

## Goal 1 Focus Group – 2/17/10

Strengths and weaknesses focus on internal factors of skills, resources and assets.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Value added “high impact” experiences like undergraduate research, internships, field work	Inadequate PR & marketing on high level of faculty/student engagement
Technology for major programs	Budget limitations for engaging in “high impact” practices on-load.
Students can afford all four years here (as opposed to growing trend of transferring in after second year)	We are a regional institution but we do not reach out to our region beyond PA
Student access to professors (small classes)	SU is not welcoming to those not from our region. Large segments feel marginalized once they are here.
Recent positive Middle States visit	Difficult working with admissions on issues related to student profile. (“Admissions/Recruitment” vs. “Enrollment Management”)
Good PR internally	Bad external PR / marketing.
Good at documenting student success	Pervasive image of SU as a state teacher’s college
Outstanding, accredited graduate programs	Lack of targeted scholarships to recruit high-performing students.
Learning Center	University should help everyone succeed
Funds for faculty professional development	Institutional structure makes “silos” that sometimes inhibit creativity
Strong in both liberal arts and professional programs	Current Gen. Ed. Program is 26 years old
Stable budget (no furloughs or increased workloads)	4-4 teaching load makes other activities difficult for faculty to commit to.
Honors program	Lack of first year experience; lack of centralized service learning; inadequate “study abroad” support
Library does a good job with student resources	Library does not support faculty research (seen as a luxury) or undergraduate research.
	Not enough collaboration between programs
	We don’t know what’s going on in high schools so we can’t influence preparation of students

Opportunity and threats focus on external factors over which you have little or no control (social or economic factors).

<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
Low cost of our programs	Lack of funding for Learning Center
A first year experience would “force” us to address some weaknesses; e.g., collaboration between programs	Inadequate resources for supporting underprepared students
We can strengthen our communication with high schools on expectations.	Lack of diversity in the region from which we traditionally draw students
We can get the word out to students and parents about faculty, programs and opportunities at SU	When we admit low-performing students, it diminishes our reputation in that school district.
The economy	The economy
Geographic location (proximity to urban areas and technology corridors)	Transportation is a challenge for students – university resources are inadequate.
Green energy initiatives, increased federal funding for sustainability and STEM initiatives	
We can develop partnerships with other institutions and facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Letterkenny Army Depot</li><li>• Marine Science Consortium</li><li>• Green Center of Central PA</li></ul>	SSHE Board of Governors – constant tug of war between centralization and decentralization. Financial “solutions” at other SSHE institutions (increase class size, increase distance education, etc.) can create expectations for us to do the same.
We have good technology/facilities (Grove 006) to deliver content via video conference.	

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STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Faculty committed to teaching	Gen. Ed. restricted to CAS. Age of current CAS.
Recent addition of diversity to Gen. Ed.	Structure of current Gen. Ed.
Elegance about our curriculum. 3 colleges, depts.	Transfer student transition. No overall strategy for accepting and assimilating transfer students.
	No capital equipment replacement & maintenance plan and fund.
Make sense per college. Not overextended past university mission. Balance in curriculum offerings that meet students' needs & basic economy needs.	Technology based disciplines difficult to grow in these budget times. Finding avenues for ways to get things funded. Faculty time.
Environ of collaboration about student issues. Lack of territorial boundaries to making curriculum changes.	Bureaucracy!!!! Approvals!!!! Forms!!!! Sometimes a barrier to new initiatives and creativity. Shuts down collaboration between depts. & colleges. "power" is spread out so far it can be difficult to get things done
Things admissions don't know about – short term study abroad. UG research initiatives.	UCC – process is long and complex and daunting
Accrediting bodies.	Support for off-campus programs – faculty staffing & resources.
Transfer students increasing.	No institutional system for external environmental scan. Departments/faculty don't have time, resources or expertise to do marketing research studies on viability of new programs.
For demographics, have good set of majors and programs.	University "diversity requirement" as stated is very "Americanist."
Connecting classroom to outside world – projects, service learning, etc	In budget situation – rising class size prevents us from meeting individual student needs. Less faculty time per student. Compromising on something we tout – small class sizes.
Mechanism for responding to nontraditional needs.	Students can graduate with virtually no quantitative or technology.
Small class sizes	Allocation of resources based on power of program, not assessment. Lack of a link between assessment and allocations.
Learning Center	Learning Center, Counseling Center, not enough resources
UCC – interdisciplinary, all deans, admin, faculty – get to see what others are doing	Not enough resources to do Distance Ed onload. Don't have a great clear vision for Distance Ed – when is it appropriate, when isn't it. Meeting students needs via

offload because not enough resources to do it on-load.  
 Not seen as a senior institution for granting, in comparison with IUP, etc.

