

# Notes: SEM Summit 2010, Halifax

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## **Tuesday, April 27, 2010:**

**Introductory Comments:** Susan Gottheil (Mt Royal University) opened the Summit by making introductory comments.

- Acknowledged the work of the Planning Committee: Susan Gottheil (Mt Royal University), Clayton Smith (University of Windsor), Asa Kachan (Dalhousie University), Stefanie Ivan (Grant MacEwan University), and Jody Gordon (Kwantlen Polytechnic University)
- Each participant was asked to introduce themselves to those at their table
- Overview of the Summit format, which includes a 20-minute framing of an issue followed by facilitated discussion involving the entire group
- Possibly look at involving students in the Summit next time
- All session PowerPoint materials are on the Canadian SEM Web site ([www.uwindsor.ca/sem](http://www.uwindsor.ca/sem))

**Introduction to Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM):** Susan Gottheil (Mt Royal University) and Clayton Smith (University Windsor) provided an introduction to SEM.

- Intrusive advising was described as the type of advising in which the institution initiates contact with the student, as opposed to the more typical approach in which the institution is passive and waits for the student to initiate contact

**Student Engagement in Canada:** Susan Gottheil (Mt Royal University) and Clayton Smith (University of Windsor) provided an overview of student engagement and how it is being applied in Canada.

- Student engagement can be brought to life at our institutions by applying SEM principles
- In order to use NSSE data effectively, buy-in, especially among faculty members, is needed
- York completed a NSSE white paper
- The Higher Educational Quality Council of Ontario has funded research, coordinated by Queens, to sponsor pilot student engagement projects at the campus level that have as their goal improving NSSE sub-scores
- May want to consider making senior faculty members co-chairs of the SEM committee
- When reviewing high school documents, need to look at more than “Chemistry Student of the Month” type awards to assess potential for students being engaged on our campuses
- Should be careful when using U.S.-created assessment tools, such as NSSE, in Canada given the differences in values and educational institutions
- Role of the co-curricular transcript in documenting and encouraging student engagement
- CACUSS’s SASA assessment roving workshops
- Selkirk College does its own student engagement survey to get beyond the “U.S.” type questions on NSSE. Made it possible to drill down into certain age groups and programs to find out why students were skipping classes
- Student Voice was mentioned as a good option
- Saskatchewan has added an assessment position in student affairs

**Using Student Financial Aid to Improve Persistence & the Quality of the Student Experience:** Peter Dueck (University of Manitoba) presented on the topic of how financial aid can be used to enhance student persistence.

- There can be silos in student financial aid offices between the area administering government aid programs and the area administering institutional aid programs. One way to attack this is to create an integrated student aid data model
- Lots of interest in work-study programs
- Growth in the down-loading of government aid regulations on the institutions, especially in Ontario
- UBC is beginning to use scholarships to encourage student engagement behaviors. Give all high achieving students a minimum award and then give additional funds to those that engage in student engagement activities.
- Ontario offers First Generation bursaries
- Some differences between financial leveraging between the U.S. and Canada, but the differences are declining as U.S. institutions are increasingly focusing on access and equity

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- Food banks are seen as a positive, especially since they are not included in student aid assessments. In Fredericton, cars coming into institutional parking lots were charged \$5 per car with the money used to give grocery gift cards to needy students. A recent survey found food banks generally present on most campuses. Other institutions refer students to community food banks.
- Selkirk College has an emergency fund, which is financed by staff through employee deduction
- Nova Scotia Community College provides a micro-credit loan through a local credit union
- The living allowance for Aboriginal students in Manitoba is \$675, while the allowance for Manitoba's non-Aboriginal students is \$929.
- Recommended reading on use of financial aid to enhance student enrolment:
  - Kalsbeek, D.H. & Hossler, D. (Summer 2008). Enrollment Management & Financial Aid. College & University, 84(1), 2-11.

The International Student Experience: Asa Kachan and Keith Taylor (Dalhousie University) provided an overview of international student experience issues.

