Summary

Themes

- IT tools to support the students’ experience – the need for the university to nimbly support each student’s “Personal Learning Environment” (the suite of learning tools they bring to campus embedded in their technology)

- Two-way engagement for true international student interactions: international students need support (in all years) in language, culture, academic expectations AND domestic students need the tools to reach out and make real connections to their international peers.

Thought Provokers

- International experiences can be “micromoments.” While many students do not have the time/resources for extended international experiences, even a week can be life changing (ex. a Reading Week international field school)

- The most effective form of integration into campus culture is delivered by students helping students, but domestic students need to develop the skills and strategies to involve their international peers.

Tension to Drive Positive Change

- Need to address the plight of contract staff (CAS:T, SOTS, Trust Research) – represent 1/3 of academic staff. These are long-term employees (average 5 years). Would like to see recognition of this service: longer contracts, funded professional development, inclusion in committees.

Strategies

- Create an INT D (interdisciplinary studies) studies course on international issues open to all students

- IT tools for international students – they are not able to use Google or Google apps from their home countries. They cannot send or receive a gmail message, which hinders communication with those the UofA trying to support them. We need robust international IT tools

- Seamless student tracking systems. Even if each unit (Service units and faculties) had different access rules, but worked from the same database, services would be more seamless, and we would be able to have a more complete picture of a student’s needs and activities.
Following introductions and a brief backgrounder, each participant was asked to name one thing they thought was essential to include in the draft plan:

1. Sustainability – would like to see this as a pillar of the plan
   a. The UofA has already committed to sustainability principles. A 2nd planning process is underway and has included hundreds of people. The principles of social, economic and environmental sustainability as aligned to Government of Alberta principles.

2. A culture of collaboration, supported from the top. All employees working from the understanding that it is university first, unit second.

3. Supporting students’ “personal learning environments.” Students arrive with a set of preferred learning tools installed on the personal devices. We need to be nimble enough to support these tools.

4. Faculty renewal supported by access to research technology supports. Similar to CTL, there is a need for a central research computing service/digital research support

5. International students need assistance with integrating into campus (language, culture, academic expectations). They do not know their options – engagement and integration requires support beyond the first year.

6. Engagement of domestic students in becoming global citizens
   a. This needs to happen in all faculties and at all levels
   b. Driven by a directive in intercultural competency – for all students to have the skills to engage interculturally. Inculcate this in the student experience.

7. Sustainability needs to be a part of the curriculum.
   a. Faculties are not reflecting how they contribute to a better world in their curricula (aboriginal issues, environment, water)
   b. Faculties need to be driven to create sustainability plans – including their research, programs and operations

8. Need to address the plight of contract staff (CAS:T, SOTS, Trust Research) – represent 1/3 of academic staff. These are long-term employees (average 5 years). Would like to see recognition of this service: longer contracts, funded professional development, inclusion in committees.

9. A focus on the current student experience. Recruitment doesn’t stop at the recruiter – it starts with the recruitment and continues until graduation
   a. The university should not refer to its missions as teaching and research, but learning and discovery; the focus should not be on student retention, but on student persistence

10. A coordinated first year experience where services are delivered similarly in all faculties. This would ease student mobility between faculties and ensure that all students feel welcomed into the UofA community.

Summary (DHT)
1. International student experience and global citizenship for all students*
2. IT and technology as an enabler*
3. Sustainability
4. Contract Staff
5. Student experience*
   • For further discussion

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP FOR ALL STUDENTS
- We put the onus on international students to integrate, but we need to start giving domestic students the tools to interact and reap the benefits of interaction
- The domestic students (particularly from rural communities) also need the skills to integrate
- Netherlands model: every student has one funded international experience
- Need to emphasize that language is not a true barrier to study in Europe
- International week is not reaching the students – we need to take the international experiences to them: ex. International field work during reading week
- Students will take advantage of international opportunities if they are informed about them, particularly if encouraged by faculty members
- International opportunities can be “micromoments” – students with jobs cannot give up huge amounts of time (like a whole semester), but they could likely find a week for a great opportunity (not everyone needs the Cadillac version)
- Create an INT D (interdisciplinary studies) studies course on international issues open to all students
- Look for opportunities to develop international sustainability activities

**IT TOOLS**
- We need more access to enterprise technologies (project management software, survey tools, etc.) [Scribe’s note: this commenter has since been directed to a number of tools that they had been previously unaware of]
- Tools for international students – they are not able to use Google or Google apps from their home countries. They cannot send or receive a gmail message, which hinders communication with those the UofA trying to support them. We need robust international IT tools
- “Personal Learning Environment” and the commuter student
  - We need an environment that is equitable and meets individual needs
  - Consider how the student interacts with the university – the systems need to be seamless
  - Good access is part of a welcoming environment
- We also need seamless student tracking systems. With each service/faculty using its own student tracking systems, we do not have a good picture of all the services a student is accessing, and students have to continually provide the same information to different parts of the university. Even if each unit have different access rules, but worked from the same database, services would be more seamless, and we would be able to have a more complete picture of a student’s needs and activities. (We don’t have data lakes, we have data puddles)

**STUDENT EXPERIENCE**
- The most effective form of engagement is students helping students (ex. SU-run orientations) – but this does not reach international students as effectively as it reaches domestic students
- We need to leverage the students’ love of social media to promote activities and engagement
- Bringing students to campus for a week in grade 11 or 12 and having them attend classes that discuss current events would be an example of how to reduce the intimidation factors for incoming students (would work for rural and international)
- The pedagogy needs to intentionally include global citizenship – faculty need to be explicitly encourages/taught how to include this content – and they need to align the teaching of content to the development of skill sets