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OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Distance ed – opportunities for growth, meeting students needs, supplementing instruction, expanding univ reach and general awareness.	How Distance Ed implemented
Partnerships with HUST.	Bureaucracy
Off-campus programs – taking the univ to the people. Increasing spreading a wider net around Ship. Without directly competing with other univ in the same space.	Resourcing of new programs
Doctoral programs – doctor of education. Leverage prestige of the University; professional doctoral programs don't require as many resources; important to have masters program in analogous field in place.	Budget – state and passhe control our resources. No control. Other passhe schools making decisions that set precedent that could come back to us as a mandate/dictated.
Interdisciplinary minors require a ¼ release time – need time ahead to prove the need before resources will flow. Health, gerontology. Both needs analysis and running classes with extra students, overload, etc before resources will flow.	Student orientation in coming to school – to get a job, rather than to learn. Challenge in teaching students.
Cross-discipline/inter-college programs - sport admin, facility mgmt – faculty resources.	Transfer students without background and preparation we expect them to have. Advising that occurs at the community college – students not taking the class they should have taken.
New programs – disabilities studies program, ODL could grow more but resource capped could grow if enabled,	Preparation of HS students
More people find their way back to school – need pipelines for them.	
Economy – compete more successfully for good students with private schools.	
Grant opportunities – how do we become seen or classified as a “senior” institution. How do we get recognized for this?	
Joint programs with other schools where we are just short of resources.	

Additional Notes from Focus Group Meetings

**Academic Affairs Goal 1: *Provide a curriculum and other learning experiences that creatively address the changing needs of a diverse, technologically based, global society***

**February 17, 2010 Notes**

**Strengths of Shippensburg University related to achieving this goal.**

Value added out of class

Value for money

Access

Middle States

Strength of faculty

Faculty-student engagement

Grad programs

Faculty development

Liberal Arts institution & professional

Learning Center

Financial Stability in comparison to California

**Weaknesses of Shippensburg University related to achieving this goal.**

Lack of 1st yr experience

Central service learning--deficiencies, resources, undergrad research

Gen Ed.--26 yrs

Study Abroad--lack of support

Learning Center needs more support

Not moved beyond PA

Faculty support in library

Underprepared students--lack of support

Need adequate testing of students as they come through the door

More collaboration across disciplines

Need more diversity; some feel SU not welcoming

Admissions--working with them is difficult; do they listen?

4-4 load for faculty

Perception of overwork--faculty want to do more but can't

Strengthen connections w/ high schools

Lack of targeted scholarships

Marketing study, but no money for implementing its findings

**Opportunities in the external environment of Shippensburg University.**

Economy

Geographic opportunity

Tech and Engineering--need to take advantage

Stimulus--green

Sustainability as a study-training in this area

Biodiesel kiln

Opportunities to be creative within the constraints of our limits; how do structures encourage and discourage creativity?

Out of class; use regional resources

Transportation to get off campus

Facilities for video conferencing

**Threats in the external environment of Shippensburg University.**

BOG sold us down the river--lack of support

Economy

Tug-of-war between central (PASSHE) and decentral (campus)

More revenue streams

Budget pressures that encourage further reliance upon adjunct faculty

Appropriations

Retirement and legacy costs

Creatively respond to threats

Schools make it possible to obtain a degree without doing the work

### **February 18, 2010 Notes**

#### **Strengths of Shippensburg University related to achieving this goal.**

Faculty committed to teaching

Curriculum--elegance and balance; no weird barriers

Gen Ed on arts and sciences

Study Abroad

Undergrad research initiative

Proximity

Distance Ed

Collaborating with other schools--transfer students

Non-traditional students

School districts

Internships connect students with the world beyond the Univ

#### **Weaknesses of Shippensburg University related to achieving this goal.**

Rising class sizes compromises our core strength

Students can graduate without quantitative and tech; students need more quantitative skills

We don't have a way of scanning data

Learning Center needs more resources

Counseling Center needs more resources

UCC is interdisciplinary but It creates barriers

Bureaucracy makes it difficult to get things done

It is hard to have most courses cross-listed; honors does it

Lack of resources for exercise science

Allocation of resources based on power of program

Distance Ed--misuse by faculty/administrators--should be accdg to student need.

**Opportunities in the external environment of Shippensburg University.**

Harrisburg Tech--have we collaborated with them effectively?

Spread a wider net

We need to pair with senior institutions for grants

Dislocated workers

New programs

Disability studies

Tap into faculty for exercise

Interdisciplinary minors--health, etc.

Doctoral programs; professional programs, Psy.D.; Ed.D.

**Threats in the external environment of Shippensburg University.**

Bureaucracy

PASSHE controls budget; we can't control costs and projects

Other ways that PASSHE schools meet budget

HS lack of preparation; students come to college lacking a love of learning