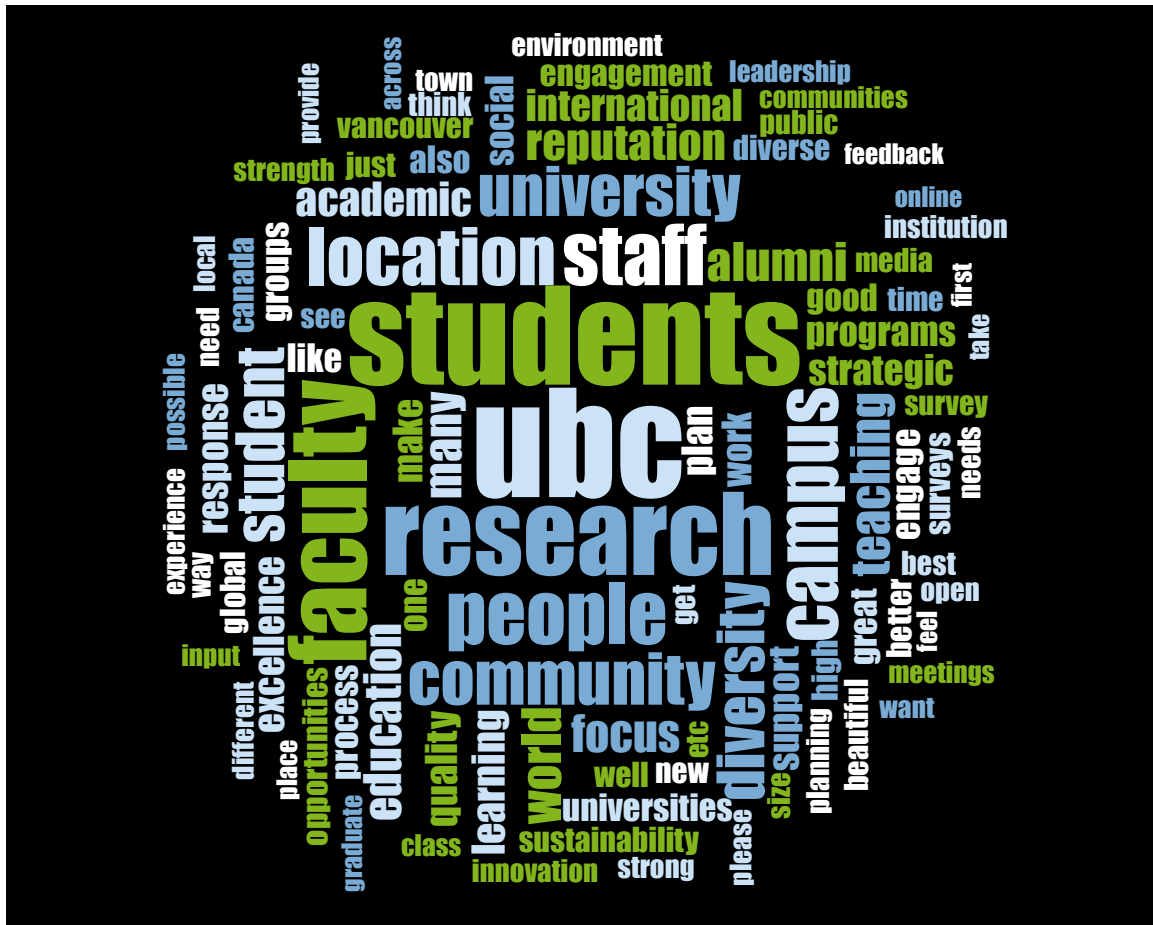


UBC's next century: survey report (staff, faculty, students and other community members)

1. Executive summary



This word cloud contains the words that were most frequently used by respondents to our initial survey on UBC's next strategic plan. The word cloud illustrates certain key themes in these responses - particularly the focus on people, community and institutional possibilities. It illustrates that respondents placed value on learning, engagement, innovation, sustainability and internationalism. However, like any research tool, it has limitations. The algorithm that generates a word cloud looks for repetitions of the same word. It cannot recognize, for example, that references to "Indigenous", "Aboriginal", "First Nations, Inuit and Métis", "Musqueam", and "Okanagan Nation Alliance" are thematically associated, or that UBC's relationship with Indigenous peoples forms a consistent and important thread in the responses we received to our questions.

Similarly, this necessarily brief summary of the key themes identified by respondents to our initial survey can't capture the richness of responses we received. Instead, it seeks to identify the ideas that were raised most often and in particular the themes that arose across campuses



and constituencies. Wherever possible, we have included direct quotes from respondents to illustrate the ideas we heard. The methodological appendix that appears at the end of this document supplies more information about the survey, response rates, and our approaches to coding.

