Principal Deane:

Thank you so much for coming out this afternoon to this second of our larger installments of the conversation.

Before we begin, I just want to acknowledge, as is our custom, our presence on the lands of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. We are grateful to be able to live, to learn, to research, and to play on these lands.

So, welcome, everyone. The first of these open sessions as part of the conversation was intended to be a very open discussion about no topic in particular. It was about the state of the university, issues that people wished to surface and to talk about.

On that occasion, the meeting occurred shortly after the Chown Hall incident, and so there was a very robust and helpful discussion about issues of climate, culture, and race on our campus. And a number of other issues came up, particularly issues regarding international students on our campus and those aspects of the first meeting cast us forward to today’s event and others.

So, just to remind you, there’s this session and then for the remainder of this term on November 18th at 4:00 in Graduate Studies there will be another one of these, on November 25th at 5:30 there will be a special AMS Assembly and on that occasion there will be pizza to stimulate and augment the discussion.

Audience member:

To increase the undergraduate turnout.

Principal Deane:

Absolutely.

And then on January 14th there will be a session at Duncan McArthur Hall on West Campus. So, the intention is to advance the conversation at every opportunity, and as I said when we were at the last of these meetings, I’m using every possible opportunity to talk to members of our university community about the issues that bear on our future, the values we want to see, animate the work we do here, the impact we want to see this university have in the world.

Through this discussion, trying to be very deliberate about some of these admittedly somewhat abstract issues, but issues which nevertheless need to be addressed and thought about before we even get close to thinking about what a strategic plan for the university should look like for the next 5-10 years.

Let me just go through some housekeeping things before I get on to those. These are the ground rules for these meetings, they are set up so that everyone and anyone can contribute to the discussion—
that’s the point—it’s not for me to talk incessantly, it’s for us to have a conversation about these questions.

If you don’t get to express your views on a topic here today in person, there’s the possibility of providing online input through the website, through the Principal’s Office website, and you’re welcome to contribute that way. I’m also very open to private meetings to talk about any issues that you prefer to talk about in that context.

We are videotaping today’s recording as we do at each of these things, principally for the purpose of making this discussion available to everyone in the university, to people, for example, who weren’t able to make it here, and these recordings also provide a means by which I and my team can be reminded of the way in which topics have come up for conversation. And because we’re recording it, it’s important when you speak please to use the mic, obviously so that we can all hear, but also so you can be heard on the recording.

So, I’m going to just set the scene if I may. I mean, ridiculous, it’s an hour-long meeting and we’re going to talk about perhaps the two biggest issues that face our university, one, research, and the other, internationalization. They are closely related, of course, because they bear together on another big issue, which is our reputation as an institution. And, whether we like it or not, in this day and age, universities are global entities, they have to have an impact in a global context, they have to be players on the international stage and so for that reason, it’s obviously critical that we think about what Queen’s international engagement should look like, what the principles are on which we should conduct ourselves in relations with institutions and students and researchers abroad.

That is a critical issue for us to settle, because of course international is not just something that happens to one side of the university. My view is that it is fundamental to the success of any university nowadays, and getting it right and getting it right in a way that’s properly integrated in the life of academic life at the university, and ethically defensible and sustainable in the context of those academic values is critically important.

International, yes, it does raise a series of specific questions that may bear on student mobility, on research collaborations, or whatever, but are obviously very connected to every university’s reputation seen from every other point of view. And then there’s the issue of research, so I’ve been back at [Queen’s] for five [months], I’ll offer you the observation that when I first came to [Queen’s] in 2005, our level of sponsored research was approximately where it is right now, so that’s fifteen years later.

As measured by those gross research dollars coming in, we’re doing okay if you’re looking at those research intensity figures we’re doing okay, but I am aware there is a sort of crisis of confidence in the university about our research standing, and I think it’d be important to talk about that and to talk about what components of that issue are circumstantial, where we are geographically, how much access we have to major health, clinical, and research facilities—because that is one of the, I think, differentiators between us and some of the universities that have much higher levels of research revenues.

