

August 27, 2015

People Plan Development Report

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1. Introduction

At the University of Lethbridge, we aspire to become Canada's destination for all who seek a comprehensive, liberal education-based university that promotes a diverse, inclusive and welcoming environment. Our future success is dependent on attracting and retaining the best people to support our aims and aspirations. At a time when there is increasing competition for talented people – locally, nationally, and internationally – the University must seek to develop and better utilize the talents and capabilities of our faculty and staff.

In April 2014, President Mike Mahon outlined the terms of reference for the People Plan Committee (the Committee) and named its members. The Committee is comprised of a group of employees from various departments across the University. It was tasked with developing recommendations for a strategic framework centered on the University's most valuable resource – our people. The People Plan fits within the context of Destination 2020, the University's Strategic Plan for the next five years, and it will be in harmony with other plans (e.g. Academic Plan) as the University moves forward.

This People Plan represents the perspectives of various employee groups of the University community, and it is a collaborative work of the following 15 members of the People Plan Committee:

- Elaine Carlson, Human Resources & Administration (Committee Chair)
- Connie Chaplin, VP Research
- Bryson Duda, Library – Information Systems
- Sarah Hilliard, Faculty of Fine Arts – Dean's Office
- Michelle Hogue, Faculty of Arts & Science – FNTP / NAS
- Lisa Howard, Faculty of Health Sciences
- Judy Jaeger, Facilities – Caretaking
- Craig Loewen, Faculty of Education
- Kim Ordway, Financial Services
- John Sheriff, Mathematics & Computer Science
- Aaron Tamayose, Accommodated Learning Centre

- Kari Tanaka, Bookstore
- Gloria Tian, Faculty of Management, Calgary Campus
- Michael Whipple, Sports & Recreation Services
- Jing Zhu, Registrar's Office

2. Development & Methodology

2.1 Origins of the People Plan

An Initial Steps Committee, formed in July 2012, was given the mandate to make recommendations for the President's consideration as to whether the University should proceed to develop a People Plan. The Initial Steps Report concluded that, while the University community had created visionary plans regarding our Strategic, Academic, Research, Business, and Campus Master Plans, more could be done to specifically address the largest and most significant asset of our institution – our people.

Senior Administration believes that the University will derive many benefits from a sound People Plan, as building a diverse, inclusive and welcoming internal community helps us to excel at our three institutional values of students, access, and quality. By ensuring the University of Lethbridge is a place where the best people want to conduct research, teach, and work collaboratively, we will be able to foster an environment that attracts and supports our students, enhancing the reputation of the University in higher education and the broader community.

2.2 Engaging a Self-Study

Information in the Initial Steps Report provided a useful roadmap for the People Plan Committee. Over the past year or so, the Committee met 25 times to create the People Plan.

The Committee's first workshop, facilitated by Mr. Victor Shewchuk, took place in June 2014. In the workshop, the Committee prioritized key elements for the People Plan, in particular:

- Create a statement of intent;

- Create a statement of shared values and commitments to one another, developed through consultation with community stakeholders;
- Begin the assessment of shared values.

The Committee then took various steps to collect input for the People Plan from the entire University community:

1. Throughout June-September 2014, inventory surveys were conducted across various departments. The purpose of these surveys was to identify existing programs, facilities and initiatives that are currently available to support our people. Programs accessible by faculty and staff, as well as their families, were eligible for inventory.
2. A webpage was developed in July and went live on August 6, 2014 to keep the community apprised of the Committee's progress, with an email address which individuals could use to provide comments and ask questions.
3. In November 2014, the Committee contracted Leger as an independent firm to conduct a survey to inform the development of the People Plan. The survey questionnaire was developed in partnership with the People Plan Committee. People Plan Survey results were presented to the Committee in January 2015:
 - At the close (November 25, 2014), there were 671 completed surveys, for a response rate of 56%;
 - As a benchmark, employee satisfaction sits at 7.3 out of a 10-point scale;
 - Fully 53% of all employees are 'very' satisfied with their employment experience;
 - Exempt Support Staff (ESS) employees and Senior Administration expressed the highest overall employee satisfaction scores (8.1 and 8.0 respectively), as well as the highest intensity of satisfaction with their employment experiences. In comparison, Faculty and Support Staff express relatively lower overall employee satisfaction (7.2 for both groups);
 - Very little "dissatisfaction" is found among any employee group when rating employee experiences.

