



Kwantlen Scenarios Report

July 2012

PREAMBLE

“I would rather poke myself in the eye with a stick than attend another Kwantlen planning event.”

The above quote came from an invitee to a scenario planning events who chose, apparently with little apprehension, to not attend. While it may appear the quote is anything but supportive of efforts to introduce scenario planning at Kwantlen, it is the most perfect place to start talking about our scenario planning journey. In Good to Great, Jim Collins shows that great organizations provide opportunities for dissenting voices to be heard. We heard many anxious voices from the very beginning of the process, which compelled us to be as consultative and inclusive as possible.

The quote was a reminder of so many things: that Kwantlen is experiencing planning fatigue; that in recent years Kwantlen has, by necessity, been trying to develop and implement new policies and procedures at a breathtaking pace; and that there have been substantial leadership changes over the past three years. The quote reminds us that if we truly believe in scenario planning we need to make the process worthwhile to the entire Kwantlen community. While the ‘client’ for this scenario planning exercise was the KPU President, we are hopeful that what we have done these past few months, and where we are going, will be of benefit to all at KPU, including those among us who see a stick in the eye as less painful than planning for the future.

Overview of the Report

This report is to update the President on the University's scenarios project as of the end of June 2012. This report contains background on the scenarios project as it has unfolded to date, the draft or skeletal scenarios that the community has developed, as well as a set of recommendations for moving forward.

Given that this is the first time Kwantlen has undertaken a scenarios project, and that scenario planning is a process that must be customized to the organization, we have had to adapt many of our original plans as the project unfolded. The one issue we have been unwilling to bend on is the timing of this report. Given the Presidential transition occurring this summer at Kwantlen we felt it was essential to have several draft scenarios, as well as a set of recommendations, by the end of June. Although we have missed that deadline by one month, this report is still timely enough to be given to both John McKendry and Alan Davis over the summer of 2012. The team responsible for this report, the Scenarios Action Group, was created as our process evolved, in response to changing circumstances and the needs of the project. Although many others have been involved in the project, this report has been written by members of the Action Group.

This report is divided into several sections: *A Brief Primer on Scenario Planning* provides a very short description of what scenario planning is and is not, and its origins and purposes; *Background on the Kwantlen Process* provides a summary of our scenario planning process and the various phases that have evolved; and *Moving Forward: Recommendations* contains suggestions for further refinement of the scenario narratives as well as process-based recommendations for using the scenarios to further Kwantlen's planning efforts. The draft scenarios are contained in the final Appendix of this report.

The Scenarios Action Group

Jane Fee (Lead)

Steve Dooley

Ariana Arguello

Wade Deisman,

Josephine Chan (Support)

Queenie Cheng (Coordinator)



A Brief Primer on Scenario Planning

The scenario planning methodology is a disciplined and rigorous way to think about the future. This methodology is most frequently used by organizations to think strategically about aspects of the future that may have an impact on their operations and future success. Scenario planning, also referred to as *strategic foresight* or *strategic thinking*, is not a means of forecasting or predicting the future. The most basic tenet of this method is that the future is inherently unpredictable and that forecasts are often wrong. A scenarios project leads to the development of a number of divergent narratives about futures as a way of opening up thinking about the *driving forces* that may help shape the future. By opening up our minds to the forces that may shape the future we can learn to think more creatively about how we need to adjust our organizations to survive future change. In this way we can help to build organizational resilience.

Scenario planning is rooted in military philosophy and strategy. In the early 1960's Hermann Kahn, a researcher for the RAND Corporation, participated in setting up the Hudson Institute, a think-tank devoted to writing stories about "unthinkable" futures. Kahn suggested, for example, that the best way to avoid nuclear war would be to publish stories about the world after a nuclear holocaust. These stories were meant to bring to life the horrific consequences of such technologies. In the late 1960's Pierre Wack and colleagues at Shell came across Kahn's work at the Hudson Institute and began to use scenario planning as a way of thinking about the future of energy consumption and conservation. Many of the scenario planning "gurus", including most of the faculty in the Oxford Scenarios Programme, have spent time working in Shell's Scenarios division.

The outcome of a scenarios project is not the production of a scenario "plan", but rather a set of possible and plausible scenarios, or narratives of the future as that future impacts the organization undertaking the project. But it is the process itself -- the engagement of the community in a process to discuss difficult but important issues that are frequently not discussed in the day-to-day life of an organization -- that can be at least as important as the actual scenarios produced. The Kwantlen Scenarios project was born as both a way to not only create a set of stories of divergent futures that may have an impact on the future of the University, but also as a way to engage Kwantlen's community in a series of "courageous conversations". Appendix 1 provides links to a set of resources on scenario planning that might be helpful to the reader.

