



Two-Decade Trends

Summarized from Initial 2009-2010 2y2d Focus Groups

Contents

Trends identified by focus groups in the following areas:

1. Discovery
 2. Diversity
 3. Engagement
 4. Globalization
 5. Interdisciplinary Education & Research
 6. Teaching & Learning
 7. Technology
-

Discovery

2y2d Themes: Quality, Flexibility, Nimbleness, Collaboration

Trends Identified:

1. The nature of disciplines and faculty collaborations is changing. Collaborations are just as often between faculty in the same disciplines but in different departments, than faculty in different disciplines.
2. Individual faculty will continue entrepreneurial activities. There will be greater emphasis on incentivizing individuals to solve their own problems and providing support tools to help faculty find resources: facilities, expertise, and collaborators.
3. Faculty will earn their salary from a combination of instruction, research, and/or service, and any drop in activity in one category involves an increase in one or both of the others.
4. The wave of upcoming faculty retirements will affect departmental budgets and decisions.
5. Research will:
 - have more porous boundaries and require flexible models to support innovation
 - require a highly collaborative, supportive and interactive research environment based on a foundation of fundamental research, often driven by single-PI labs, resting solidly on a very high quality faculty;
 - be carried out with many different partners (at UW, at other universities, with companies, with foundations, with other countries, with new public/private/government partnerships);
 - involve fewer but larger and more cost-effective research facilities, highly leveraged and cooperative;
 - require better IT infrastructure, including collaborative tools and networks

Diversity

2y2d Themes: Retention, Inclusion, Diversity More Broadly Defined, Collaboration, Accountability

Trends Identified:

1. Racial/ethnic demographics are changing and the country is becoming more “minority majority.” Changing demographics will require new responses to the growing needs and interests of diverse populations.
2. An increase is expected in the number of first-generation university students and students of Latino heritage.
3. Definitions of diverse groups will shift. Individuals will self-identify in different ways and group affiliations will change. Census and other formal definitions of diverse groups are likely to change, affecting diversity-related metrics.
4. Federal and private funding agencies are increasingly looking for proposals that include diversity as part of their broader impact.
5. Diversity will:
 - a. have a broader definition, including race, gender and gender identity, low socio-economic status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, disability, age, religion, nationality, and individuals who express multiple minority identities.
 - b. be a prerequisite for excellence. Excellence will, by definition, be inclusive.
 - c. require nimble structures and coordinated efforts to respond to changing societal trends, demographics, and needs and interests of internal and external communities.

Engagement

2y2d Themes: Relationship-building, Personal Connection to the UW, Take Chances, Faculty/Staff/Students Serve as Ambassadors

Trends Identified:

1. Engagement will require more relationship-building and “connectivity” between all audiences, external and internal. It will not be only one way.
2. Engaging internal audiences will require a “mission-driven” message to provide a “rallying cry” to get behind and strong leadership at every level.
3. Engaging external audiences will require focusing on student/faculty-told stories, working to build a meaningful personal connection to the impact and value of the UW in their lives, a strong umbrella brand, and emphasis on impact and accountability.
4. Managing engagement will require nimbleness, being ready when opportunity knocks. Universities will need to be opportunistic and take chances. Don’t just deliberate. Act.
5. There’s nothing wrong with being aggressive, competitive and confident. To move forward, the UW should let go of past, Northwest-culture, quasi-apologetic messaging.
6. Trends in giving include:
 - a. donors will look for a return on investment
 - b. planned giving will be the source of large gifts
7. More and more data will be available about groups and individuals we want to engage.
8. Engagement will:
 - a. mean identifying and cultivating donors and alumni whose lives have been touched the most (grateful patients, scholarship recipients, first in the family to get a college education, etc.). Those individuals feel a need to give back to the University because of what it gave them.
 - b. require continued engagement of the legislature at current levels or higher.