And then, how much of it is cultural? What are we not doing? What is its relationship, for example, to our rates of faculty hiring? So, we just embarked on a faculty renewal initiative to bring 200 faculty members into the university over five years bound to have, I hope, if our hires are good, an impact on our research productivity. But that is one of a number of factors, so I’m interested in talking to you
about all of those. Now, some of you will be aware of the Research InfoSource figures that came out just about three days ago, and so just, this is the last of the context I’ll provide before asking for your thoughts about these things. Queen’s dropped two places in the national research rankings in terms of gross research dollars coming in; we dropped from 11th, where we were last year, that’s based on 2017 data, to 13th, so 13th out of the 15 research intensive universities in the country. What was behind that? A 15% drop in research income in that year. Now, I know from talking to Vice-Principal Woodhouse, that can be accounted for almost entirely by fluctuations in clinical trials funding. That’s perfectly understandable, you know, Calgary went up by 40 million a couple years ago and looked fabulous, but it was just a particular set of clinical trials.

So, you know, one has to look at this not in an alarmist way, but however, that still means we are sort of fluctuating and vulnerable around the sort of $170 million mark for sponsored research. So, that loss was approximately a $30 million loss in research revenues to the university and that clinical trials hit. That’s the largest drop in the U15, and if we’re thinking about where this institution stands or should stand on the national scene, that is an important thing to think about. We don’t want to be 15th out of 15 in the U15.

Now, positively if you look at the figures, we’re actually quite good on the research intensity side, so the average research dollars brought in by eligible faculty members here in that year is $226,000 approximately. That’s pretty respectable, UBC is $261,000, Alberta is $235,000, Western is $171,000. So, here again, I don’t want to be appearing to be overly worried about this, because I think it’s a respectable figure.

On the other hand, University of Toronto $407,000, on average, McGill $321,000, and McMaster $439,000, on average. Now, here we go to the contextual thing, institutions with access to the University Health Network, of course are going to have a higher average. Universities with a higher concentration in the sciences and biomedical sciences like Mac than we are, will have a higher figure, and that’s circumstantial and it’s not necessarily something we should worry too much about.

But, it is true that we need to think seriously about the enterprise of research here, you know, the horse has left the gate, we are a research-intensive university, we will be ranked, we will be assessed next to those other research-intensive institutions, and we need to therefore be thoughtful about how we improve our performance on that front. And as I say, that is of course profoundly connected to the issue of our global standing.

So, if you look at the Academic Ranking of World Universities, it is research data and bibliometrics that earn your place in the ARWU rankings. Similarly, with the Times Higher, these significant global rankings don’t have mysterious methodologies. You can agree with the methodologies or not, but they are based—some of them—heavily on publicly accessible research data bibliometrics.

So, there’s my sort of opening contextual comments, and I hope they haven’t set a gloomy tone for the discussion, I am actually very excited for where we can go at Queen’s on both of these fronts. But in order to chart a clear course, we need to talk about what we want for the university in terms of research or in terms of international. So, could I just leave it there, and see how you would like to take the conversation, and give me your thoughts about either of those topics. I’ll say, we’ll pick up both of these topics up repeatedly in future ones. Yes, please.
Nora Fayed:

First of all, thank you for holding this session. I’m going to, kind of, voice two things I’ve observed as a relatively new faculty, relatively junior person. When I first arrived here—I arrived here 2015 and had two children in that time, so I wouldn’t add up all those years as if they were full years, but there are two main things that I think were not tied to our geography or our limitations that I think could’ve supported me further.

So, when I first arrived within the first few months, I got my first grant as a principal investigator in the strategy for patient-oriented research. By any metrics that’s extremely—that’s great. But I learned very quickly that one of my biggest challenges was going to be that there was no mechanism for my administrative, supporters or not, to help me leverage my research success into more research success.

So, the workload agreement was the same workload agreement meant for everybody no matter how successful or productive that they were. So, I have to say that as a junior faculty member, that can be a little frustrating. Now, I’m not turned off, I’m not going to take my foot off the gas, but there is hiring new faculty and there is setting them up for success when they get here. So, I would say making sure there is a mechanism for those who are productive, who are willing, who can demonstrate a track record, who can grow their program, make sure that you support them into doing more of the same and then rewarding them when they do. So, that would be the first thing.

The second thing had to do with some collaborations that if I was able—if they were more formalized, if there was more administrative support for collaborations, then it would have been easier for me to not have to pound the pavement. Now, my area is health sciences, specifically rehabilitation, and I have to do a lot more work that detracts from my research to set up partnerships with clinicians and providers, and I think that if those partnerships were more formalized at a higher level, it would be easier for those people to work with me and for me to work with them. We’re not having difficulty working with one another because we’re bad people or because we don’t want to, but because it’s not part of our jobs and that makes it very difficult for us to do things together.

So, those are kind of the two elements I’d say are something we could actually do something about, they’re our problems, they’re not anything else.

