



Michael J Grant Campus Forum

Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
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INTRODUCTION

A SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis is a strategic framework that colleges have been utilizing for decades. While the terminology may seem foreign, it has proven useful in decision-making and direction setting given its ability to align internal operations with external conditions. More specifically:

- **Strengths** are attributes of the college that have a positive effect on achieving its goals.
- **Weaknesses** are attributes of the college that have a negative effect on achieving its goals.
- **Opportunities** are external conditions that will likely have a positive effect on the college achieving its goals (if leveraged).
- **Threats** are external conditions that will likely have a negative effect on the college achieving its goals (if left unaddressed).

On February 22, 2012, in the Captree Commons Room 112, 18 participants including faculty, administration, staff and students from the Grant Campus participated in a campus SWOT exercise facilitated by the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (OPIE). This exercise mirrored the process used as part of the college-wide strategic planning effort during a 2- day workshop in January conducted by HR Synergy. As the first step in the interactive portion of the session, participants were encouraged to write the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, unique to the Grant Campus, on color coded sticky notes. After the individual statements were gathered, participants grouped the individual statements in categories and were then asked to rank the three most important themes in each of the categories. Number one was used to identify the most important, number two was used to identify the second most important, and number three was used to identify the third most important. For purposes of scoring, the numbers were transposed when adding up the final tally within each category (a 1 was worth 3 points, a 2 was worth 2 points, and a 3 was worth 1 point). At the end of the forum, the results were tabulated and the results of this analysis are listed below. The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness would like to thank Dr. Keane and the Grant campus faculty and staff who made this forum possible.

MICHAEL J GRANT CAMPUS SWOT

- **Strengths:** The top three strengths were;
 - People
 - Diversity and Adaptability
 - Students

In summary, participants identified the great people, faculty, staff and administration as the campus' top strength. The attendees identified the camaraderie among the faculty, an emphasis on teaching, and a collaborative environment in which people are willing to help each other as the catalysts for the friendly, assessable, and caring nature of the campus. The participants also felt that the

multicultural population, diversity of the student body, and the ability to respond and adapt programs of study to the diverse needs of the Grant campus students were strengths. Participants notes, specifically, that the numerous biology majors and the Grant campus science colloquium series contribute to the diversity and adaptability of programs. Finally, the participants indicated that the students on the campus are wonderful to work with, are heavily involved and committed, and belong to great student clubs.

- **Weaknesses** The top three weaknesses were:
 - Faculty
 - Counseling
 - Budget

In summary, participants identified the adjunct to full time faculty ratio, lack of sufficient full time faculty, and lack of full time faculty teaching freshman seminar as weaknesses. They noted that the adjunct faculty does not have enough representation, has limited influence on decisions, and lacks access to an appropriate amount of professional development. Concerns were also raised regarding a need for greater understanding of student advisement and how students get academic advisement since there are placement issues that exist. Additionally, there was a feel that there were not enough full-time counselors and too many part time counselors, which results in poor communication between student services and academic departments. Finally, budget constraints, the dependence upon unstable financial resources, and the local economic situation were viewed as weaknesses. Participants felt that this situation leads to inadequate staffing and a lack of support staff and grant writers, situations exacerbated by the perception that resource inequity exists across the campuses.

- **Opportunity:** The top three opportunities were;
 - Innovation
 - Community Collaboration
 - Communication

In summary, participants identified the innovation of programs and program expansion that include interdisciplinary programs in STEM as the greatest campus opportunities and felt that the development of a premed option with the health science options as well as improved science facilities and technology in the classroom would further enhance the programmatic strengths. Also identified as a strength was the community collaboration that exists and provides the campus with partnerships that give students a unique experience and provides the community with locally shared programs. Specifically identified were the partnerships with local schools in multiple disciplines and the collaboration with area high schools that bridge the gap for incoming freshman. Although not currently seen as strength, the participants felt that communication provides an opportunity for the campus and college moving forward. They felt that stronger communication amongst departments on all three campuses and increased participation by governance provides the college with a substantial opportunity.

- Threats The top three threats were;
 - Staffing Issues
 - Money
 - Underprepared Incoming Population

In summary, participants identified staffing issues as a major problem that results in inefficient operations (i.e. concerns over sanitation), which is exacerbated by the perceived lack of intelligently designed instructional space, a “top heavy administration”, inequitable staffing across the college and a high “rate of attrition without replacement” as threats to the college’s success. In addition, participants highlighted financial constraints, changes in budget resources, fiscal cuts, an unstable economic climate, and changes in state aid as major threats to the college moving forward. Finally, the number of underprepared students entering the campus was a concern to participants given the additional preparation needed to ensure that these students are successful. Another concern expressed was the chancellor’s plan to eliminate remediation in 10 years, which will impact the college’s enrollment.

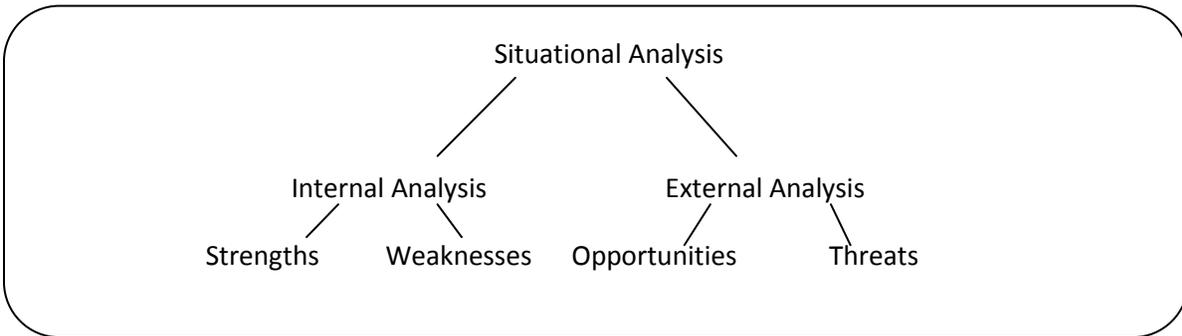
Table 1

Summary of Michael J Grant Campus SWOT

Strengths		Weaknesses	
People	33 (12)	Faculty	34 (13)
Diversity and adaptability	15 (10)	Counseling	19 (11)
Students	13 (5)	Bud	14 (11)
Practical issues	2 (1)	Student opportunity	7 (3)
Physical campus	12 (18)	Campus organizations	3 (1)
Opportunity		Threats	
Innovation	23 (10)	Staffing issues	26 (13)
Community collaboration	22 (9)	Money	23 (10)
Communication	15 (9)	Underprepared incoming population	19 (12)
Growth in physical space	12 (6)	Academic concerns	11 (5)
Research	10 (5)		
Diversity	4(3)		
Funding	1 (1)		

= total score
 # in () =number of participants who voted

Table 2



Bibliography

Net MBA <http://netmba.com/strategy/swot/> retrieved January 25, 2012

Idaho State University SWOT analysis resource page <http://isu.edu/acadaff/swot/index.shtml>
retrieved January 25, 2012