The initial survey constitutes the first step in a process of institutional change. A Steering Committee comprised of staff, faculty, students and other community representatives has been established (see <http://president.ubc.ca/strategic-initiatives/our-process/#steering-committee>). The Steering Committee will draw on this report and the accompanying Alumni report to identify 5 - 7 change-focused institutional priorities. These priorities will in turn form the basis for further community-wide consultation.

This report focuses on feedback we heard from faculty, staff, students and those who identified as fitting “other” categories (primarily, respondents who fit more than one category and emeriti professors). This represents feedback from a total of 564 community members. **A separate report considers feedback from alumni.**

In order of frequency, the key themes that emerged from the survey responses were:

1. Institutional
2. People
3. Geography
4. Diversity
5. Learning
6. Engagement
7. Governance
8. Wellbeing
9. Innovation
10. International
11. Indigenous engagement
12. Sustainability
13. Research
14. Physical infrastructure

Many of these themes bore close relationships to one another. For example, the theme of geography intersected with Indigenous engagement, sustainability and international, and often arose together with physical infrastructure. Diversity likewise intersected with international and Indigenous engagement, and also with wellbeing. Innovation and engagement cut across learning, research and sustainability. The theme of people connected with diversity and was especially closely related to wellbeing. These intersections reflect that there is more than one possible taxonomy for a strategic plan. This report describes these key themes and the relationships among them.

2. Institutional

The institutional theme comprised responses that focused on institutional factors such as UBC’s reputation, academic standards, its capacity to recruit and retain the best students, staff and faculty, the two-campus structure, global recognition and rankings, UBC’s size, and particular strengths such as the Michael Smith Laboratories, libraries and the UBC Farm. For the most part, these responses were not focused on change, but they identified many things that UBC is doing well and institutional activities and attitudes that our community values and wishes to foster. For example, one faculty member commented that UBC’s:

greatest strength is what differentiates us: world-leading research coupled with a commitment to excellence in teaching. A belief that it is not ‘one or the other’ of these two core mandates for a PSE institution: it is possible to do both to a world-leading standard.

While a staff member observed that they appreciated that:



there is a culture of reflection in asking 'how do we do this better?'

A student identified UBC's greatest strengths to be its role as a:

safe haven of culture and bold, critical, evidence based thinking[.]

A few responses in this category identified some great ideas for building upon our institutional strengths. These ideas will be shared for further investigation - for example:

*Add a "make this better" button to every UBC webpage to automatically build-in feedback about how UBC can strive for eminence--some of the best feedback happens in the moment and the opportunity is lost just as quickly.
[Community member.]*

Others identified that some institutional structures impede nimbleness or present disincentives to innovation and collaboration:

This goes right down to how we count student numbers—we count enrolments not toward the unit that provides the teaching resources but according [to] the rubric students sign up for courses under. This provides a disincentive to all Heads to provide teaching resources for cross-listed courses. ... The curriculum process is so cumbersome and slow that it defeats all but the most dedicated. [Faculty member.]

The institutional theme constituted the largest set of responses (representing 27% of all coded answers).

3. People

The theme of people represented 14% of all coded answers. Responses in this theme focused on the strength and quality of UBC's people - students, staff and faculty. As an example that was echoed many times within the responses, one staff member wrote that UBC's greatest strength is:

its people. The staff who keep this majestic ship running (often quietly and behind the scenes), the faculty who teach and research, and of course the students who come here to learn.

Student responses identified the quality of faculty, the support given to them by staff, and connections with alumni and peers as factors they valued about their experience at UBC. A student identified that their highest priority for UBC's next strategic plan is:

I'd like a focus on UBC's identity, to have students and faculty feel and know they are part of an institution that cares about them and they are proud of.

Faculty commented positively on the "Outstanding quality of our undergraduate and graduate students, excellent and dedicated faculty and staff".

While respondents commented very favourably about the quality of UBC's people, they also saw scope for a greater institutional and community focus on helping people to achieve their

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full potential. This was a particularly strong theme in staff responses. For example, a staff member explained:

This should not be UBC's number one priority (which should always be excellence in teaching and research), but I think an important piece of the strategic plan is a focus on how UBC can become a place that ambitious staff view as a viable career. It is increasingly hard to recruit and retain excellent staff who are committed to supporting learning and research. This is often due to insufficient opportunities for advancement. So, while teaching and research are important, some attention must be given to those staff who support those things behind the scenes.