Globalization

2y2d Themes: Competition, Meaningful Partnership, Fee-based outreach

Trends Identified:

1. The globalization of research, education and training will only intensify with increased competition for students; faculty; research funding; and university, industry and government partners. Individuals and organizations will think more globally about their choices and will be more knowledgeable about global opportunities.
2. A few universities will benefit from a truly international brand. Currently, many are American but this may shift as global institutions gain in prestige, reputation and ranking.
3. International students and related support services could be an increasingly strategic part of enrollment planning, advising, and student services activities.
4. Study abroad options will likely increase with longstanding European sites joined by new sites in Asia, Latin America, and Africa.
5. International educational partnerships will need to be genuinely collaborative, in which each side learns from the other in a spirit of mutual respect, to be lasting.
6. There is a trend of American universities establishing “branch campuses” overseas. The track record of such efforts, both financially and intellectually, has been mixed at best.
7. The UW will likely maintain its standing as a world leader in several key arenas of global research, namely, global health, global environment, and global communications and information technologies and like many peer institutions will increasingly become a genuinely global public university.

Interdisciplinary Education & Research

2y2d Themes: Collaboration, Bottom-up initiatives, Key to Solving the Big Problems

Trends Identified:

1. Quality and nimbleness will be central to success and reputation moving forward.
2. Collaborative work will provide the best opportunity to address society's major issues.
3. Collaborations will likely be between faculty in the same disciplines, but different departments, as well as among faculty in different disciplines and involve team-based problem solving research, often combining multiple methods and perspectives.
4. "Bottom up" research initiatives, beginning with the faculty, are the key to a flourishing interdisciplinary culture.
5. Faculty need to anticipate emerging fields ("skate to where the puck will be")
6. "Interdisciplinary" work will take several shapes: research reflecting two disciplines (or more), combining both fields' perspectives and trans-disciplinary research, which transforms both original fields.
7. Tensions and ambiguity around defining and "doing" interdisciplinarity are both strengths and challenges; requires strong intellectual leadership to do well.
8. UW will change greatly in the next decade, as many of the "boomers" retire with younger faculty more likely to be interested in interdisciplinary activities.
9. Recruiting will be a key to success—recruiting high quality graduate students and hiring faculty with an eye specifically to their ability and willingness to conduct interdisciplinary research and teaching, and a willingness to help define and build appropriate infrastructure, policies, practices, etc.
10. Interdisciplinary education and research will:
 - a. be best when resting on a strong foundation of departments, disciplines, and/or discipline-based foundational knowledge.
 - b. likely take very different forms in contexts of teaching and research
 - c. Interdisciplinary work will be both large and small-scale.
 - i. "Small bridge" collaborations (e.g., people in different units approach the same question from a different focus; or use a similar tool – such as lasers—to understand different kinds of issues. Collaboration practical, somewhat focused.
 - ii. "Bigger bridge" collaborations, in which people pursue transformative "big ideas" conversations, research
 - d. involve many different partners (across units at UW, or with community partners -- public/private/government)
 - e. be supported by cost-effective infrastructures but at times may be more costly than alternatives (e.g., fully-articulated team teaching)
 - f. be informed by the successes and products of existing high quality interdisciplinary graduate education and research programs, including faculty who are recruited to the University of Washington from such programs.
 - g. allow the university to be the incubator of new ideas.

Teaching & Learning

Key Themes: *Effects of Technological Change on Pedagogy, Expectations of Digital Natives, Changes in Student Demographics, Maintaining Access, Interdisciplinary Study, Experiential Learning*

Trends Identified:

