



St. Mike's 180

Rooted in the Future

Community Engagement Report



UNIVERSITY OF
ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Stakeholder Consultation Summary

*A summary of the most commonly stated values and aspirations heard from stakeholders of the University of St. Michael's College community during consultations.





On October 11th & 17th, 2019, Colbeck Strategic Advisors conducted three stakeholder consultation sessions with current students, staff, faculty, alumni and community members of the University of St. Michael's College (SMC/St. Mike's).

Each session consisted of individual brainstorming and small-group discussion guided by three questions. At the end of each small group discussion, the 4-5 small groups reconvened into one large group, where major themes were discussed. This report will summarize the most common themes that emerged during both small and large group discussions.

Questions Posed to Stakeholders

- 1.** Imagine it's 2032 and we are celebrating St. Mike's 180th. What do we want to be able to say about St. Mike's with regard to student, faculty, staff, and alumni experience? What do we see? What do we feel?
- 2.** What are St. Mike's most important assets/strengths currently? What differentiates St. Mike's currently?
- 3.** What does St. Mike's need to start or continue doing to have greater impact (to create the experience you expressed wanting to see above)?



Summary of Responses



1. Imagine it's 2032...

SMC is...

- A leader at U of T in academics & residential life
- A celebrated & engaged community

Students say...

- “SMC was my first choice when applying to U of T”
- “as an admitted student, SMC beat my expectations”

Stakeholders feel...

- Proud to belong to the tradition of St. Mike's
- Supported and valued as a member of the community

Stakeholders see...

- Diversity in all of its forms
- Relevant and inviting spaces

2. What are our strongest assets currently?

- People & sense of community
- Physical space & location
- Excellence in academics
- Values & ethos
- History & tradition
- Affiliation with U of T

3. What will it take to achieve this vision?

- A shift in mindset from scarcity to abundance
- Investments in priority areas
- A clarified & well-advertised brand
- Empowering & engaging our people

In 2032, St. Mike's is...

We asked participants to think aspirationally about what varied groups of stakeholders might experience while interacting with SMC in 2032. What are stakeholders saying, hearing, feeling and doing in 2032? What might SMC do to generate these results? Below are key themes that arose from this discussion.

A leader at U of T in academics & residential life (because it...)



Enriches the academic experience of all students

- Provides faculty mentorship opportunities
- Delivers an engaging curriculum
- Attracts students from outside of SMC

“We’d like to see more students taking SMC courses so they have a reason to be on campus more often.”



Has the newest and best residential facilities

- Existing facilities have been updated & new ones have been constructed
- Canada Hall is a desirable place to eat and affordable for commuter students

“We need to improve the residences to make them feel like home. We also need more of them: the rooms are always full.”



Helps students succeed professionally

- Hosts opportunities for career development
- Complement curriculum with experiential learning

“We have to figure out the balance between maintaining our core and preparing students to go forward and get a job.”

In 2032, St. Mike's is...

A celebrated & engaged community (because it...)



Hosts many interesting events

- Specifically for community members
- That are student-driven

“There should be more unique events that bring people to campus from across U of T.”



Communicates effectively with alumni

- Through social media/technology
- Who have recently graduated
- Through current students

“We would benefit from developing young alumni relations as well as a connection between current students and alumni.”



Provides space for debate & discussion

- On relevant/current topics
- Some specifically for students
- Some for all stakeholders

“We can bring more students to campus through events, discussion and reflection groups.”

In 2032, SMC stakeholders are saying...

**“St. Mike’s was my first choice when applying to U of T,”
because of their:**



Sense of community

“SMC is an inclusive, accepting environment, a place you want to attend, that’s vibrant, and hosts diverse perspectives and opinions.”



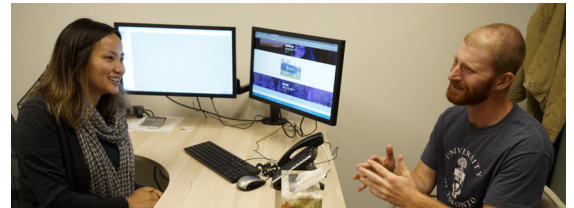
History & tradition

“It is amazing how St. Mike’s engages with and maintains traditions and values.”