Principal Deane:

Thanks, both really important points. Particularly the latter point, I think there are many aspects of the university’s operations that could benefit from a more targeted capacity for finding relationships and building them so that the individuals who are doing research say, “well, we’re trying to teach a course which has an experiential learning component,” don’t have to do the basic work of trying to find a partner, so I think that’s a really good point. When you talk about collaboration, I took you to mean collaboration largely with parties outside of the university. Is it also a problem internally?

Nora Fayed:

No, I’m thinking of health service providers who are not given the message from their bosses and their managers, that they’re going to be rewarded for participating in research, that they’re detracting from patient care, for example, when they do research. Even if we’re not draining resources, I’m very mindful of that, I’m a former clinician myself, but if you raise it sometimes higher-up people will just be like, “oh,
well that’s kind of the way it is,” but really, it would be great if their bosses and their managers were rewarding them for working with me, and I also was rewarded for working with them if we were co-publishing together, if we could find some synergies, long-term it has an educational benefit, too.

It’s more clinical placements for the students, it’s more potential clinics moving forward once we establish the research, like there are downstream effects to things besides research, but it’s got to start with a little bit of input energy to get that catalyst going. I could provide more specifics, I don’t necessarily think it benefits the audience, though. I would be happy to discuss it further.

**Principal Deane:**

Thanks, I appreciate it. I actually think the whole issue of partnerships, obviously in the health sector there is a particular form of partnership that’s important, but partnerships with industry seem one of the key ways in which you can really grow the level and intensity of research on this campus. Also, partnerships with other institutions that take us out of our jurisdiction.

**Nora Fayed:**

This campus has been extraordinarily supportive with the partnerships that I’ve been trying to develop. I would like to say there have been a lot of infrastructure supports to help me do that. But the research office, the development office, they’ve really been helping with that.

**Principal Deane:**

Good to hear, thanks. Feel free to comment on the points just raised or if you want to go in a different direction. Yes, David.

**David Gordon:**

Kingston is a lovely place but it’s difficult to set up international networks and national networks from here, particularly when you want to be the PI on the thing, so we get most of the credit.

So, I think one of the things that ought to be extraordinarily easy to do here is compensate for distance with IT. I think it should be blazingly simple, there should be a city- or university-wide license for things like Zoom, so that we can all have at our desk the ability to make two clicks and have 30 people on a research group from around the world, to make it easy to set up meetings, to make it dead easy to see each other and talk to each other on a regular basis and overcome the disadvantage of our non-metropolitan location.

It’s getting easier to do that, I think this is one of the things the university ought to specialize in, that our IT group helping us with this, particularly as we’re starting to get criticism about researchers’ air travelling so much from a sustainability point of view, it’s another reason we’ve got to get expert at this. And it has a flip-over good effect in our teaching, in that it should be really easy to get our colleagues from around the country and around the world into our classroom, so that you can have guest lectures from the very best people in the world that we know from our research network and make it, again, dead easy to drop them into Stirling D there. So, that would be a sort of underlying thing that would help us compensate for our location in this lovely city.

**Principal Deane:**
I like that idea very much. It speaks to two things—it speaks to the fossil fuel issue but it also is a very, very elegant solution to the geographical issue. Not possible in earlier times but now very possible, so thanks, that’s a great point. Yeah, please.

Michael White:

Thank you, I’m Michael White from the library, and I just wanted to build on the previous statements regarding Zoom. I think we need to develop some type of university-wide plan for building our digital communication infrastructure, in addition to video conferencing software, I think there are a whole range of tools we should be looking at and integrating into our research. Things like citation managers, of course, but writing tools like Overleaf, which a number of universities now are incorporating and are allowing their grad students and researchers to use to write and then also integrated with their institutional repository, so that theses are moved from the Overleaf system right into the institutional repository.

There is a whole host of tools we should be looking at to improve managing our research data, electronic notebooks, for example. And I think here at Queen’s we tend to look at these things kind of at a faculty level or even a departmental level, so it’s kind of piecemeal and ad-hoc, so I think we should be doing more of an institutional-level plan.

Principal Deane:

Thank you, very much, and great point. I think, very much, an extension of David’s. If where we can facilitate our research productivity, our research connectivity, and so on through technological means, it makes a lot of sense to do that course. But, other comments? Yes, please.

