

Focus Group – President’s Advisory Council (approximately 10 administrators) 10/26/10

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

- Consensus, no it is not compelling.
- Public liberal arts institutions (COPLAC) are few and not that well known.
- The word “premier” seems to be the big problem;
- how do you measure such a statement.
- “It is not a vision, it’s a hallucination, it is not realistic.”

What is the most important priority for Truman over the next five years?

- Name recognition, in and out of state.
- Maintaining quality in light of the severe budget problems.
- Foundation, private resources.
- Next big transformation may be in the fiscal area, what to do about fiscal stability and fiscal resources.
- Student learning and success still number 1.

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?

Budget, staffing and technology:

- Tight, tight and changing
- Assume level funding with small incremental increases, not much larger budget from state than we get now
- Staffing smaller
- Expand and enhance other sources of funding
- Technology a bigger part

Political:

- Conservative. No talk of taxes or revenue enhancement. Smaller government movement.
- 40% of legislature is new – how do we contact and work with them? Communicate points with them: Truman trying to create better teachers, science and math, tout our strengths, show how we spend state money.
- Employers – communicate that we are educating students. They will need employees with skills they have identified as important: communication skills, critical thinking skills, and teamwork.
- Emphasize Truman’s accountability

Student needs and expectations:

- They are high
- We have very good students, our job is to create opportunities for them
- Make sure they have positive experiences
- Parent expectations, what are they? Students will likely be going to community colleges in growing numbers, what kind of influence will this experience have on them and Truman?

Practices in higher education:

- Carol Twig, use technology in approaches to design/planning for learning: issues of seat time, new approaches to student learning.
- What will bring about these changes?
- Truman not in the forefront of online delivery, it is not our primary mode of education.

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

- Brevity
- Bold, compelling
- Collaborative, engagement from all constituencies
- Positive reaction from alums
- Measureable objectives