



KING'S

Western University · Canada

Key Themes from Strategic Planning Workshops



March 2016

Sessions by the Numbers

5 strategic planning sessions

90 minutes in length

118 participants

7 questions

33 pages of ideas



Participants

44.8% Staff

32.8% Faculty

12.8% Students

9.6% Board Members

The Process

- Higher level, vision type questions
- Exploration, creative thinking, idea generation
- Five questions for rotating, generative workstation activity
- One table top discussion question
- One final thought from each participant



Discussion Questions



1. Why does King's exist? What does King's need to do to ensure a strong and vibrant future?
2. What is the value, and what are the limitations, of our affiliation with Western?
3. What does it mean to operate based on a Catholic mission? What are we doing well? What can be improved?
4. What can we do to prepare students for a meaningful experience once they leave King's? What should we continue doing? What should we stop doing? What should we start doing?
5. Why would students choose to come to King's five years from now?
6. What is one bold thing King's can do?
7. What is the most important thing you heard today? (individual responses)

Why does King's exist?



Key Themes

- Liberal arts education
- Values/Catholic-based
- Preparing students, developing citizens
- Small campus experience
- Social justice, community focus and involvement
- Student engagement
- Different ways of learning



What does King's need to do to ensure a strong and vibrant future?



Key Themes



- Ensure programs continue to meet emerging needs (unique and relevant, link to jobs, branding, define benefits, more experiential learning such as co-ops, diversify types of teaching methods, etc.)
- Focus on the recruitment and retention of students (outside of London, national, international, linkages with high schools)

Key Themes



- Build partnerships and external relationships (churches, businesses, Indigenous populations, Fanshawe College, other universities, etc.)
- Acquire more space/land and use existing space more creatively (less surface lots)

Key Themes



- Ensure there is a strong strategic direction
- Maintain relationships with graduates/alumni
- Continue to focus on creating a healthy work environment for staff, admin, and faculty (full-time versus part-time faculty, social engagement, sense of belonging)



Key Themes

- Access to resources and expertise (classes, facilities, grants, athletics/sports, library, grad students, clubs, health services, student benefit plan, professional development and networking, staff, book store, bus plan, etc.)
- Value of the Western brand and Western's international reputation (recruitment, Western degree, name recognition)
- We can have the “best of both worlds”

Key Themes



- Lack of control (funding, decisions, academic choices, graduate program growth, courses/programs offered, resistant to change, high entrance grades, unequal relationship, etc.)
- King's is competing with Western (recruitment of students, retention of students, funding issues, differentiating ourselves)

Key Themes



- Differing values/viewpoints (education of the whole person, holistic)
- Cost of the affiliation (expensive)

Key Themes

Our Mission

King's is a Catholic University College committed to the ongoing creation of a vital academic community animated by a Christian love of learning and the pursuit of truth. The College strives to foster an environment based on open inquiry, Christian values and service to the larger community.

- Values driven organization (mercy, compassion, inclusive, truth, service, humility, acceptance, equity, curiosity/ wonder, open, etc.)
- Address the whole person
- Operate based on a “bigger picture” perspective, with a goal of engaging with the world to make it a better place (social justice, building community, citizenship)

What are we doing well?

- Offer a range/variety of faith-based experiences, services, and resources (veritas, speaker series, campus Ministry, masses, etc.)
- Have created a welcoming and inclusive environment (safe spaces, Muslim prayer room, accommodate diverse needs, multi-faith courtyard, community gatherings, etc.)

What are we doing well?

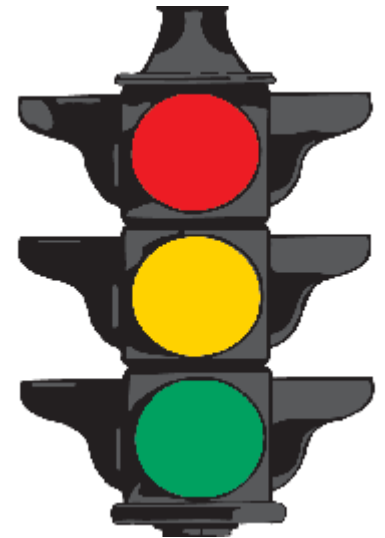
- Have connections with Catholic school boards and high schools
- Are involved in social justice initiatives (refugee initiative, St. Joseph's Hospitality Centre, etc.)
- There is program alignment with our values (BSW, MSW, London Poverty Research Centre, etc.)

What can be improved?