Chris Coupland:

Thank you, Chris Coupland, I’m from undergraduate admission and recruitment. So, the point about the video conferencing, that seems to be really interesting when you think about the Castle as well. So, being experts in that area and how can we allow faculty to be able to deliver talks, not just bringing in people here to the Kingston campus, but getting the best faculty members to deliver talks at the Castle, and more broadly, how do you think the Castle fits in with the whole internationalization of the campus?

Principal Deane:

So, thank you for the question. Well, the Castle is a unique asset, I mean, there is no Canadian university that has a similar asset. And my observation would be, including the five years I was here as [Vice-Principal] Academic, we haven’t quite known what to do with it.

So, there’s the dilemma of is it Queen’s in East Sussex? Well, that’s hard actually to sustain that feel because it doesn’t have the facilities we have here, there are some subjects that are very difficult to teach there. There are subjects you can teach there that you can’t teach here, and my view has always been that you have to recognize its difference before you can integrate it.

I think it’s a mistake to assume it’s just an extension of us and that we can control it from the mothership. I think that’s not the case. However, I think it needs to be a cornerstone of our internationalization strategy, needs to be a place, sort of a beachhead we have on the other side of the
Atlantic, where we not only try to offer an exciting globally informed education, but also where we perhaps bring research partnerships together.

I mean, we have a number of conferences that occur there every year which is in keeping with the original conception of the place, but I think we’re nowhere near making the most of that as an asset. At the moment, enrollment is down, alarmingly down—I mean, it’s below 100, and if I remember rightly, the sustainability of the Castle is about 150 students in any given term. So, that’s alarming, and what’s also alarming is the students are not particularly international.

So, I think there’s a lot of good thinking going on about it at the Castle there, but what’s important to me is that we integrate any strategic thinking about Herstmonceux into our broader strategic thinking about international on campus. And I do think we need to be creative, it’s an asset we have at the moment I don’t think we are using to full effect.

It’s become more challenging to do this in the UK, right, for immigration reasons, so that’s one reason the numbers are down, I gather. And it’s not always easy for other institutions to partner with us in sending students there. In its initial conception, remember, it was a consortium of various Canadian universities sending students to this place, which we had been fortunate enough to be given. And then, of course, the mystique of Queen’s meant that other institutions chose not to send their students there, because they lost them transferring into Queen’s. That’s what I was told by the U of T president. So, that model, though we won an award for it, is no longer possible, but we do need to really work on the international networks that we have that would bring students to the Castle so it could be a truly international place.

But we also need to think beyond it as a place purely for undergrad education. So, I’m not going to presume to say what it should look like, but I think, A, we need to integrate it thoroughly, it has to be a cornerstone of what we try to do internationally, and we cannot presume that it is going to be successful because it is a Queen’s operation. You have to work at it, you know, you have to recruit students there, and what is on offer there has to be demonstrably not on offer anywhere else. So, I think, a lot of potential there still.

Canan Sahin:

Hello, I’m a PhD student in Political Studies and I’m an international student, so I kind of believe from my observation, international students bring with themselves some research topics and our reach contributes to the internationalization of the research activity as a whole, and one point that can make an institution more attractive to international students which can produce good quality work or candidates to do so, is their well-being in the place that they want to go to, and if we are in a competitive plane with other universities, I think financial well-being is one of them. And PhD students who extend their studies beyond four years, they are struggling, and when they are struggling it’s not so easy to, I think, focus on your work or excellence, or you do but it takes a longer time and makes things worse. I know next week’s Principal’s conversation, it will be maybe the focus of the talk, I don’t know, graduate studies and the challenges that we are facing in that field. But even in that topic of internationalization it’s important because U of T, Western, McMaster, recently Brock, those universities have changed their funding packages and their fee structures for PhD students and if Queen’s wants to remain competitive and attractive, I think there should be fundamental reforms that should be done.
When you pay $15,000 fees for my program and you have to do multiple TAships and RAships and if you write your dissertation at the same time, so research excellence is something also that is put at risk.

Principal Deane:

Thank you, very important points, to some extent have been raised at the earlier one of these meetings, so absolutely those are important questions to be taken seriously and to be looked at, I agree with you completely.

I will say, by the way, the federal government’s recent internationalization strategy feels like a terribly lost opportunity to me. It’s actually a small amount of money—I mean, one should always be grateful for what governments put out there, but it is $140-some million, and the hope had been that there would be money for Canadian students outgoing to have an international experience, and for international students to come into the country, both the undergraduate and graduate level.

What there is now is money for universities to look at ways in which incoming students can be supported and so on, so institutions can do what those other institutions you’ve mentioned have done, just remove the differential fee for graduate students of a certain level and so on, and I think that is necessary to do.