Background on the Kwantlen Process

Phase I: The first phase of the process began in October 2012 when the following four individuals were sponsored by the President's Office to attend the Scenarios Programme at Oxford University:

- Gordon Lee, VP Finance & Administration
- Jane Fee, Associate VP Academic
- Wade Deisman, Second Vice-Chair, Senate; Chair, Criminology
- Ariana Arguello, Manager of Strategic Analysis, Institutional Analysis & Planning

Upon our return, this small group met with the senior executive group in order to seek a mandate to begin a scenario planning process at Kwantlen. In mid November, Rafael Ramirez, Director of the Oxford Scenarios Programme visited Kwantlen. Over the four days of Dr. Ramirez' visit thirteen different events were held across Kwantlen's campuses. These events were targeted at informing the university community about scenario planning and refining ideas about a Kwantlen-specific scenarios project. Over the next month, Jane Fee was identified as the project lead, and a Scenarios Secretariat was created to begin the planning. Members of the Secretariat are provided in Appendix 2. This group met weekly to discuss strategy, develop the specific scenario planning "question" for Kwantlen, and draft a roadmap for the process. The final question or objective, as provided below, was finalized after Board of Governors and President's Council meetings in December 2012.

These scenarios are tools for thinking about the future – 30 years into the future – that will allow the senior leadership of the University to plan more effectively.

The thirty-year timeframe was established to complement Kwantlen's existing 30-year history. It was agreed that a set of draft scenarios would be developed by late June in order to feed into the arrival of the new President and inform strategic planning efforts likely beginning in fall 2012. The scenarios would be imagined, scripted and created through broad participation in a set of dialogues about the most impactful and uncertain macro-forces ("key drivers") of the world of 2042.

A number of benefits of the Kwantlen scenarios project, culled from the research and from the original team's visit to Oxford, were identified for the University community:

- To enhance our perception and awareness of factors shaping the future as of way of building institutional resilience;
- To help us think about and clarify assumptions about what is important and urgent and to generate and test ideas for action and innovation through more effective planning efforts; and
- To provide opportunities for "courageous conversations" about difficult and important issues facing the University.



Numerous discussions were also held about how to *institutionalize* scenario planning at Kwantlen. These discussions centered on how to pique the interest of specific Kwantlen areas in engaging in their own scenarios activities, as well as establishing a permanent scenario planning capacity, perhaps a Futures Research and Innovation Centre, at Kwantlen.

Phase II: Phase II of the project began in mid January when a Scenarios Action Group was created to lead on-the-ground efforts through the end of June. Steve Dooley, Chair of Sociology and Director, the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research: Community Learning and Engagement (CIR:CLE), agreed to be the lead facilitator for the project and began the training of a group of student facilitators. A Communications Group, led by Joanne Saunders, designed the Scenarios logo that is attached to this report. Two students, with journalism and media experience, were hired as official videographers of the project to capture the energy and process of scenarios events and to interview principals of the process. Both students were drawn from the President's Ambassadorial Team.

A summary of the various scenario events held from February through early May is attached in Appendix 3. Fifteen events were held during this time, and over 250 individuals were in attendance. Two-thirds of the events took place at pre-established meetings that members of the Action Group attended. The four Future Forums were organized to allow all members of the community to attend an event, and to ensure that an event was planned for each campus. Phase II events provided an introduction to scenario planning and the Kwantlen initiative, followed by a series of hands-on activities designed to capture the *driving forces* present in the year 2042. *Driving forces* were defined as "factors or people who tend to make things change (major future shapers)". A description of Phase II activities are provided in Appendix 4.

The STEEP categories (**S**ociety, **T**echnology, **E**conomics, **E**nvironment, **P**olitics) were used as a tool for generating ideas about possible driving forces; however there was no attempt to restrict thinking to only these categories. Each event led to fascinating conversations about the future and the forces that may impact possible futures. The majority of those attending events have been happy to participate in a dialogue about the future, and seem intrigued by the benefits this process might bring to Kwantlen.

Phase III. The core of Phase III was a full-day Scenarios Workshop held on June 20, 2012. Twenty-three participants were invited to attend as either members of the President's Council or individuals who had been identified as being creative and/or interested in the process itself. The videographers filmed the workshop and interviewed some of the participants.

