

## Team 5: Consultation Process

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An Academic Plan micro-committee met to plan how to approach the first phase of consultation for the academic planning exercise. The first phase of consultation will focus on generating ideas and setting academic priorities. There will be a second phase of consultation when members of the community will be able to comment on the draft plan.

The committee makes the following recommendations:

### 1. Who to consult

- Beyond providing opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to participate in the academic planning exercise, the group recommends being intentional about getting feedback from the following groups of students: equity-deserving groups; recent high school graduates coming to StFX; students who have struggled academically (contacted through Associate Dean or Academic Advising); students who access Tramble Room and Student Success Centre services; first generation students; international students; graduate students. There could be a number of approaches to soliciting feedback from these groups: targeted invitations to the sessions, holding separate consultation sessions, or surveys.
- To avoid duplication, when possible and appropriate, consultation events for the academic planning exercise should be shared with consultation for the planned university-wide strategic planning exercise. This is particularly important for consultation with external groups (the local community, Indigenous communities, French-speaking communities, African-Nova Scotian communities, alumni.)
- On topics that span both academic areas and student life areas (e.g., first-year experience), consultation sessions should be shared between this academic planning exercise and the student quality of life exercise, which is taking place concurrently. These sessions should be promoted in ways that reflect their dual purpose: addressing both student life and academic issues.
- Sessional staff and part-time faculty are not normally available during the summer months. These people will need opportunities to participate in the Fall. Students will also have limited participation in the summer.

### 2. Types of sessions:

- **General Discussion Sessions:** opportunity for general discussion focused around topics from the discussion document.
  - 8-10 sessions, held virtually (anticipate 20-30 people per session).
  - Six of those sessions should be organized by academic discipline: Business, Science -- professional programs, Science – core sciences, Education, Social

Science, Humanities. While these sessions will be for faculty, students, staff with common interest in these areas, the discussion will remain organized around the discussion document, but will allow for a more focused discussion.

- The remaining sessions will be open to anyone. People may attend a discipline-specific session or an open session, as best meets their needs.
  - A specific session for students facilitated by student members of APP will be scheduled for the fall. Offering an incentive for participation may encourage attendance.
  - All general discussion sessions will be facilitated using the same approach.
- **Topical Sessions:** These sessions will give people the chance to come together to discuss a very focused topic (much like the micro-committee approach). These sessions will take place after the General Discussion sessions. The topics for these sessions will emerge from recurring themes in the general discussion sessions.
    - Possible sample topics: Supporting innovative teaching; experiential learning; first-year transition; Decolonizing the classroom; potential new program areas.

### 3. The sessions: Facilitation and Collecting feedback

- A team of at least 6-8 faculty members (APP and non APP) should be the main facilitators for the sessions. Each person could facilitate 1-2 sessions.
- Students should also be part of the facilitation team, as well as staff members of APP.
- Prior to the beginning of the consultation sessions, the Facilitators will meet to plan a common approach.
- The Facilitator group will also determine a common approach to collecting feedback. Options include virtual tools that simulate flip charts (e.g. padlet, jamboard) and/or a common survey completed at the end of each session. The sessions could also be recorded for later reference.
- Some members of APP should attend each session to observe.

### 4. Survey–

- A survey, framed around the questions in the discussion document, will be created as a way supplement the feedback from the consultation sessions. Attendees will be encouraged to complete the survey after the sessions. People may also complete the survey without attending a session.
- If other, more targeted surveys are created, members agreed that there needs to be clarity on what each is trying to achieve and what stage in the process it is best sent.

### 5. Processing feedback –

- A micro-committee will be formed to summarize the feedback. APP will review the summary to plan next steps and also have access to the collated feedback.

## 6. Timing –

- Initial schedule for the academic planning exercise had consultation sessions taking place mid-May to June. Given the following, that schedule has been changed:
  - May 10 - 14 Teaching retreat.
  - May 24 - 28 University closure.
- New recommendation: Hold an initial group of General Discussion Sessions in June. Hold additional General Discussion sessions in September. If there has been good attendance in the June sessions, a preliminary summary of results can be prepared after those sessions.
- Hold “Topical Sessions” in September-October.