

## **Executive Summary**

### **1) Background**

The Talk Exchange was organized by the Board of Governors' Community Relations and Advancement (CRA) committee to provide a forum for a cross-section of Carleton's communities/stakeholders (students, faculty, staff, alumni and donors) to engage in an open discussion about Carleton's future.

The forum was a Board-led engagement event, premised on the idea that open dialogue could be best achieved through direct conversation with Carleton's Stakeholders.

Linda Ann Daly, chair of the CRA and Jay Nordenstrom, vice-chair, organized the event with the support of the Board Office and the Department of University Communications.

To encourage registrations a promotional plan was developed. The Advancement Office assisted to reach out to interested alumni. The event was promoted through emails, notices were included in the daily intranet posting for faculty and staff, social media and the webpage was updated to provide background on the event and a registration link. Space for the event was provided in a meeting room within Dunton Tower.

The forum was held on October 5, 2017 and included over 24 participants who registered in advance through the Talk Exchange website, as well as 5 participants that dropped in to take part in the event and 3 student note-takers from the Paul Menton Centre. The total number of participants in attendance was 29.

### **2) The Conversation**

The Talk Exchange planning committee identified three key questions to focus on for the session, with the last two questions being grouped together for the discussion:

- a) What do we want Carleton University to be known for?
- b) How do we get there? How do we improve?

**What do we want Carleton University to be known for?**  
***Main themes raised by participants***

**Reciprocity**

- Carleton is very good at community engagement but there is always room for improvement.
- It is imperative moving forward that the University ensures community groups are benefitting from Carleton's involvement as well.
- There is a desire to be known for giving back and enhancing the surrounding community.

**Perception**

- Having a strong reputation of being a university that offers quality teaching and research opportunities for students.
- The student experience offered at Carleton is next to none and is very apparent once you are on campus. That sense of pride and student experience needs to be translated more effectively to the external world.

**Research**

- To be known as an institution with competitive and quality research programs that attract students.

**Culture**

- Carleton has an incredibly welcoming and engaging atmosphere. It is important to harness this energy and continue to embrace what it is that makes Carleton special and those that attend and work here proud to be a part of the community.

**Accessibility**

- To be known as one of the most accessible schools for students with disabilities. Carleton is also known for ensuring that students from all backgrounds are provided with the appropriate accommodations.

**Location**

- A university that not only offers incredibly greenspace but enables students a central location within Canada's capital. Demonstrating Carleton's placement within the City of Ottawa is advantageous and can benefit students by way of experience, opportunities and employment.

**How do we get there? How do we improve?**  
***Main themes raised by participants***

**Reciprocity**

- By including a constraint within the ethics protocols that govern research projects requiring researchers to demonstrate how their project will benefit community groups involved.
- An incentive could be offered by way of an award. This incentive would be awarded to the research project that most clearly demonstrates a positive impact on the community and any groups involved.
- This would improve community relations and provide Carleton with a positive reputation of serving the public good.

**Community Involvement**

- Involvement of our community partners in all stages of community projects, from conception to the final presentation and conferences.
- Inviting other community members/groups to have an opportunity to be heard.
- Highlighting student community involvement such as the volunteer work of Carleton's sports teams within the community.

**Communication**

- The Carleton community at large has a desire to be involved in decisions and believes that not all decisions should be made at the Board level. There is a call for more collaboration and a belief that this would lead to an even stronger sense of community at Carleton, where everyone approves of a decision and feels content.

**Research and Funding**

- Difficulties arise when attempting to disseminate all of the current news stories. Uncovering different ways of connecting with the external world is essential. Success stories and current projects can be showcased on a "hub" or "research portal" located on the website to showcase all that Carleton is doing.
- Developing a framework that incentivizes faculty work to increase interest and involvement in quality research projects. This could be done by implementing a point's based system that commends faculty on the different elements involved. Such as:
  - Teaching, research, administration all receive points and can impact Career Development Increments.

- Recognition of community service should be included in tenure reviews as this could lead to greater interest and involvement as well.

### **Culture:**

- Sports have a way of bringing the community together and Carleton is known for having the highest attended sporting events. However, some student groups tend to get lost in the “Raven’s Culture”. It can be perceived as excluding for some as it only speaks to a certain groups that are more visible and vocal. There is a larger community that includes Aboriginal, International, mature and students of colour that are sometimes not included within this culture. They are also not matched in the area of leadership and tend to feel underrepresented.

### **International Presence**

- The current frame works holds individual departments responsible for navigating international internships. More administrative assistance is needed for faculty. Perhaps extending this task to an Institutional International Internship Program would be more strategic.
- Providing incentives for faculty to waive international fees or provide more grants to decrease the amount of opportunities lost.
- Redistributing funds from departments with larger amounts could potentially assist with offsetting the fees for international students as well.

### **Perception:**

- Carleton has worked hard to defeat the reputation of being a “second rate” institution. In order to continue to avoid that damaging reputation more emphasis needs to be placed on research and putting students first.
- The university needs to become more effective at advocating and sending out the message of excellence and that students attending here can expect a high quality education.

### **Accessibility:**

- Highlighting success stories:
  - Canadian Forces Veteran competing at Invictus Games and also developed Veteran Student Affairs group.
- Continue to promote inclusivity and diversity on campus and in campaigns by featuring students from various backgrounds and making sure their needs are being accommodated.

### **3) Key Findings**

The Talk Exchange participants expressed a strong desire to have more opportunities for constructive conversations within the university community and the Board.

The Three themes of “Research”, “Perception” and “Culture” dominated the feedback. The themes relate to the mandate of the CR&A committee. From the feedback, the Board has an opportunity to: Assess how it engages with the community groups; capitalize on the great success stories happening around campus and how it can harness the energy of the campus community to further student engagement and encourage the future students to choose Carleton as their university.

Top of mind issues highlighted in the discussions included:

#### **Risk**

- The discussion revealed that there is a real need for stronger branding.
- Carleton tends to be seen as passive to act or take risks for fear of impacting the university negatively. There was a strong belief that the university may need to take more risks when it comes to initiatives, thinking forward, marketing and branding.

#### **Research**

- The development of a framework that incentivizes faculty work in an effort to increase interest and involvement in quality research projects. This could be done by implementing a point's based system that commends faculty on the different elements involved, such as:
  - Teaching, research, administration

#### **Dominion Chalmers Church**

- Improving the amount of available space will increase our capacity and assist in backing university promotions.
- Extends Carleton's reach into the community by providing a space downtown to showcase art shows, music events and lectures.
- The potential of the new church could extend community reach and bring several different community groups together through music and art festivals (i.e. Involving the indigenous community in hosting indigenous art events)

#### **4) Lessons learned:**

- Participants agreed that more meaningful, regular conversations between students, staff, faculty and Board members is beneficial, to assist in making informed decisions for the future.
- Sessions should be longer in order to facilitate a more in depth conversation.
- It was also suggested that the once the individual table sessions have ended, the discussion be opened up to the entire group.

#### **Attachments:**

Summary Notes – CRA Talk Exchange

Participants Feedback Summary