Staff & faculty

“St. Mike’s is a model in providing academic support and engaging curriculum.”



Student support

“St. Mike’s supports the student as a whole.”



Openness

“St. Mike’s is an inclusive and accepting environment.”



Beautiful facilities

“SMC is such a beautiful college.”

In 2032, SMC stakeholders are seeing...



Relevant & inviting spaces

- Sustainable
- Accessible
- Up-to-date
- Beautiful
- Useful

“Space within St. Mike’s has flowers and greenery.”

“Green innovations!”

“Updated spaces that are full of activity.”



Diversity in all its forms

- Thought
- Religion
- Academic Department
- Commuter Status
- Age

“Diversity of students and faculty.”

“More events with diversity of culture.”

“We want to hear more diversity of opinions.”

In 2032, SMC stakeholders are feeling...



Supported & valued as part of the community

- They have a sense of belonging/feel connected to others
- There is sufficient & accessible support for mental wellness
- There is sufficient & accessible support for students

“We are showing students that we prioritize their mental health and support their academic endeavours.”

“St. Mike’s is part of their identity.”

“We need to remove silos and promote collaboration between departments.”



Proud to belong to the tradition St. Michael’s

- They know & appreciate the narrative history
- They understand & feel connected to SMC values
- They understand & appreciate the[ir] Catholic identity

“We need to demonstrate that the values of the Catholic identity are inclusive and the ways in which that identity manifests are a unique strength.”

“We see that our Catholic tradition gives SMC a distinctive character.”

What are SMC's best current assets?



Its people & sense of community

- Students
- Faculty
- Staff
- Alumni
- Community members

“Our people are committed/dedicated. People put their heart into everything that they do.”



Its physical space & location

- Beautiful landscape
- Historic buildings
- Kelly Library
- Proximity to TTC
- Location on U of T campus

“The beauty of St. Mike's is one of our biggest assets. It has lots of green space, lots of open space.”



Its history & tradition

- The Religious Orders that founded and ran St. Michael's
- Its history as an institution & those who have attended

What are SMC's best current assets?



Its values & ethos

- Inclusivity
- Commitment to social justice
- Goodness, discipline & knowledge

“Our values, like connection with the broader community, tolerance, acceptance & diversity, make us unique.”



Its excellence in academics

- Committed Faculty
- Undergraduate curriculum delivery
- Continuing education

“Our academic programs like Christianity & Culture are very unique, both with respect to content & delivery.”

“Each St. Mike's program makes it an asset—they give SMC a historic strength in the academics it offers.”



Its relationship with U of T

- World-renowned faculty
- Dedicated undergraduates
- Potential for additional resources

“We are affiliated with the best university in Canada.”

The way forward: what needs to be done to achieve St. Mike's 180?



Shift our mindset from one of scarcity to one of abundance

“We want a future shaped by a feeling of prosperity & abundance of resources.”

- Stop trying to stretch limited resources across many areas
- Stop thinking of ourselves as a younger sibling to some of the larger colleges
- Have more conversations about what we could do with unlimited resources



Invest in priority areas

“We have to show people that we are invested in them.”

- Student mental health services
- Student academic support services
- Residential spaces & Canada Hall
- Modernizing existing infrastructure
- Green technology & sustainability
- Making the physical campus even more beautiful & accessible

The way forward: what needs to be done to achieve St. Mike's 180?



A clarified & well-advertised brand

"A strong & clearly articulate brand narrative helps to build our reputation."

- Elevate our values that focus on community building (e.g. inclusivity, diversity)
- Articulate how our tradition & history compliment these values
- Creatively distribute our brand (e.g. through social media, apparel)



Empower & engage our people

"We need to have ongoing discussions about what is working and what isn't."

- Facilitate networking between: faculty & students, students & alumni, alumni & SMC (as well as amongst themselves)
- Host additional events that: bring the community onto campus, are directed by students, encourage thoughtful debate & discussion
- Solicit frequent feedback from stakeholders
- Create & resource cross-departmental task forces to tackle specific challenges



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