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

I. What would make EIU first choice for students, faculty, and staff?
   a. Students:
      1. Can establish relationships with faculty.
      2. Benefit from small class size.
      3. Realize that teaching is preeminent at EIU.
      4. Have many mentoring opportunities.
      5. Have a sense of connectedness.
      6. Have the opportunity to discover their major, their calling, due to accessibility to faculty whose doors are always open.
      7. Have advising support. Given the preponderance of transfer students, academic advising is a key ingredient in the success of our students.
      8. Have accessibility to an employable degree.
      9. Place emphasis on the value of a 4 year residential degree vs. a 2 year program.
     10. At EIU, students learn independence and self-discovery. Many are 1st generation students.
     11. Students come to EIU and leave ready to enter the world.
     12. EIU engenders a sense of development; students feel able to grow.
     13. Can demonstrate value for the dollars spent.
     14. EIU provides realistic affordable support to families.
     15. Enjoy a safe learning environment for all.
     16. Undergraduates are not cannon fodder for instructors.
     17. Students need economic support via lab research, administrative report generation and survey instrument participation.
   b. Faculty:
      1. Sustain a combination of rigorous research opportunities coupled with service involvement at all levels.
      2. Understand that the low man on the totem pole does not languish there at EIU.
      3. Sustained a very warm and collegial atmosphere
   c. Staff:
      1. Can be as involved or connected as they want to be.
      2. Have the sense that they are valued members of the team.
      3. Realize that they play an integral role in who comes and stays at EIU.
      4. Realize that intelligent and capable staff are a component of the public face of the university.

II. What is the one thing we need to change at EIU that would enable us to be a great institution?
   a. Determine what we stand for. Determine our purpose.
   b. Treasure our reputation.
   c. Lower the cost of fees to make EIU more price competitive—make EIU not the cheapest but make EIU an obvious economic and academic value.
   d. Analyze cost tradeoffs and look carefully at relative value: e.g., the cost of concerts may be at the expense of classroom activities.
   e. Examine each area that we are investing our tuition dollars in.
   f. Establish more collaboration between departments and colleges especially in the realm of finances.
   g. Eliminate “silo” thinking and value the overarching goals of the institution.
   h. Collegiality and collaborative work must be manifest at the department, dean, college and VP levels. For example, ITS vs. CATS. The fight is always on and faculty are stuck in the middle.
   i. There is no support for interdisciplinary cross-department teaching.
   j. Integrative learning is absent.
   k. Parking policy is in contention with the shuttle bus system.
   l. EIU should discourage car presence and encourage environmental sustainability.
III. What about our history and traditions do we need to remember and preserve as we plan for the future?
   a. Cherish the faculty-student relationship. When we reduce the number of faculty and increase class sizes, we lose an essential aspect of what makes Eastern different.
   b. At EIU the “door is always open”.
   c. EIU started as a teaching institution. We should honor that identity and celebrate that legacy.
   d. Faculty should focus on becoming the good teacher. This requires on-going professional preparation and development.
   e. Graduate assistants teaching classes are a small number. The preponderance of classes are taught by tenured or tenure track faculty. We need to sustain this.
   f. We are currently providing insufficient support for research and mentoring. Students want research opportunities at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
   g. Celebrate the tradition of faculty contribution: EIU is “Make do U”. We do more with less.
   h. EIU cares. We are a big perhaps dysfunctional family, but we are a family.