1. Use of online and contemporary teaching technologies, media, electronic delivery and interaction mechanisms will enhance, not replace, faculty involvement with students.
2. Experiential learning will increase with more teaching, learning, and public scholarship opportunities that focus on the specific application of knowledge in real-world settings. Field work, field trips, and in-class experiential learning will be used to illustrate course concepts and involve greater engagement with community leaders and mentors.
3. Physical location will matter less with greater remote collaboration on coursework—between classmates, universities, and internationally with students engaging issues, problems, and people at different locations around the world.
4. Fewer students will be able and/or willing to attend face-to-face classes and will access alternatives such as hybrid courses (combining in-person and online instruction) and mixed (or blended) courses, with some students in class and others attending remotely.
5. Schedules will matter less. Courses may vary in length and students may expect to be able to access course-related materials or interaction on-demand at all hours.
6. Student will do their own research, mostly online, beyond course materials and with faculty support, relying on a diverse range of media, resources, and engagement.
7. Students will come from more diverse backgrounds and are less likely to be native speakers of English.
8. Providing access to higher education will continue to be a public-service mandate.
9. A greater number of interdisciplinary majors will be offered and interdisciplinary and innovative teaching and learning will increase, breaking down social, communication, and institutional boundaries and offering more core courses to students.
10. Textbooks and printed materials may be largely replaced by online materials.
11. Traditional paper-based grading methodologies may change to accommodate new ways of learning, including collaborative projects.
12. The inevitable cost increases may drive a market response of alternative ways of accessing degrees, or even alternative degrees and certification.
13. Digital natives will soon become the next generation of scholars.
14. Teaching & Learning will:
 - a. include attention to forming learning communities.
 - b. involve deciding which teaching activities are better online vs. face to face and faculty will be more comfortable teaching in more than one medium.
 - c. take advantage of the increased quality and use of digital tools, visual resources, game-based learning, faster network speeds, “cloud” computing, classroom technology and mobile technology students bring to class.
 - d. include instruction in critical digital literacy to enable students to gauge the reliability of information, especially when using the web as a research tool.
 - e. Include project-based learning with multi-tasking in classrooms, decentralized learning structures, access to online materials that promote experiential and shared learning outside the classroom.

Technology

Key Themes: IT for Teaching and Research, the Rise of Distance Learning, Collaboration Tools, and Interaction

Trends Identified:

1. Wireless will be ubiquitous, fast, and fully integrated with smart devices and fully wired classrooms
2. Social Networking will pervade interactions with virtual and physical worlds converging in more planned and strategic ways. Trust will be more important than ever and will have to be established face to face first.
3. Precision in writing, awareness of (or instruction in) different styles of writing for different media, and selection of appropriate media for messages will be important to avoid the potential for ambiguity of abbreviated forms like twitter.
4. Research collaboration will require:
 - a. massive cloud data storage, data visualization tools, immersive online environments, collaborative/interactive online meeting spaces, robust security and authentication programs, creative backup and restoration technology
 - b. instant translation; more bandwidth between continents and countries; quicker and more flexible publication
 - c. virtual meeting environments, improved video conferencing
 - d. personal relationship networking based on common academic and commercial interests.
 - e. cyber-security of intellectual property
5. Data & access is and will be recognized as an institutional asset and includes all of our knowledge of what we did over the last 20 years. The majority exists in electronic form. Historical and new data will be systematically collected and mined in the Research, Education and Business domains (DMC focus on business currently). Large data repositories will be accessible, organized and available to anyone, anytime.
6. Relationship Management will involve creating profiles or "identities" to capture and retain information about everyone who interacts with or contacts the UW. It will include integration from applicant (Admissions) to SDB, to alumni, also including HR/Payroll for faculty and staff, patient information from UW Medicine, all of our affiliates (KEXP, KUOW, Burke, Henry, etc.), and vendor relationships.
7. Virtual Environments will be more prevalent. Standards will rise for fully supported and managed virtual environments that will require current to stay competitive.
8. Artificial intelligence will be more pervasive.
9. Storage will involve increased server space.
10. IT Infrastructure will be modernized to better support "the business" of the university.
11. Cloud Computing will be prevalent. People won't know or care where their computing takes place as long as they have service.
12. Technologies will be irrelevant – content will be most important.