

## SWOT Analysis, Advisory Board Meeting, John L. Grove College of Business, October 30, 2009

At the October 30, 2009 meeting of the John L. Grove College of Business Advisory Board, board members, Grove College administrators, faculty, and honors students, along with representatives of the Shippensburg University Foundation, participated in an exercise designed to aid the College in its planning efforts as part of the development of the University's Academic Master Plan. The exercise, facilitated by faculty members Louise Hatfield and William Oberman, employed the established technique of "SWOT" analysis to draw upon the diverse knowledge and experience of the participants. The purpose was to identify factors that could be classified as strengths and weaknesses in the internal environment of the Grove College of Business and opportunities and threats in the external environment, as well possible strategies to exploit or mitigate these factors.

For the initial identification of the environmental factors, participants were divided into six groups. Three groups were charged with identifying the internal strengths and weakness of the Grove College. One group consisted entirely of faculty and administrators, along with a member of the Foundation staff, one was made up entirely of Advisory Board members who were also University alumni, and one was made up of students. It was hypothesized that each of these populations would have a distinct perspective on the College's strength and weaknesses. Hence, it was decided to separate them so the distinct perspectives would not be lost. Likewise, three groups were asked to identify opportunities and threats in the external environment. Each of these groups had a mixed membership. The faculty facilitators then publically queried each group for its highest ranked factors in a round robin fashion and consolidated the responses on a flip chart.

Following the environmental analysis, groups were reconstituted and asked to identify strategic options available to the College. One group was exclusively made up of faculty and administrators, one was a mixture of faculty, staff, Foundation staff, and advisory board members, and the other four were mixed advisory board members and students. Strategies were suggested in the areas of general program development, distance education, marketing and recruitment, and external relations.

The College of Business faculty and administration will take these suggestions under advisement as they craft their strategic plan for 2010-2012 as well as prepare for their upcoming AACSB reaccreditation visit in October 2010. The final COB strategic plan will inform both the Academic Master Plan of the division of Academic Affairs, as well as the University's strategic plan.