

IUP Discussion Groups Summary and Observations 04.13.07

Discussion groups were conducted with internal and external university stakeholders during March and April 2007. Nine (9) sessions were held with the following audiences:

- Administrators, faculty, and staff - University Planning Council, University Senate, Administrative Advisory Council, Diversity Council, Dean's Council, Managers (those with that specific job classification)
- President's Cabinet and Council of Trustees
- Council of Chairs
- Students - Student Government Association, President's Student Advisory Network, Graduate Student Assembly
- Faculty –Tenured and non-tenured faculty and Council of Graduate Coordinators
- Staff –Non-faculty unions and employees of the Research Institute, Student Cooperative Association, and Aramark
- Community and affiliate organizations - Key community leaders and representatives, Foundation Board, Alumni Board, Student Cooperative Association, Research Institute Board
- General session – Those who were unable to attend the discussion group held for their specific audience

There were a total of 111 participants in all discussion groups session. Participants discussed the six (6) draft strategic goals that had been identified by university committees. Participants were assigned to small groups to discuss ways to achieve each of the strategic goals.

The consulting team was unable to identify common themes regarding the strategic goals for specific audiences, such as faculty, students, etc., because some of the sessions were attended by stakeholders from diverse audiences. Rather, common themes among all of the discussion group sessions were identified by reviewing the verbatim summaries of responses from each session. Points that were identified by participants at three (3) or more discussion group sessions were considered to be common themes for that goal. Participant quotes are included for each goal following the common themes for that goal. In addition, observations are made regarding the discussion groups. The summary of common themes, participant quotes, and observations follows.

Academic Excellence (DRAFT)

- Provide distinctive and rewarding undergraduate, masters, and doctoral learning and research experiences
- Provide students with career preparation experiences
- Increase access to educational opportunities through a variety of innovative teaching and learning approaches
- Increase retention of students by supporting student academic success
- Attract and retain highly qualified, diverse faculty and support their professional development
- Increase access to international learning experiences

What are your suggestions for achieving this goal?

Common Themes

Increase the quality of advisement – put a plan in place to advance quality advising and services

Expand options for distance learning

Focus on first year program experience to prepare all incoming students with emphasis on learning strategies and career planning

Offer incentives to retain and attract quality faculty, such as professional development opportunities in teaching, research, and scholarly activity

Increase opportunities for real world career experiences outside the classroom – internships, assistantships, etc.

Expand career exploration – create a living/learning environment

Support/enhance accredited programs

Participant Quotes:

- *Find a means of engaging students in learning both in the classroom and out*
- *Establish an office or unit to serve as a central place for distance education (distance education center)*
- *Enhance advisement component in the academic setting, and provide/enhance/promote mentoring peers*

Civic Engagement (DRAFT)

- Develop and expand civic engagement opportunities for students, faculty, and staff
- Develop strong partnerships with the local, national, and global communities
- Prepare students for citizenship in the increasingly diverse yet connected world
- Provide a wide variety of culturally enriching experiences for students, faculty, and staff

What are your suggestions for achieving this goal?

Common Themes

Incorporate service learning opportunities within courses in the major and promote service learning in all capacities

Include civic engagement as part of curricular requirement

Improve relationships with outside communities

Reward and recognize those who participate in civic engagement

Better coordinate and promote events offered on campus by diverse groups

Involve alumni in civic engagement

Engage the local community to come to campus for events, to access campus resources, etc.

Participant Quotes:

- *Stop a “we” and “they” atmosphere between University and Indiana residents and businesses*
- *Offer credits for civic engagement and voluntary service*
- *Make community aware of resources at IUP*

Marketing and Promotion (DRAFT)

- Elevate the visibility of IUP through implementation of an integrated marketing plan
- Promote a positive image of IUP as an institution of regional and national significance
- Identify and market successful programs that distinguish IUP regionally and nationally
- Engage all members of the university community to support IUP and advance it as an institution of higher learning
- Promote the IUP experience among students and alumni

What are your suggestions for achieving this goal?

Common Themes

Identify and promote IUP identity - promote what is unique about IUP

Engage alumni by keeping them informed and involved in the process of marketing and promotion

Promote achievements and successes to improve IUP's image

Involvement of students, faculty and staff in promotion of the university – internal marketing

Expand marketing to include state, national and international mediums

Improve relationship between IUP and the media – focus on the positive

Marketing and promoting IUP regionally through connections with local high schools

Participant Quotes:

- *Marketing starts from within...Internally we need to take pride in our institution.*
- *Find better ways of learning accomplishments and achievements of university community and promote these in media outlets*
- *Develop team of alumni to be advocates in their community for IUP (alumni ambassadors)*

Enrollment Management (DRAFT)

- Develop and implement an enrollment management plan
- Ensure targeted enrollment growth consistent with the university vision and market conditions
- Establish a university culture that engages all members to participate in recruitment and retention efforts
- Expand recruitment and retention of diverse students
- Establish enrollment management of regional, satellite campuses

What are your suggestions for achieving this goal?

