Planning and Feedback Session

The purpose of this session was to conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis for Eastern Illinois University.

**Group:** Strategic Planning Steering Committee  
**Date:** February 22, 2011  
**Tool:** Carousel Design

**STRENGTHS:**

Top 5:
- Student access to faculty & administration
- Quality faculty
- Compact campus
- Small class size
- Doudna Fine Arts Center

**WEAKNESSES:**

Top 5:
- Funding
- Lack of school pride
- Too many faculty don’t live in town
- Location
- Visibility in the state

**OPPORTUNITIES:**

Top 5:
- Creative fundraising
- Untapped alumni/community
- Integrative learning
- New energy center
- Student recruitment opportunities

**THREATS:**

Top 5:
- Funding to the institution
- Competition from other types of higher education institutions
- Students increasingly unprepared academically
- Students and families economically unprepared to pay tuition while facing decreased financial aid
- Watered down academics
Each category is sorted according to the number of ‘votes’ received.

Complete list of Strengths:
- Student access to faculty & administration (18)
- Compact campus (13)
- Quality Faculty (13)
- Small class size (13)
- Doudna Fine Arts Center (11)
- Booth Library (10)
- Relationships (8)
- Good people (7)
- Library staff/faculty that go above and beyond serving campus (6)
- Size of the university (# of students) (6)
- Spirit of service (6)
- Technology-rich classrooms (6)
- Tradition of excellence (6)
- Unionized employees (6)
- Well respected/liked university president (6)
- Community/family atmosphere (5)
- “High-touch”—personal attention (5)
- Administration motivated to better the university (4)
- Annuitant support (4)
- Residential community (4)
- Cost (3)
- Good location (3)
- Private school feel (3)
- Rec. Center/Lantz (3)
- Sustainability programs (3)
- Textbook rental system (3)
- Traditions/history (3)
- Campus safety (2)
- Do more with less (2)
- Experienced faculty/staff (2)
- Many strong academic programs/departments (2)
- President committed to better the university (2)
- Alumni/donors (1)
- Applied learning vs. pure theory (1)
- Community committed to the university & to community-university relationship (1)
- Creativity in financing (1)
- Education programs (1)
- Massive alumni base—geographically dispersed (1)
- Renewable energy center (1)
- Strong student support services (1)
- Study abroad rich (1)
- Accessibility
- Inspiring president
- Lean administrative structure
- Presence/brand-name Illinois
Complete list of Weaknesses:

- Funding (16)
- Lack of school pride (13)
- Too many faculty don’t live in town (11)
- Location (9)
- Little corporate financial support in the area (8)
- Visibility in the state (8)
- Difficulty replacing tenure track faculty (7)
- Aging facilities (6)
- Low expectations (6)
- Athletic facilities—not Division 1 quality (4)
- Limited professional development funding (4)
- Silo organization (4)
- Textbook rental system undermines education (4)
- Ability to keep “superstar” faculty & staff (3)
- Cost of doing business (3)
- Diversity (3)
- Lack of “things to do” on the weekends (3)
- Recruiting—no jobs for spouses (3)
- Resistance to change (3)
- Sometimes takes too long to get things done - red tape and too many forms (3)
- Area K-12 outreach/recruitment (2)
- Decision makers don’t see/face outcomes of decisions (2)
- Economic divide between faculty/students and majority of community (2)
- Focus on quantity rather than quality (2)
- Lack of entrepreneurial spirit (2)
- Parking (2)
- Pockets of teaching ineffectiveness (2)
- Rift between faculty and administration (2)
- Some want us to become Harvard on the Embarrass (we need to know our role) (2)
- Alumni relations weak (1)
- Some departments don’t feel equal (1)
- Ineffective zoning
- Technology behind
Complete list of Opportunities:

- Creative fundraising (10)
- Large body of untapped alumni and community (8)
- New energy center (7)
- Expand EIU research/creative activity community (5)
- Focus on transfer students/nontraditional (5)
- Integrated learning (5)
- Community engagement (4)
- Strong honors program (4)
- Supportive president (4)
- In-state tuition for border state students (3)
- Online programs (3)
- Other schools facing crumbling infrastructure (3)
- Other state schools facing similar funding issues (3)
- Private school tuition increase (3)
- Push energy initiatives to be the “green” leader in the state (3)
- Community colleges (2)
- First choice programs (2)
- Out of state/country potential students (2)
- Services to schools in the state (2)
- Strong graduate program (2)
- Student-faculty/staff relationships (2)
- Successful fundraising (2)
- Sustainable operation (2)
- Unstable energy markets (2)
- Advancing TRIO & minority enrollments (1)
- Focus on program needs/goals, not individual turf (1)
- Learn to embrace potential new technologies (1)
- Private university appeal (1)
- Seek national recognition for academic programs—Phi Beta Kappa (1)
- Student incubators (1)
- Continued high academic ranking
- Faculty engaged in recruitment
- New delivery systems/locations methods
- To work as one team with one dream—the best EIU with 100% enrollment
Complete list of Threats:

- Funding shortfalls (17)
- Community colleges (11)
- Students increasingly unprepared (11)
- Decrease in student aid (10)
- Families unprepared economically (10)
- Online universities (Phoenix) (10)
- Watering down academic quality (10)
- Competition from other universities - instate & out (9)
- Government mandates from lawmakers who don’t understand higher education environment (8)
- Growing “anti-intellectualism” nationally (7)
- Unwillingness of units to sacrifice for the greater good (7)
- Anti-union threats (6)
- Loss of human capital (retirement/loss of qualified applicants) (6)
- Falling behind in technology (4)
- Growing friction between administration and faculty (4)
- New government regulations (federal & state) (4)
- Unfunded state mandates (4)
- Decrease in shared governance (3)
- Decrease in transparent leadership/involvement (3)
- International academic supremacy (3)
- Safety (terrorism, shooter) (3)
- Tuition hikes—unattainable higher education (3)
- Accrediting body demands increasing (2)
- Demand for applied degrees vs. liberal arts degrees (2)
- Lack of confidence in national economy (2)
- Lack of student preparedness for college (2)
- Short-sighted (2)
- Tuition recovery model (TRM) (2)
- U of I taking our top prospects (2)
- Chicago vs. Down-state
- Cost of doing business
- Private colleges deeply discounting tuition
- Security perceptions
- State procurement rules