SWOT Environmental Scanning

SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY

2017-2018

To help inform strategic planning, Southeastern developed an environmental scanning process in Fall 2017. This would help identify institutional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. These SWOT elements were gathered across three constituents, Students, Faculty & Staff, Alumni & Community Members. Individuals were invited to participate in a series of focus groups and were also given the opportunity to participate in a brief web-based SWOT survey.

Approximately 400 individuals participated in either one of the SWOT focus groups or one of the SWOT surveys. The feedback gathered was analyzed and summarized. This report contains six summary reports, a focus group report and a survey report for each constituent group based. This is followed by a summary of each constituent group across the data gathering methods. Finally, a summary across all the data is provided.

In February 2018, Student Affairs conducted fourteen focus groups to get the opinions of students regarding Southeastern's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. A total of 111 individuals participated. Below are the themes of the comments made in the focus group discussions.

Strengths - unique advantages that our institution offers or that people perceive about our institution
- Student Resources and Organizations - 18%
- Faculty - 7%
- Campus Grounds and Buildings - 7%
- Textbook Rental - 7%
- Small Classes and Small Campus Feel - 7%
- Cost of attendance and Scholarships Available - 5%

Weaknesses - unique disadvantages that our institution has or that people perceive about us.
- Campus Buildings, Out of Date and Not Maintained - 13%
- Marketing and Branding, Including Social Media - 11%
- Parking - 9%
- Lack of Amenities and Social Opportunities on the Weekend - 5%

Opportunities - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive advantages. Taking advantage of strengths or eliminating weaknesses also can give rise to competitive advantages.
- Marketing and Branding, Including Social Media - 19%
- SE 101 - 6%
- Campus Grounds and Buildings - 6%
- Recreational Equipment and Opportunities - 6%
- Technology - 5%
- Southeastern Pride - 5%

Threats - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive disadvantages. Failure to take advantage of strengths or eliminate weaknesses also can give rise to competitive disadvantages.
- State Funding, Including TOPS - 8%
- Campus Grounds and Buildings - 5%

In February 2018, students were provided a link to give their opinion on Southeastern's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. A total of 48 individuals responded. Below are the themes of the comments.

Strengths - unique advantages that our institution offers or that people perceive about our institution
- Faculty - 31%
- Campus Grounds and Buildings - 29%
- Campus Community: Friendly, Accessible, Small Class Size - 29%
- Textbook Rental - 10%
- Students - 10%

Weaknesses - unique disadvantages that our institution has or that people perceive about us.
- Parking - 43%
- Campus Grounds and Buildings - 9%

Opportunities - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive advantages. Taking advantage of strengths or eliminating weaknesses also can give rise to competitive advantages.
- Parking - 26%
- Campus Grounds and Buildings - 14%
- Communications with Students, Keeping Them Better Informed - 11%

Threats - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive disadvantages. Failure to take advantage of strengths or eliminate weaknesses also can give rise to competitive disadvantages.
- Campus Safety - 32%
- Parking - 18%
- Tuition & Fees - 11%

In November 2017, Academic Affairs conducted 6 focus groups to get the opinions of faculty and staff regarding Southeastern's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Below are the themes of the comments made in the focus group discussions.

Strengths - unique advantages that our institution offers or that people perceive about our institution
- Ancillary Services/Activities - 15%
- Learning Environment - 14%
- Academics - 10%

Weaknesses - unique disadvantages that our institution has or that people perceive about us.
- Faculty Issues - 17%
- Academics - 15%
- Marketing - 10%

Opportunities - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive advantages. Taking advantage of strengths or eliminating weaknesses also can give rise to competitive advantages.
- Community - 21%
- Marketing - 19%
- Academics - 15%
- Recruitment/Retention of Faculty & Staff - 14%

Threats - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive disadvantages. Failure to take advantage of strengths or eliminate weaknesses also can give rise to competitive disadvantages.
- Community - 23%
- Academics - 19%
- Fiscal Issues - 17%

The beginning of November 2017, faculty and staff were provided a link to give their opinion on Southeastern's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. A total of 26 individuals responded. Below are some of the themes for each question, responses could contain more than one theme. Following the themes are the actual responses to each question.

Strengths - unique advantages that our institution offers or that people perceive about our institution
- Faculty & Staff - 42%
- Faculty-Student Ratio/ Small Class Size - 39%
- Caring & Friendly - 37%
- Location - 27%
- Academic Programs - 15%
- Low Tuition - 12%

Weaknesses - unique disadvantages that our institution has or that people perceive about us.
- Administration - 24%
- Budget - 24%
- When and Types of Classes Offered - 24%
- Faculty Morale - 24%
- Technology - 20%
- Commuter School - 16%
- Facilities - 16%
- Perception as an Easy School - 12%
- Students Not Qualified/Prepared for College - 12%

Opportunities - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive advantages. Taking advantage of strengths or eliminating weaknesses also can give rise to competitive advantages.
- Academic Programs - 17%
- Community Involvement - 13%
- Marketing - 17%

Threats - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive disadvantages. Failure to take advantage of strengths or eliminate weaknesses also can give rise to competitive disadvantages.
- Budget - 32%
- On-line institutions - 18 %

In March 2018, University Advancement conducted three focus groups to get the opinions of alumni and community members regarding Southeastern's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. A total of 37 individuals participated. Below are the themes of the comments made in the focus group discussions.

