

Summary Report of Campus Consultations: COVID-19

Introduction

The University of Windsor launched the Aspire online survey between February and March 2022 as the first step in the strategic planning process. The survey was accessed by more than 2,000 respondents, with 1,534 usable responses. The Aspire Café Conversations were the second step in the consultation process. These sessions provided students, staff, and faculty with the opportunity to provide their input through in-person, discussion-based, consultation sessions targeted at key topics identified through the Aspire survey. A total of 665 students and nearly 200 staff and faculty participated in these events. The Aspire online survey and Café Conversations aimed to gather respondents' perceptions of where the University of Windsor should be and how the University can best get there.

It is important to note that these consultations were intended for broad, community-based input. The University also implemented separate consultations with approaches that are appropriate for specific communities whose voices must be heard. For example, while questions about Indigenization and Decolonization and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) were included in consultation questions, dedicated consultations with community members using informed and appropriate methods were also needed to ensure that this priority was supported by rich and informed processes.

As part of the Aspire Café Conversations, attendees were asked to respond to questions centered around changes to the University as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This summary report will discuss student, staff, and faculty responses to these questions. A total of 1,287 responses were recorded, of those 1019 (79%) responses were from students, 87 (7%) from staff, and 181 (14%) from faculty.

Changes Attributed to COVID that UWindsor Should Keep

Respondents submitted nearly 700 individual answers to the question, **What is a specific change that has taken place at the University because of COVID you would like to KEEP?** This included 532 student, 54 staff, and 107 faculty responses. Table 1 presents the five most common themes identified in these responses by role. Flexible learning modalities was a key theme that emerged across the three respondent groups. Respondents noted that they would like the University to continue the flexible teaching and learning opportunities that resulted from COVID-19, such as hyflex and online course options. Students also frequently noted that they would like to keep the assessment and feedback methods that resulted from COVID-19 with requests to continue the pass/fail option, online

examinations, and alternative grading options. Flexible work arrangements was identified as the top response from both staff and faculty. Responses in this theme centered around work flexibility with requests for opportunities to work from home and to have more control over work hours. Staff also noted that they would like to keep the changes in management and operations of the University that resulted from COVID-19 (e.g., team chats, team meetings, and work plans) and faculty noted they would like to keep changes in the culture and atmosphere of the University (e.g., building a community of respect, inclusion and belonging, greater empathy and understanding, and increased awareness of barriers and diversity needs).

Table 1. Five most frequent themes regarding COVID-19 initiatives to KEEP.

Role	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5
Students	Flexible Learning Modalities (334)	Student Assessment/ Feedback (62)	COVID-19 Safety Measures (22)	Post Grad Skills/ Training and Opportunities (16)	Size (15)
Staff	Flexible Work Arrangements (29)	Management and Operations of University (6)	Flexible Learning Modalities (6)	Campus Services (4)	Health and Wellness (2)
Faculty	Flexible Work Arrangements (55)	Culture and Atmosphere of University (14)	Flexible Learning Modalities (10)	Teaching and Learning (7)	Accessibility (4)

Note. Numbers in parentheses represent the frequency of the theme.

Changes Attributed to COVID that UWindsor Should Stop

Respondents submitted nearly 600 individual responses to the question, **What is a specific change that has taken place at the University because of COVID you would like to STOP?** There were 487 student, 33 staff, and 74 faculty responses. Table 2 presents the five most common themes identified in these responses by role.

The University's efforts to offer flexible learning modalities as a result of COVID-19 was identified as something to stop post-pandemic across all three respondent groups. Responses mainly focused on stopping online, hyflex and asynchronous classes, and returning to teaching in-person. It should be noted that in comparison to responses from the previous question, more students expressed the desire to keep flexible learning modalities while more faculty wished to stop flexible learning modalities.

Respondents from all three respondent groups indicated they wished to stop COVID-19 health and safety measures currently in place including masking, maintaining physical distance, and the locked doors on campus. Students also frequently commented on the Safe Lancer App and the removal of the mandatory COVID-19 assessment and QR code access to university buildings.

Students frequently noted changes in campus services that resulted from the pandemic. Respondents indicated that returning to in-person student counselling and student advising appointments and reopening closed food services is key to our return to campus. Staff and faculty both commented on stopping certain management and operations of the University (e.g., use of the sage Lancer app, MS Teams as “always available,” “red tape,” and number of virtual meetings) and stopping flexible work arrangements (e.g., virtual meetings, working from home, and online teaching) that resulted from COVID-19.

Table 2. Five most frequent themes by role regarding COVID-19 initiatives to STOP.

Role	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5
Students	Flexible Learning Modalities (131)	Campus Services (127)	Website and Web Services (120)	COVID-19 Safety Measures (87)	Parking (13)
Staff	Management and Operations of University (14)	COVID-19 Safety Measures (3)	Health and Wellness (3)	Flexible Learning Modalities (2)	Flexible Work Arrangements (2)
Faculty	Flexible Learning Modalities (29)	Flexible Work Arrangements (12)	COVID-19 Safety Measures (7)	Management and Operations of University (5)	Culture and Atmosphere of University (5)

Note. Numbers in parentheses represent the frequency of the theme.

Next Steps

We all hope that the worst of COVID-19 is behind us. The pressures that emerged from the pandemic were unprecedented, and change was forced on us in a short time. It is very unlikely that things will ever return to the Fall 2019 status quo, but this strategic plan allows us to take a moment and reflect on the changes that may add value going forward while also building resiliency against any future pandemic.