- Deeper integration of the Catholic mission (identity in practice, hiring practices, all aspects of student life, etc.)
- Better communication of what a Catholic mission and tradition means to non-Catholics (don't need to be Catholic to be a student or to work here)
- Ensure students of all faiths feel included/welcomed (representing our Catholic nature with a focus on inclusion)
- More engagement/service activities in the local community

What can we do to prepare students for a meaningful experience once they leave King's?

- What should we *continue* doing?
- What should we *stop* doing?
- What should we *start* doing?



What should we *continue* doing?

Continue ▶

- Engaging alumni (events, networking, updating, connecting, etc.)
- Developing and strengthening student services
- Offering experiential courses (placements, exposure to life outside the classroom, etc.)
- Networking events with alumni
- Offering the small class experience

What should we *stop* doing?



STOP

- Working in silos (internal competition)
- Making comparisons to Western
- Looking back, assuming the status quo will get us where we want to be
- Hiring part-time/contract faculty

What should we *start* doing?



- Mentoring programs for students (faculty mentors, alumni mentors, business mentors, etc.)
- Raising the profile of career counselling services and adding more “career” events (Career days, job fairs, etc.)
- Enhancing experiential learning opportunities, including co-ops and placements

What should we *start* doing?



- Introducing mandatory courses (writing, philosophy, management, religious studies, ethics, justice, foundational core curriculum in liberal arts)
- Offering lifelong learning (post-certificate program, enrichment opportunities for alumni, etc.)
- Preparing students intentionally from the first year

Why would students choose to come to King's five years from now?



Key Themes



- Programming (choices, unique, blended and online learning, experiential learning, signature, thematic clustering, interdisciplinary collaboration, continuing education, graduate level, etc.)
- Facilities (residences, compact village, world class, accessible, green, cutting edge technology, etc.)
- Connection to Catholic faith/roots

Key Themes



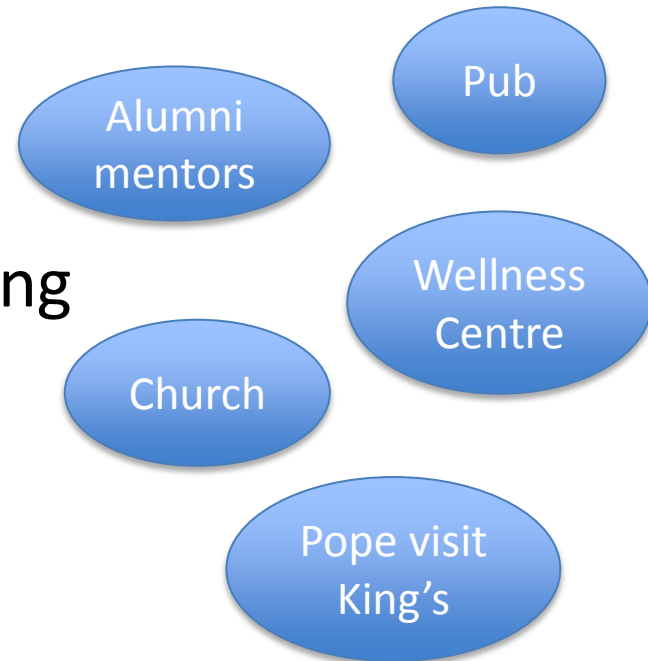
- High quality student experience (small class size, strong student supports, welcoming, open, wellness program, mentoring coach, more services, community feel, etc.)
- Faculty (access to/available, approachable, reputable, personal, high quality, diversity, etc.)
- Reputation/strong brand that differentiates us
- Career development and preparedness

Key Themes

BOLD

Many BOLD ideas were suggested in the areas of:

- Space, land, facilities
- First year student experience
- Branding, communication, marketing
- Relationship with Western
- Visiting faculty, chairs, speakers
- Programming



Common Thoughts



Overall, participants were engaged and want King's to grow and be the best it can be. Topics which emerged more frequently throughout the discussions include:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Catholic mission (what it means, looks like, and how to be inclusive)• The student experience• Space (use of and need to acquire)• Unique and relevant programming | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What differentiates King's, brand• Affiliation with Western• Connections with and leveraging alumni• Recruitment and retention of students• Partnerships/external relationships• Create indigenization plan |
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What does the Planning Committee need to hear from the Community?

- Create a quality, integrated student experience (student support services, academic & wellness)
- Affirm our inclusive Catholic identity, not just in the past but in the future, and explore what it means for current and future members of King's
- Dream big, be bold and get focussed when thinking about campus, programming, property, partnerships, and King's place in Canadian PSE
- Build the King's story internally and nationally, but start using verifiable data that will help inform strategic decisions



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