Another staff member identified their highest priority for UBC's next strategic plan to be:

Stable, thoughtful leadership that trickles down and makes UBC an engaging place to work and study, where people feel valued as contributors to a goal, regardless of "rank".

Faculty also identified some areas in which UBC could improve the institutional environment for its people. Concerns that were specifically identified by respondents included paid leave for graduate students (eg parental leave), better support for instructors in contract positions, institutional support for those who are adversely affected by Vancouver's housing market (including at recruitment), meeting the needs of international students, and providing clear and appealing pathways to retirement.

Respondents also identified concerns about the impact of commuting on the sense of community at UBC, as illustrated in this quote from a student respondent:

We are far from downtown and other parts of the greater Vancouver area. Commuters comprise a large portion of the student population who are more likely to have a reduced sense of how connected they feel to campus.

Faculty and staff also shared concerns about commute lengths and quality of life. For example, one staff member wrote:

I currently commute more than three hours each day, and my son spends nearly 10 hours per day in daycare. ...

We're moving farther east, and without work-from-home options, many of us will be looking elsewhere - either for work closer to home, or for progressive companies that recognize this trend and work with employees to find flexible solutions.

I also feel that supporting work-from-home options for employees supports women in the workplace.

Respondents also identified that they care deeply about UBC's institutional response to sexual assault and other harms.

Sexual assault support, culture of consent on campus[.] [Community member]



Focus on students and not bureaucracy, finalize sexual assault policy.
[Student]

Each of these topics identifies areas in which UBC may be able to take actions that positively influence community and quality of life, thereby helping our people to achieve their goals.

4. Geography

This theme incorporates several dimensions. Many respondents focused on the advantages afforded by the locations of our two main campuses (Vancouver and the Okanagan). Our community takes great pride in our beautiful campuses and their proximity to wilderness spaces. Others identified the ways in which our place on the cultural, physical and geopolitical map (British Columbia, the West Coast) infuses UBC's culture and identity. Respondents identified UBC's strengths as including:

that it is situated in British Columbia--at the edge of Canada, on the Pacific Rim in the province with the most diverse first people's population. This is a particular perspective that no other university of its size has.
[Faculty member]

As this quote illustrates, many of the comments regarding UBC's geography intersected with other key themes such as Indigenous engagement. Similarly, in the following quote, a community member draws connections between UBC's physical location and its institutional emphasis on sustainability as a key differentiating factor:

Situated on the West Coast, in a city that aspires to be the greenest city, in a social culture that supports environmentalism, UBC needs to be a leader in all things sustainable (economic, environmental, social).

Others emphasized the advantages presented by our place within the Canadian university system:

... We work in an entirely different system [from the US] –there are no important private research universities and liberal arts colleges in Canada– this means we have an Ivy-League-quality subset of our large undergrad population and we need to provide them with the opportunities they deserve. ... I'd begin the exercise by thinking about what we want Vancouver, BC, and Canada will mean to the world for the next thirty to fifty years and what roles UBC can play in making that happen. Again, reproducing already existing things is neither going to work nor ambitious enough. [Faculty member.]

The relationship between UBC's geographic location and its institutional priorities was a particularly strong theme for faculty, but it was also raised by others. For example a staff member identified that a key differentiating factor is:

Place. Where UBC is situated - on Musqueam territory, on the most Western edge of Canada close to the Pacific Rim, surrounded by Asian Canadian communities with deep and complex histories in BC and Canada - makes us incredibly unique. Our place can be the launching pad for UBC to make its mark in the world as a university that not only researches and teaches but learns and grows through sincere, respectful and mutually beneficial engagement with the communities around it.



A desire to engage with our geographical setting and learn from it was also echoed in the themes of engagement, learning, Indigenous engagement and sustainability.

5. Diversity

The diversity of UBC's students, staff and faculty was widely cited as a particular strength and differentiating factor for our institution. A staff member from UBC-Okanagan explained:

Diversity & Inclusiveness - at UBC they work together

Respondents identified a clear desire to foster and protect diversity, and to secure the benefits of deep institutional commitments to diversity:

Greatest strength is its diverse people--students, staff, and also the local population. We have so many cultural and national backgrounds, so many multilingual speakers, and underleveraged assets. We draw from the diversity all the time to [do] amazing things, but without intentionally leveraging these assets most of the time. If we could learn to really maximize what we have, and then tell the story of why we are able to do so much with so little, we would be looked to as world leaders. ... Furthermore, its the cultural knowledge that languages represent--the implicit and soft skills that create trust relations and are the basis of so much of the social capital and far flung networks that give us strength. We need to tell the story better of this diversity, and also invest in it in a more overt way. [Faculty member]

Another respondent suggested that UBC:

Provide meaningful spaces and opportunities to design intentional encounters where all students, international and domestic, are engaged in intercultural dialogues around difference. [Staff member]

Diversity extends beyond cultural diversity, as illustrated in the following quote in which a staff member describes what they consider to be UBC's greatest strength:

Its diversity and the fact that it has the resources to ensure that it is welcoming to a diversity of students regardless of gender identity, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation.

