

## *University of Scranton Planning Day – Summary of SWOT Analysis*

*Planning Day participants worked through a series of activities designed to evaluate internal and external planning issues. Lengthy lists of internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats were produced; these are summarized in the pages that follow.*

### **Exercise #1 – Opportunities (themes from individual worksheets)**

#### **Social/Cultural Trends**

Increased emphasis on diverse education, cultural awareness (16)  
Growth in need for adult education – graduate and continuing education (16)  
Bachelor’s degree new minimum for obtaining a “good job” (14)  
College age population increasing (9)  
Increase in ethnic diversity in northeastern United States population (7)  
Higher education viewed as the norm in most employment settings (5)

#### **Political/Legal Trends**

Support from and connections with local and state politicians. (12)  
Accountability movement – can demonstrate excellence (8)  
Focus on needs for Homeland Security (5)

#### **Economic Trends**

Increased entry-level and continuing education requirements (16)  
Workplace need for skills we provide (languages, technology, reasoning, communication) (16)  
Internationalization/Globalization (13)  
Revitalization of Scranton and the region (8)  
Job growth in business, pharmaceuticals, technology, health care, education (8)

#### **Technology Trends**

Need for continuous training/updating of technology skills (5)

#### **Competitive/Organizational Trends**

Perceived value of a Jesuit education  
Position in local market  
Privatization of state’s public institutions (costs, quality, services)  
Accountability movement (assessment and accreditation)  
New Modes of Education (distance ed, certifications, active and applied learning)

## **Exercise #2 – Threats (themes from individual worksheets)**

### **Social/Cultural Trends**

Lack of diversity in the local and regional areas (8)

Influence of drugs, alcohol, violence, and other morally questionable behaviors on our students (6)

Perception of college costs (5)

Demographics–flat or decreasing numbers of high school graduates; aging population (5)

### **Political/Legal Trends**

More regulation and oversight by the government (11)

Less funding from federal and state government for higher education (8)

Litigious nature of society (6)

Homeland Security issues (5)

### **Economic Trends**

Perceptions of higher education as not affordable to many families (6)

Local economic problems in the city and county (4)

### **Technology Trends**

Cost of technology (7)

Demand for IT professionals, Need for continuous training

Loss of interpersonal skills, the human touch (4)

### **Competitive/Organizational Trends**

Number and competition from colleges/universities in the local area (11)

### **Exercise #3 – Strengths (themes from individual worksheets)**

#### **Programs & Services**

Pre-professional and professional programs (8)

Pre-med, pre-law, CPS

Service projects and programs (7)

Special programs (6)

Fulbrights, SJLA, Business Leadership, Leahy Health Center, Faculty Student Research Program

Jesuit/mission/values-focused (5)

#### **Systems & Processes**

Technology (16)

IR division, integration into programs

Planning/Financial Management (8)

Link of planning and annual reports to budget, recognize the need for planning

Admissions (5)

#### **People**

Dedicated faculty, staff, administration (19)

Faculty and staff concern for students (12)

#### **Finances**

Strong budget processes/planning (13)

Limited tuition increases, active stewardship of resources, disciplined, conservative

Fundraising efforts (8)

Annual fund, President's Business Council dinner

Strong bond ratings (5)

#### **Facilities**

Overall quality of campus appearance (13)

Grounds, Limited deferred maintenance

Technology (12)

Mediated classrooms, labs, library

New Buildings (12)

Retreat center, library, Brennan, McGurrin, apartments, parking garage, Hyland

## **Exercise #4 – Weaknesses (themes from individual worksheets)**

### **Programs & Services**

Not flexible, innovative (13)

Compartmentalized, lack integration (3)

Adult education (graduate, DHC, CCE) (7)

General education (5)

### **Systems & Processes**

Governance and decision-making processes (30)

Convolved, hard to navigate, too slow, not clearly defined

Duplication of services within units/silos

Processes to add, remove, change curriculum cumbersome (6)

Processes for hiring, promotion, dealing with problems not consistent (7)

Communication (9)

Technology (8)

Driven by system rather than user needs, need more training

Planning too complex, not understood and supported (6)

Systemic Change/IAC created suspicion, anxiety, misunderstandings (5)

Not focused on meeting student or other customer needs (5)

### **People**

Climate/atmosphere (34)

Mistrust, suspicious atmosphere, divide between faculty/staff, silo mentality

Resistance to change

Equity issues (11)

Lack of diversity, a caste system

Faculty-related issues (10)

Utilization of part-time faculty, faculty focused on discipline/department not larger

University community

Staff-related issues (14)

Lack of career paths, management training

Longevity of the current workforce

Lack of loyalty to the University or its mission by faculty and staff

Administrative issues (7)

Turnover at top levels, perception of lack of leadership

### **Finances**

Endowment too small/Fundraising limited (22)

Budget/Resources (19)

Limited resources for programs, program development, or enrollment increases

Lack of information, questions about budget processes, priorities, resource allocation

Spend it or lose it mentality  
Tuition dependence/tuition discounting (11)  
Spending/Indebtedness/Borrowing (10)  
    Limited borrowing capacity, bonded indebtedness too high  
    Perceived inconsistencies in spending practices

**Facilities**

Science facilities (15)  
Student center space inadequate (15)  
Some facilities outdated/Imbalance between quality of old and new buildings (9)  
Athletic facilities (8)  
St. Thomas (8)  
Housing (5)