The problem will always be with us unless there is some kind of big funding source that makes it possible for students from around the world to come here, who have the talent and the brilliance to succeed in a graduate program, but just not the resources. I think we have to attend to our own policy issues, I think we also have to find money that actually supports that because it’s hard to describe yourself as an international campus when it’s in fact so difficult for graduate students to come and do the work they need to do without being under duress. Cynthia?

Cynthia Fekken:

Let me also add my thanks to you for hosting this conversation, it’s a pleasure to be here. I want to build on your comment about partnerships. In the same spirit as some of my colleagues, these things are things that we have control over here at Queen’s University. In my role as Associate Vice-Principal of Research, I often was told it’s very hard to be partners with Queen’s University. We make it very difficult for other people to become our partners internationally, with student exchanges, with research collaborations, with industry.

And I was thinking about that a little bit and I think there are a variety of reasons; one is cultural, we think about ourselves at Queen’s, we’re very proud of Queen’s, we love our university, we think of ourselves as different and special, and so we’re very picky about who our partners are going to be. We also have this thing about Queen’s that’s really unique and wonderful, we’re very decentralized. So, it’s hard when partners come here to know who they need to talk to and who’s in charge and who’s making the decisions.

I think the last thing is simply a matter of resources. It takes a lot of effort on the part of people who put those partnerships together to have an opportunity to have sustained interactions. So, for example, you can’t just go once to one meeting and say, “okay, we’re going to be partners.” But if you’re going to go to a series of meetings or have a series of conversations, that’s going to take a certain amount of time out of whoever is making those partnerships. And we have had a bit of a habit of looking at this as a one
shot thing, so, “I’ll give you some money to try a partnership with that”, rather than, “we need a three-year plan in order to make this happen.” So, again, I think that we have an opportunity here to do some things differently and think about how we want that to be in the future.

Principal Deane:

Absolutely, I’m so pleased you mentioned that. I’ll say, speaking as a person of Queen’s, was here, and has been away, that notion of it being an institution that is very difficult to partner with is absolutely true. I’ve seen it on the inside, how it works, and I’ve seen that perception from the outside. A really good point.

Similarly, that issue of investing in it, because it has to be sustained—and this is related to another issue that I think is a problem in the university and that is the capacity for risk-taking. I think you actually have to be prepared to take a risk, and you have to be able to gamble more than just one air ticket to northern Italy, and “oh, that worked out okay,” or, “no, it didn’t.” There has got to be more to it and I think you have to be strategic about where you want partners to go, or you have to find some way to get around that decentralized issue that occurs because it’s much easier to have a partnership with an institution or a group of institutions in another country, say, if different constituencies in the university are feeding into it, rather than just one unit.

So, great point, Cynthia. It’s early in this conversation, but to me it’s such an obvious thing, this issue of partnership and the capacity for partnership as representing one of the key solutions to some of our issues that we have.

Interesting, I met just last week with the Retirees’ Association, and I asked the same question, “what’s your advice for me? What should we be pursuing?” and there was a strong feeling in the room that partnership, getting away from thinking we’re so wonderful and self-sustaining, actually is reaching out to strengthen ourselves through good partnerships. Thanks, Cynthia. Please.

Audience member:

So, I’d like to turn around one of the things you said at the beginning, that we’re not close to UHN or other large areas that we could partner with. We have the unique opportunity that we are, say, 200 kilometers away from any other institution of our size. That gives us a massive catchment of partners. Whether we’re talking about small and medium enterprises, we could be talking about smaller health teams, we could be talking about non-profits, and it all comes down to the collaboration, again. So, I’d love to know how you could see us leveraging Queen’s, not from a “look at how big and tough we are”, but look at how we can sail ahead, break the ice and bring partners along and what kind of partners you could see us partnering with, whether that’s municipalities, not just City of Kingston but again, stretching out to our neighbours at [Gananoque] and across.

Principal Deane:

Thanks, a really good suggestion. So, there is already discussion underway about Queen’s leading sort of a cluster that would run the 401 corridor from Scarborough to Cornwall, say, and then north of that line, bringing industry, other institutions, municipalities, and so on. The end of this month we’re convening MPPs from that whole area at Queen’s Park to talk about this, and last week we had Queen’s Day at Queen’s Park, and this was an issue we presented.
So, I’ve come out of the Toronto-Waterloo supercluster—of course, that’s a formidable force, because just by concentration of industries and institutions, there’s a lot of firepower there. And there is a comparable capacity, or well, something similar could be done in this eastern corridor.