Overall, many of the responses that focused on diversity expressed a desire for UBC to do more institutionally to work with and celebrate the strengths of a highly diverse community. The theme of diversity has strong connections to the themes of international, Indigenous engagement, and wellbeing.

6. Learning

The theme of learning encapsulates traditional, classroom based learning but goes well beyond this context. Many respondents placed considerable value on UBC's emphasis on offering high quality, innovative learning opportunities to its students. One community member wrote:



an important distinction for UBC is its investment in undergraduate education. Supported by the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund, grant funding at a level unheard-of at most universities, and then in recent years by the Carl Wieman Science Education Initiative, UBC is a leader among research universities in the amount of faculty and course development that has occurred in the last 20 years at the undergraduate level. It is hard to quantify some of this success (to what extent does it contribute to the very high retention levels, for example?) and faculty development is not considered a hot innovation like one often heard about in, for example, learning technology, but it is fundamental to how classroom operate[s] here and it is a different place to learn science than other universities. Many universities visit and contact us about our successes in this area.

The leadership offered by the Faculty of Medicine in teaching and learning was also identified as a particular institutional strength:

Offering a distributed medical program via videoconferencing. We are the only university to distribute a program on such a complex level. We have become the leaders in this education offering coaching and mentoring U of T, Dalhousie, the University of Washington and beyond. We are the leaders in this field. [Staff member]

Respondents identified an appetite for innovation and flexibility in many areas of teaching and learning. The following quotes provide a flavor of these responses:

To expand the scope and reach of learning beyond the classroom, the campus and to reach a broader, larger audience. ... [O]pen the doors to more learners for different reasons and consider why someone wants to learn a topic versus what certificate or degree they must earn. [Staff member]

Major focus on lifelong learners, supporting people through the acceleration of change in our lives. We need to improve the ways we connect with our many communities and 'extend learning' across broad topics. It's an essential and appropriate way to engage. Professional Applied Degrees (part-time format; off-campus locations + online, and client-oriented) would help the economy, the workplace and the community enormously. In balance, strengthen public programs for community participation, building an informed and civil society. [Faculty member]

Respondents identified the relationship between institutional resources and teaching innovation (a theme that connects with institution and physical infrastructure):

A vision that includes innovative teaching - and provides the support and funds for changes to processes (e.g. academic scheduling) and infrastructure (classroom upgrades including technology) that support that goal. [Staff member]



Others identified the importance of the teaching leadership stream, but also suggested that further consideration needs to be given to support and rewards structures for that stream. For example:

*I really want to see teaching, and research on teaching, emphasized and valued. We have excellent people in the educational leadership faculty stream, and many are doing amazing research work. There is little support for that work, sadly (e.g., not much in the way of research grants).
[Faculty member]*

Respondents differed about the proper emphasis within our teaching and learning. For example, one staff member wrote:

Address the need for broad educational values, international understanding through the required study of humanities as opposed to the continuing narrowing and specializing towards "job training".

Another staff member explained:

a career is the end goal of a university student. let's focus on integrating career success into the strategic plan in a way that makes university strongly relevant and financially worthwhile to all students. ... What do we need to do to convince the average student that's it worth their dime to attend - I think that's focusing on jobs.

The latter view was echoed by some students, for example one who wrote:

Jobs - increasing engagement with companies to determine which skill sets are necessary for the 21st century economy. Not every student will (and wants to) go to grad school.

7. Engagement

The theme of engagement emphasizes connections and relationships between UBC's work and people and the communities and societies in which we live and work. Engagement intersects with innovation, teaching and learning, research, and institutional factors. It also finds particular expression in respect of the themes of Indigenous engagement, international and sustainability.

Community members who chose the "other" or "no campus" descriptors emphasized this theme especially strongly:

I hope UBC's institutional goals and the individuals providing leadership can achieve more interactive relationships with the millions of citizens in BC not privileged enough to live, work and study on campus.

Similarly, a community leader in the Okanagan region explained that their priority was:

To leverage the academia on campus to benefit the Okanagan region both as a student and later as a graduate. We hope to develop more initiatives where students get involved with [local] projects or strategies so they



acquire practical skillsets and we gain different perspectives and/or solutions.

