

Faculty & Staff Strategic Conversations

Executive Summary

October 2017

On Friday, October 27, 2017, over 100 faculty and staff from across the university gathered for a day of strategic conversations to consider two primary issues.

***How does the university become the place of choice?
and...***

What do we need to do-- what changes to make-- to get there?

Faculty and staff participants were pre-assigned and divided into eight topic-specific groups to consider these issues from the lens of the topic. Each topic was defined by internal or external constituents and their related programs. The membership of each group was a mixture of faculty and staff with topical expertise in order to foster productive conversation across disciplines, departments and programs. A SWOT analysis was performed by the group on their topic to assess the ability for the topic's constituents to respond to the primary questions. As a result of this analysis, opportunities were identified that could then become actionable items. At the close of the day, each group proposed how to operationalize some of the opportunities. After the day's event, each group's analysis was transcribed and then summarized by the group's lead facilitator.

Shared Priorities

The facilitators along with the Strategic Conversations organizers (Provost Patricia Kucker and AVP Special Projects Shelton Walker) met in the subsequent weeks to debrief and identified shared priorities among the groups. While the issues discussed hailed from departmentally specific concerns, university-wide priorities emerged that encapsulate most:

- ***Improving physical spaces and facilities to support student success***
- ***Improving our communication both internally and externally***
- ***Designing flexible programs that evolve with changes in creative industries***
- ***Preparing students for successful, creative lives***

Key topics and opportunities that were surfaced by groups are listed below. Transcriptions of each group's analysis, as well as narrative summaries are available on the UArts portal.

Group 1: College of Performing Arts

Facilitator: David Thomas, Educational Accessibility Advisor and ADA/504 Coordinator

Key Topics & Opportunities

- Expansion of and increased awareness of existing business minor and related experiences
- Foster and leverage strategic partnerships both internally and externally to further collaboration across disciplines and contribute to the larger dialogue on the value of the arts
- Increase visibility of successful faculty, students and alumni by revising the university's communication, marketing and branding strategy
- Increase internal understanding of university-wide programs and events among students, faculty, staff and public safety officers by revising internal communication plan

Group 2: College of Art, Media & Design

Facilitator: Curt Haworth, Professor, School of Dance

Key Topics & Opportunities

- In recognition of how technology has revolutionized all fields of art and design, integrate technology and digital tools throughout CAMD programs
- Prioritize hiring faculty who are tech-savvy leaders within their discipline, and provide incentives to existing faculty to enhance their proficiency with digital tools
- Invest in and provide access to advanced, digital tools within purpose-built, shared work spaces
- Commit to requiring proficiency with relevant technology at an early level so that all students can iterate and ideate digitally
- Identify opportunities for technology resource consolidation across schools and even colleges and create shared courses

Group 3: Liberal Arts

Facilitator: Rick Longo, VP for Enrollment Management & Student Affairs

Key Topics & Opportunities

- Lead with the value of the Liberal Arts to an Arts Education and move towards the model of the Artist-Thinker
- Marry the “scholarly” and “creative” practices
- Establish UArts as a Center of Intellectual Life
- Mirror the contemporary world by bringing today’s issues into the classroom
- Map the faculty to the student body (Diversity, Innovation, Agility)
- Forward the Role of the Library as Campus Center
- Mandate the use of “Philadelphia as Campus” throughout the Curriculum
- Provide curricular offerings that meet students where they are with consideration given to learning styles, skill level, and schedule constraints

Group 4: Continuing Studies

Facilitator: Christy Daly, Business Analyst

Key Topics & Opportunities

- Increase visibility of the university through a thoughtful communications, marketing and branding strategy which in turn will increase awareness of Continuing Studies offerings
- Improve the digital visitor experience for Continuing Studies audiences by re-evaluating website presence as well as digital tools employed for registration, learning management, and online courses
- Improve internal communication and awareness of events across campus via a university-wide event calendar
- Stabilize leadership within administrative units to facilitate continuity within inter-departmental communication, collaboration and procedural efficiency
- Recognize the Continuing Studies unit as a college to facilitate collaboration within undergrad programming and further professionalize existing graduate programs in CS

- Create and foster strategic partnerships with external organizations to build feeder programs for undergraduate degrees

Group 5: Buildings and Grounds

Facilitator: Sarah MacDonald, Public Services Librarian

Key Topics & Opportunities

- Renovate entryways and spaces to create a “wow” presence
- Overhaul campus wayfinding and street-level signage
- Devise an ADA-friendly access plan and implement across campus
- Rectify and address necessary deferred maintenance updates as well as standards of cleanliness
- Prioritize a student center for future capital improvements, and explore the integration of a 21st century library
- Create a permanent UArts history exhibit

Group 6: Industry & Community

Facilitator: Michael Attie, Program Director of Film & Video

Key Topics & Opportunities

- Centralize and strengthen our communications strategy to effectively tell the “UArts Story”, both internally and externally
- Seize the location of UArts to visually brand Broad Street as our campus
- Prioritize the need for a common space or that could serve as the hub of activity on Broad St
- Embrace and return to the UArts mission statement to “serve the community in which we reside”

Group 7: Student Life

Facilitator: Stephen Lightcap, Vice President for Finance and Administration

Key Topics & Opportunities

- Enhance internal, student facing communications to better promote and share departmental events as well as those offered throughout the city of Philadelphia; a comprehensive university-wide calendar that is shared in a variety of formats
- Develop our students as artist citizens through a program that builds community, expands our connections to Philadelphia and provides opportunity for civic engagement among our students; utilize an expanded UArts Day engagement model across all years of a student’s tenure
- Integrate professional practice within the curriculum and throughout the student life experience
- Prioritize the creation of common, student spaces throughout campus (a student center)

Group 8: Creative Work, Scholarship & Research

Facilitator: Krista Apple, Assistant Professor, School of Theater

Key Topics & Opportunities

- Seek out best practices to re-invigorate approach to faculty development and remain competitive among peer institutions
- Innovate “outside the box” to provide the resources of time, space and information to faculty without additional financial burden to the university
- Centralize information pertaining to funding opportunities, promotion procedures, and facilitated mentorship for dossier preparation
- Facilitate support of faculty development beyond faculty grants, via a pathway to apply for time: course release for creative research
- Support external partnerships that can provide space for creative research and collaboration