Engagement and Data Gathering Sessions

Group: Financial Aid Staff

SPT Partners: Dr. Robbie Steward and Dr. Adam Peck

Date: November 11, 2014

Design: Carousel with S.W.O.T.

Attendees: 13

TOP STRENGTHS

- Multiple sources available conducive to studying, i.e. AARC (2)
- Customer service (1)
- Access to Financial Aid counselors/loan advisors (1)
- Small professor to student ratio (1)
- Campus accessibility- parking, getting to class easily (1)

TOP WEAKNESSES

- Quality of student (immature) (2)
- Lack of communication between departments (1)
- Employee retention (within department) (1)
- Increased cost of education (1)
- Parking & employees have to pay for parking (1)
- Low salaries (1)
- Develop online programs (1)
- Not able to recruit top of the lines students/employees due to lack of growth (1)

TOP OPPORTUNITIES

- Online programs/degrees (2)
- Specialized fields (not just general degrees) (2)
- Better recruiting (target specific groups, i.e. National Merit Scholars) (2)
- More marketing of scholarships (1)
- Better communication between faculty/staff and students (1)

TOP THREATS

- Higher default rate (2)
- Online processes- more online classes (1)
• Less funding (1)
• Interest rate increase (1)
• Pace of completion-graduation (1)
• Increase in apathy (1)
• Cost increase- tuition (1)
• Not enough community involvement (1)

Other Strengths Listed

• Literature readily available
• Caring and compassionate
• Multiple ways to contact us- campus wide
• Knowledgeable staff/students
• Always looking for ways to make processes easier (innovative)
• Rapport throughout the office
• Continuous training
• Willing to cross train with other departments
• Small town atmosphere
• Well maintained campus
• Area cost of living
• Personal touch between departments for students
• Campus “life”
• Nice facilities
• Starting to offer more online classes
• Nice sense of community
• Size (population)
• Staff accessibility

Other Weaknesses Listed

• National exposure
• No employee cross training between department
• Business office technology (programming)
• Not a lot for students to do (other than party)
• On campus affordable housing
• More nationwide banks (ex: BOA, Chase, Wells fargo)
• No growth in Nacogdoches
• No major retail chains/ restaurants available
• No major community events (concerts on campus)
• Do any of our degrees/programs make us stand out?
• Cost of living
• Lack of career growth for staff members within SFA
• Not enough office space

Other Opportunities Listed

• More community interaction
• More faculty interaction within SFA
• Increase academic standards
• Offering community courses (administration, gardening, engine repair)
• Recruiting students who are prepared
• Community involvement
• 2 year tech degree (with apprentice)
• Increased admittance standards
• Offer aid of instruction throughout college career

Other Threats Listed

• Drop in enrollment
• Dumbing down of curriculum (students graduating ill prepared)
• Not enough to offer students:
  ○ Entertainment
  ○ Places to study
• Spaces to expand
• Lack of team spirit/ support
• Independent school (SFA is not in a system)
• If you aren’t growing, you’re dying
• Type of graduate- marketable, just average
• A lot of competition
• Department of education regulations- changes
• No automatic pull of junior colleges to SFA (no symbiotic relationship exists)
• No change- Nacogdoches unwilling to improve anything