

SAAA Meeting November 19, 2019, Sennott Square room 4217

Call to Order 3:05pm

Attendance

Elected Members

Joanne Baird, SHRS;
Harvey Borovetz, Engineering;
Nancy Glynn, Public Health, Dept Epidemiology;
Marylou Gramm, Dietrich, Department of English;
Julius Kitutu, School of Nursing;
Sybil Streeter, Dietrich, Psychology;
Juan Taboas, Dental Medicine;
Sue Wesmiller, Nursing (*on call*);

Chancellor's Liaison

Penny Semaia, Senior Associate Athletic Director for Student Life;
Jennifer Seng, General Counsel

Staff Council

Tricia Connell, Staff Council Representative (*on call*);

Senate Liaison

Gosia Fort, Health Science Library System

Student Representatives

Selena Eisenberg, President of College of General Studies Student Government (*on call*);
Mailinh Dang, Student Government Board

Office of University Communications

Donovan Harrell, *University Times*

Agenda

Guest Speakers: Marian Vanek, Director of Student Health Services; Leigh Culley, Director of Disability Resources and Services; Matt Landy, Associate Director of Student Conduct; and Patrick Pugliese, Pharmacy Manager of Student Health Services.

For the presentation by our guest speakers about Medical Marijuana and the University of Pittsburgh campus regulations, please see the PowerPoint slide attached to this email.

Q & A following the presentation

Borovetz: This is a big mess from my perspective. Someone with inflammatory bowel disease, for example, has a flare up, and if a physician prescribes, a student from out of state or an international student cannot store their medical marijuana prescription on campus. Where can they store it? All those other illnesses which need this medicine for immediate attention to symptoms are important to address.

Vanek: We are abiding by federal law...

Borovetz: Students who suffer, are in pain, need relief. This is a big problem.

Vanek: I agree. It is a dilemma.

Landy: I try to educate students that living off campus is less expensive—more space, other options...

Borovetz: Freshmen have to live on campus.

Vanek: They can get an exception. Colleagues across the country, any university (regardless of state) follow the federal policies. But they do make accommodations if the students wish to live off of campus. It's not just anecdotal that marijuana can provide alleviation of symptoms of illness. But until we have research beyond anecdotal evidence, the government won't change the legality.

Pugliese: Major barrier is not enough case controlled studies. Physicians can't legally prescribe, only recommend [medical marijuana].

Landy: We're not on a witch hunt of students who use the medication. You would not know someone is using unless it happens right in front of you.

Vanek: A lot of my colleagues use unwritten philosophy of don't ask, don't tell.

Kitutu: Do you have any sense of how many students take medical marijuana?

Vanek: No. We've had a number of students asking if we can prescribe, and of course, we can't.

Kitutu: Can you get data?

Vanek: I don't want to put any one into an uncomfortable position and there are HIPPA issues.

Kitutu: In health sciences, students who practice clinical have to go through clearances. When we get negative clearances, we have to negotiate with the site. We never know in advance. How can we protect such a student?

Culley: Is it known to students that they'll be randomly screened?

Kitutu: Yes. But if they are using it as a medicine ...?

Vanek: We've had students come in who know they'll be tested. Students ask about the half-life of the drug in urine and in blood.

Baird: What is the half-life?

Pugliese: In urine, hemp usually doesn't show up though we don't know how much THC it might have, which could be a factor. CBD products should be okay. Hair test though can show usage for months. It can be from days to weeks, depends on the frequency the drug is taken.

Baird: We're not very clear about drug testing with our clinical students because not every site requires it.

Vanek: Do you ever tell students assigned to a particular site that it might require testing? Medical school is very clear that a drug test is required to complete practical work.

Kitutu: If we knew, we would advise students in advance. Sometimes you can tell the clinical site, this student uses medical marijuana. But if we wait to tell them—too late.

Vanek: What would you do for that particular student?

Kitutu: If the site required it, we would tell them about the student's medical usage of marijuana.

Seng: Any prescription medication (even opioid) could impact a drug test; the student has the option to seek counsel, giving them the option to talk to Pitt supervisors to help navigate doing clinicals.

Semaia: That's being self-disclosed. So that way, if it does come up, we know why.

Taboas: When we detect a program or department with notable drug use or a suicide rate—can we make an intervention?

Vanek: Any information shared with an advisor at the Wellness Center, we don't share that.

Taboas: Couldn't you de-identify?

Vanek: Hard to do. We have counseled students how to go through appropriate channels to address these problems, through the Dean, or whatever. But if it's a risk of harm to self or others, that's a different issue.

Taboas: Drug use too?

Vanek: Abusing drugs, there are a variety of measures: counseling, higher level of care...

Taboas: all on an individual student basis?

Vanek: Yes.

Landy: If I do see an uptick of drug use in Tower A, I can work with university police.

Taboas: Can students only see a counselor for a limited time, or has that been extended?

Vanek: No set time limits. But we do refer out for long-term counseling.

I. Next meeting: Tuesday, December 17, 3 – 4 pm, Sennott Square room 4127.

Meeting adjourned: 4 pm