

Summary Report of Campus Consultations: Mission, Vision, Values

Executive Summary

Based on the responses of over 1,300 members of the campus community (including students, staff, faculty, administrators, alumni, and those in other roles at the University) to the Aspire Survey, we were able to draw several key insights on perceptions about the institution's values, mission, and vision.

While the 2010 institutional values, mission statement, and vision still resonate with many members of the campus community, there also exists the sentiment that the University was not completely successful in living up to these guiding principles since the last strategic plan. The data presented in this report suggest that perceptions of the meanings of some of the terms have shifted. Responses collected also suggest the potential for new elements to be considered in the institution's values, mission and vision.

Introduction

As part of the strategic planning process, the Aspire online survey was open to the University of Windsor campus community from February 16th, 2022 until March 7th, 2022. The survey was the first step in the consultation process and aimed to collect perceptions of where the community wants the University of Windsor to go and how the University can best get there.

The data gathered were intended to explore patterns in campus community perceptions and to help develop initial themes and ideas that would be valuable for further discussion and development. This survey was built as a consultative tool for broad-based input, rather than a research tool. By gathering these initial perceptions and feedback, more specific tools and methods were developed in a way that caters to the individual needs of specific communities and voices. For example, while questions about Indigenization and Decolonization and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) were included in consultation questions, dedicated consultations with community members using informed and appropriate methods were also needed to ensure that this priority was supported by rich and informed processes.

Methods of distributing this survey to the campus community included several different channels, such as internal and external email lists, DailyNews articles, and social media platforms. Over 2,000 respondents started the survey, yielding 1,534 complete and usable responses. The results presented in this report focus on Aspire survey questions related to perceptions of the values, mission, and vision of the University.

Familiarity with the University's Values, Mission, and Vision

Respondents were asked whether they were familiar with the University's current set of institutional values, the mission statement, and vision. (presented in Figures 1a, 1b, 1c). Across all three guiding principles, most respondents expressed they were not familiar with the University's values, mission, or vision. These results are based on 1,465 responses for the question on values, 1,397 responses for the question on the mission statement, and 1,363 responses for the question on vision. Students were less likely than faculty and staff to have been familiar with the institutional values prior to the consultation.

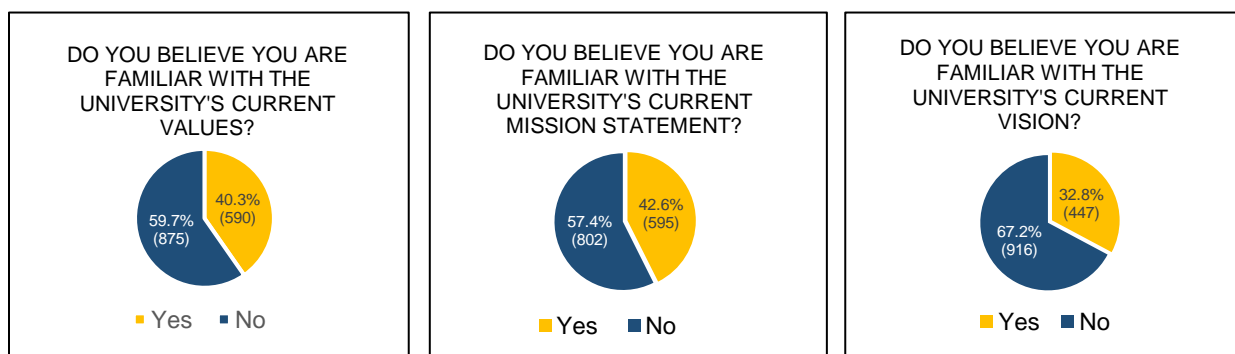


Figure 1. Familiarity of the University's Values, Mission Statement, and Vision

Note. Figure 1a (left) presents the percentage of respondents familiar with the University's values, figure 1b (middle) presents percentage of respondents familiar with the University's mission statement, and figure 1c (right) presents percentage of respondents familiar with the University's vision.