- Use the Canadian Bureau of International Education international student survey data to tunnel down into institutional data
- Trent has a 2-week pre-semester international student orientation program
- York and Regina have found that international students represent a considerable percent of students in receivables difficulty
- Saskatchewan has developed initiatives to provide spousal support, especially for graduate students
- Racism is in society and not easily overcome by institutions
- A transition year for international students could be a way of improving the international student experience, but we need to be clear: is it successful? Why? And how do you measure it? Are they subsequently able to enter the already established larger cohort? Simon Fraser University introduced the NAVITAS first-year transition program. Having a built-in cohort in place as students transfer into second year is seen as positive. Just did a 3-year review (available on SFU's Web site). Money goes to departments and they have full discretion on how it is spent. Also in place in Manitoba and being considered at Dalhousie. Success depends on how it is introduced, with faculty consultation early in the process. A similar concept (Study Group International) was defeated earlier in the year at Windsor, but is still under consideration.
- UBC offers a program called "Jump Start" that provides a 3-week transition program for international students in August. A fee is charged. Has led to better academic performance.
- Another approach, in use at UBC, is to extend the probationary range so that students have a longer period of time to more fully transition
- York noted that there is a shortage of qualified ESL instructors in its region
- Dalhousie has found that students who meet the TOEFL requirement for admission still need English support during their studies
- Regina noted that ESL instruction is booming
- Sometimes a challenge in getting international students to accept help
- It was noted that international students see ESL as a barrier and like the possible dual enrolment of ESL and credit studies simultaneously. St. Mary's permits a one-half ESL and one-half credit course load.
- Nova Scotia College of Art & Design has developed a post-baccalaureate certificate to include 30 credits of design, along with some ESL
- St. Mary's University indicated that academic integrity is a continuing concern. Laurier provides peer-to-peer academic integrity sessions in its Learning Services area, which also includes a staff member from the International Students' Centre; also provides information during the international orientation at the beginning of the semester. York uses a multifaceted approach, which includes re-examination of academic policies, use of Turnitin.com, and support from the Centre for Support for Teaching & Learning.
- Manitoba has developed a Student Advocacy Office, which is widely used by international students
- Little success in globalizing the classroom
- Academic preparation is likely to be different
- Should we look at pedagogy instead of curriculum to globalize learning?
- But international students may have come to Canada to learn Canadian ways of doing things and may not be as interested in further internationalization

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- Make use of Universal Instructional Design as a way of meeting international students' academic needs
- In British Columbia, up to half of student enrolments are local students whose first language is not English
- Simon Fraser University has a Student Success Program that it offers to students who are being requested to withdraw, which includes a significant number of international students. Exploring an associate degree model for those students ineligible to return to university studies
- Money paid to finance agent fees is seen as a lost leader in Year One, which is recouped in future years.

The Aboriginal Student Experience: Christine Pierre (University of Manitoba), Jacqueline Fitzpatrick (University College of the North) and Gina Guiboche (University College of the North) offered an overview of the Aboriginal student experience.

- The Aboriginal space was a “dingy, dark space” at Carleton until it was brought to life recently. It should be put in the centre of everything, not off to the side.
- Should dialogue with elders regarding the location of the Aboriginal centre
- Assiniboine Community College has developed an Aboriginal Community Development Program. Non-Aboriginal people should sit and listen to Aboriginal conversations.
- If Aboriginal students are respected they are more likely to speak and participate
- Academic preparation of Aboriginal students is sometimes a challenge, especially in math. One reason is that, in Manitoba, there are 64 communities and only 14 high schools, which means many Aboriginal students have to be away from their community in order to attend high school. Then they have to leave again to attend a PSE bridge program.
- At the University College of the North, formal and informal appeals processes are offered. During the informal approach, the student, professor and elder meet in a “sharing circle” to mediate the appeal during which only one person can speak at a time and each is given one rebuttal. Only the person holding the rock can speak.
- Humber has an elder on campus. Looking at outreach in both urban and rural communities. It was recommended that both be done.
- Outreach to urban Aboriginal students should be relationship-oriented on a 1:1 basis if possible
- Laurier uses an urban and rural approach and is looking at an initiative in grades 7 and 8 to encourage Aboriginal students to take the academic stream in high school, which begins in Grade 8.
- Many Aboriginal students decide not to pursue PSE as early as age 13
- University College of the North offers the “STAR” retention program. It is an early intervention initiative in which faculty members notify counselors so that they can contact the student. Students are tracked in the SIS.
- New federal funding approach for Aboriginal support is being considered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs that will result in Aboriginal students having to pay loans back. Could be controversial since education is considered a treaty right.

