**Summary**

| Themes | Diversity and equity—need a cross-institutional strategy relating to faculty, staff, and students. |
|        | Create a teaching stream—value, count, and acknowledge the work of CAST faculty members. |
|        | Learning assessment and quality (are we measuring learning outcomes and graduate attributes?); develop more co-curricular programming. |

| Thought Provokers | Some parents of international students invest life-savings into their child’s education—how can the U of A honour that, meet their expectations, and ensure that international students are seen as an asset to the university? |
|                  | How can we foster resiliency and build change agents among our students, faculty, and staff? |

| Tension to Drive Positive Change | USRIs are a sham—do not measure teaching effectiveness and do not facilitate any increases in teaching quality or innovation. |

| Strategies | Begin faculty renewal, and use it as a mechanism to support future strength in research and teaching – and as a lever for academic freedom |
|           | Create mechanisms to support the development of teaching excellence in our faculty – including mentoring and peer evaluation |
Each participant was asked to name one thing to include in the draft plan:

1. Mechanisms for measuring, supporting and rewarding teaching excellence and professionalism. Give teaching a definite value.
   a. Reward curricular innovation
   b. Require good teaching through reward mechanisms
   c. Apply across-the-board

2. Quality assurance in terms of what we deliver on the teaching and learning side. Courses and programs.
   a. Organized teaching and learning support

3. Develop a data-driven framework that would capture all of the elements of the learning environment, including things outside of the classroom such as living conditions.
   a. Excellence should include measures of/for community impact

4. Need to find a way to create a “buffer” (e.g. some kind of financial reserve) that allows the institution to handle gov’t cuts without having to immediately apply internal cuts.

5. Mental health (not only mental illness) should be a priority across all groups in the university (students, faculty, and staff).

6. We need to include a statement that say we value staff and the contributions and service they provide the institution. Build internal ambassadors.
   a. Mentor APO and support staff.
   b. Increase staff mobility to help individuals grow professionally and also to increase the talent pool of the institution.
   c. More secondments.
   d. More opportunities for networking.

7. A clear definition of “community” would be helpful. Define our communities and then you can target some goals for each one.

8. Need a strategic vision for equity and diversity for faculty, staff, and students.
   a. U of T and UBC are good examples/comparators
   b. Remember that equity and diversity are not the same thing
   c. Visible minorities need to be included
   d. Links need to be drawn between having equity and diversity strategies and fostering and producing innovation and creativity
   A encompassing vision like this has been absent from the U of A since 1994.

9. Foster change resiliency in students and institution. Create change agents and build change agency.

10. Integrate sustainability plan into all aspects of the institutional plan (programs, academic, facilities, curricular, co-curricular).

11. Research and program in climate change. Make the U of A a leader in climate change issues.
12. Ensure that international students are an asset to the U of A and the U of A an asset to international students. This is a mechanism for building diversity and community.
   a. Build community—work at creating a mutually rewarding integration between international students and institution. Two-way. Local students are looking for support in how to engage with their international peers.

13. Acknowledge the value of teaching at the U of A with the introduction of a teaching-intensive stream. These individuals would have the capacity to focus on strong curriculum design.
   a. Look at the agreements we already have in place and improve them, such as FSOs

14. Define who/what we want to be as a university. We need to focus, as we cannot be everything to everybody.

15. Prepare students for the 21st century through the development of more co-curricular options.
   a. Provide funding for students to take advantage of them.
   b. Alumni as mentors

16. Apply assessment measures, attributes, competencies, etc. to teaching expectations and evaluations. Teaching is a process and can be controlled - educational curriculum can and should be designed around student outcomes (graduate attributes).

17. Create a teaching-only stream and ensure that current CAST faculty get the job security, research funding, benefits, professional allowance, etc. Value the work they do. Count what they do. Acknowledge what they do.

18. Student affordability is a big issue. Need to ensure that students can manage the increasing costs of education.

Further discussion of three emerging themes:

Diversity/Equity/International students

- Internationalization may enhance diversity but it doesn’t seed it. We already have a very culturally diverse campus.
- Need to be sure that can make a compelling case for recruiting international students to parents of local prospective students.
- Good to see gender equity in the report. What’s the data on staff and administration?—especially director or above.
- Large proportion of international students come from Canadian high schools—they have a particular set of needs.
- Note: many faculty members who are themselves immigrants were once international graduate students.
- We need to deliver on what we promise to international students—while also balancing the institution’s need to attract students with the greatest capacities to succeed.
Teaching-only stream

- Teaching-only streams already exist at the university—e.g. FSO—can we make more use of them — or make more consistent use of them (each faculty treats them differently)
- CAST members are treated unfairly—the pay and benefits vs the job responsibilities can mean some labour becomes equivalent to volunteer labour.
- CAST members are “indispensable disposables.” Many of our CAST faculty are our former grad students—when we treat them in this way, we devalue our own degrees.
- Was once opposed to the teaching stream but no longer. If people would like to have this option, we should allow for it.
- If we create a teaching stream, long-term CAST faculty should be transitioned into it as they have already been in a “teaching stream” for years and this should be acknowledged.

Learning assessment and quality

- Encourage more interdisciplinary programs and experiential learning.
- There is a systematic devaluing of teaching—based in part on a mistaken idea that excellence in teaching can’t be measured. It can and should be measured.
- Mechanisms need to be in place to train people to be better teachers—regular, systematic peer evaluation, for example.
- Appoint people on the basis of a set of deliverable and measure performance against them. UBC has this kind of appointment.
- USRIs are a sham—do not measure teaching effectiveness. The most effective feedback in changing teaching is formative feedback to the instructor – what did they learn?
- Align teaching evaluations with declared learning objectives of the course.
- Professionalize the practice of teaching on campus.
- More formal mentorship of young teachers (grad students, PDFs, assist profs) is needed—good way to use professors emeriti.
- Consider how the classroom itself can foster healthy students; many students in distress will not seek other access points for assistance.