Common Themes

Distance Learning – give the students more options of study

Plan of action needs to be in place, implemented, followed and continuously addressed

Engage students, faculty, staff and alumni to be involved in recruiting

Recruit more international students

Offer more scholarships

Money and resources are needed to support enrollment management

Actively recruit in both rural and urban areas to increase diversity

Exit interviews – why are the students choosing to leave IUP

Respond to what students want and market conditions – target growth based on specific disciplines

Participant Quotes:

- *Must be built to support diversity*
- *Develop an enrollment management program based on needs for employment and future jobs*
- *Identify mechanisms to draw students to IUP from outside our traditional market*

Continuous Improvement (DRAFT)

- Develop and implement a process to assess the achievement of the university mission and goals
- Engage all members of the university community in the process of continuous improvement
- Use assessment information to channel resources toward achievement of the university goals
- Reward continuous improvement throughout the university

What are your suggestions for achieving this goal?

Common Themes

Implement continuous evaluation processes

Accountability - reward and recognition for meeting goals and requirements and hold accountable those who are not meeting the requirements

Money and resources needed to make improvements

Benchmark with outside entities and learn from other universities - national and international universities not just state universities

Outcomes assessment plans for all areas of the university

Participant Quotes:

- *Reward and encourage ways to increase productivity*
- *Get everyone signing from "the same sheet of music"*
- *Taking a look at other universities' successes*

Resource Development (DRAFT)

- Expand the financial resource base of the university through research grants, annual giving, endowment, major gifts, and outreach to alumni
- Strategically leverage resources for scholarships, programs, services, and facilities
- Provide state-of-the art facilities and technology
- Advocate to policy makers for adequate funding to meet the university mission

What are your suggestions for achieving this goal?

Common Themes

Make alumni want to give money and resources - keep them informed

Upgrade quality of facilities, equipment, technology and technological support

Equal upgrades need to be done for each department – very unequal

Allocation of funds where most needed

Keep students informed and involve in the development process

Outside partnering with corporations and businesses

Maintain affordable education levels

Participant Quotes

- *Allocate funds where the return will be highest and where the market is most available*
- *Alumni pride – create a want to be involved experience*
- *Upgrade computers and library resources*

Have any major strategic areas been overlooked in the draft goal areas?

Common Themes

Sense of IUP community – campus environment and culture

Communication throughout university on all levels

Enhance and promote athletics

Participant Quotes:

- Have no sense of community*
- We have talked a lot about need for effective communication...should or could it be mentioned more prominently somewhere within the goal?*
- A thriving activity athletic program essential to academic excellence and marketing and promotion*

Observations

Some of the strategies identified were mentioned as ways to address more than one goal area. Strategies should be implemented that take advantage of the interrelationships between the goal areas to make a synergistic impact. These strategies include:

- Service learning
- Distance learning
- First year freshman experience
- Promoting a consistent positive image of IUP
- Providing real world experiences for students in and outside of the classroom
- Engaging all of university (students, faculty, staff, alumni, etc.) to support IUP

There continues to be divergent opinions regarding whether to recruit and enroll all students or to increase the quality of the students accepted. This impacts the goals academic excellence and enrollment management. The STAMATS report regarding enrollment management can serve as a guide for addressing this.

There are divergent opinions regarding whether resources and upgrades to facilities should be equal across university departments or whether allocation of resources should be targeted to where they are most needed.

Alumni were identified as key stakeholders that need to be engaged as more active participants and supporters of IUP.

There is a clear need to create a unique identify for IUP and promote a consistent image of that identify to the community – internally and externally. The STAMATS report regarding integrated marketing can serve as a guide for addressing this.

There is a need to more fully develop a sense of community at IUP. This is essential if the university community will be engaged to support and promote IUP. Engaging the university community was identified as important by discussion group participants.

There are opportunities to build relationships with the Indiana and surrounding communities through service learning, internships, economic development projects, providing community access to university resources, recruiting students from local high schools, etc.

Many positive things were identified as happening at IUP, both as an institution and among the individuals that comprise it. However, these accomplishments are not celebrated or widely known throughout the university community. It is important for these to be shared with the university community.

It was anticipated that participants would identify economic development, technology transfer, or commercialization as strategies for moving IUP forward; however, these were not identified by discussion group participants.