### Wednesday, April 28, 2010:

Using Data to Support SEM Decision-Making: Darrell Kyte (Dalhousie University) and Leane French-Munn (Nova Scotia Agricultural College) provided an overview of data use to support SEM.

- There is a range of institutional research, from national surveys to institutional surveys to qualitative focus groups and in-depth interviews
- The IR staff should be involved in SEM strategy development
- Link with academic planning using IR metrics
- IR folks tend to tell us that we have a problem but do not provide sufficient analysis to lead us toward considering solutions
- Qualitative studies are “solution finding”
- Each level of the organization needs different information. For example, deans are interested in aggregate enrolment targets while admissions personnel are looking for new student targets.
- York has begun monitoring social media sites
- Need to ask whether it is helpful to collect data (such as national surveys) for reasons other than other institutions are doing it
- Areas acquire data but may not know how to assess it given various data definitions

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- Before providing the data the IR staff should ask about the purpose for the data so that the request can be filled properly
- But some reports are simply update reports where analysis is not provided
- Number of people requesting reports is growing considerably
- At Simon Fraser University, an enrolment coordinating committee, comprised of representatives from all faculties, comes together to talk about the data
- At Douglas College, the enrolment management committee has developed subcommittees on topics, such as recruitment, retention, etc.

Engaging the Student Learner: Gail Forsyth (Wilfred Laurier University) and Jane Fee (Simon Fraser University) provided an overview of some of the issues pertaining to the challenges in engaging student learners, and specifically addressed the need for academic affairs-student affairs partnerships.

- St Thomas University has a Student Athlete Advising initiative
- Cape Breton's Writing Center focuses mostly on international students
- Grant MacEwan University has a comprehensive orientation program, which includes a parent orientation session
- Need to integrate the social and academic orientation programs
- Students sometimes complain that there is duplication between the social and academic orientation sessions. They should be intentionally coordinated.
- Humber offers a Transition Advising Program, which engages at-risk students in small cohorts. It focuses on First Generation students and those in business and health sciences.
- Regina has the University of Regina Guarantee. Students who are unable to find a job in their field after 6 months of graduating and who were engaged properly during their study period are offered the opportunity to take up to 30 credits more
- Saskatchewan has a learning commons in its library which offers peer mentoring and learning assistance. Also has a faculty member living in residence
- Simon Fraser University has learning communities in residence, a learning commons, and academic enhancement programs
- Assiniboine Community College is bringing faculty more into orientation
- Dalhousie has an "Ask Me" button campaign that has many staff and faculty wearing buttons during the first several weeks of the semester as a way of letting students know they can ask questions. Also has an Ask Me booth during the early part of the semester.
- Carleton has taken orientation back from the student union
- Need also to focus on student engagement in the classroom
- Recommended Reading:
  - Hughes, J.C. & Mighty, J. (Eds.). (2010). *Taking Stock: Research on Teaching & Learning in Higher Education. Queens Policy Study Series #66*. Montreal, PQ: McGill-Queens University Press.

Putting It All Together: Dave Morphy (University of Manitoba) provided an overview of Manitoba's experience with implementing SEM. Stefanie Ivan (Grant MacEwan University) summarized each of the key topics presented during the Summit sessions.

- Lots of interest on how to determine capacity
- Carleton is offering an incentive program
- Blended business model at Nova Scotia College of Art & Design. The BFA Interdisciplinary offers a lot of supply courses from many departments which makes major-funding difficult.
- At UBC, they pay \$3,000 (\$6,000 for international students) of the Government Grant to the department for each major and 75% of the tuition to the department that teaches the course,

Closing: Susan Gottheil (Mt Royal University) and Clayton Smith (University of Windsor) made closing comments,

- Shortly, a survey will be sent to all participants regarding the effectiveness of this year's Summit, where we might place next year's Summit, and what theme we might focus on next year