4. Six World Cafés, facilitated by Jeff Meadows, Brad Reamsbottom, Bernie Williams, and Laurel Corbiere, were organized in January-February 2015 on Lethbridge and Calgary campuses. We had a great turnout, with 195 participants from various departments across the University taking part. The People Plan Survey results helped the Committee to identify areas where we are doing well and areas where improvements could be realized, which in turn informed the World Café discussion topics. This enabled us to explore these issues on a deeper level and to gain additional ideas and insights.

3. The People Plan

The People Plan speaks to those employed by the University of Lethbridge. For the purposes of our Plan, these include the University of Lethbridge academic staff, administrative professional officers, senior administration, and support staff.¹

Certain shared values emerged from the various steps of consultation with the University community. In February 2015, the Committee reviewed World Café results and identified priorities for action that emerged. Working groups were then formed in March-May 2015 to develop the vision and strategies for each of the six People Plan priorities (in alphabetical order):

- Collaboration and Cohesiveness
- Communication
- Orientation
- Supervision and Leadership
- Training and Development
- Work-Life Balance

¹ The Initial Steps Report suggested that Teaching Assistants also be included. After some thoughtful debate, the Committee decided to focus this initial plan on continuing employees and thus Teaching Assistants (TAs) are not included. However, TAs and other like groups should be considered in the future.

4. Action Items

In the course of our surveys and discussions, many suggestions came forward from the Community. These were subsequently collected into a list without evaluation or prioritization. This list, which is available on the People Plan website, is not a 'to-do' list; rather, it is intended to inspire actions and serve as a starting point as we develop action plans that reflect our People Plan values and priorities. The actual action items arising from the People Plan will be determined by the various divisions, departments and groups who work on its implementation.

5. Conclusion

A diverse, inclusive, and strong university rests on its people. While the Committee enjoyed the unwavering support of the President's Executive, our efforts were directed by the many members of the University community who responded to our surveys, participated in World Cafés, provided expertise, and submitted suggestions.

This Plan should be a living document. As such, the Committee recommends additional steps to be taken:

- Conduct an employee survey every 3 years
- Organize World Cafés every year on different topics
- Name a representative committee to create an annual progress report to the University community

The People Plan is dedicated to the people who work at the University of Lethbridge, and it serves as a foundational voice from which community well-being initiatives will evolve and be developed. It is now our responsibility as a University, faculty, department, unit, committee or individual to breathe life into the People Plan by creating opportunities to think, create and explore together.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized cursive letters that appear to be 'EC', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Elaine Carlson

People Plan Committee Chair

Acknowledgements

The People Plan Committee thanks the following individuals who helped us with their expertise throughout our consultation process:

Name	Faculty/Department	Expertise
Lesley Brown	VP Research	Research Plan
Laurel Corbiere	President's Office	World Café Facilitator
Spencer Court	Facilities- Planning/Arch.	Campus Master Plan
Robert Ellis	Faculty of Management	Consulted – People Plan Survey
Courtney Faulkner	Communications	Photographer
Darren Fletcher	Human Resources	Website Design and Maintenance
Ken Heidebrecht	Faculty of Education	Photographer
Leona Jacobs	Library	Research – Institutional Assessment
Tanya Jacobson-Gundlock	Communications	Consulted - Communications
David Kirby	Communications	Consulted - Communications
Joshua Knapp	Faculty of Management	Consulted – People Plan Survey
Dan Koehler	IT Web Team	Website Development
Maria Marcial	FOIP	Consulted – FOIP re Survey
Mark Matias	Northern Campuses- Calgary	Northern Campuses World Café
Suzanne McIntosh	Human Resources- Wellness	Consulted – People Plan Survey
Kali McKay	Communications	Communication Writer
Jeff Meadows	Teaching Centre	World Café Facilitator
Mandy Moser	Institutional Analysis	Consulted – People Plan Survey
Brad Reamsbottom	Teaching Centre	World Café Facilitator
Sharon Sproule	Legal Counsel	Consulted – People Plan Survey
U of L Bookstore Staff	U of L Bookstore	Consulted – Cell Phone Wallets
Nancy Walker	VP Finance & Admin	Comprehensive Institution Plan
John Walkey	IT – Client Services	IT- Web Ex for Meetings
Bernie Williams	Faculty of Management	World Café Facilitator

The Committee also acknowledges the invaluable input provided by:

- 671 faculty and staff who participated in the People Plan Survey
- 195 faculty and staff who participated in the People Plan World Cafés

*Last but not least, the Committee specifically thanks **Teresa Petriw** who spent countless hours keeping us informed, organized and always on track, and **Darcy Tamayose** who put our thoughts on paper through creative design and thoughtful words.*

