Planning and Feedback Session

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

**Group:** 18 Community College Presidents  
**Date:** March 31, 2011  
**Tool:** Carousel Design

Below we’ve listed the top five in each category followed by the other responses. We’ve indicated the number of responses for each in parentheses.

**STRENGTHS:**

Top 5 Strengths:
1. Transfer Friendly
2. Affordability
3. Good selection of comprehensive programs
4. Location & size
5. Personal & supportive

Other Strengths:
- Comprehensive programs/good selection (12)
- Excellent transferability of credit (12)
- Welcoming to transfer students (11)
- Affordability (9)
- Robust transfer support (9)
- Excellent outreach to 2 year institutions (7)
- Location & size (7)
- Book rental (6)
- Concerned about personal development of students (5)
- Excellent faculty—solid reputation (4)
- Excellent inter-institutional communication (4)
- Emphasis on integrative learning (3)
- Partnerships (3)
- Quality faculty (3)
- Strong administration leadership (3)
- Strong educator preparation program (3)
- Strong library collection (3)
- Strong support services (3)
- Collegial Administration team (2)
- Growing excellence in fine arts (2)
- Support for study abroad (2)
- Support for undergraduate research (2)
- Alumni base (1)
- Great athletic programs & summer athletic camps (1)
- Strong school of continuing education (1)
- Being a public institution
- Career services & placement
- Fundraising
- Good reputation off campus
- Strong exercise science, sports management, and athletic training program
- Student encouragement
- US News and other high rankings
WEAKNESSES:

Top 5 Weaknesses:
1. Lack of scholarship awards
2. EIU’s distance from urban areas
   a. Limited online offerings
3. Lack of strong dual enrollment programs
4. Decline in number of off-campus courses and cohorts

Other Weaknesses:
- Scholarship awards for new and transfer students (10)
- Decline in the number of off-campus cohorts and classes (6)
- Distance from urban areas (6)
- Limited online offerings (5)
- Lack of strong dual enrollment opportunities (4)
- Cost (4)
- Lack of needed professional programs (nursing [freshman-senior], computers, etc.) (3)
- High salary cost for teaching summer courses (3)
- Lack of institutional aid for students (2)
- Lack of land for expansion (2)
- Inadequate academic preparation for incoming students (2)
- Dynamic tension between teaching & research priorities among faculty (1)
- Lack of academic doctoral programming (1)
- Programs designed or native students are not all transfer friendly (1)
- Entrenched controlling bureaucracy
- Lack of institutional-wide commitment to reallocating resources from lower to higher priorities
OPPORTUNITIES:

Top 5 opportunities:
1. Enrollment increase at community colleges
2. Collaboration on grants/service learning opportunities
3. Creation of distance education courses/programs/certificates & other online offerings with community colleges
4. Expand 2 + 2 agreements
5. Off-campus program growth opportunities

Other Opportunities:
- Take advantage of tremendous enrollments in many community colleges to encourage more transfers (14)
- Expand 2 + 2 agreements with community colleges (11)
- Collaboration on grants/service learning opportunities (8)
- Creation of distance education courses/certificates/programs (8)
- Off campus program growth opportunities (8)
- Collaborate on retaining & graduating incoming student populations that are increasingly underrepresented (7)
- Online offerings with community colleges (7)
- Taking advantage of multicultural diversity opportunities at community colleges and EIU (7)
- Catchment area could be increased (6)
- EIU office at community colleges (virtual & real space) (6)
- Increase in enrollment because of unemployment and economic depression (6)
- Increase awareness of all programs for transfer students (e.g. study abroad & national student exchange) (4)
- Joint scholarship opportunities with community colleges (4)
- Use renewable energy center to bring awareness of environmental concerns to the region (4)
- More resources towards transfer relations (3)
- Cost/quality niche (2)
- Develop new certificate program designed to teach others to integrate learning in their course/programs (2)
- Increase tuition waivers for out-of-state students/foreign students (2)
- Increased interest in global issues (2)
- Use Doudna to reach out to the region & state with increasingly fabulous programs (2)
- Interdisciplinary programs (2)
- Better facilitate the transfer of fine arts credits
- “Race to the top” focusing attention on higher education
THREATS:

Top 5 Threats:
1. Higher tuition/less funding
2. Legislation regulating transfer (Note: Some community college presidents expressed concerns about including this item. Such legislation could benefit the community colleges but be a threat to EIU.)
3. Competition with proprietary & online universities
4. Other universities’ scholarships
5. Students/parents more interested in credential than learning

Other threats:
- Less funding (11)
- Possible future legislation regulating transfer (11)
- Growth of for-profit, regionally accredited online universities (9)
- Keeping tuition affordable (8)
- Competition with proprietary schools (6)
- Other universities offering competitive scholarships (6)
- Students/parents more interested in credential than in learning (6)
- Being state abused (5)
- Cost of needed technology (5)
- State failure to remain solvent (5)
- Decline in number of traditional-aged students (3)
- Higher tuition (3)
- Possible defunding of CPB—public broadcasting (3)
- Threats to National Endowments for the Humanities and the Arts (3)
- Globalization of education (less international students coming to the US) (2)
- Lack of grant/contract opportunities for all academic areas (2)
- Loss of alumni support (2)
- Competition of private gifts/fundraising (1)
- Lack of development & growth within academic programs (1)
- Lack of understand on campus of the great changes in higher education today (1)
- Potential mandated performance fund with metrics inconsistent with mission