

CURRENT ISSUES IN STUDENT AFFAIRS

THE CONTEXT, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CANADIAN
STUDENT AFFAIRS TODAY

Dr. Heather Cummings
Dr. Peggy Patterson
(Moderators)
CACUSS

Agenda

1. Introduction of Moderators and Session Goals- H. Cummings
2. Brief Overview of 2009 Current Issues Survey and other related information – P. Patterson
3. Introduction of the Panelists- H. Cummings
 - Lilly Walker
 - Brenda Whiteside
 - David Hannah
 - Bruce Belbin
 - Brian Sullivan
4. Panelist Presentations
5. Q&A
6. Final Thoughts

Setting the Stage: Survey of Current Issues in Canadian Higher Education * in 2009 - who responded

- Sent invitation to complete an online survey to 160 College, Institute and University Presidents (both public and private institutions) and Canada's 13 Advanced Education Ministers in January 2009
- 24 of 160 Presidents responded (26.3%)- 30.6% of the University Presidents; 20.3% of the College/Institute Presidents responded
- The respondents were from 25 public universities and colleges and 13 private colleges and universities and 4 university-colleges or polytechnics
- None of the Advanced Education Ministers responded
- Responses were grouped by issues overall, type of institution, length of time in job, job position, institutional size and region

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ccshe/files/ccshe/Current%20Higher%20Education%20Leadership%20Issues%20Report%20.pdf>

What the Survey respondents said: Issues and Specific Concerns *within* each topic area

- Research – Funding (noted as a concern by 56% of respondents)
- Learning and Instruction- Student Experience, followed by academic teaching support and addressing diversity
- Faculty and Staff – Salary and compensation, followed by recruitment and developing a work climate
- Stakeholder relations – Relationships with donors and government (21% of respondents each followed by engaging the community
- Campus Infrastructure and operations- updating facilities, building new facilities, new/updating computer technology
- Top 2 OVERALL ISSUES – 1)Funding-related issues- fundraising and managing capital and operating budget, 2) Student and programs related – student recruitment and program/curriculum development

Survey Results (** indicates within-category differences)

- When all areas were combined, 3 areas were identified as concerns most frequently by Presidents of both *public and private* institutions – student-related, planning and budget-related and overall funding/fundraising.
- 3 issues emerged as being of most concern to Presidents regardless of the *length of time they had been in their positions* – student-related, planning and budget issues. **
- Student-related issues, planning and budget and funding/fundraising were top concerns for all 3 *job types*(University President, College President or Senior Academic Officer).*
- Student-related, Funding/fundraising and Planning, budget were the top 3 issues when *institutional size* was considered. *
- Student-related, Planning/budget and Funding/fundraising were the top 3 issues when *geographic region* was considered. **

Our Panel

- Lilly Walker – **Memorial University Newfoundland**
- Brenda Whiteside – **University of Guelph**
- Dave Hannah – **University of Saskatchewan**
- Bruce Belbin – **Northern Alberta Institute of Technology**
- Brian Sullivan – **University of British Columbia**

Lilly Walker – Memorial University of Newfoundland

- Too few men
- Technology and challenge of engagement
- Declining Birth rates and student heterogeneity
- Socializing Millenials
- Culture of Fear...Preserving principled decisions
- Protempore Leadership ... Chaos amidst uncertainty

Student Affairs at the University of Guelph Issues shaping the Campus

Budget and Pension Issues: This is having significant issues on budgets.

- Forcing review of programs, discussions of duplication, relevance of programs
- Use of technology in areas before never imagined - Counselling.

Demographic Changes: Future potential for decline in enrolment.

- Focus on the GTA. More commuters – what does this mean for student engagement?
- Greater diversity of our student body. What does this mean for programming?
- Move to admit more international students. Impact on services?

Accommodation Issues:

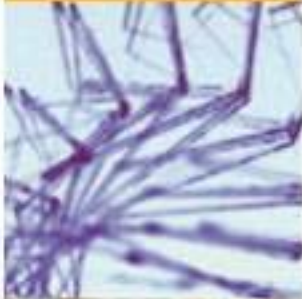
- New requirements for accommodation and training under the AODA legislation.
- A noticeable increase in students on campus with serious mental health issues. Counselling Units overwhelmed. What are the responsibilities of universities in providing sustained mental health support? How do Counselling units keep up?
- Issues of human rights. Accommodation both in the classroom and on-campus.

Assessment: A move to learning outcomes – proving your worth.

- How do you measure some of the intangible outcomes within personal development
- Infrastructure to support an assessment process

Service Learning: A strong commitment to embedding Service Learning into the Curriculum

- How to support in a way that not just a one-off experience?
- How to work more collaboratively with our academic colleagues?



David Hannah – University of Saskatchewan

Enrolment Management

- Shifting provincial demographics + historical insularity = enrolment challenges

Student Crisis Management

- Growing number and complexity of student crises + Virginia Tech = Student Crises as a priority
- Growing incidence of mental health concerns & incidents (often combined with cultural considerations with international students)

Relationships with Academic units

- A perennial/ongoing issue for our profession
- Helping colleges/faculty better understand who we are, what we do, and how we can partner with them to support student success

U Sask cont'd

Facilitating Student Voice & Developing a more Student-Centred institution

- Continuing concerns re: student feedback processes, follow up, and resolution of problems
- No Ombuds service
- Lack of a “culture of service” to students in some areas

Assessment

- Ad hoc, haphazard, anecdotal, numbers/satisfaction-based or non-existent

Financial challenges

- Long history as “have not” province -> many (most?) areas significantly underfunded
- SK gov't remains strongly committed to post-secondary sector (5% increase this year)
- U of S had to eliminate \$ 10M structural deficit over last 2 yrs

Bruce Belbin – Northern Alberta Institute of Technology

- Funding
- Staff shortages
- Training
 - changes in models from one stop to combined academic and administrative sharing and cooperation
- Demand for services.
 - disabilities, international, specialized college services

Brian Sullivan, UBC

- Strategic Enrolment Management (Building the Class)
- Economic Sustainability (Taking Care of Business)
- Campus and System (One Great University; Two Great Campuses; a Lot of Dotted Lines)
- Transformative Student Learning (Delivering on Place and Promise)
- Service Partnership Models (Getting by (in) with a little help form my friends)
- Surveys and Dashboards (Can't Get No Satisfaction)
- Communication with Students (Hello Operator)
- Talent Development (Should I Stay or Should I Go?)
- Technology Platform (Spread the Knowledge)



a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Final Thoughts

