



President's Leadership Forum - Summary Report

January 8, 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents wellbeing commitments made by UBC's senior leaders (Vancouver and Okanagan campuses) during the President's Leadership Forum on October 4, 2019. These commitments were collated by the UBC Wellbeing Strategic Support Team. The intent of this session was to shift the institutional focus from reactive, individual, and siloed initiatives to whole systems commitments.

Approximately 120 attendees were inspired to consider the Wellbeing Strategic Framework's "Collaborative Leadership" priority area. Facilitators provided engaging stories to centre dialogue around proactive, systems-level change, and leaders were encouraged to embed wellbeing in their portfolios at this level. In this report, commitments are organized by systems or individual change, followed by further theming into priority areas and audience. The results are **46 unique whole systems commitments**.

Commitments from each priority area:

- **Collaborative Leadership:** 26 unique commitments from 43 individuals
- **Mental Health & Resilience:** 9 unique commitments from 10 individuals
- **Food & Nutrition:** 2 unique commitments from 3 individuals
- **Social Connection:** 5 unique commitments from 9 individuals
- **Physical Activity & Sedentary Behaviour:** 1 unique commitment from 2 individuals
- **Built & Natural Environments:** 3 unique commitments from 3 individuals
- 33 additional individual commitments were made by 50 individuals

Highlights include:

- **People:** Assign wellbeing as a portfolio element to the Associate Dean in the Faculty.
- **Faculty engagement:** Continue the work of a Dean's task force on building a respectful environment, changing tenure and promotion processes.
- **Orientation and mentorship:** Positive and wellbeing-focused mentorship (whole person, peer-to-peer approaches) for new students, staff, and faculty, including postdoctoral fellows.
- **Sharing knowledge:** Through a wellbeing Speakers Series, create a forum for researchers and practitioners to connect and gain new insights.
- **Learning environment:** Ease student stress through developmental advising.
- **Affordable food:** Ensure food services offers at least one \$5 healthy meal option.
- **Fitness facilities:** Develop more facilities combined with space for wellbeing and mindfulness.

Next steps for senior leaders to uphold their commitments:

1. Engage with January and March surveys sent by UBC Wellbeing as an evaluation mechanism.
2. Use the [UBC Wellbeing Web Toolkit](#) to take action to embed wellbeing.
3. Consult with UBC Wellbeing Strategic Support Team for planning, evaluation, facilitation, and communications support.
4. Summary of outcomes will be included in UBC Wellbeing Annual Report to Board.

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WELLBEING SESSION OBJECTIVES

1. **Gain clarity:** Increase awareness of UBC's commitment to wellbeing through the Okanagan Charter and the Wellbeing Strategic Framework (WSF).
2. **Make a shared commitment:** Provide a space for dialogue around Collaborative Leadership to ensure the wellbeing of UBC's people, places, and communities.
3. **Take action:** Identify collaborative and portfolio-specific opportunities to take action across wellbeing priority areas.

FACILITATED DISCUSSIONS

At 17 tables, Table Hosts - UBC faculty and staff with experience in at least one priority area of the Wellbeing Strategic Framework - led discussions with senior leaders. They led the discussion with a short story of systems change efforts they have made to spark the conversation. Stories exemplified collaborative leadership through a **systems, proactive, and organizational approach** (e.g. launching a new bike-share program), as opposed to a **siload, reactive, and individual change approach** (e.g. an individual choosing to bike to work). The discussion asked senior leaders: *Given the story you just heard, how could you embed wellbeing in your area/setting?*

Our goal was to steer the conversation towards portfolio-level commitments. Secondary commitments included unit, university-wide, and external communities. At the end of the conversation, leaders made actionable commitments to embedding wellbeing.



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SUMMARY OF COMMITMENTS

The session connected leaders through dialogue as they made commitments to support wellbeing - captured below in themes. In line with our session objectives, and UBC's commitment through the Okanagan Charter to a whole systems approach, commitments can be found under the headings of “**Systems, Proactive, Organizational Change**” and “**Individual Change, Team Change, & Existing Resources**.” These commitments relate to UBC's community of staff, faculty, and students, and have the potential to impact larger groups of people, policies, and processes. Commitments are further categorized by audience: **Faculty Leadership** and **All Leaders**. These commitments are also aligned with the Wellbeing Strategic Framework's six priority areas: Collaborative Leadership (primary focus of this session), Mental Health & Resilience, Food & Nutrition, Social Connection, Physical Activity & Sedentary Behaviour, and Built & Natural Environments.

The sample of commitments shared below were selected to be **generalizable** and **actionable**. A more in-depth summary of possible wellbeing actions is available online in our [Wellbeing Implementation Toolkit](#).