IV. 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)
   a. Gross uncertainty about financial support. For example the summer session enrollment enigma.
   b. Increasingly, there are no straight answers relating to financial aid support.
   c. More and more students are asking “what kind of job can I derive from this line of study?” Are we offering the most negotiable degrees?
   d. Teachers’ education standards are becoming increasingly burdensome with a high fail rate on standardized testing.
   e. Outstanding teachers are being marginalized without the support to be successful.
   f. On-line learning must be dealt with head-on. If this is the wave of the future, we need to seek consensus on EIU’s response to this issue. We need to recognize that students want on-line offerings.
   g. We need to organize summer session so that it represents not what faculty wants to teach but what students want to take. Who is running summer session?
   h. Realize that summer session is an opportunity for students. Discard the perspective that this is a burden.
   i. In teachers’ education, retention is a major hurdle as we accept more and more students who have a low likelihood of succeeding.
   j. We never ask students what they need.
   k. The University is top down driven vs. bottom up.
   l. Still, with all of the above, “I do love Eastern.”

V. What is the most vital core value that EIU should preserve?
   a. The relationships between faculty and students.
   b. Available, responsive, interested faculty.
   c. Students know that they are valued.
   d. Paramount that we keep the doors always open.
   e. EIU helps students learn their profession.
   f. Academic advising is a mainstay at EIU. It is the single most key ingredient in the retention issue.
   g. Small class size.
   h. Mutual respect among students, faculty, and staff. Open, free discussion of diverse ideas and opinions without fear of retribution.
   i. Education is not a “product we sell”. We transform humans into thinking beings.
   j. Our work here is a profession. It is not just a job.
   k. In terms of teaching, it’s not what we do to them; it’s what we enable them to do for themselves.
   l. We need to sustain our clear sense of purpose. This is expressed in “I am EIU”.
Summer School Suggestions:

- **Summer School Director**
  - We need one
  - Responsible not only for finances, but for planning for course offerings.
  - Provide clear statement of purpose for Summer School.

- **Reinstate Schedule Blocks**
  - In the past, there were set schedule blocks.
    - for example, 8-10, 10:15-12:15, etc.
  - This year, either the schedule was changed, or not enforced, with the result that students cannot take back-to-back courses.
    - if Class A meets 8-10 a.m., and Class B meets 10-12, PAWS considers them overlapping courses, and, at a practical level, a student cannot get from Class A to Class B without being late.
    - This may be contributing to some of the enrollment issues we are seeing this summer.

- **Guaranteed slate of General Education courses**
  - Courses that will be offered regardless of enrollment
    - If we want students to take summer school, they have to be able to plan a year in advance (or more) and be certain that the courses will be there.
  - Course offerings coordinated based on student demand
    - Full slate of offerings
    - Summer 4:
      - Courses which appeal to current students looking to complete graduation requirements or take a course or two since they still have a lease on their apartments
      - Suggestions:
        - Senior Seminar
        - Math Gen Ed
        - Bio 2001G
        - Humanities Gen Ed
    - Summer 6:
      - Courses which appeal to incoming students who want to ease into the college routine
        - 1000 & 2000 level courses that incoming freshmen can take
        - Consult Academic Advising Center for specifics
      - Courses which appeal to student athletes on campus for summer training
- Consult Cindy Tozer at Athletic Academic Advising for specific recommendations
- Opportunities to teach these courses distributed equitably among departments offering such courses
- Ability to supplement guaranteed slate in the case of documented STUDENT need for additional Gen Ed offerings

**Additional Course Offerings:**
- To be determined by departments
- NOT General Education
  - don’t undermine the guaranteed slate of Gen Ed courses
- Course offerings preferably determined by student demand
  - We need to assess student demand/need.
    - Types of courses
    - Types of delivery format
  - Course offerings need to be selected based on curricular need and student desire to take the course.
- Course offerings NOT guaranteed – low enrollment courses MAY be cut
  - Appropriate deadlines for cutting courses
  - Offer faculty the option to teach low enrollment courses for prorated salary
    - For example, if the cut off is 15, and there are only 10 enrolled, offer the option to the faculty person to teach it for 67% pay
    - If they don’t want to, offer it to another faculty person for 67% pay
      - According to department summer rotation policy
  - The important thing is to NOT cancel courses unless there is no other option.
    - Students will look elsewhere if they are not confident that they will be able to take the class(es) they register for.