This theme was also strongly supported by faculty, for example:

*A plan that embeds ... community and public engagement as core components, where appropriate, into Teaching, Learning, Scholarship and Research - with central units, and those within faculty that support these endeavours are resourced appropriately and barriers to these activities are addressed. We need a institution-wide effort and strategy that removes barriers and listens to the voices of those most engaged in these activities currently to help drive it, and support others - students, staff and faculty to get more involved working with local communities and public efforts that both further the institution from a learning and research perspective and *actually* bring resources to communities and contribute to greater public good and social change around local issues.*

and:

To see UBC truly embrace its commitment to engagement with Asia, recognizing the importance of Asia to the people, communities, businesses, and cultural landscape of Vancouver and British Columbia overall. This MUST include both attention to Asia itself (Asian languages, cultures, histories) and to the Asian Canadian communities that have such a long-standing presence in British Columbia.

Staff also identified the importance of engagement:

It is important that the university clearly expresses its responsibility to our community/society. We are publicly funded and must be certain that the priorities we pursue are in the public interest, and in order to do this effectively and without presumption, we must try harder to connect with our community.

8. Governance

The theme of governance relates specifically to university leadership and institutional structures. Many respondents identified the leadership that President Ono has demonstrated in his early months as a key strength:

*That we now have you, the president who is determined, diligent, collaborative, fair and open-minded individual, who has UBC's best interests at heart and is willing to take that long hard road if needed.
[Staff member]*

Respondents across categories emphasized the importance of good governance and also identified scope for improvement in this area. For example, one community member wrote:

The university needs to consider how it operates across both campuses and also within the Vancouver campus. We have tended to operate as a cluster of independent units or faculties with common needs for infrastructure and

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administrative support. However, if UBC is truly to move from Excellence to Eminence, we need to agree on a common set of activities and priorities, and work together across portfolios in the best interest of achieving UBC's strategies rather than focusing on our individual priorities.

A staff member identified:

Place and promise did an excellent job of outlining a number of key lines of development. However, nowhere in the values, commitments, goals or actions elucidated was there explicit reference to a plan for good management as an aim in itself: the equivalent of 'working on' as opposed to 'in' the business. Coming from a nation founded on the principles of 'Peace, Order and Good Governance' this seems to be somewhat of an oversight.

While a faculty member suggested that UBC should prioritize being:

forward thinking - proactive rather than reactive. Eliminate inefficiencies in bureaucracy - so much of what we do is redundant or piece-meal patchwork processes that waste time and resources.

Some respondents suggested that governance and reward structures may need to be revisited in order to reflect changing times:

*Establishing how a university can modernize to the realities of 21st century learning and economies by shifting what faculty do and are rewarded for.
[Community member]*

The theme of governance was also connected with engagement, as reflected in this comment by a staff member who prioritized:

Greater willingness to enable community voice to inform governance. Meaning, a deep and abiding commitment to partnership requiring both sides to change and adapt for the purposes of meeting in the middle and creating something new.

9. Wellbeing

The theme of wellbeing has a clear and strong connection with the theme of people. Broadly, the answers coded to this theme focused on factors beyond the “explicit curriculum” and traditional employment relations purview, such as mental health, physical activity and cultural expression. Wellbeing therefore also connects with diversity, international and Indigenous engagement. For example, one respondent wrote:

UBC offers an unparalleled student experience. From UBC Jump Start to Sauder's Business Career Centre, from Self-Directed Seminars to the new Wellbeing Promotion unit, UBC professionals create environments in which students can thrive. Student supports (in and out of the classroom) should no longer be UBC's best-kept secret. International student supports in particular should be a differentiator in our recruitment efforts to attract the best and brightest from around the world. [Staff member]



Respondents also drew connections between wellbeing and our geographic location:

Our relaxed west coast attitude, which encourages the balance of fitness and well being with high academic achievements. [Staff member]

Faculty, staff and students prioritized fostering good mental and physical health and accommodating a range of abilities within our communities:

Mental Health, Work-Life Balance for Faculty and Staff[.] [Faculty member]

Mental health/resiliency education and support[.] [Staff member]

I would like to see disability issues - from academic and structural perspectives - occupy a leading role in the next strategic plan. [Faculty member]

Others also emphasized the desirability of building positive and inclusive communities, for example:

More emphasis on wellbeing in particular has a direct impact on supporting our staff, faculty, students, and neighbours to thrive, be more productive and contribute to making UBC a better place to live, work, play, and learn. It is important that this not just be an isolated initiative but something deeply integrated throughout the strategies, policies, and culture of the university. The International Okanagan Charter for Health Promoting Universities & Colleges adopted by UBC last fall sets out an excellent set of principles and actions for us to apply. [Staff member]

