Collaboration, Discovery, and Innovation Focus Group

UND Strategic Planning – Provost’s Executive Council

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16 Participants

1. **What does it mean to infuse creativity, discovery, and innovation as an essential component of the student experience (in and out of the classroom)?**
   1. This ends up being class or topic specific within the class. This is more foundational piece, we need to get the material and information across, but can we do this in an innovative and creative way? At first, they need to know the material.
   2. As a faculty member, I struggled with finding balance with the things you need to teach and make sure your students know that does not lend itself to creativity, discovery, and innovation (CDI), but still give a space for CDI to happen. This is something I wrestled in my classes as a faculty member. At times I didn’t know if we could be truly creative or interesting, because we didn’t have the basic knowledge yet. At the classroom level we need to engage in this conversation/discussion.
   3. We need to be willing to take risks and be open to stepping outside of our comfort zone. We need to try new things and not know if it will always be successful, but we will try it. If our students see us doing this then they will be more willing to do this as well and take these risks. We need to model the behavior.
   4. The word ‘essential’ stands out to me. It makes me think there may be a requirement for this. If there is, this needs to be stated and we would need learning outcomes articulated along those lines that are anchored to what we do. At Med School we have been involved in HIPs that undergrad/grad students have in labs that gets at the creativity, discovery, innovation kinds of knowledge and skills that we want to see in students. So, I see implicit in this: (1) A requirement in what the learning outcomes will be and how they are articulated (2) we need to have all kinds of experiences in these areas that address these learning outcomes.
   5. Being creative and innovative requires a significant time investment from faculty because it is hard to think of ways to be creative in the classroom at times. A few years ago, we heard from high school counselors that students have been disappointed to be stuck in lecture halls when they are used to more immersive/creative experiences in high school. This was disappointing to hear, because there is a lot of creative things happening in the high schools and at times it feels stogy to be here for these new students. This takes a lot of faculty time and energy to think of ways to infuse more creativity into their pedagogy. Great things that we can learn from pedagogy in high schools. They may be a bit ahead of what students consider innovative.
   6. A big drawback to this is time. If they are teaching 5 classes a semester, they don’t have time to devote to being innovative/creative. We need to think about how to provide time for this
   7. Pair what you want students to learn in your course vs. what they can get out of the course. It does not always need to fall on the back of a faculty member- we can help in other areas that is not always faculty dependent.
   8. Agree, many interesting/creative things are happening outside of the classroom. How can we better connect spaces, equipment, and staff up so we can better support this initiative for faculty? We need to create space where faculty can go and ‘play’ and learn this new tech and learn how to change the pedagogy so the students can get that new experience that they are looking for.
   9. Community engagement. Lots of opportunities to be involved in the community and students want this. An example from our college is when one of our classes worked with the Fire Department on communication and an educational component. Also, our Criminal Justice Department partnered with police department in Denver looking at how they can make a difference in their communities. This was a Riipen project.
      1. Riipen is a platform that faculty can use that makes experiential learning in our coursework easier. How do you encourage faculty to do these types of things within their courses? Riipen does help facilitate this and can help infuse some of these experiences in the course work. We have been providing stipends to faculty to do this work as well.
   10. These are the examples that we need to hear in Admissions because providing experiential learning is something that every student is looking for in a college experience.
2. **How does creativity, innovation and discovery encourage or promote faculty and staff excellence? What could be enhanced or what is missing?**
   1. For faculty and staff doing research this is a natural part of what they do. For those in teaching we do not encourage CDI as much in our teaching methods- we don’t promote this as much as we should. We should evaluate this more and encourage this more.
   2. What resources would you need to do that?
   3. We have faculty that are doing new things in the classroom, so perhaps promoting what they are doing more. Struggle is reaching faculty that are stuck in their ways and are not motivated to do new things. Other than through the faculty eval process I am not sure how we incentive new ways of doing things.
   4. We held an open house for OER that had great faculty turn out that wanted to see what others were doing in this area and how to incorporate in into their work.
   5. Yes, but they people that show up are the ones that are already engaged.
   6. Would love to connect this to mid-career professional development. Think that it would be great to take mid-career faculty to another campus that is doing innovative things and let them see what is happening in their classroom/institution. It is hard to break a habit. But, getting to see what another place is doing makes people pay attention. We don’t necessarily do a good job at this. Take 5 of mid-career people to another university that is doing cool/exciting things.
   7. I like that idea from a hiring side. It is hard to get people to come here, but if we got out faculty out to other schools it strengthens the relationships between these institutions.
   8. This also helps with student recruitment because it is our faculty out talking to other students.
   9. This helps instill the idea of lifelong learning. Research faculty are more likely to go.
   10. Another area this goes on is at professional conferences. We have a lack of funding to send faculty to these conferences. If we can find more money to send more faculty to these conferences this would help.
   11. Internally TTaDA has variety of trainings, and we have been talking about putting together a badging process where faculty could look at different paths. If there were identifiable people within the colleges that you would allow to be part of this and if you rewarded these efforts in page 2’s then this would do a long way.
3. **Look ahead 10 years, how do we know UND has successfully infused creativity, innovation, and discovery as a core value across all aspects of our institution?** 
   1. If students have multiple opportunities to engage in creativity, discovery, and innovation even if it is not a part of their major. Many of the experiences that students have right now is very major specific, but if they have opportunities to do this outside of their major that is important as well.
   2. From an enrollment side of things- is our enrollment still strong? Students want to go to a place where creativity, discovery and innovation are valued and infused throughout. Also, if we are successful in short term does this translate into long-term philanthropic giving? Are they giving or are their companies connecting with us because of these programs and initiatives?
   3. If employers are coming to recruit our students because they know they are known to be innovative and entrepreneurial then this is a good sign that we are doing things right
   4. Workforce- are they getting jobs as soon as they leave here? Is this percentage moving in the right direction?
   5. Speaking or enrollment, I don’t know if people will commit to 4 years anymore. We are seeing more in house trainings and people who are working while they take classes. If we stay static in the way we structure courses and think of higher education delivery model it will hurt us. We need to be creative in how we structure our educational delivery model.
   6. In 10 years, the language of CDI is woven into the governance documents that faculty experience in terms of T&P, annual evaluations, merit considerations, etc. If we systematically take a look at these governance documents and if we express these as value propositions, then that is a good metric. If we put in the T&P document that you will be rewarded for Innovation and Creativity, we will need to make good on this in some way. In 10 years from now if we know what this means and how to evaluate it that will be success.