The inputs to this workshop were the ten thematic groupings of driving forces that had been identified during Phase II (the top two from each of the five STEEP categories). Over the course of the day teams of five or six were asked to identify the two critical uncertainties (i.e. the most important and impactful driving forces) that higher education would face by the year 2042. The polar extremes of the critical uncertainties were identified and combined to develop the framework for crafting four possible and plausible scenarios, or stories about the future. Each group was asked to narrate one of their four scenarios and to present their scenario to the larger group. At each of the sessions we asked participants for feedback about their experiences.



A week after the workshop the Scenarios Action Group began refining the scenarios work produced at the workshop and arrived at the two most critical uncertainties identified across the four teams at the workshop. These critical uncertainties, called **axes** in scenario planning, are provided in Appendix 5. Using the two identified axes, the four draft scenarios provided in Appendix 6 were produced.

Phase IV. Phase IV of the scenarios project will be our next steps. Recommendations regarding next steps are provided in the next section.

Moving Forward: Recommendations

The Kwantlen community remains anxious about the Presidential transition and the impact this transition may have on the scenarios project. As the President is the client for our project, we have tried to build into our report a set of recommendations for how our draft scenarios can continue to add value to the University once the new President is installed. These recommendations are provided below:

Recommendation 1: Have the senior leadership engage with the scenarios.

We hope that President McKendry/President-Designate Alan Davis will commit to taking a version of this report and the draft scenarios to the Board of Governors and the University Executive. The Vice-Presidents should be asked to ensure that there is good dissemination of the report within their respective portfolios. The senior leadership and the Board should determine if all four scenarios will be pursued, or whether certain scenarios are less interesting and will not be followed up.

Recommendation 2: Provide opportunities for the Kwantlen community, both internal and external, to engage with the draft scenarios during fall 2012.

The scenario development process was deliberately constructed to create draft scenarios that could be discussed and refined at a later date by the larger Kwantlen community. During our consultations we talked about how the first stage of the process would be to create draft scenarios, and later the community would have the opportunity to “colour in between the lines” to further flesh out the scenarios. This decision was made in order to gain buy-in from an audience that is somewhat skeptical about university-wide events that have either been “driven from the top” or grass roots initiated, but then shelved because of organizational changes or lack of buy-in from the University’s Executive.

The scenario planning process as taught at Oxford calls for engagement of both internal and external experts in determining the plausibility of the stories as well as the independence of the various factors used in creating the scenarios. While a number of internal disciplinary experts have already participated in the scenarios process, it is hoped that during the fall of 2012 both internal and external experts can be further engaged in order to help test the *plausibility* of our stories. Now that the critical uncertainties have been determined and there are actual stories of possible and plausible futures, expert engagement will be more easily obtained and plausibility tested.

Opportunities for engagement with the draft scenarios must be both face-to-face and electronic, as a way of providing maximum opportunity for all. The existing SharePoint scenario-planning site is available only to internal members of the Kwantlen faculty and staff community, so we will have to revise our electronic strategy to ensure that the engagement of external experts and students is possible. The video will provide a



useful portrayal of the scenarios process used to generate the draft scenarios so individuals who have not previously attended events can participate in the future.

Recommendation 3: Use the Kwantlen scenarios to drive more effective planning.

One major objective of a scenarios project is to influence planning efforts. By exploring a divergent set of possible and plausible scenarios, or narratives about the future, organizations can enhance planning and make better decisions. This is particularly important in times of increasing uncertainty and rapid change. The Kwantlen scenarios should be used as a lens through which institutional plans (e.g., a strategic plan for the University, the academic plan, etc.) can be viewed and developed. Being more attuned to changes in the external can help the University to quickly engage with new opportunities that arise from external changes.

Recommendation 4: Institutionalize the scenarios initiative.

If scenario planning is to aid in Kwantlen's long-term success, it is essential that the project is properly resourced. We recommend that funding be found to create a *Kwantlen Futures Institute* that can lead and coordinate the following activities:

- a. A regular series of "future-focused" events such as a speaker series and an annual Futures Conference;
- b. Support for new scenarios projects within Kwantlen and with Kwantlen's external communities. Two Kwantlen Faculties have begun to engage in scenario planning activities within their own units. These types of activities should be encouraged and supported by the University;
- c. Professional development activities relating to scenario planning;
- d. Regular dissemination of Kwantlen's scenarios activities, including studies on scenario planning and associated publications and case studies.

To date the scenarios project has being funded out of a special-purpose fund. Until such time as permanent funding is found to create the Futures Institute, we suggest the scenario planning special purpose fund be used to fund: several additional Kwantlen faculty and administrators to attend the Oxford Scenarios Program (upcoming offerings are planned for October 1-5, 2012 and April 22-26, 2013) as well as the activities suggested in Recommendations 1 to 3.