Some respondents identified factors that are presently making it difficult to achieve this goal:

The experience for students and those teaching at UBC is under substantial strain. As a community, we need to be more careful about the time and energy pressure put on those at UBC. [Community member]

Over the past two years, I have witnessed high staff turn-over in my unit. During this time, I have assumed additional responsibilities (mostly managerial and beyond my training) while maintaining my personal workload. This has taken a toll on my health and I know that other colleagues are in the same boat. I would like UBC's strategic plan to incorporate an element that puts the well-being of its staff first. UBC HR has acknowledged that the majority of medical leaves are due to mental health issues as a result of the workplace. Perhaps we can explore why this is the case, how to solve this wide-spread problem, and reinvigorate the employees who still want to work here. Let's have honest conversations. [Staff member]

10. Innovation

As is evidenced within the themes of learning and wellbeing, respondents to the initial survey identified that they place considerable value on UBC's willingness to be innovative in its

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approach to all aspects of its institutional activities. Innovation connects closely with engagement and learning, but also with sustainability and Indigenous engagement.

The following comment from a faculty member about UBC's greatest strength captures the scope of this theme well:

Risking innovative, unconventional improvements and ventures regarding not only science and education but also administration and employment policies.

Staff also identified innovation as a particular institutional strength:

We are recognized by our peers as a leader and innovator in operational and academic sustainability. Our position allows us to be a model to promote local, regional and global change.

Respondents pointed to the Campus as Living Lab strategy and to innovations within the Faculty of Science and Faculty of Medicine curriculum and learning models as examples of the value of innovation.

Respondents also identified that they wished to see UBC continue to innovate:

To contribute and work more with community partners, organizations and companies outside of campus; to be more involved with entrepreneurship and development of start-ups. [Student]

Increasing our research impact with government, business, NGOs and citizens -- proving our relevance; improving community connections; innovating our learning environment. [Faculty member]

UBC has a great opportunity to be a university of great innovation, provided that it is willing to take on some real risks of failure. There are so many opportunities from academics (ie. Teaching & learning) to facilities to community engagement and governance. But, there needs to be a level of transparency, accountability and forgiveness in order to absorb the setbacks that will come along side the advancements. [Staff member]

Respondents emphasized the importance of innovation beyond commercialization:

a recognition that educators as much as entrepreneurs play a critical role in supporting innovation - that learning from failure and through learning opportunities at all stages of the degree, are required for the resilience of our students and the creation of new ideas and approaches to problem solving. [Staff member]

Start being more innovative and working with marginalized communities in a better way. [Other community member]

Others identified that some institutional barriers work against further innovation:

Interdisciplinary collaborations, facilitating these so that students and faculty have a chance to work together. The administration (funding models, curriculum committees, etc) is a big barrier to this. I feel like the



organizational infrastructure is standing in the way of educational innovation. [Staff member]

11. International

International is a complex theme, which intersects with people, geography, diversity, learning and research. A staff member's description captured the complexity of internationalization very well:

1. Internationalization as an ethos (Harari, 1989) that infuses an international (many countries/regions) and global (issues that span countries/regions) perspective in everything we do. Internationalization that says, "This isn't Canada - this isn't China - this is UBC" ([Homi Bhabha's] third space). Internationalization they can see from outer space.

Respondents were proud of UBC's geopolitical connections to Asia and the Pacific Rim and of our international reputation. These factors were particularly emphasized by student respondents:

strong brand name in Asia Pacific and Canada

International reputation

Asian connection

Respondents emphasized the importance of adopting a thoughtful institutional approach to securing the benefits of ethical internationalization, particularly with respect to international students:

International students must also be engaged in meaningful ways with their learning and with their learning environment. They (and the tremendous transformative power they represent, both for themselves and others) must be equipped for full engagement with their learning and their learning environment. What happens? They begin to co-create the campus and classroom experience. They turn to Canadians in their classes and actually talk to them. They join clubs and organizations and believe they have a right to contribute fully. Classroom discourses shift to include alternate perspectives, sources, research interests and ways of knowing. Faculty look forward to having more international students in their classrooms because of the ways their teaching and research will be stretched. [Staff member]

Concerns were raised by some respondents about the price of international student tuition. While many respondents praised the supports UBC provides to international students, some also suggested that there is scope for further support for academic English skills and culturally appropriate student services in the area of wellbeing, and a desire for further training for staff and faculty who work with international students.

