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.

1. **What would make EIU first choice for faculty, staff and students?**

   When a student leaves after 4 years with a degree, what did they get? The focus on education and degrees should drive everything. Quality is crucial.

   The real strength of EIU is keeping the eye on the product—that makes us great. However, the next ten years will be rough.

2. **What is one thing we need to change at EIU, that would enable us to be a great institution?**

   EIU is one of the top two best-run institutions in the state. EIU keeps its eye on the product—producing students with employable skills. The university could promote itself better—Eastern is a gem. EIU is important to employment and economic development in the area. People need to be reminded of the value added by higher education.

3. **What about our history and traditions do we need to remember and preserve as we plan for the future?**

   Don’t lose the content. Don’t substitute calculators for math. Don’t substitute canned software for programming. Don’t lose the ability to create the widget. For too many people, the ability to problem-solve, invent and analyze is gone. Critical thinking is key.

4. **What are 2 emerging issues that you can anticipate, that we will have to deal with effectively if we are going to thrive in the future?**

   (e.g., role of technology in the classroom, retirements, tenure, demographics, online education).

   One emerging issue is the move to performance-based funding. It will either be university-driven or driven top-down. Either higher education will have to express how the pot should be divided, or we may have to move to the Missouri model (specialty institutions). Legislators want to preserve our assets. We do not need 14 liberal art and sciences programs; we need 10 good ones. Quality has to be the main focus.

   Pension costs are a second emerging issue—$5.5-billion after last year’s reform.

5. **What is the most vital core value that EIU should preserve?**

   Honesty and integrity. If you shake on it, it’s a deal.