

Summary Report from
Seventh Sessions of the Bradley University Campus Conversations Series (BUCCS)

The Office of Teaching Excellence and Faculty Development and the Institutionalizing Undergraduate Research Committee have now sponsored a seventh set in a series of conversations for faculty and administrative and professional staff. The intent of these sessions (now in the second year) has been to provide an opportunity for members of the Bradley community to share ideas and insights on issues affecting the mission of the university. BUCCS is thus a forum for Bradley-wide dialogue related to our future.

The process design for 2007-2008 series of conversations has evolved from that used last academic year. Now, three topics are presented at each BUCCS session and attendees elect to participate in one extended small group conversation on the issue of their choice. A spokesperson from each group reports out consensus opinions from those participating in group dialogues to the larger group of BUCCS attendees. What follows is a thematic summary set of ideas, one for each topic, generated across all three conversations held in late November for BUCCS 7.* Responses for each of the two questions for each topic area have been combined. A distinction is made between small group and larger group discussions.

- **Topic 1,** **Question 1a: *How can we help our students develop leadership skills/collaboration skills?***
 Question 2a: *What is needed in order for us to improve collaboration/leadership among Bradley students?*

Small Group Discussions: Different levels of leadership within disciplines—these and other unmet needs should be identified; Do not neglect the fact that serious individual work is needed in order for students to have skills to bring to collaborative projects; Immersion in problem-based team experiences using cross-level students (freshmen to senior) and cross-disciplinary focus; Out of classroom experiences such as service learning; Debates on topical issues; Group projects where “natural” leaders will fall out and can be mentored—this necessitates support for those wanting to be workers; Focus on communication skills, including listening skills; Use COM103 to help develop a wide range of skills related to leadership and collaboration not just for giving speeches; Use student organizations and activities within these to help foster leadership and collaboration skills; Changes in pedagogy including reflection on how to integrate leadership skills into learning experiences; Focus on systems thinking; Faculty model leadership/collaborative behavior, for example, model open discussion techniques that are used to change opinions; Faculty emphasize the benefits of collaboration; General education courses become building blocks for a shared Bradley experience that allows students to develop leadership and collaboration skills; New faculty forum becomes a venue to develop leadership skills in faculty.

Additions from Large Group Discussion: Acknowledge that good leaders and collaborators are often students who want to learn more, who take risks, who develop a personal stake in the group project, who finish what they start and motivate others to do so; Other skills to be developed are tolerance for varying points of view, appreciation of diversity; Help students define the many facets of group success and positive group progress; Campus atmosphere that supports crossing disciplinary boundaries is important; Faculty should collaborate more and include students in these collaborations; Faculty should be trained in techniques to “push forward” more quiet students; Library should be designed to facilitate group/collaborative work; Administrative support is needed to provide more opportunities to practice collaboration.

- **Topic 2,** **Question 1a: *How can we help our student develop global citizenship?***
 Question 1b: *What is needed in order for us to improve global citizenship among Bradley students?*

Small Group Discussions: Increase recruitment of international undergraduate students; Greater emphasis on study abroad, specifically making these opportunities more affordable; Develop courses on global awareness, especially a core course; Work to develop educational components (outside of general education) focused on global citizenship

Additions from Large Group Discussion: There was a general discussion on whether cultivating global citizenship was part of the educational mandate, including concern that values may be forced on students; Develop strategies to better integrate international students into the Bradley community; Develop strategies to help students recognize and overcome prejudices related to other cultures; Sources for scholarships for study abroad should be developed; International festivals could become part of campus activities; Train faculty to help students with ‘personal growth’ issues; Address employment issues; Provide service learning opportunities.

- **Topic 3,** **Question 1a: *How can we help our students develop ethics?***
 Question 1b: *What is needed in order for us to improve ethics among Bradley students?*

Small Group Discussions: Develop a stronger campus system to make clear that cheating is unacceptable; Build an atmosphere that supports ethical behavior across campus; Model ethical behavior in the classroom and across the institutional structure; Discussion of ethics in all classes; Enforce rules and policies related to breach of ethics; Build self-accountability into the curriculum; Explain rules of ethical conduct and how these will be enforced; Design discussions that include ethical controversies; Use available systems to make plagiarism more difficult

Additional Comments from Large Group Discussion: Ethical behavior can result from teaching effective problem solving skills and critical thinking skills; Faculty should provided written expectations for ethical behavior; Coursework can be expanded to include case studies about ethical dilemmas; General Education course, given early, that deals specifically with ethics; Make it known that ethical behavior is a priority at Bradley (through speaker series, classroom and campus activities, modeled behavior); Make clear that alternative codes of ethical behavior exists

*Those wanting to view the full set of ideas compiled should contact Bob Wolffe <rjwolffe@bradley.edu>