So, I think it’s a great idea, and some people would be reluctant to bring Ottawa into this, but I’m not, I actually think that would be potentially a very strengthening thing to do. But I like that idea very much, and I think you look at federal government initiatives, they are all in the future realistically they are going to put a premium on partnerships for regional enhancement, so whatever we do whether it’s advancing some very specialized field of research or whether it’s some industry-contracted research on some new materials, this could all be integrated in a view that I think would be very persuasive to governments when they’re funding. Great point, thank you. Yes.

Cathy Lemmon:

I’m reluctant to let this conversation end without making some comment about the revitalization of our internationalization plan here at Queen’s. In the time since you’ve been gone and more recently, the international community or the culture of internationalization has really suffered a blow at Queen’s. The International Centre itself was all but dismantled by a new reporting structure, and its focus has really taken on a different way of supporting the internationalization plan at the university. And I’m just aware as our last internationalization plan has finished and we’ll be thinking about a new one that we think about developing a new internationalization plan with an “internationalization at home” piece to it, because not everyone can go abroad and not everyone wants to go abroad, and we have a lot of students here but what are we doing with our culture here that makes it a more global community? So, there’s lots of ways to unpack that, but just to make sure that everyone knows that’s something we need to work on.

Principal Deane:

Thanks, Cathy. I would not have wanted that session to end without that being said, too. My observation is that we do seem to have lost something we had before. We had a structure that was highly respected across the country for training international educators, there was a conference every year, and there were individuals within the Queen’s University International Centre who were respected nationally for the work they did on this front. And I don’t yet understand what has happened, but we are in a very different place.

My perception is that our capacity for internationalization on all fronts, at home, through student mobility, through research partnerships and so on, is very scattered, and notwithstanding some good work that has been done by the former [Associate Vice-Principal] for International Affairs.

So, I’m actually optimistic about what can be done here, because we know what we used to have, and there would be a way of reconfiguring some of the things that seem to have, for one reason or another, I was going to say gone astray but it feels as though we’ve lost sight of the importance of a coordinated approach to internationalization.

Now, you mention internationalization at home, and I do think that is critical. When you think of the components that have to be kept together to be an institution with international impact, they are obviously student mobility in both directions, research partnerships, but to your point, what about—
even if we got really good at it and we had 25% of our students all having an international experience by going abroad, 75% of the students need to be prepared to be actors on the global stage when they graduate. And just teaching them the way we have been doing is not going to cut it. We need to think—I mean, this is a global discussion, right, what is internationalization at home look like? How do disciplines have to change, driven by that goal of producing graduates who have the skills and capacity to do the work that they do effectively in a global context?

So, here’s sort of where we are, I mean, the conversation is an open-ended thing, we’re talking about all these topics, but we can’t wait until we get to the end of the conversation to take some action. So, there is already planning going underway to produce a working group to think about what the bits and pieces are that need to be brought together, what it should look like, before we get to the point of saying “well, here’s the next strategy.” And the next strategy needs to be much more ambitious than the one that is ending right now. It needs to be not only ambitious but fully integrated with the overall direction of the university and its goals. Yeah, please.

**Audience member:**

Sorry, I’m just nursing a little cough. I work at the School of Business, and just to add to the piece of international at home, I want to also emphasize the importance of thinking about how we create space for other voices and the experiences of degree-seeking international students on this campus, and dedication to providing resources and services and in addition to that culture change, also a culture change on the perceptions of international students at Queen’s.

So, I’ve worked in many capacities, at the International Centre, in the Faculty of Engineering as well, working with international students, and that would be my takeaway also considering how as a campus we react to the international students on this campus, the knowledge that they bring in, the expertise that they bring in as well, when talking about international at home as well.

And there’s another piece I want to quickly touch on when we talk about even the international student population, what is that diversity within that population? I had the opportunity to attend a lunch with international high school advisors and I was at a table with a couple of advisors coming from different parts of Africa, and one of the things they said to me was, “Queen’s doesn’t care about us. We don’t hear anything from Queen’s in the continent.” And for me, as a black person, as a former international student from Nigeria and working with many other international students, it’s kind of disheartening to work with students who feel like this university isn’t seeking them out, and they have to seek themselves to be here. So, that’s kind of my perspective when we think of international at home as well.

**Principal Deane:**

It’s a really valuable perspective, thanks. I mean, if I could go to your second observation, yes, absolutely true, we have to be thoughtful about where we would like to see students come from and we need to have a very broad approach to the world here.

