

A nighttime photograph of the Toronto skyline, featuring the CN Tower as the central focus. The city lights are reflected in the water in the foreground. The sky is a deep blue, and the buildings are lit up with various colors, including yellow, white, and red.

Future U:
Creating the
universities we
want

OCUFA Conference
February 27-28
Toronto, ON



Future U

- Purpose: to consider the challenges & share ideas
 - on how to build democratic, high quality, sustainable institutions
 - that reflect the needs of students, faculty and citizens
- Attended by faculty, students, administrators and policymakers
- Format: panel sessions & keynotes

Sessions on ...

- Current challenges to “traditional” faculty work
- Reclaiming the civic university
- Creating the democratic university (governance)
- Educational technology (“Beyond the MOOC”)
- Higher education in high participation societies – the U.S. in comparative perspective

Some Themes and Issues

- Ongoing struggle between “traditional” and “corporatized” view of the university
 - Higher access
 - Alignment with labour needs
 - Change in governance to managerial
 - Combating faculty idealism
- Rising tuition (from zero or close to zero) and debt
 - education as commodity

Some Themes and Issues

- Pervasive under-funding
 - False austerity
 - Drive for efficiency and productivity
 - Drive for online education as quick fix
- “Casualization” of faculty work
- Differentiation (in Ontario)
- Faculty engagement in governance; politicization; collegiality

Some Themes and Issues

- The role of business leaders on boards and advisory committees
- Technology
 - MOOCs: the speculative bubble has burst
 - Electronic, adaptive “textbooks”
 - Transformation of research practice
 - Student demand for online courses?
- The pitfalls of high-participation systems