Strengths - unique advantages that our institution offers or that people perceive about our institution
- Campus Community: Friendly, Accessible, Small Class Size - 15%
- Relationships and Partnerships with the Community - 10%
- Academic Programs - 12%
- Location - 9%
- Affordability and Value - 9%
- Alumni: Involved, Loyal, and Successful - 7%
- Student Life - 7%

Weaknesses - unique disadvantages that our institution has or that people perceive about us.
- Image: Easy School, Secondary to LSU - 29%
- Commuter School - 8%
- Lack of support: Money, Alumni, Community - 10%

Opportunities - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive advantages. Taking advantage of strengths or eliminating weaknesses also can give rise to competitive advantages.
- Marketing - 39.6%
- Increase Partnerships - 18.8%

Threats - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive disadvantages. Failure to take advantage of strengths or eliminate weaknesses also can give rise to competitive disadvantages.
- State Funding and Regulations - 22.2%
- Other institutions: on-line offerings, other schools marketing in our region, NTCC - 22.2%
- Lack of Communication - 18.5%

In March 2018, alumni who did not participate in the focus groups were provided a link to give their opinion on Southeastern's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. A total of 9 individuals responded. Below are the themes of the comments.

Strengths - unique advantages that our institution offers or that people perceive about our institution
- Campus Community: Friendly, Accessible, Small Class Size - 21%
- Location - 18%
- Campus Grounds and Buildings - 15%

Weaknesses - unique disadvantages that our institution has or that people perceive about us.
- Funding: State Funding, Alumni Financial Support - 32%
- Campus Grounds and Buildings (including parking) - 13%

Opportunities - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive advantages. Taking advantage of strengths or eliminating weaknesses also can give rise to competitive advantages.
- Increase Partnerships - 31%

Threats - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive disadvantages. Failure to take advantage of strengths or eliminate weaknesses also can give rise to competitive disadvantages.
- State Funding - 36%
- Other institutions: On-line offerings, Community Colleges, NTCC - 22%

Below are summaries of each constituent group across the data gathering methods.

Students

Strengths - unique advantages that our institution offers or that people perceive about our institution
- Faculty
- Campus Grounds and Buildings
- Campus Community: Friendly, Accessible, Small Class Size
- Textbook Rental

Weaknesses - unique disadvantages that our institution has or that people perceive about us.
- Parking
- Campus Grounds and Buildings

Opportunities - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive advantages. Taking advantage of strengths or eliminating weaknesses also can give rise to competitive advantages.
- Campus Grounds and Buildings

Threats - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive disadvantages. Failure to take advantage of strengths or eliminate weaknesses also can give rise to competitive disadvantages.
- Fiscal: State Funding, Tuition & Fees

Faculty & Staff

Strengths - unique advantages that our institution offers or that people perceive about our institution
- Campus Community: Friendly, Accessible, Small Class Size

Weaknesses - unique disadvantages that our institution has or that people perceive about us.
- Faculty Morale

Opportunities - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive advantages. Taking advantage of strengths or eliminating weaknesses also can give rise to competitive advantages.
- Local Community
- Marketing

Threats - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive disadvantages. Failure to take advantage of strengths or eliminate weaknesses also can give rise to competitive disadvantages.
- Fiscal Issues

Alumni and Community Members

Strengths - unique advantages that our institution offers or that people perceive about our institution
- Campus Community: Friendly, Accessible, Small Class Size
- Location

Weaknesses - unique disadvantages that our institution has or that people perceive about us.
- Support: Fiscal, Alumni, Community

Opportunities - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive advantages. Taking advantage of strengths or eliminating weaknesses also can give rise to competitive advantages.
- Increase Partnerships

Threats - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive disadvantages. Failure to take advantage of strengths or eliminate weaknesses also can give rise to competitive disadvantages.
- State Funding
- Other institutions: On-line offerings, Community Colleges, NTCC

All Constituents

Looking across all the SWOT analyses, a clear strength and a clear threat were identified. All groups, regardless of whether the data was collected via a focus group or a survey thought that the *Campus Community: Friendly, Accessible, Small Class Size* was a strength for Southeastern. Similarly, *Fiscal Issues, in particular State Funding*, were seen as threats to Southeastern. There was not as much agreement on the opportunities Southeastern faces. Two of the three groups agreed that *Community Partnerships* and *Marketing/Branding* were opportunities. There was no clearly identified weakness across the groups, they each had different weaknesses rise to the top.

Strengths - unique advantages that our institution offers or that people perceive about our institution
- Campus Community: Friendly, Accessible, Small Class Size

Weaknesses - unique disadvantages that our institution has or that people perceive about us.
- Faculty Morale
- Support: Fiscal, Alumni, Community
- Campus Grounds and Buildings, Including Parking

Opportunities - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive advantages. Taking advantage of strengths or eliminating weaknesses also can give rise to competitive advantages.
- Community Partnerships: Businesses, Other Institutions, K-12 Schools, Government, Etc.
- Marketing/Branding

Threats - changes or developments, typically from external sources, that could give rise to competitive disadvantages. Failure to take advantage of strengths or eliminate weaknesses also can give rise to competitive disadvantages.
- Fiscal Issues, State Funding