

## ***ITS Staff Discussion – November 15th***

### **Question #1 – Is becoming “the premier public liberal arts and sciences institution in the nation” a compelling vision statement for you? Why or why not?**

#### Yes, critical thinking skills is our niche

- The vision lists national, but should this be global?
- There are pros and cons to our niche. Because of our mission we get additional state funding, but it does limit access to Truman in other ways.
- Critical thinking skills are our ‘edge.’

#### Better Definition Still Needed

- What does liberal arts and sciences mean?
- Our vision says ‘premier’ and ‘national’ – but most of our students are from Missouri. Don’t we need more students from other locations in order to be national?
- It would be interesting to know how our alumni are using their liberal arts degrees.

#### Vision Statement Problems

- Do we really have the resources to support this vision?
- We are very selective, and this limits our access, which then limits our resources.
- If we change our mission though, it could affect our alumni base.

### **Question #2 – What is the most important priority for Truman over the next five years?**

1. Accountability and Standards for Our Faculty and Staff
  - Attract and keep high quality faculty and staff.
  - What are our standards for faculty and staff quality, especially in relationship to our students?
2. Emphasize Our Student Focus (both in the classroom and through community building efforts)
  - Provide more value in the classroom. Students can take courses anywhere online, what is different about our classroom environment?
  - Build student community
3. Enhance Recruitment and Retention Efforts
  - Keep all students here through graduation.
  - Keep engaging students at the high school level, don’t let up here. We need to keep Truman relevant to high school students.
4. Stabilize Our Resource Base
  - Address the realities of our financial situation.
5. Enhancement and Maintenance of Our Facilities
  - Keep technology up-to-date. Perceived needs do become real needs.
  - Our facilities need to be maintained at an acceptable level.

### **Question #3 – What assumptions about the next five years are reasonable for us to make regarding budget, staffing, technology, political realities, student needs and expectations, and practices in higher education?**

1. Scarce Funding
  - Scarce funding may make it difficult to maintain our brand. Need to maintain good lobbyists to address this.
  - We need to do more with less, as there will be no additional funding from the state.
  - Students will want more scholarship dollars to attend.
  - It may be difficult to find donors willing to give large endowments, we need to expect smaller donations from more individuals.

- Tuition will increase.
2. Online Courses Will Become Even More Pervasive
    - We will need to do more with less.
  3. Higher student and parent expectations
    - Millennial students will be here in about 5 years, and they have higher expectations.
    - Parents of millennial students are more involved and expect more response.
  4. Technology Will Change
    - Technology will continue to change rapidly
  5. Intense Competition
    - Competition will be more intense, and people will ask 'why' should they come to Truman.
    - Students will college-hop – we need to address transfer credit articulation issues.
  6. Workloads Will Increase
    - Staffing levels will not increase, and we will lose knowledge and expertise through retirements.
    - Workloads will change and shift.

**Question #4 – In your opinion, what would be the characteristics of a successful strategic plan for Truman for 2011-15?**

1. It should have a clear mission and vision, and be something we actually practice. It should also have a roll-out plan with guidance and training.
2. It should allow us to track accountability, and include assessment (and consequences for poor assessments). It should also be marketable, i.e., actionable and publicly visible.
3. It should be a flexible, nimble, and fairly compact document.

Parking Lot – We need to take advantage of opportunities as they come along.  
How will we be innovative during this time?  
We need to continue to benchmark against others.