Planning and Feedback Session

The purpose of this discussion session was to gather information relating to what Eastern Illinois University needs to address in our planning process.

Group: EIU Athletics Panther Club Executive Board
Date: April-May, 2011
Tool: E-mail

1) What would make EIU first choice for faculty, staff and students??
   - Facilities, staffing and alumni assistance are the three topics. We are behind in this category when prospective students are looking at EIU and Illinois State and University of Illinois (those are two of the main cross applicant schools) especially in the natural science areas.
   - We also need to upgrade the student recreational facility.
   - Creative ways need to be developed as the University competes for new staff (both faculty and administration). It is an era of dwindling funds and concerns with state budgets therefore we need to be on guard as other states may offer more attractive packages for new hires.
   - Work on good relations with alumni - Alumni need to be cultivated in assisting with “spreading the word”. EIU according to several ranking guides has a lower rate of giving than some of our comparable competitors. The university must continue to work on good relations with alumni in order to have them be solid ambassadors in the future
     - Increase salaries and secure benefits for faculty and staff. This is critical for attracting new faculty. I was at Indiana State prior to coming here. I would have stayed there had I known about the current changes. We must make it clear to new faculty to expect the unexpected! I do not know how we are advertising new faculty without that in place! Secure small class sizes and a positive professor to student ratio!
     - Don't get rid of the pond at Lantz! - This is not what the majority of alumni want. One person should not have the power to change this!!!!!!

2) What can be done to improve academic quality and scholarship across campus?
   - In this time of funding shortages, it is difficult to earmark money for scholarships. It is a fact of life that everyone is looking for a scholarship (unless on financial aid). Public schools are raising prices just as quickly as the privates.
   - EIU needs to continue to work like a private school in developing money from other sources in order to have the resources available to compete for those top students.
     - Provide some or any money for training. We seem to have none. Some would be good! I have paid over $6,000 dollars so far this year for training and expect another $2,000 just to keep up in my field. I may consider entering the private sector.

3) What is one thing we need to change at EIU that would enable us to be a great institution?
   - The one thing that would help IMMENSELY is to move the University of Illinois to another location!
   - Be as aggressive as possible in dealings with the state, the prospective families as well as alumni. We cannot ever sit back and wait for anything to happen.
     - I believe that the administration is trying to do this more than in the past. Be as visible as possible
     - We need to be united! A central place to advertise all campus events would be helpful. This would be so easy in the age of technology. We need a centralized technology, not one for sports and another one for other events as proposed!
     - Most faculty members are very disgruntled about the separation of funds for academics and athletics! Most faculty members are very supportive of athletics, but we are starving and you are proposing to build new buildings when they are not leaking?

4) What about our history and traditions do we need to remember and preserve as we plan for the future?
   - Be willing to make tribute to longtime employees (in all areas) by means of special events and invites (athletics has done a solid job of this in the past few years)
     - Too many to mention, but all of the greats that have been here. Could we have info on a website for incoming students to see and be required to view prior to their admission.
5) What are 2 emerging issues that you can anticipate, that we will have to deal with effectively if EIU is going to thrive in the future?
   - Two emerging issues are funding sources and recruitment/retention emphasis. These may not be new but are ongoing.
     - Get green! We are behind so much of the world. Let's catch up! Solar panels on every dorm, bicycle generated energy in the recreation center. I am well versed in the initial cost, however, the long-term payoff could be tremendous!
     - WE are losing many students to Lakeland College in Mattoon! Carmen hall has only 400 students for the fall. 1st time EVER!

6) What is the most vital core value that EIU should preserve?
   - One core value that must always be emphasized is personal attention.
     - Friendly atmosphere and small class size