Appendix 1: Resources on Scenario Planning

1. Duderstadt, James J. The Chronicle of Higher Education. “A Choice of Transformations for the 21st Century University”
<http://milproj.ummich.edu/publications/choice/download/choice.pdf>
2. Olgilvy, James. The NEA Higher Education Journal. “Three Scenarios for Higher Education: The California Case”
http://www.nea.org/assets/img/PubThoughtAndAction/TAA_93Fal_01.pdf
3. Riley, James. Understanding Scenario Planning in Your Organization
<https://our.kwantlen.ca/sites/committees/planning2011/scenarioplanning/Scenario%20Planning%20Library/Understanding%20Scenario%20Planning%20in%20Higher%20Education.pdf>
4. Sayers, Nicola. Research and Development Series: A Guide to Scenario Planning in Higher Education
<https://our.kwantlen.ca/sites/committees/planning2011/scenarioplanning/Scenario%20Planning%20Library/A%20guide%20to%20scenario%20planning%20in%20higher%20education.pdf>
5. Turner, Nick. Future-Proofing Your Organization
http://www.gbn.com/articles/pdfs/GBN_Futureproofing.CEO%20j.pdf
6. Usher, Alex. University Affairs. “Back to the Future”
<http://www.universityaffairs.ca/back-to-the-future.aspx>



Appendix 2: Scenario Planning Secretariat Membership

John McKendry, President

Gordon Lee, Vice President Finance and Administration

Harry Gray, Associate Vice President Human Resources

Jane Fee, Associate Vice President Academic

Maggie Fung, Executive Director of IET

Joanne Saunders, Director, Marketing Communications

Ariana Arguello, Manager, Strategic Planning, Institutional Analysis and Planning

Steve Dooley, Sociology and Criminology faculty and Director of CIR:CLE

Wade Deisman, Chair, Department of Criminology

Josephine Chan, Special Assistant to the Provost

Shirley McKendry, Manager, Provost's Office



Appendix 3: Scenario Planning Events in Phase II

Group	Date	Time	Venue	Scenario Planning Team Members	Event	Number of Participants
Student Leadership Conference	Saturday, January 28, 2012	11:45am-1:00 pm	Surrey Main	Wade Deisman Ariana Arguello	Roadshow	15
President's Ambassadorial Team (students)	Friday, February 24, 2012	12:30pm-2:30pm	Langley 1010	Jane Fee	Hybrid	14
Access Programs for People with Disabilities (faculty)	Wednesday, April 4, 2012	10:30am-11:00am	Surrey Cedar 3010	Jane Fee	Roadshow	26
English Language Studies (faculty)	Friday, April 13	10:30am-12:00pm	Richmond 1340	Jane Fee	Roadshow	30
AVP SEM and Student Life (staff)	Friday, April 13, 2012	3:00pm-4:00pm	Surrey Main 2840	Jane Fee Ariana Arguello Wade Deisman Steve Dooley Josephine Chan	Roadshow	9
HR department (staff)	Wednesday, April 18 th , 2012	2:00pm-4:00pm	Langley Campus, Classroom 1650	Jane Fee Steve Dooley Ariana Arguello Josephine Chan	Hybrid	16
Group of 7 (VP Finance Directors)	Wednesday, April 25 th , 2012	10:00am-11:30 am	Langley campus, HR meeting room	Jane Fee Steve Dooley Ariana Arguello Josephine Chan	Hybrid	8
KSA Executive (students)	Friday, April 27 th , 2012	8:30am-9:30 am	Surrey Campus, Cedar building room #2110	Jane Fee Steve Dooley Josephine Chan	Roadshow	3
Information & Educational Technology department (staff)	Friday, April 27 th , 2012	1:30pm-2:30pm	Surrey Campus, classroom 2820	Jane Fee Ariana Arguello Josephine Chan	Hybrid	13

Faculty of Academic & Career Advancement (faculty & staff)	Friday, April 27, 2012	10:15am-12:15pm	Surrey Conference B/C	Jane Fee Steve Dooley Josephine Chan Wade Deisman Ariana Arguello	Hybrid	45
Langley Campus (all)	Thursday, May 3, 2012	10:00am-1:00pm	Langley 1030	Jane Fee Steve Dooley Josephine Chan Ariana Arguello	Future Forum	20
Cloverdale Campus (all)	Thursday, May 3, 2012	2:30pm-5:00pm	Cloverdale 1853	Jane Fee Steve Dooley Josephine Chan Ariana Arguello	Future Forum	8
Richmond Campus (all)	Friday, May 4, 2012	1:00pm-4:00pm	Richmond 2520	Jane Fee Steve Dooley Josephine Chan Ariana Arguello	Future Forum	7
Surrey Campus (all)	Monday, May 7, 2012	12:00pm-3:00pm	Surrey Conference C	Steve Dooley Josephine Chan Ariana Arguello	Future Forum	30
Community & Health Studies (faculty)	Friday, May 25, 2012	8:15am-10:00am	Surrey B106	Jane Fee Ariana Arguello	Hybrid	13
<p>Key: Roadshow: Informational event generally held for a specific group in a pre-planned meeting Hybrid: Informational event plus short interactive activity designed to collect data on macro-forces Future Forum: Longer event designed specifically to collect data on macro-forces</p>						



