

Preliminary Environmental Scanning

As preparation for our Strategic Planning work, we conducted three sets of brainstorming sessions dealing with Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOTs). This is often called Environmental Scanning.

Below are listed the ideas from these sessions.

STRENGTHS

President's Council (6/27/07)

- Sense of community in many areas (not all).
- Intentionality (?) [weakness = how to operationalize]
- Committed to equal educational opportunity
- DIVERSITY [define; How to ?]
- Faculty expertise/research
- Excellent classroom instruction (creative)
- Campus location and attractiveness (e.g. grounds)
- Well-maintained buildings
- Technological resources
- Library—staff, technology, resource mix, network
- LC (learning Center?), Reading lab, Writing lab, math Lab
- Accessibility Center, [weakness = improve student oriented for all services]
- Focused identity is strong. Need to share, and weakness is external
- Commuter status yields nice mix. Matches capacity
- PE program and facilities
- CTC—links with community
- CCICS/El Centro/ Lake County
- Heritage of working with all communities/partnerships
- Staff—dedicated, committed to Mission
- [weakness is sense of mission/goals across the University]

Administrative Team (8/20/07)

- Diversity
- Location (Chicago)
- Cost Effectiveness
- Access
- Renewed Energy for Strategic Planning
- Relatively Compact Campus
- Focus on Teaching
- Small Classes
- Evening and weekend courses
- Partnerships
- Specialized and Professional Accreditation

- Friendly Staff
- Job Placement
- Founded as Experimental school
- Increasing Grants
- First Year Experience/ Honors/McNairs
- Safe Campus
- Attractive and has sufficient re: Parking
- Outreach
- Arts *
- Excellent Faculty
- Committed Faculty & Staff
- International Programs
- HSI (Hispanic Serving Institution)
- Variety of Academic Programs
- Excellent Access to Library from Off Campus
- Cultural Programs
- Variety of academic computing labs.
- 5 Campuses
- Emeriti support
- Undergraduate Research Symposium

Students (10/11/07)

- Professors are student focused
- Affordability
- Diversity – Students, curriculum, languages
- Commuters (both plus and minus)
- Most non-traditional students can get a schedule.
- Diverse Programs
Proyecto Pa'Lante, Summer Transition Program, etc.
(Freshman focus)
- Well-equipped/prepared faculty
Experienced/enthusiastic

WEAKNESSES

President's Council (6/27/07)

- Match hires to future jobs
- Need ombuds function?
- Dependency on state support (financial resources in general?)
- Need to build endowment, etc.
- Have let “lack of money” define us
- Allocation?
- Match?
- Lack of priority setting—keep muddling forward

- Insufficient payroll deduction-- Culture of philanthropy
- Professional development and new employee orientation—back-ups
- No T visa program for research scholars
- Lack of sense of common goals
- (intensity of disagreements or lack of awareness)
- Technology—understaffed
- Old habits, practice is policy
- (physical) visibility of Student Affairs units
- Lack of space
- Lack of sense of community for some, e.g. all campuses

Administrative Team (8/20/07)

- State Allocation
- Diffuse priorities
- Lack of Visibility
- Lack of Public transportation
- School pride
- No sign on I-90
- Operational barriers for students, faculty and staff
- Lack of space
- Inadequate fundraising and Alumni Relations
- Lack of Staffing
- Ratio of Tenure track faculty and instructors. (low pay for instructors not-competitive).
- Poor advising system
- Improve website
- Staff development
- Unwritten Policies and Procedures, not collected in one place
- Students need more classes
- Help desk needs improvement and infrastructure
- Expand child care center
- Need greater diversity, faculty and students
- Customer Service
- Extended library hours
- Labor relations
- Student accomplishments – publicity
- Enhanced cross training
- Need Seminar Classrooms
- Lack of traditions
- Low Morale
- Greater diversity of Faculty and students (African-American)
- Review/ analysis of current curriculum and new curriculum. Preparation for careers.
- Lack of strong sense of identity
- CU's
- Sequence guarantee for evening programs in particular

Students (10/11/07)

- Mismanagement of schedule of classes
- Faculty less diverse than student body
- Science equipment and facility outdated and insufficient
- No multicultural center
- Customer service skills need improving
- Technical information needs up grading, e.g. Financial Aid files and information
- Lack of research experience
for graduate students pursuing a Ph.D.
- Advising insufficient and/or uneven (general ed. and major)
Wrong information
(Work to get the right information)
- Lack of cohort model in many disciplines
- No U-Pass
- Lack of supportive- attitude and mechanics from staff and administration (how to graduate in 4 years)
- Need more child -care
(some slots are open to public)
- Some events not well funded
- More variety in vendors
- College of Business – night classes only?

EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES

President's Council (6/6/07)

- Private support
- Capitalize on Diversity
- Increase diversity on Board of Trustees
- Green Initiatives
- State-wide need for (bilingual)
Health professionals
- Need for degree completion
for place bound
- International opportunities for U.S. students
- Residential Students (Is there demand?)
- Can we grow?
- On-line
- Satellite campuses?
- Identify emergent communities
- Legislative champion(s)/advocacy
- Alumni advocacy
 - job network
 - mentoring

- internships
- donations
- Olympics? Partner/PR
- Curricula for
Growth areas in the economy
- Share expertise with other universities & CBC's
- link Market (research) and academics (curriculum and development) to
meet needs of area employers
- Become better known
- Partnerships K-12
- CTC
- Partnerships –
 - for advanced degrees
 - for general transfers
 - city colleges
 - high schools
- NEIU Doctoral Program
Education links diversity and global view
(Create advocates – in business and where else?)

Administrative Team (9/17/07)

- Utilize Chicago neighborhoods
- Leverage political connections
- Increase partnerships with community colleges (threat of competition from community colleges)
- Cultivating relationships with agencies to increase visibility
- Multiple sites in the face of transportation decline
- Capitalize on Hispanic population
- External grant opportunities
- Leverage our alumni
- Attract students from new areas; residence halls?
- Enhance cultural activities (more diversity)
- niche programs with multi-lingual background
- Develop continuing education, etc... and market
- Increase visibility, advertising and electronic methods
- More non-traditional students
- Attract Faculty From area Chicago Universities
- Scan for high growth professions and interests
- Promote successful programs as national models
- Well placed alumni
- Capitalizing on HSI status

Students (10/11/07)

- More marketing
towards both traditional and non-traditional students
- Build link with alumni
(and help our students know them)
- Multicultural Center; perhaps lease for money
- Money for job fairs for all programs
- More faculty
(and interesting faculty)
- Partnership with other Universities
(helps marketing)

EXTERNAL THREATS

President's Council (6/6/07)

- State Funds decreasing/ Tuition increasing
- Other Universities are recruiting away H.A? minority
- Decline in enrollment of African American students
- External definition of success (e.g. a single number); especially legislative
- Community colleges wanting to offer baccalaureate degrees
- The change in Demographics in Chicago
(gentrification; minorities to suburbs)
- For- profit universities
- Affordability
- Textbook Prices
- Increasingly Competitive faculty market
- security
- University reputation and awareness
- Restructuring of Illinois higher education
- U of I?
- Latino leaders view of HSI's
- Transportation System getting worse
- Leveling of high school Graduation numbers
- Land-locked Main Campus
- Accreditation Standards
- Increased Reg. of Transfers

Administrative Team (9/17/07)

- NEIU – Where? (also opportunity)
- Invisibility-
- Community Colleges – Competition
- New market by others in our expertise and for profits

- Not preparing for skills
- Adjunct salaries (Civil Service)
- Lack of online courses
(Commoditization)
- Lack of adequate public transportation
- Competition of programs
(eg. Stream lined)
- Lack of external funding
(and match)
- Fundraising competition
- Exploit ? hybrid??? course
- Changes in demographics also opportunity
- Decline in state funding as college costs increase;
Social justice issue
- Limited resources
- What students want?

Students (10/11/07)

- Negative Image of NEIU
- Bad reputation of some staff
(uneven)
- Falling behind on technology
- High School approach – lack of self-sufficiency
- Not using NEIUport
- Lack of classes may yield lower total enrollment
- Too many functions
low attendance and too much money spent