So, at the moment, we’re very concentrated in a few parts of the world in terms of the student body. So, all international students need to feel welcomed, valued, and engaged with when they come and as you say, if in certain parts of the world people figure Queen’s couldn’t care less whether you come or you don’t, that’s hugely problematic. And Sub-Saharan Africa is the glaring absence in our thinking about these things, so the working group that will be put together to look at this will have to think about how
we understand our relationship to the whole of the globe. And we don’t want to, in fact, just be the victim of geopolitical currents and the desires out there, we need to actually be thoughtful about what kind of international community we want to make here and who is in it.

Your first point, I thought, was also a really important one, too, about how international students experience life here. There have been some very alarming statistics in recent years, for example, about how many international students leave this country able to say they’ve made a Canadian friend. It’s an appalling figure—I can’t remember, 1-point-something percent—extraordinary. And also, when asked to what extent were you engaged with in recognition of the perspective you might bring to material in the classroom, most students would say “not at all.” That’s across the country, not just in our institution, so all the issues you’ve raised are really important. Of course, they also intersect with our equity, diversity, and inclusion issues on this campus, so a proper international strategy will have to attend very explicitly to the issues you’ve raised. Yes, please.

Audience member:

I have a Queen’s BA, I have a Queen’s PhD, I’ve worked for 20 years in online education, and I’m just wondering, when is Queen’s going to get Queen’s online? Because that is a step in your aspiration to internationalize and it would help you with sustainable development goals and the right to education initiative, which requires for there to be quality education, which Queen’s is always all about, to adopt availability, accessibility, acceptability, and adaptability, as the four cornerstones of the right to education.

If Queen’s started to use that language of the right to education adopted by UNESCO, you would have the language you need in order to reach further, do more, and so I would think you should start talking to Queen’s graduates who are working in distance education because we actually know how to do it, and it’s the 21st century, and you’re talking about things that are, sort of, a little bit old school. So, let’s push the envelope a little bit, online education is where it’s at, you’ll get all kinds of kudos for it. Queen’s has a national, an international reputation, you just have to get those students back and be online.

Principal Deane:

Thank you, before you give up the mic, can I just ask—just because I’m new having come back—what has been the level of discussion about our online activity over the years here?

Audience member:

I teach your students. I teach for Athabasca University, I teach a lot of visiting students, I teach the older demographic, the people who cannot leave Renfrew, or who have taken some Queen’s online courses but can’t get the courses that they want, and so they come and take the courses from us because our enrollment starts at the first of every month, and in the next couple years it will probably change so it will be as soon as you enroll, you can start the course.

And that really does speak to people’s motivation—there are many people who can’t pick up and move, so we have to go to where they are. And that would be such a much better way of serving the corridor you’re talking about and those who can, can come and they can do short-term courses at Herstmonceux or at Queen’s, they would love it.
But you also have to serve those unemployed Calgarians who have their first degree but who are never invited back. So, if you took all of the Queen’s grads and after 10 years invited them to do a Master’s at Queen’s—for those who haven’t gone out and got one—my goodness, you’d know that they had a good basic education and you’d have chatter about how wonderful Queen’s is all over the country again.

Principal Deane:

Thanks, really interesting suggestion. I especially liked the point you made about the SDGs and the whole question of—I mean, online education as a force for global development is a really important consideration. As part of this conversation, I’m asking “what is the impact of this place?” I mean, we’re not having a conversation about just keeping going, you know, our existence has to be vindicated in some way by an impact. So, there’s an interesting way of opening onto the question of global social impact.

Audience member:

When I came to Queen’s, I came from Saskatoon because of a high school teacher, and that high school teacher has retired to Kingston, and whenever I come to Kingston, I visit him because I’m so grateful that he sent me in this direction. So, part of it is, you have to just know what you’ve got in the brand and you’ve got to cultivate it, but you’re sort of losing your way because I think it’s an insecurity around the research piece. When I did my first degree, Queen’s was an undergraduate institution and quite proud of it—and it’s fine, yes, we want to be in the U15—but at the same time, it starts with the undergraduates.

Principal Deane:

Thank you, yes, please.

