

*Never the Same Again:
Adapting Academic Strategies Following
Student and Faculty Feedback from COVID-19*

Neil Mort, Pedro Cortina & John Daniel

Acsenda School of Management, Vancouver, Canada.



**Asia-Pacific Association
for International Education**
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
Vancouver, Canada | March 27-31, 2022

Introduction



**Asia-Pacific Association
for International Education**
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
Vancouver, Canada | March 27-31, 2022

Accenda School of Management (ASM) is a private, for-profit, Australian-owned, postsecondary institution in downtown Vancouver.

- International students count for over 90% of its enrolment
- ASM's motto is: *International Thinking, Individual Focus.*
- We will describe how ASM came through the successive phases of covid-19 pandemic, focusing on how student and faculty attitudes evolved between March 2020 and January 2022.
- These new perspectives will alter the nature of ASM's future teaching/learning strategies, student services, and new opportunities for international collaboration.
- Original Paper Springer Professional:
<https://www.springerprofessional.de/en/conducting-a-college-through-covid-19-the-evolving-leadership-ch/18809194>

Phases of ASM's Response to Restrictions by Health Authorities



**Asia-Pacific Association
for International Education**
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
Vancouver, Canada | March 27-31, 2022

Change Management

- Before the COVID-19 pandemic erupted, ASM was engaged in change management through strategic planning to assess how best to incorporate online technologies into ASM's future teaching and learning activities.

Crisis Management

- When COVID-19 struck, ASM's two-year plan to incorporate online technologies became a two-day plan

Change Leadership

- Continue to employ a crisis management strategy, including ongoing environmental scanning, the development of signal detectors, and scenario planning to prepare responses to potential future crises

Focus on Faculty:

Skills Development for Remote Teaching



**Asia-Pacific Association
for International Education**
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
Vancouver, Canada | March 27-31, 2022

Faculty were supported with several training sessions on:

- BigBlueButton
 - Zoom Platform
 - Synchronous online delivery and learning methodologies
 - Asynchronous online delivery and learning methodologies
 - Gamification and Game-Based Learning
-
- BigBlueButton as well as Zoom were both offered for redundancy
 - ASM provided Online Learning Coaches for one-on-one needs
 - Faculty were surveyed every three months for the first 9 months of the pandemic

Focus on Students:

Student Experience and Support



**Asia-Pacific Association
for International Education**
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
Vancouver, Canada | March 27-31, 2022

- Students were given written and personal guidance on how to access their courses online
- Once there, faculty trained and guided them from within the course platforms
- Students were given access to Online Learning Coaches
- Students were surveyed every 3 months for the first 9 months of the pandemic
- Online learning questions were then added to the general Student Survey
- Student ambassadors

Successes:

Faculty Surveys, Communication and Collaboration



**Asia-Pacific Association
for International Education**
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
Vancouver, Canada | March 27-31, 2022

Faculty survey results showed:

- Focused on student experience, learning, and satisfaction
- Started using BigBlueButton and then naturally moved to Zoom
- Consistently incorporated new SYN, ASY, and Game-Based activities
- Satisfaction of online learning remained around 80% throughout
- Some issues identified around technology learning curves, student accessibility to technology, and student isolation and mental health

General Faculty Drop-In Sessions

- Faculty participated in ongoing, open, online drop-in gatherings to seek support and to collaborate sharing best practices.

The communication strategy also included other stakeholders such as the parent company, Academic Council, educational agents, peer institutions and the Ministry of Advanced Education

Methodology: Online survey with 23 questions, 3 informational, 10 quantitative, and 10 qualitative.

Successes:

Student Surveys, Communication and Collaboration



**Asia-Pacific Association
for International Education**
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
Vancouver, Canada | March 27-31, 2022

Student survey results showed:

- Excitement and commitment to a new way of learning
 - A preference for Zoom as opposed to BigBlueButton.
 - Satisfaction of online learning remained around 80% throughout
 - Some issues identified around technology learning curves, obstacles to access technology or connectivity, as well as student isolation and mental health
- Beneficial to develop an evaluation plan early to collect data
 - Important to monitor and measure the effectiveness of responses
 - Reinforcing a culture of learning and continual improvement

Methodology: Online survey with 9 questions, 3 quantitative, and 6 qualitative.

Challenges:

Returning to Campus and Navigating a New World



**Asia-Pacific Association
for International Education**
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
Vancouver, Canada | March 27-31, 2022

ASM offered several faculty professional development sessions to support coming back to campus focusing on:

- Safety
- Addressing apprehensions/anxiety
- Student expectations and support
- Faculty concerns
- Learning needs

Slow return to Campus

- Aimed at having 50% of courses on-campus by T4-2021
- Aimed at having 90% of courses on-campus by T1-2022
- Remain with 10% of courses online to support flexibility

What Changed for Us:

Teaching, Learning, and Operations



**Asia-Pacific Association
for International Education**
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
Vancouver, Canada | March 27-31, 2022

- All classrooms were updated to have full Hybrid technology for online remote access
 - First setup made with following faculty survey
 - Improvements made after faculty survey suggestions
 - Faculty training to use hybrid technology is ongoing
- Courses were reviewed and updated where appropriate to reflect new reality
- Student advising moved online and became more accessible
- Faculty are now well trained to deliver online courses and to use a variety of online learning tools and strategies

What Changed for Students:

Engagement and Student Experience



**Asia-Pacific Association
for International Education**
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
Vancouver, Canada | March 27-31, 2022

- Student flexibility to attend in-person:
 - Considering health issues/concerns
 - Geographically limited because of Covid
 - Or other important personal situations
- Providing student services support at a distance
- Animating social life through virtual connections
- Developed strategies to effectively interact, learn and work in a technology-based fully online environment

Conclusion:

Faculty Support and Consensus Development



**Asia-Pacific Association
for International Education**
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
Vancouver, Canada | March 27-31, 2022

- What began as a gradual change management process quickly changed to crisis management
- All sectors of the organization were engaged in the process, and this contributed to a state of readiness to adapt
- Reinforce the importance of ongoing crisis management practices
- Academic support for students online
- Centrally coordinated strategy
- Consensus Development

Conclusion:

*How we will never
be the same*



**Asia-Pacific Association
for International Education**
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
Vancouver, Canada | March 27-31, 2022

- Reinforce the importance to provide necessary support for those affected to adjust to change
- Minimized the financial and organizational impact of a crisis that could have been a disaster for a small private-for-profit HEI highly dependent on international students
- ASM will hold fast to the holistic view that its relationships with students are not only academic and pedagogical but also, just as importantly, social, technological and psychological.
- How is Acsenda different in 2022 as compared to 2021

Thank you.

*Never the Same Again:
Adapting Academic Strategies Following
Student and Faculty Feedback from COVID-19*

Neil Mort, Pedro Cortina & John Daniel

Acsenda School of Management, Vancouver, Canada.



**Asia-Pacific Association
for International Education**
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
Vancouver, Canada | March 27-31, 2022

Student Experience:

Discussion



**Asia-Pacific Association
for International Education**
ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
Vancouver, Canada | March 27-31, 2022

- How was this experience and what did you learn?
- How did it feel as a student to have to respond to these changes?
- What helped? What could be done better?
- How will this affect your choice of courses you study in the future and what delivery models