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Class leads discussion on vision of campus as community

Students completing a leadership class this fall realize that there are as many views of the campus as a community as there are individuals on campus.

Approximately 40 students, faculty, staff employees and administrators, including UA President Manuel T. Pacheco, accepted an invitation last month to attend a forum sponsored by the Leadership Concepts and Contexts 401/501 class. The forum, titled, "What Does Community Mean on Campus" is a requisite for the course, which looks at the definition of community now and in the future.

Associate Professor of Agricultural Education Nancy Huber, teaches the course, which focuses on personal leadership through experimental learning and philosophical exploration. Throughout the semester, the students discussed community and what it consists of on campus. They came up with their own definition of community and compiled the list of invitees to the forum based on the role each plays in the campus community.

"Those invited seem pleased that the students decided who to invite and the students led the discussion process at the forum," Huber said. "From my perspective, just as it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a campus community to educate a student," she added.

Attendees were divided into four groups and asked to define community as it is on the UA campus. Each group spent a few minutes discussing their own definition of community and then created a collective definition for presentation to the entire forum.

Following a review of the various definitions, the group members were asked to give examples of what they would like the UA community to look like in the year 2020. Lastly, participants made recommendations on what they can do collectively and as individuals to achieve the community they envision.

"Visions" included, the pairing of each freshman student with an upper-class mentor, abundance and availability of resources, 50,000 underground parking spaces, student-designed curriculums to fit the aspirations of the

individual student and more student-faculty interaction.

Pat Porfirio, of student business affairs, hopes to see a safe campus community "where no bikes are stolen. and we can leave our doors open or walk across campus and not be afraid."

Michael Gottfredson, vice president for undergraduate education, hopes for a community free of fiscal and budgetary restraints, where there is enough money allocated to support undergraduate education.

"This (forum) is a great opportunity to bring together this group of people to address common goals," Pacheco said.

Troy Lillebo, a graduate student in the College of Education and student in the class, said "I was really impressed with the many levels (and perspectives) that administrators brought to the forum. Our class group focused on community as seen by students, but with the administrators input I realize there are so many levels of community and sub-communities. ..." he said. "I hope something is done with this information. I have a feeling that this group will do something with it."

The class will compile a report and fact sheet on the results of the forum and distribute the information to those who attended and others who were unable to attend.

The preceding article describes a project undertaken by students taking AED 401/501 (Leadership Concepts and Contexts). The semester-long effort culminated in a forum to probe the meaning of community on campus and suggest ways to move toward a vision of what our community at the University of Arizona might be. The participant list included students, staff, faculty, administrators, and the university president. The forum was designed and facilitated entirely by students.



Agenda:

- Welcome - Introductions
- Background and Context
- Review Agenda and Getting Started
- The Meaning of Community on

Campus
- 2020 Vision of Campus Community
- Creating the Vision of Campus

Community
- Summary and Next Steps

Following the sharing of background information about the project and introduction of all the participants, the group split into four smaller sub-groups to dialogue about the meaning of community on our campus. Their [ideas](#) were captured on newsprint. Each group was then asked to create a single sentence from their ideas that captured the [meaning](#) of campus community to share with the entire group.

Once the meaning of campus community had been explored, the participants were asked to imagine what the ideal campus community might be like in the year 2020. These "[vision bits](#)" were solicited from the whole group and noted on newsprint. After re-reading the list, everyone was asked to think about what they might do individually to move toward the vision they were creating, and then to ponder what we might do together to create that preferred future. They wrote "[I can](#)" and "[we can](#)" statements on sticky notes which were then posted on the wall for everyone to see.

Enthusiasm ran high. Camaraderie was evident. All of us in the room felt a part of the larger whole. Many expressed a longing to continue the dialogue, to involve more people from all over campus, and to remember that we each had a role to play in enhancing community on campus.
