

What we heard...

**A Summary of Feedback on the
Aspire Strategic Planning Process**

Aspire.
TOGETHER FOR TOMORROW

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT: We acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations: the Ojibwa, the Odawa, and the Potawatomi. As we make this land acknowledgment, it is important that we continue to do the work to address systemic and historic injustices that Indigenous peoples have experienced.

Where we started.

On October 14th, President Robert Gordon formally announced the beginning of a yearlong journey to develop a new strategic plan for the University of Windsor. The first engagement exercise in this process was the validation of a Position Paper that outlined the proposed goals, values and overall process for Strategic Planning. Students, staff, alumni and faculty were invited to validate and prioritize these initial thoughts through an anonymous online feedback survey (“the feedback survey”) on our engagement platform Bang the Table at <http://www.engageuwindsor.ca>.

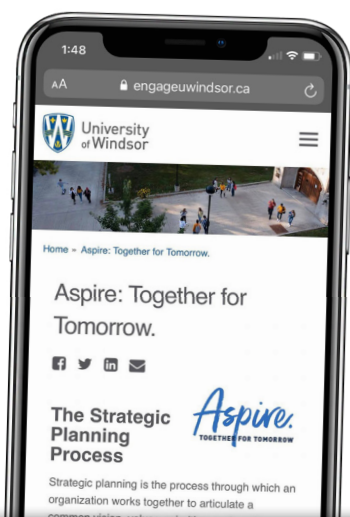
This initial draft Position Paper was developed after engaging senior leadership at the University as well as Senate and the Board of Governors. From across campus and in the community we received over 200 comments to the Feedback Survey, and we want to thank you for your insight, input, and guidance provided on the process, values and timelines. This is the first step on a longer journey, and we hope you will all continue to engage in this important dialogue. We will be reaching out for your insights, and for the insights of others including all the contact points suggested throughout the Strategic Planning process.

The input so far has provided important guidance both on the process and on key themes and concerns we need to explore further through research and on- and off-campus dialogue, and expert consultation.

CONSULTATION PROCESS: ABOUT BANG THE TABLE

Bang The Table is an internationally recognized, widely-used community engagement tool used across North America by municipalities, post-secondary institutions, and community organizations. Moving forward, all online elements of the strategic planning process will be hosted on Bang the Table. It may also become a potential central hub for a wide range of other campus and department engagement processes in the future. Bang the Table ensures data confidentiality and storage within Canada and is GDPR compliant. Information surrounding their privacy policy and data and information security is available on the site, and has been reviewed by the Chair of the Research Ethics Board.

Bang the Table is one tool in our toolbox for this Strategic Planning Process as we move forward with engagement. As COVID-19 restrictions are relaxed, in-person and other engagement strategies will be deployed to gather input and feedback from across campus and beyond. Input from the Feedback Survey strongly reinforced the importance of comprehensive outreach and ongoing reporting on what we learn. See page 8 for a summary of the outreach contacts proposed by Feedback Survey participants: these will be added to the overall contact plan for outreach.



Strategic planning feedback

In the beginning stages of developing this Position Paper, Senate, the Board of Governors, and senior leaders were asked to provide preliminary guidance on the values, contextual considerations, and goals that might drive the strategic planning process. This input was consolidated in a draft position paper that was posted for campus community review, gathered through a feedback survey which validated and expanded the proposed process values, contextual factors, aspirations and approach.

VALUES FEEDBACK

The values articulated in this section are based on campus community advice about how we should conduct ourselves during the planning process, and the qualities that campus community members have suggested should guide our work during the planning process. Ultimately, some may persist in the institutional values the campus community will develop together as this process move forwards but what is in this document is focused on how we will conduct the strategic planning process. The feedback survey suggested that we had not made that clear enough. Part of strategic planning is to jointly come to a collective understanding and consensus on the institutional values. This will be carried out as part of the engagement process over the coming months.