Appendix 4: Description of Phase II Events

A thematic affinity process was used to collect individual and group responses to the following question:

What do you see as the external driving forces in 2042?

The affinity group process is a combination of individual and group work designed to achieve the objective of creating an affinity diagram in responses to the question posed. While the number of participants at each session varied, participants were divided into groups of 6 to 8 people (the total number of groups varied based on the size of each forum).

Initially group participants work independently to respond to the question by writing their ideas on post-it notes. Participants were instructed to write one idea per note and, for this phase of the exercise, participants were discouraged from sharing their initial thoughts with other members of the group. After about 10 minutes, each member of the groups was instructed to go to a designated spot of the wall to 'stick' their individual ideas onto flip chart paper.

At this point the individuals now become a group and work together to identify the affinities (common ideas/themes) from all of their individual responses. At the discretion of the facilitators, the groups were asked to address the question according to one of the STEEP categories.

A total of 1075 individual post-it notes were written with a total of 29 Affinity diagrams created. While the technology category was the most commonly used step category (n=9 affinity diagrams), the balance of the Affinity diagrams are mostly evenly split among the other categories. Across all diagrams there were more than 187 different thematic categories presented.

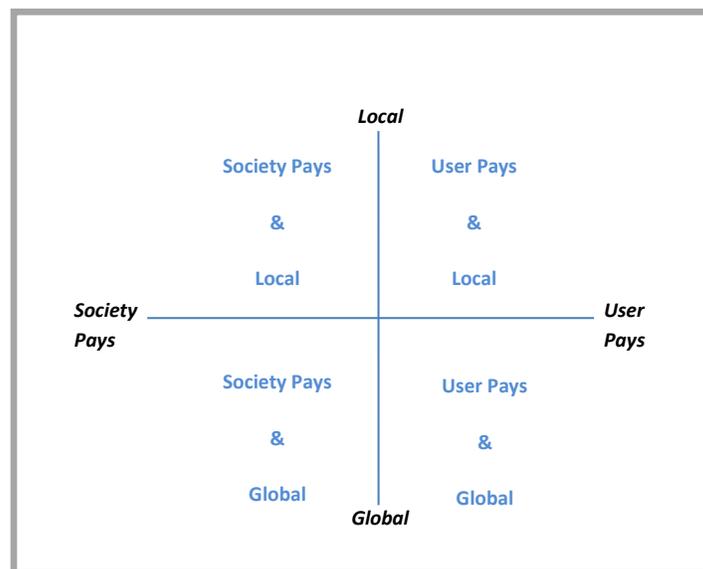
All 29 Affinity diagrams were presented at the Scenario crafting workshop on June 26, 2012. The 23 participants at this session were asked to 'ground' the development of their scenarios to the data collected from the previous sessions.

Appendix 5: The Critical Uncertainties (The “Axes”)

At the June 20th Scenarios Workshop, most of the day was spent identifying the two most critical uncertainties facing post-secondary education by the year 2042. In scenario planning these critical uncertainties become a set of axes, which create a quadrant for the creation of the four scenarios. The two critical uncertainties identified by most groups at the workshop (although different terms were used by different teams) were identified as:

- a. changing political control leading to shifts in funding for education – the two extremes of this axis were labeled as ***society pays*** and ***user pays***; and
- b. the degree of globalization as it pertains to the political economy – the two extremes of this axis were labeled as ***global*** and ***local***.

Technology was identified as a major theme by all groups. Because all groups struggled with the fact that the impact of technological change was ubiquitous across the scenarios, we have included it as an important feature of each of the four stories to be told and not as an axis of its own.



Appendix 6: Draft Scenarios

Currently in the process of being refined so that they stimulate thought, creativity and reflection about the future.

1. My eCloud Educational Portfolio (Society Pays/Local)



2. From the Landfill (Society Pays/Global)



3. Tiers (User Pays/Local)



4. Niche Education (User Pays/Global)