Audience member:

I just wanted to add to this lady’s comments because I just actually took a different job at Queen’s, but the six years prior to me being in this job, I was the academic advisor for our online students doing Arts and Science online courses. In the first term that I started that job, I had about 180 students. In the last term before I left that job, we had 1300 in one semester. So, it’s a very high number of students that are being exposed to the Queen’s undergraduate online experience, and as I got to know them and we started doing some demographic and psychographic research, we realized these are students who would not have any other opportunity to pursue an undergraduate education because they are people who are working parents, they might be running a business, it’s just not a time in their life where they can drop everything and pick up and do an undergraduate degree. So, supporting that, I think, would help position Queen’s to be in a place where we could really enable the education and the betterment and the transformation of these people, who as I said, would not normally be able to have access to this education.

Principal Deane:

Thank you very much. Yes, go ahead.

Audience member:
To continue the train of thought as well, one thing I’ve never understood with universities is why when you graduate, your relationship is done aside from, for lack of better terms, asking to open up the wallet and make contributions. A nice online platform would allow you to continue a relationship with students. Honestly, after someone has been gone for three or four years, why not allow them to take some basic course, some components for their own upgrading or badging or whatnot, so they stay within the community. The conversation continues, the relationship continues.

**Principal Deane:**

Thanks. At the last session someone proposed the analogy of a club, that when you graduate from the university you remain a member of this club for which there would be some privileges, and part of that would be the capacity for ongoing education throughout the lifespan.

We do have to think about that, because, you probably know we just signed this Magna Charta declaration. And I’m on the group that’s rewriting the declaration for the next 30 years, and one of the elements being incorporated in this account of what universities should be for the 21st century is that idea, which is that education doesn’t end, because of the whole question of people having to re-tool for different jobs all the time, it’s going to happen.

So, universities need to adapt to that concept of playing an ongoing role in people’s lives as their work situations change. So, I’m mindful of the fact that we’re almost out of time, but there is a few minutes, so anyone else want to raise an issue that we haven’t gotten to or amplify something that we’ve discussed? Yes, please.

**Laura Murray:**

Laura Murray, in English and Cultural Studies. There are many ideas I have floating in my head, but on this question of access, something that I’ve recently encountered is the fact that if you live in Kingston but have never been enrolled at Queen’s and you want to take a single course out of interest here, and the professor is okay with it, you’re not allowed. You can only take an online course in Arts and Science if you haven’t been a Queen’s student before.

So, I think this access question goes to both the local and the global level, so while I love the idea of drawing alumni in for courses, I also think that it’s quite unconscionable that we’re not open to what we used to call mature students or people who, like the online students maybe, they have time, they live around here, they can take one course, or they’re experimenting, they might go back, they need to try it out. This is ridiculous to me.

I tend to be quite locally oriented in my research and I think that the regional and national actually provide a useful dual way of anchoring and positioning ourselves. One of the things I was thinking when you were talking about the regional efforts, this 401 idea, I know that there was an organization and Susan Lord had a grant for awhile called ‘Corridor Culture’ and it was based on the fact that people are always travelling from Montreal to Toronto, and maybe they need to stop in the middle and do something here. I don’t know if that’s still going on, but it was partly just strategic, but it’s also a way of thinking of this as actually being the fulcrum of these communication routes.

From my research, I also think that we could think about the treaty area as a possible way of thinking about our range of conversations and partnerships. So, the Crawford Purchase Treaty basically goes
from Mallorytown to, well, either the Bay of Quinte or Cobourg or whatever, but the northern shore of Lake Ontario. Relationships with Mississauga people and Haudenosaunee people really ought to go beyond the land acknowledgement. We could think about the kinds of relationships that we could develop, both for research and teaching, and I think they can complement each other. So, those are—there you go—both international relationships and local relationships, and I’m excited to think about the ways that we could develop that further.

**Principal Deane:**

Thanks Laura, and all that comes together under the heading of impact. So, the big question we want to ask is, what sort of impact do we want this place to have? And a strategic plan that says we want to have a certain kind of international profile in research is, to me, a hopelessly abstract goal.

To say this institution is going to mobilize its resources for the transformation of this region, socially, culturally, and economically—and through doing that, have its global impact because these things are continuous, to me that’s an exciting way to talk about impact. Not just suggesting we want to achieve a certain level of prominence, which is to me, an odd goal.

So, I welcome what you say, because I think it’s—what’s going to get us all up in the morning to come to work? It’s about knowing that impact, that’s human, that’s transformative, and that is local to us. I’m hoping there will be much more talk of that sort as this conversation progresses because that’s part of being bold, not saying we’re just here to uphold our tradition, we’re here to actually do something bigger.

I know the weather is getting bad so you probably want to head off. Thanks very much, everyone, and I hope you’ll come out for the next one.