In this Feedback Survey, hundreds of data points identified specific concerns, ideas, and themes for possible future discussion. Among the themes that emerged are the following:

- university mission and purpose;
- university culture;
- curriculum;

- teaching and learning;
- alignment and consistency in university decision making;
- excellence in research and research intensity;
- innovation and open to innovation;
- industry engagement;
- campus climate;
- equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility;
- Indigenization and decolonization;
- student experience and success;
- internationalization;
- mental health;
- post-COVID-19 futures;
- leadership and leadership development;
- being more change capable;
- sustainability and stewardship;
- reputation and quality;
- recruitment (employees and students) and competition;
- community engagement;
- the evolving post-secondary context;
- being a compassionate organization;
- working for the collective good;

These themes and the more specific questions and comments will be shared with the Strategic Planning Steering Committee for review and prioritization so strategies can be deployed to engage as many of these topics as possible.

REVIEWING THE PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED VALUES

To gain insights on the previously proposed process values, the following question about originally identified values was asked in the Feedback Survey:

Rank order the proposed values from most important (1) to least important (6) in guiding the development of the university's strategic plan.

- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Reconciliation and Respect
- Accountability and Transparency
- Trust, Integrity and Honesty
- Connectedness and Community Engagement
- Leadership Excellence and an Aspirational Focus
- Learning Focus

The following table illustrates the total score of responses by the various constituent groups that identified themselves during the Feedback Survey. The highest priority items are the ones with the lowest scores: these are highlighted green according to the identified respondent group; in contrast, red highlighted cell indicate lower priority values (highest total value).

Response	Group Identification	EDI, Reconciliation and Respect	Accountability and Transparency	Trust, Integrity and Honesty	Connectedness and Community Engagement	Leadership, Excellence, and an Aspirational Focus	Learning Focus
206	Total	370	411	376	577	552	465
21	Administration	61	60	46	60	48	61
10	Alumni	34	26	25	37	36	31
2	Community Partner	7	5	5	10	8	7
32	Faculty	58	68	65	104	88	79
45	Staff	76	74	65	115	110	106
97	Students	133	174	167	245	257	179

This feedback strongly reinforces several themes identified in the original draft of the position paper, including trust, integrity, and honesty; accountability and transparency; and equity, diversity, inclusion, reconciliation, and respect, and supports the

inclusion of all of the originally identified values. One factor of note is the implication that a grass roots approach rather than a leadership-driven approach to the process appeared to be prioritized by many stakeholder groups.



During the Feedback survey we received 206 responses from staff, students, administrators, faculty, alumni and community members.

This scoring is one step in prioritizing elements of the strategic planning process going forward. These six value areas, with some revisions based on community input, will remain a part of the planning process, but several others will be added based on the input received from the campus community.

ADDITIONAL VALUES SUGGESTIONS

Open text response invited feedback on the identified values some of which reinforced or proposed changes to existing values, while other submissions suggested new values and perspectives. This word cloud represents 86 unique ideas with larger words illustrating values that more commonly appeared.

SOME KEY VALUES THAT WILL BE ADDED TO OUR PROCESS INCLUDE:

While we had included excellence in the academic mission of the university – research, teaching and service within the guiding questions offered by the President at the beginning of the Position Paper, campus input made it clear that prioritizing **excellence in the academic mission of the university – research, teaching and learning,**

and service – must be explicitly articulated as a core process value and the starting point for this process. **A focus on innovation, boldness,** and a willingness to try new things was clearly articulated as a value to be incorporated into this process.

There was extensive feedback on the need for a focus **on climate, sustainability, and stewardship** within the core values of our process. Although much of the feedback around this topic involved specific initiatives or activities the university should explore as part of strategic planning, it was also clear that many felt that it was important that this lens needed to be a starting point for how we plan and be fully integrated into discussion and analysis.

A general value/theme that was nested within numerous comments was: **compassion, empathy, a compassionate university/institution, considerations for mental health** (in a range of contexts) as well as understanding of students, staff, and faculty context.

A number of submissions noted the importance of **accessibility** as an element of discussions of equity and belonging.

An updated list of process values and explanations is included in the revised Position Paper and Summary.



