the membership being from Newfoundland.

At the 2010 Spring Conference hosted by the University of New Brunswick, Saint John, we had our divisional where we were able to discuss and share experiences related to how we managed H1N1 at our respected institutions, the need to keep student staff engaged in our programs, how we implemented academic and social programming, and relationships with residence councils/residence societies etc. in our communities. Hopefully, we will be able to build on these discussions at this year's conference at Dalhousie University.

Luckily, H1N1 was not a factor, and we were able to hold the 2010 Fall Workshop at Mount Allison University. I personally was not able to attend due to being on leave for November and December, but a divisional meeting was held with the members present, where they discussed staff training initiatives, damages, issues in regards to alcohol consumption, and reviving the annual Atlantic Residence Conference, last held in 2008. The Atlantic Residence Conference (ARC) was last hosted by Acadia University. Although I have yet to be able to find an institution that has been willing to host and help get ARC back up and running, I hope to be able to bring this topic forward at the divisional meeting this spring to see how we can make ARC a viable option for Fall 2011.

Like all areas of Student Affairs, Housing/Residence Life is very interesting, sometimes challenging, but always rewarding field of work. I have been happy to have a chance to connect and network with my colleagues to see what is happening on their campuses.

I look forward to seeing everyone at this year's Spring Conference at Dalhousie University.

Submitted Respectfully,

Erin Dorey
Memorial University

International Division

This year in the International Division, we saw a change in representatives. Natasha Clark took over from Shawna Peddle in June 2010. Since June 2010, the International Division welcomed one new member. For 2010/2011, the membership of the division totals thirteen.

Discussion and communication within the membership of the division has been limited. However, during the Fall Workshop, a valuable discussion took place around issues related to immigration regulation changes. Such as changes to eligibility criteria under the federal skilled worker category, changes to entry visa application, and proposed changes around international student enrollment monitoring. We also discussed how institutions assist international students in financial difficulty as a result of natural or financial crisis and the unique challenges they face as students in financial difficulty in terms of their immigration. Communications from the divisional reps to the membership are made every two months and in order to encourage a two way dialogue, I have begun to share news articles and news releases.

Student affairs professionals within the area of international education have had a lot to keep up with in the news. From January on, we have been challenged as providers of support services to our international students from all over the globe who are going through their own struggles. It has certainly been an intense few months as we hear news out of Egypt, Libya and Japan and try to assist our students in dealing with their personal, financial and immigration challenges. We have also been responding to many changes in immigration procedures such as the new application for Canadian entry visa.

I look forward to 2011/2012 and working with the membership to discuss issues as they arise and share best practices.

Respectfully Submitted,

Natasha Clark
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Accessibilities Division

The accessibilities division has had very minimal activity during this past year. There have been a select few members who continue to keep in touch and create some discussion. We have discussed ways to develop interest and create more discussion and resource sharing. This should be explored further next year.

Some suggestions were;

- Meeting via teleconference/video conferencing every couple of months as a division
- Setting up divisional webpage via AACUSS main page (place to post web resources, books, share tools, forms etc.

There were only 3 members present at the Fall Conference at MTA but we did engage in a good discussion/exchange around service provision and best practice. Waiting to hear of #'s for attendance at Spring Conference.

New Brunswick LD Association will consider offering LD screening Tool training next year if enough interest.

Cambrian College Learning Disability Specialist Certificate Course available, however new course start date is now September.

<https://secure.cambrianc.on.ca/coned/showcert.cfm?strCert=LDED.HTM>

Products also available via Cambrian College Glen Crombie Centre:

<http://www.cambriancollege.ca/Departments/DisabilityServices/Pages/ProductsAndTraining.aspx>

I will be on Maternity Leave next year. Heather Avery from NSAC has offered to coordinate the Accessibility Divisional meeting at the Spring Conference. Heather has also expressed interest in being the Divisional Representative for the coming year.

It's been a great experience/opportunity this year to be involved with such a wonderful group of people, especially since I am relatively new to working in the post secondary area.

Thank You and have a wonderful summer!

Respectfully Submitted,
Heidi Lafford
Mount Allison University

Career/Employment Division

No Report Submitted