

Notes from SWOT Meeting on Feb. 6, 2013

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MPA SWOT MEETING

Strengths

- local leaders join us to be adjuncts (strong adjunct pool)
- town/gown
- faculty/staff dedicated/determined
- faculty productivity
- location
- reputation
- concentrations
- tribal cohort
- developing a new field (tribal governance)
- alumni (international reach)
- embedded within strong grad programs at Evergreen
- Financially in black (before this year)
- Students are amazing, diverse, caring, dedicated
- What alumni and employers say:
 - communication
 - critical thinking
 - analysis
 - collaboration
- adaptability of curriculum
- demand
- flexible schedule
- least cost for value

- meeting mission, mostly
- flexibility in admissions
- don't require GRE
- recruiting
- answer tough questions
- research and grants

Amy's categories (staffing, stability, sustainability, students)

Weaknesses

- not enough continuing faculty to consistently deliver curriculum
- stability - faculty rotation
- permanent white water - fundamental turmoil, always one step away from melt down - takes toll
- Director (rotation, job structure, lack of expertise in tribal affairs and Indian education)
- overwork of assistant directors - lack of support from college
- inadequate institutional support (admissions, financial aid, student support - availability/access)
- Oly Day model dominates
- periphery of college
- workload - distribution
 - student/faculty load
- relying too much on adjuncts
- ILC load not equitable
- governance distribution not equitable
- way too applied
- no plan for undergraduate faculty to rotate into the program
- no plan for mentoring, evaluating, training faculty
- can't evaluate teaching/quality across program (Cores, concentrations and electives)
- no anonymous evaluation of teachers/classes
- college org structure wrong structure for graduate programs
- not teaching enough finance/econ/budgeting
- not performing mission: diversity/equity
- lack of ability to offer predictable electives
- inconsistency of academic rigor/expectations
- lack of flexibility around planning - can't do long-term planning
- no research arm - sustain funding
- loss of NIARI
- no non-profit & local government concentrations
- fundamental resistance between needs of two cohorts - due to institutional racism (privileging general

cohort's KSAs over what tribal communities and tribal cohorts need - seen it from the Provost and from the program).

- tribal cohort marginalized - campus services not available, hard to access - increases their marginalization
- alumni/students - perception of institutional racism - lack of ability to deliver on our promise - people come thinking they are going to get something they want in particular (concentrations) but we are a MPA - how balance?
- need staffing to support internships & career placement (given current environment - more people come to get jobs)
- quality differences (teaching) in delivering curriculum, uneven recently - cohorts

Opportunities

- critical mass of alumni network - opp to develop stronger networks
- develop research arms of the program
- develop additional program concentrations
- work with outside agencies, forge relationships
- outside funding
- better internships/co-op model
- beautiful step-child (while grad programs and other non-Oly day programs are not viewed as essential, we are performing well, being asked to grow and in a good position vis-a-vis the college)
- changes in state government job market ("new" model of public admin, ala Inslee - be ahead of 8 ball or follow behind - respond to new directions in government)
- huge potential: non profits, local government, international
- creation of a graduate studies planning unit
- stop offering classes we can't teach - getting real
- reinstate student advising - workshops
- program review is an opportunity
- look at curriculum overall, perhaps rethink "seat time." Rethink heaviness of weekend intensives - rethink how we physically deliver curriculum (distance learning)
- Environment in NW (politically, environmental policy initiatives)
- biggest non profit funding institutions in Tacoma - health
- opportunity to further develop the tribal concentration - working with tribes
- hires
- play an important role in developing a tribal liaison position at Evergreen
- tell our stories
- events that bring community together
- enhance student point of entry experience/access to services with online tools

Threats

- staffing expertise, efficiency for each cohort - tribal, in particular
- competition (brick and mortar, on-line, tribal)
- increasing tuition
- potential students maxed out on loan eligibility from undergrad/few scholarship opportunities
- limitations on abilities to attract from out-of-state, makes us a regional program
- not expanding geographical - limited to regional
- free coursework from top universities in the world - why pay for grad education? Unless they can get a job
- advance of free market/anti-public sector sentiment - anti-government
- institution's inability to address our administrative, student and facilities support needs
- threat to the survival of Evergreen itself (state support this institution?). Model is threatened - dependent on undergrad
- NASPAA accreditation - may have to go for it, if all competitors are accredited and if not being accredited harms recruitment efforts
- Lack of coherent vision
- ability to talk about our differences
- tolerate our differences
- lack of funding
- lack of staff/personnel
- lack of time
- recruitment and diversity (down in apps, various color and backgrounds; honest conversations)
- governance structure (threat if person in Director position doesn't have expertise in tribal affairs and Indian education)
- faculty hiring - need to reflect the needs of our students and our communities we serve (tribal needs to serve tribal communities - reflective of communities we serve)
- talk across differences - not just tolerated, want to be understood - build trust.
- quality of teaching in entire program - not evaluating within program
- not all teach across the entire program consistently

- conversations where we take threats (feel unsafe) seriously - position but no power
- extreme lack of consistency year-to-year; teaching quality/supports
- Sticks? Accountability.
- Program power to manage our program?
- Weakness of director position - un-manageable situation (so much energy going into just a few pieces)
- deterioration of academic work we do together
- permanent white water

Next Steps

- Distribute notes from SWOT analysis meeting on 2/6 (Jan & Cheryl)
- **Meeting:** Topic/activity - mind-mapping exercise using the notes. Develop themes. Prioritize themes. Already scheduled MPA Fac/Staff meeting: Wednesday, 2/20, 11am-1pm (Cheryl & Faith)
- Agree to process to make decisions on message/structure of report (2/20 meeting)
- **Meeting:** Topic/activity - message/structure of report. Already scheduled MPA Fac/Staff meeting: Wednesday, March 13, 11am-1pm.

Gaps

- Focus Group with Tribal employers/leaders (ATNI, June?)