VALUES IN ACTION AND CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

One of the more illuminating questions in the Feedback Survey was the future-focused aspirational question that inquired about what happens if we are successful in this process and live up to the values. The word cloud above breaks down the responses, with 163 unique aspirations being identified:

As you can see different campus groups (student(s), staff, faculty, workforce) dominate the word cloud in the context of being more engaged (or more engagement from/with) linked to a wide variety of adjectives – learning, stronger, feel, pride, etc. There are lots of other key words like Reputation (being improved), greater Trust, and Learning and Research outcomes improving to name a few. While a number of these envisioned outcomes of the process had been captured in the original Position Paper, input from the Feedback Survey additionally emphasized issues of becoming a community leader in stewardship and sustainability, and alignment between explicit priorities, practices, reward and recognition structures, and resources.

In responding to contextual factors to be considered, a dominant theme was COVID-19 both in terms of its impacts on students, staff, faculty, and institution as well as how it will impact this process – some of our students have never set foot on campus and may not this year. A number of contextual issues like enrolment patterns, budgets, provincial mandate


agreements, climate change, workplace morale and more were identified as factors that could impact this process. Over the course of the fall, we plan to provide a series of information documents on topics like these which will provide background information for wider campus discussion of these factors and create space for imaginative and creative solutions to how they impact both this planning process and our future planning. This information will be leveraged as a part of the overall engagement plan that will be shared with the Strategic Plan Steering Committee following their convening and will be monitored through the process to ensure we are reaching the voices that are needed to be reached.

ADVICE AND RESOURCES

The respondents were very generous in sharing honest thoughts and feedback on the proposed process and next steps of the Strategic Plan.

One item that was suggested and that we will be actioning early in our engagement process is creating a pathway for independent submissions from interested parties throughout the process.

There are already many amazing ideas out there about how to better the University. People in our campus community have deep experience and expertise on specific areas of practice. We are not ready to explore some of these at this stage of the process, but they have all been catalogued and will be re-introduced in future planning stages.



Another piece of advice that was shared was to talk to other institutions and experts that have already undertaken a similar process. This is certainly a part of our process and we have undertaken a national scan of processes and communications at other Canadian universities, and are leveraging the experience of Dru Marshall, Past Provost at the University of Calgary. We are exploring opportunities to consult with and bring in outside experts by through a virtual speaker's series in the new year, with speakers focusing on key topics related to strategic planning process, and will be reaching out to strategic planning leads at other universities for further discussions.

Specific suggestions to contact have been noted for outreach.

As mentioned above, as part of the engagement plan, this fall will see "Discussion Papers" shared with the campus and community to help level set key issues and topics, for example – community demographics, University enrolment patterns, research funding trends, equity, diversity and inclusion issues, sustainability, funding models, as well as best practices documents related to issues like student experience, employee engagement, and potentially more. In the Feedback Survey, several resources were shared that will be incorporated into that process. We are currently collecting the shared resources and they will be posted on <https://engageuwindsor.ca> in the coming weeks.

PROCESS CHANGES BASED ON FEEDBACK

For the most part, our process was supported with a few respondents wanting the process "going faster".

As the Strategic Planning process unfolds we will continually adjust based on feedback. The main area of feedback was the composition of the Steering Committee. Based on these suggestions, the following changes to the committee structures were made:

- 2 Employment Union Representatives: to note, these positions were inadvertently omitted from the original graphics, but were always an intended part of the Steering Committee. Union executives were consulted last week and a process of identifying delegates is underway.
- The splitting of the Alumni/Community representative into two separate positions allowing for a standalone Alumni representative and a Community representative.
- 1 Industry Representative added.
- 2 additional Faculty "at large" to be appointed.

Although the committee has grown, the scope of its work in this process remains the same and will be fully articulated in a Project Charter in the coming weeks.

The second is a minor tweak to the timelines. As we all know, the semester is in full swing, there are many initiatives currently in progress as well as the pandemic work, and finding time in schedules to hold key meetings of the various committees was originally planned to occur in October, but this will now continue into November. This does not significantly impact the process, but it does mean that additional recruitment for Working Teams will continue through November. Finally, the Steering Committee in their initial meetings will be establishing some clear engagement and process metrics that will be shared with campus, monitored and reported on throughout this process.

All these changes are reflected in the Updated Position Paper and Summary Document that can be found at <http://engageuwindsor.ca>

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK

Input from the Feedback Survey identified over 250 groups, organizations, and individuals (including duplicates) to engage with in this strategic planning process.

