

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL & CULTURAL STUDIES
SPAC Forum
November 18, 2010

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?

- Thinks this is one of the things we ought to be doing. Should be recruiting nationally, but doesn't know what resources that would take.
- International recruiting is an untapped market.
- Doesn't know how “compelling” it is, but we should be aspiring to that.
- Students graduating and going out are either our best advertisement or worst. They are anxious to leave before things start going downhill.
- Need to make students and alumni part of our community, continue to preserve the community. We need them to maintain the quality. They feel there is trouble brewing.
- What makes Truman special is that students get to be our collaborators.

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

- Maintain the quality, but really need to be proactive instead of reactive.
- Keeping economic house in order so we can weather the problems with the state economy.
- On the national level, pulling students from across the nation here, maybe the financial situation wouldn't be as bad.
- How long before Truman becomes a fully private university? We will always be a state institution, there is likely to be greater centralization and control because of the public refusal to fund education.
- Biggest problem is the state budget—we have to sort out this economic mess.
- If the state is not going to be funding us and we have to turn to private funds, private individuals may not want to give enough funds to support. It is hard when the state ties our hands and won't let us raise tuition.

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?

- We are going to have to raise our own money, can't count on the state for anything.
- Must create niche to create new revenue sources. Trying to catch up with what is already devastating.
- Where does the cutting end and it levels out?
- Concern that we must be able to maintain what makes the institution unique.
- With more and more classes being offered online, personal interaction skills will go down. If we squeeze much more, afraid it will change the product. Truman cannot be run as a for-profit, as students come here for our expertise. The legislature is pushing us toward a for-profit model.

- We are going to lose more people, and we are already hurting.
- We are so late getting our advertisements out when hiring new faculty that it is past the cycle and the best candidates are gone. If interviews are scheduled in April, the best candidates already have jobs.

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

- Have to recognize the things we do well and there is a bottom where you can't go any more.
- Specific, focused, deliberate
- Tiered—these things we will never give up, these things we might give up, and these things we can give up.