Internationalization extends well beyond our student population to encompass diversity among faculty and staff, institutional engagement with international peers, international research and other activities. Respondents articulated a desire to make more institutionally of our



international diversity and international relationships. Many identified that institutional strategies should be intentionally designed to capture the strengths of our relationships with particular regions and cultures:

We need to highlight better who and where we are--internally and externally, in terms of our location, our diversity, and how we will capitalize/leverage/grow in ways that build upon this strength, rather than growing in spite of it or without intending to take advantage of it. Especially with the tide turning against an empty belief in the promise of globalization, we need to have compelling and articulate reasons for our strength through our international networks and demographic diversity so we can explain why we have risen so quickly and so far ... We still tend to abstract our international connections as if all connections to all parts of the globe are equal in impact on us. [Faculty member.]

Faculty members also expressed a desire for greater institutional support for international research collaborations:

The strengthening of UBC's research capacity through infrastructure that emphasizes global research partnership development.

12. Indigenous engagement

Many respondents - staff, faculty, students and other community members - emphasized the value that they place on UBC cultivating strong relations with Indigenous communities, including the Musqueam and Okanagan Nations Alliance, on whose traditional, ancestral and unceded territories our two main campuses are situated. Indigenous engagement is another cross-cutting theme: it has implications for Indigenous students, staff and faculty; it is relevant to our institutional relationships with First Nations; it informs curriculum design and learning; and it has important implications for research, community engagement, innovation and sustainability. Our attention to Indigenous relations and Indigenous studies was repeatedly identified as a key differentiating factor for UBC.

Respondents identified the positive foundation established by the Aboriginal strategic plan that was a central aspect of *Place and Promise*, while also observing that there is space to update the commitments made by UBC in that plan:

I am happy with the Aboriginal Strategic Plan, and believe that UBC would be well served to keep it as a central component of UBC's Strategic Plan. I would like to see an update process occur with the Aboriginal Strategic Plan, to accommodate the post-TRC environment. [Faculty member]

A staff member valued:

The increasingly more positive relationship with First Nations communities, especially the Musqueam. Land acknowledgments, spaces for dialogue to discuss the very difficult historical relationship with Canada's colonial impositions, all contribute to a relationship that is improving.

Many respondents identified that UBC should make it a priority to continue to cultivate Indigenous engagement in its next strategic plan:

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I believe the strong commitment to Aboriginal engagement is crucial. In addition, inclusivity and spaces for open dialogues on challenging topics is important as we move forward. [Staff member]

Continuous support for Indigenous engagement. Long term support to ensure that the momentum created so far continues and is strengthened. [Faculty member]

Indigenous reconciliation means indigenising academia; see experts. [Student]

13. Sustainability

Respondents also emphasized that they are proud of the work UBC has done to become a leader in sustainability. One community member identified UBC's greatest strengths as:

Sustainability, Planning and Innovation. We are doing leading work across these areas that are recognized by Universities and colleagues across the world.

Our emphasis on sustainability was praised by respondents as consistent with our geographic location, providing excellent learning opportunities and providing the potential for community engagement and innovation. We heard considerable support for continuing this emphasis:

in a city that aspires to be the greenest city, in a social culture that supports environmentalism, UBC needs to be a leader in all things sustainable (economic, environmental, social). [Community member]

Fostering the integration of the academic and operational parts of the campus to work on addressing social, economic and ecological sustainability challenges on campus and in the regions we are embedded within. [Staff member]

Continued commitment and improvement to sustainability focused campus management, teaching, learning, research, outreach. [Student]

14. Research

Research lies at the core of UBC's purpose. This theme has significant connections to engagement, innovation, international, Indigenous engagement and sustainability as well as geography and institutional factors. This brief summary of research-themed feedback focuses on responses that are not captured within these other themes.

Respondents across all categories identified that UBC's strength in research is a key differentiator, especially given our institutional age and the priority we place on teaching and students. Our research strengths are a source of great pride for our university community.

Faculty responses were the primary source of suggestions about how to improve or reform our institutional approaches to research and research support. They identified the importance of supporting research in those fields in which we are already performing well, regardless of what discipline these fields occupy:



I agree with President Ono that we can enter the top echelon in the world. Those universities (Oxford, Harvard, Berkeley) are strong across the sciences and also the arts. It's time for some resources to go to humanities fields that are within reach of top twenty to ten rankings.

Faculty members also expressed a desire to see interdisciplinary research, in particular, better supported by the institution.

Some faculty members identified the importance of working with research funding agencies to strengthen Canadian research:

[UBC should] take a leadership role in reforming federal and provincial funding for research (TriCouncil & MSFHR for example)[.]

