

CONSULTATION REPORT

Where do you see TRU in ten years?

In March 2019, Thompson Rivers University began conducting consultations, through *Envision TRU*, with the intention of informing a new vision for the institution. This process—which aims to be as transparent, inclusive, and authentic as possible—is based on the idea of shared learning and is expected to continue until the end of March 2020. The following report is a summary of responses to the tenth consultation question, and presents information regarding participation, top thoughts, and emergent themes.

Thoughtexchange is an online platform that brings people together to anonymously share and communicate thoughts about a given subject and rank those that have already been submitted by others. This exchange, which ran from June 19 to October 8, asked participants:



Figure 1. Participants

Describe your ideal TRU 10 years from now.

In total, 102 students, alumni, faculty, and staff participated in this event (Figure 1). Fifty-four thoughts were shared and contributed to the discussion, while 1,216 ratings provided insight into community agreement regarding these comments and ultimately formed the basis for the emergent themes (Figure 2). The largest group of participants were on-campus faculty members (35), followed by staff/admin (27).

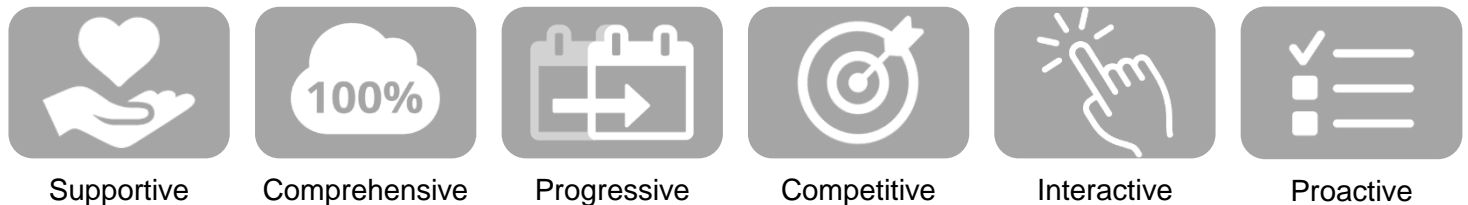


Figure 2. Emergent Themes

Emergent Themes

Supportive

At its core, being supportive involves providing help, support, and encouragement to those in need. Ten years from now, participants seemed to agree that their ideal TRU would continue to be supportive—not only of students and staff, but of all members of the community as well.

“An institution which respects, shows compassion, and provides support to staff and students so that they can achieve their goals and objectives.”

“A university that is engaged with the community in solving the economic, social and environmental problems we face.”

Progressive

As supposed hubs of innovation, participants generally agreed that universities have an inherent role to push the boundaries and advocate for the betterment of society. Suggestions on how TRU might achieve this included actions such as continuing to encourage equity and diversity and improving the student experience by allowing for greater flexibility in completing their programs.

“A **RACIALLY** diverse community, respecting and celebrating people's ethnicity and the value that their experiences brings to TRU”

“Students can completely build their own credential on their own terms. Because it is what the students want.”

Comprehensive

TRU's commitment to its mission of being a comprehensive, learner-centred institution was appreciated by participants. Suggestions also were made about how TRU might better incorporate Open Learning and on-campus courses together, as well as how it might build and grow over the next 10 years.

“We are TRU. not TRU OL and TRU on Campus. Because our main client groups don't distinguish between the two. It is only an internal issue.”

“Bigger campus with more programs to offer We can't stay as small as we are. TRU has a lot of potential and should have more programs to offer students.”

Competitive

Being competitive often implies having a strong desire to compete or succeed. But while this may be true of many institutions, like TRU, participants seemed to agree that building and maintaining a reputation is just as important. How universities are perceived by communities, either on the provincial, national, or even international stage, can greatly determine their success.

“More research intensive Producing more credible, rigorous, externally funded research is key to enhancing TRU's reputation in Canada.”

“We want to show the international research community that we can compete with the big dogs.”

Emergent Themes (cont.)

Interactive

By definition, the word 'interactive' often refers to the interactions between a computer and its user. But, in the context of this exchange, participants tended to focus more on the need for social interactions between students and their intrinsic value in building identity.

“Increase public palace for studying and group gatherings. It fosters communication and increase enjoyment”

“More 'spirit' on campus towards athletics
Builds culture, sense of belonging, and enhances experience.”

Proactive

Comments about being proactive were often presented in relation to being progressive. Participants generally seemed to agree that, part of pushing the boundaries, involves taking action and causing change as opposed to simply reacting to problems as they occur.

“We act expediently to meet the demands of the marketplace Right now if I want to make a major change to a course, it takes approximately 1yr to get through the various committees.”

“TRU - University of the Future, right here, right now”