Analyzing Values of the University

The working definition for values for this strategic planning process is:

"Values are enduring, passionate, and distinctive core beliefs, and they're an essential part of developing the strategy of an organization. They are based on enduring tenets—guiding principles—that the organization adheres to no matter what initiatives, challenges, or decisions the organization undertakes. Core values are part of the strategic foundation of the organization."

The starting point for consultation on values were the values introduced in 2010:

1. Commitment to the highest intellectual standards
2. Commitment to the highest standards of human rights and freedoms
3. Commitment to have student experience be a central consideration in decision-making
4. Commitment to civility and respect for others
5. Commitment to applying teaching, research, and creative activity to issues of importance to the world
6. Commitment to be a responsible steward of people, culture, resources, and the environment

Survey respondents were asked to rate the importance of the six values from 2010 on a scale from 1 “not at all important” to 5 “very important” (Table 1 - left column). On average, the importance of the values ranged from 4.40-4.56, suggesting they all remain quite important to the campus community.

Respondents were also asked to rate how successful the University has been in living up to these values since their introduction in 2010 on a scale from 1 “not successful” to 5 “extremely successful” (Table 1 - right column). On average, the success of meeting these values ranged from 2.29-3.27, suggesting the University has been somewhere between “somewhat successful” and “successful” in implementing these values.

Table 1. Order of Importance of the 2010 values to keep as a value moving forward (left) and Order of Implementation Success of 2010 values since their introduction (right). Mean Score and Standard Deviation are shown in parentheses.

Order of Importance to Keep as a Value	Ordered by Success since 2010 value
Highest Standards of Human Rights and Freedoms (M= 4.56, SD= 0.76)	Applying Teaching, Research and Creative Activities to Issues of Importance to the World (M= 3.27, SD= 1.10)
Have the Student Experience be a Central Consideration in Decision Making (M= 4.53, SD= 0.74)	Civility and Respect for Others (M= 3.26, SD= 1.18)
Civility and Respect for Others (M= 4.51, SD= 0.77)	Responsible Steward of People, Culture, Resources and the Environment (M= 3.22, SD= 1.13)
Applying Teaching, Research and Creative Activities to Issues of Importance to the World (M= 4.46, SD= 0.81)	Highest Standards of Human Rights and Freedoms (M= 3.17, SD= 1.21)
Highest Intellectual Standards (M= 4.43, SD= 0.81)	Highest Intellectual Standards (M= 3.11, SD= 1.01)
Responsible Steward of People, Culture, Resources and the Environment (M= 4.40, SD= 0.83)	Have the Student Experience be a Central Consideration in Decision Making (M= 2.92, SD= 1.22)

Through open-text responses, respondents shared various terms, concepts, and ideas they felt were important to be reflected in the values and mission of the University. With over 5,000 data points shared by respondents, the top five keywords identified were inclusivity, innovation, diversity, engagement, respect. While these keywords may draw close associations with the previous set of values, other clusters that emerged include honesty, truth, and transparency - themes that may not clearly overlap with the 2010 values. It is important to acknowledge that this data doesn't capture the complex nature of interpretation and understanding. Concepts, ideas, and keywords may have different interpretations to different people and it is critical to recognize that these keywords do not fully capture that complexity. Later stages of consultation explored these questions more fully.

Analyzing Mission of the University

The current mission statement of the University of Windsor (est. since 2010) is:

“Enabling people to make a better world through education, scholarship, research, and engagement.”

The mission statement was broken into five separate components for the Aspire survey:

1. Enabling People To Make A Better World
2. Education
3. Scholarship
4. Research
5. Engagement

Survey respondents were asked to rate the relevance of the 5 components mentioned above to what they believe the mission of the University should reflect on a scale from 1 “not relevant at all” to 5 “extremely relevant” (Table 2). On average, the relevance of these components ranged from 4.37-4.75, suggesting they all have significant relevance.