Staff responses also emphasized that a strong research culture is a product of teamwork:

To increase the quality of research support. We cannot aim to be an excellent research facility solely by increasing funding for research, we need to consider those who support the research process in various administrative offices, the "unsung heroes" if you will. Research does not happen in isolation.

15. Physical infrastructure

The theme of physical infrastructure was particularly present in responses from those primarily associated with our Point Grey campus. Many respondents commented favourably on UBC's efforts to improve its physical infrastructure:

The campus design and its built environment embodies our values of sustainability (people, place, planet). [Staff member]

However, gaps were also identified. Particular concerns were raised about the seismic status of some older buildings on the Point Grey campus (particularly the Music school and Woodward library). Respondents also identified a desire to see more and better designed community spaces such as recreation centers and campus space for commuters. This theme connects with the themes of geography and wellbeing, as well as institutional structures.

Appendix

The initial survey was open to members of the UBC community (Faculty, Staff, Students, Alumni and other community members such as emeriti and residents of the University Neighbourhood at Point Grey) from 19 December 2016 - 20 January 2016.

The survey asked four questions:

What is UBC's greatest strength?

What differentiates UBC from other universities?

What is your greatest priority for UBC's next strategic plan?

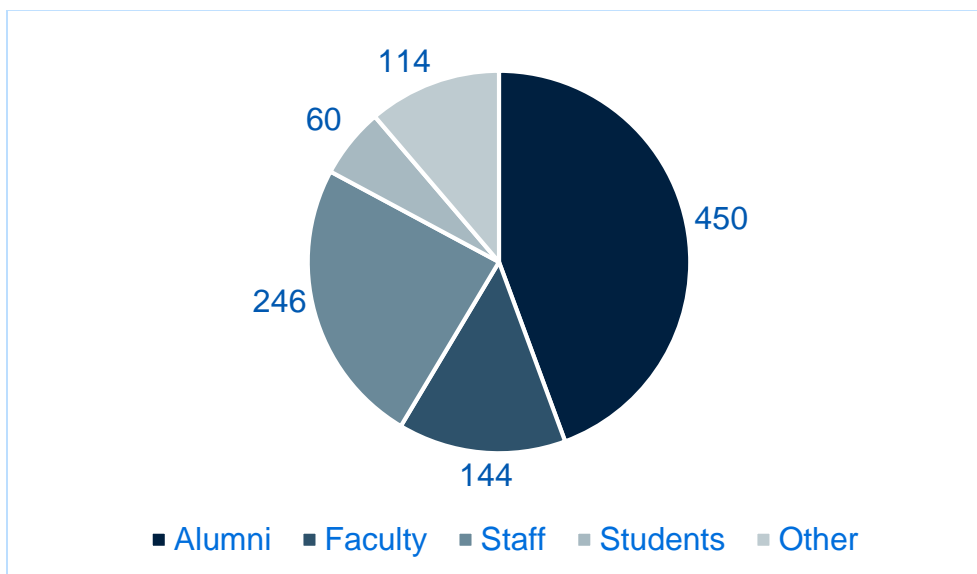
We would like to engage as many people as possible in the strategic planning process. Do you have any ideas about how we might do this?

We received a total of 1,014 responses to the survey. The largest number of responses was from UBC alumni (n = 450, 44%). The responses received from alumni were thematically quite different from those received from other community members - this may reflect the different nature of their daily relationship with UBC. Because the responses received from alumni were different from those received from other categories, and because of the number of responses received from alumni, we will provide a separate report regarding alumni responses.

We received 246 staff responses (24% of responses); 144 faculty responses (14% of responses); 60 student responses (5% of responses); and 114 responses from those who chose "other" (11% of responses). Many of those who chose "other" indicated that they met more than one of the categories (eg alumni and staff), or that they were emeriti, prospective students, or neighbourhood residents.

Figure one shows the breakdown of respondents by their association with UBC.

Figure one - respondents to survey



UBC'S NEXT CENTURY



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

941 respondents indicated a primary affiliation with UBC-Vancouver. 52 respondents indicated a primary affiliation with UBC-Okanagan. 21 respondents did not indicate their campus affiliation. Because response rates from UBC-Okanagan were relatively low, this report aggregates respondents by their type of association with UBC (ie faculty, staff, students, other) rather than by campus affiliation.

Results were coded using Nvivo qualitative coding software. The coding showed that the themes present in answers to the first three questions were relatively similar, while the responses to the fourth question were rather different from responses to the first three. This report therefore focuses primarily on the information received in respect of the first three questions. Responses to the fourth question have informed the design of the engagement process.