

Student Focus Group – Sophomore Truman Leadership Scholars (approximately 25) 11/5/10

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

- Too much, too lofty as a vision
- Too competitive for students at Truman; people come here for the community and the support, they do not want to be competing with the whole world
- Like the fact that the statement pushes us – I like to feel proud when I tell others where I got my degree
- The best is a great goal but perhaps we need to focus on smaller steps
- The size of our university and community might limit us in our ability to achieve that vision

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

- Like to see us expand programs to include majors in forensic accounting, actuarial science, interior design, disabilities studies and a BS/BA option in education.
- There was a discussion about the difficulties involved in combining math and education.
- Students ought to be able to choose the career path they want at Truman.
- Friends are not attending Truman when they are undecided because there are limited options from which to choose.
- Truman needs to change the fact that some courses are limited to majors. We take liberal arts classes and get interested in studying a topic at a deeper level and, then, are not allowed in the classes.
- Even people with minors in some areas are not allowed in many classes that are designated as majors only.
- In some cases there are too many pre-requisites to take a class that is really interesting to you.
- It is also annoying that some courses are listed in the catalog but are never offered.
- A priority is to focus on who we are and not to lose our identity as we try to appeal to students who may not “fit” at Truman
- As a student ambassador, I see that it is clear we have a reputation for being hard. We need to keep the quality of our best programs and strengthen the others.
- We have very goal directed students. The liberal arts core forces us to get breadth in our studies. We need to keep that.

- No one outside of the Midwest knows who Truman is – we need to get our story out.
- I ran into someone in New Mexico who knew about Truman. It was really great.
- The internet is a problem – friends at other Universities have reliable internet service
- Keep tuition low – fees should be covered by scholarships
- Need to remove the ice and the snow in the winter, we are constantly falling – other Universities have heated sidewalks
- Drinking is a problem at Truman but not as bad as other institutions, need more programming
- Maintain academic goals
- Quality/cost balance

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 know there will be no money and fewer staff.
- It is very important to keep technology up-to-date and that will be more important in the future.
- Truman has to keep pace. Technology is and will become more of an integral part of everyone's life.
- The internet slowness right now is very frustrating. Can't get any work done. It keeps kicking you off.
- Based on younger siblings, they believe that future students will need more in the way of counseling, health, study skills and other kinds of support.
- Lots of problems and want to talk with adults about those problems
- Siblings expect to be catered to.
- It took them at least a semester to learn how to study when they came to Truman.
- The study skills class was too general to be helpful. They have had study skill "tips" before. They want to be able to apply information to their lives – how do I do better in the classes I am taking.
- The appearance of facilities is very important. Remodeled dorms and classrooms are very important. Student Ambassadors know first hand about the importance of these "first impressions" to student recruitment and retention.