SUGGESTED CONSULTATION GROUPS IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER			
Aboriginal Education Council and First Nations Leadership	Donor/ Potential Donors (5)	Internship/Placement Partners (2)	Staff Currently Enrolled in University
Aboriginal Leaders from the Community	Elected Officials (Municipal, MPPs, MPs) (5)	Information Technology Services (3)	Students (24)
Anti-Black Racism Taskforce (2)	Employee Engagement in Human Resources	Joint Health and Safety Committee	Students Accessibility Services
Academic Leaders at Other Institutions	Employers (4)	Key Non-for-profit Organizations	Students above the Age of 30
Admin (2)	Enrolled Staff	Leaders from Different Departments	Student Groups/Societies (6)
Aboriginal Education Centre	Equity & Diversity Committees	Less Enfranchised Individuals	Student Services
Affiliated colleges	Equity Seeking Groups	Library	Students who are not-High Achievers/on Academic Probation (2)
All Local Bands/Nations	Everyone (3)	Local Business and Manufacturing (4)	Students who Decline to come to UWindsor
Alumni (27)	Executive/Senior Leadership	Members of Minority Groups	Students who use Daycare Services
Any Organization	Experiential Learning and Co-op	Municipal Administrative Team (2)	Student Unions
Bargaining Unions and Members (6)	Facilities	Multicultural Council of Windsor-Essex County	Students who are Employed
Business Improvement Areas	Faculty (34)	Non-Unionized Employees	Trans Wellness Ontario
Black Council of Windsor-Essex	Former Athletes	Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association	Turtle Island Aboriginal Education Centre
Bounce Back Ontario	Former Board of Governor Members	Office of Open Learning	United Way Windsor-Essex County
Campus Pride Centre	Former Student Award Recipients (2)	Organization of Part-Time University Students	University Retirees Association/Retirees (2)
Can-Am Indian Friendship Centre (2)	Frontline Managers and Staff (2)	Office of Research & Innovation Services	University of Windsor Students' Alliance (2)
CAW/Unifor/Labour	Funding Agencies	Our Neighbors	Volunteers

Citizens Environment Alliance	Future Students/High School Students (2)	Outstanding Scholars	West Windsor Community
City of Windsor (4)	Grad Students including international students	Public Affairs and Communications	Windsor-Essex Pride Fest
Charities Focused on Educational Pipeline	Graduate Student Society	Partner Institutions	Windsor-Essex Transgender and Allied Support
Collective Bargaining Units	Health and Safety	Partners in Research	Woman's Welcome Centre Shelter
Community Groups/Leader/ Partners (11)	High school Guidance Counsellors, Teachers, Principals (4)	Prospective Students	Women's Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor Inc. (WEST)
Competitor and Partner Institutions Representatives	Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Consultant	Recruitment Office	Workforce Windsor-Essex
Continuing Education	Institutional Analysis	Religious groups	Windsor Regional Hospital/ Hotel Dieu Grace Healthcare
Constituents/public input opportunities	Ignite Employees	School Boards	Windsor University Faculty Association
County of Essex	Indigenous and Black leaders	Senate	
Centre for Teaching and Learning	Indigenous Community	Sessional Instructors	
CUPE	Industry and Associations (4)	Small Business	
Distilleries, Brewers and Wineries	Institutions from which students transfer	Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre (SOAHAC)	
Distress Centre of the Downtown Mission	International Students	Staff (24)	

Our goal in this process is to engage all these groups and more as a part of our consultation process beginning in early 2022.

NEXT STEPS

Identification of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee membership by various campus constituent groups is underway. By November 15th we expect to be able to announce the full representation on the Steering Committee based on the membership groups outlined in the Position Paper

Over the coming weeks a series of educational discussions will begin on <http://engageuwindsor.ca>.

To ensure that the broader engagement process

is well informed, a series of discussion papers as outlined on page 7 will be released for comment, feedback and general discussion. The topics of these papers will help contextualize this process in the broader ecosystem that the University operations and range from: enrolment, university budget, strategic mandate agreement, research funding, sustainability, EDI and more. Please register for updates on the site should you wish to be automatically informed when new activities, engagements or information is posted related to the Strategic Plan.



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