Table 2. Order of relevance for the five above components of the 2010 mission statement to perceptions of what the mission of the University should reflect.

Order of Relevance for the 5 identified components of the 2010 mission statement		
Identified Component	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Education	4.75	0.54
Research	4.56	0.70
Engagement	4.47	0.76
Enabling People To Make A Better World	4.39	0.89
Scholarship	4.37	0.87

The perception of relevance for “education”, “research,” and “engagement” were highly consistent across different respondent groups, with marginally greater variability occurring in ratings regarding “enabling people to make a better world” and “scholarship”. As a previously mentioned note of caution, the complexity and range of interpretation of these components is not captured in this data.

Analyzing Vision of the University

The current vision of the University of Windsor (est. since 2010) is:

“The University of Windsor is a progressive, student-centred university, where the challenges of communities and of a world in transition inform the education we provide, the research we do, and the creative endeavours we pursue.”

The vision statement was broken into seven separate components for the Aspire survey:

1. Progressive
2. Student-centred
3. Meeting challenges of communities
4. Meeting challenges of a world in transition
5. Education
6. Research
7. Creative endeavours

Survey respondents were asked to rate the relevance of the 7 components mentioned above to what they believe the vision of the University should reflect on a scale from 1 “not relevant at all” to 5 “extremely relevant” (Table 3). On average, the relevance of these components ranged from 4.16-4.71, suggesting they all have significant relevance.

Table 3. Order of relevance for the seven above components of the 2010 vision statement to perceptions of what the vision of the University should reflect.

Order of Relevance for the 7 identified components of the 2010 vision statement		
Identified Component	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Education	4.71	0.59
Student-centered	4.59	0.72
Research	4.55	0.69
Meeting challenges of a world in transition	4.32	0.90
Meeting challenges of communities	4.32	0.85
Creative Endeavors	4.26	0.87
Progressive	4.16	1.01

Statistical Significance of Results

As mentioned, respondents were asked how successful the University of Windsor was in living up to the established 2010 values (Question 6) and how important these values were to keep in the new strategic plan (Question 7), respectively.

A paired t-test was conducted to assess whether there were significant differences in respondents’ mean response scores for each of the core values in the two questions. As shown in Table 4, all analyses were statistically significant.

Table 4. Paired t-test completed on responses from survey questions 6 and 7 to assess the presence of significant statistical differences.

	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>D</i>
Intellectual Standards	1,463	-1.198	1.397	-32.811	1462	.000	-.858
Human Rights and Freedoms	1,458	-1.283	1.514	-32.363	1457	.000	-.848
Student Experience	1,459	-1.485	1.530	-37.083	1458	.000	-.971
Civility and Respect for Others	1,458	-1.175	1.436	-31.241	1457	.000	-.818
Application of teaching, research, and creativity activity	1,454	-1.041	1.444	-27.474	1453	.000	-.721
Responsible Stewardship	1,461	-1.063	1.480	-27.452	1460	.000	-.718
Average Questions 6 and 7	1,438	-1.208	1.005	-45.583	1437	.000	-1.202

Typically, respondents that rated the university's performance as low on each value in Question 6 also tended to indicate that the values were important to keep in the strategic plan in Question 7.

The area of biggest difference was in the University's "Commitment to have the student experience be a central consideration in decision-making". As demonstrated in Table 2, this value scored lowest in the University's success in implementing. However, this was also scored comparatively high in its importance in keeping as a value moving forward. In other words, compared to the other assessed values, survey respondents felt that a commitment to student experience was important to keep in the new strategic plan, but they also felt that in the past, the University has done a relatively poor job at making student experience a central point in decision-making.

Next Steps

As mentioned, this survey and data collection was designed as an initial tool and the kick-starter to the strategic planning process. This data does not thoroughly capture the complex nature of interpreting questions, nor the entirety of the on-campus points of view. However, this data provided an effective starting point for future investigation, discussion, and to move forward. The responses to this survey were used in the development of the University's mission, vision, and values for the new strategic plan.