Systems, Proactive, Organizational Change

Faculty Leadership

- **Collaborative Leadership:** Encourage including wellbeing statements in training environment and other sections on grant proposals (e.g. NSERC).
- **Collaborative Leadership, Mental Health & Resilience:** Train new faculty members on workload management, considering group coaching approaches.
- **Collaborative Leadership:** Provide an environment for faculty to share grant applications and peer review proposals to improve their success rate as grants are a major source of stress for faculty.
- **Collaborative Leadership:** Highlight wellbeing at the next administration meeting in a Faculty to begin discussing what it means and how we can support it.
- **Social Connection:** Building community in large classes through a cohort system.
- **Mental Health & Resilience:** Consider implementing a fall break.
- **Mental Health & Resilience:** Organize regular information sessions for graduate students about fellowship applications to include information on wellbeing and self-care.
- **Collaborative Leadership:** Embed information on wellbeing in a variety of students' curricular material.
- **Mental Health & Resilience, Collaborative Leadership:** Review the language of how we communicate with students experiencing difficulties.
- **Mental Health & Resilience, Collaborative Leadership:** Ease student stress through developmental advising.
- **Collaborative Leadership:** Collaborate with the Graduate Student Society to better understand their wellbeing priorities and needs given affordability challenges.

All Leaders

- **Social Connection, Food & Nutrition:** Implement and scale President Ono's suggestion to regularly share meals with representation from 4 faculty, 4 staff, 4 administrators, and 4 students, coordinated with residence dining.
- **Food & Nutrition:** At meetings and other events, facilitate the availability of healthy food opportunities to replace low nutrient food consumption.
- **Collaborative Leadership:** Create networks between administrative offices at both campuses and across faculties to facilitate connections and collaborations.

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- **Collaborative Leadership:** Create a forum for researchers and practitioners to connect and gain new insights, potentially starting a Wellbeing Speakers Series, connecting UBC experts with students, faculty, and staff.
- **Collaborative Leadership:** Positive and wellbeing-focused mentorship (whole person approach), role modeling, & buddy systems for new students, recent hires, and postdoctoral fellows (international with domestic students, new with experienced staff/faculty, postdoctoral fellows and pre-tenure faculty with tenured faculty).
- **Collaborative Leadership:** Specifically identify the wellbeing of the UBC community as part of the best interests of UBC when developing recommendations for policies.
- **Collaborative Leadership:** Ensure UBC leadership visibly demonstrates wellbeing through visibility and accessibility at activities, events, meals, performances, and communicate these activities through social media.
- **Collaborative Leadership, Mental Health & Resilience:** Encourage the team to work from a perspective that supports their wellbeing, including working from home, flexible hours, pet policies, self management, etc.
- **Collaborative Leadership:** Use WES (Workplace Experience Survey) results to identify areas of need for staff support and encourage participation in your unit.

Individual Change, Team Change, & Existing Resources

All Leaders

- **Social Connection:** Organize regular group functions and spontaneous social occasions during work hours within the team.
- **Physical Activity & Sedentary Behaviour:** Encourage activity in the workplace through meeting rooms with no chairs, walking meetings, and lunchtime exercise.
- **Mental Health & Resilience:** Encourage employees to take lunch breaks, schedule meetings after 9am, encourage self- and team - care, and check in with colleagues.
- **Mental Health & Resilience:** Ensure that all faculty and staff know about the mental health resources available through the EFAP program and extended health benefits.

RESOURCES TO ACHIEVE COMMITMENTS

UBC Wellbeing Web Toolkit

UBC Wellbeing Strategic Support Team has compiled an [implementation toolkit](#), shaped around a series of workshops, to help walk you and your team through embedding wellbeing in your area.

UBC Wellbeing Consultation

The UBC Wellbeing Strategic Support Team is available for consultation to explore your next steps:

- For **strategic and whole organisation** wellbeing support: **Matt Dolf**, Director, Strategic Support, UBC Wellbeing | matt.dolf@ubc.ca | 604 827-0709
- For **workplace** wellbeing initiatives for faculty and staff:
 - **Vancouver: Natasha Malloff**, Director, Health, Wellbeing, & Benefits, Human Resources | natasha.malloff@ubc.ca | 604 822-8140
 - **Okanagan: Carleigh Benoit**, Manager, Work Reintegration & Accommodation Program, Human Resources UBC-O | carleigh.benoit@ubc.ca | 250 807-9543
- For **student** wellbeing initiatives (undergraduate and graduate students):
 - **Vancouver: Patty Hambler**, Director, Health Promotion & Education, Student Health & Wellbeing | patty.hambler@ubc.ca | 604 827-3569
 - **Okanagan: Roger Wilson**, Director, Health and Wellness, AVP Students UBC-O | roger.g.wilson@ubc.ca | 250 807-9261