

Engagement and Data Gathering Session

Group engaged with:	NEDCO Executive Board
SPT Partners:	Justin Blount, John Calahan
Date:	November 4, 2014
Design:	Carousel
Attendees:	14

Top 5 Strengths

- SFA has strong Cultural/sports/garden events which it brings to Nacogdoches.
- SFA employs well educated/knowledgeable citizens that it brings to Nacogdoches.
- SFA active participation in local organizations.
- Works well with city groups/understands importance of relationship with city.
- Tie for 5th:
 - SFA marketing program is effective and brings attention to Nacogdoches
 - STEM Project/understanding community's education needs
 - Small town atmosphere works.

Top 5 Weaknesses

- Image of university (needs to be improved with respect to quality)
- Lack of things to do around campus and in Nacogdoches to keep students over weekends.
- Cost of tuition, need more online courses.
- Lack of student enrollment growth
- Need a commercial data center at SFA for use by the city/more bandwidth for campus and city.

Top 5 Opportunities

- Explore allied health programs (Nurse Practitioners, medical technology, etc.).
- Enhance efforts to assist students in getting a job upon graduation, SFA 401 type course.
- Online education (add more distance learning/online programs).
- Opportunity to grow enrollment through development of relationships with local community/making sure we keep great local students.
- Develop a commercial data center to serve the local community and students.

Top 5 Threats

- Competition from online/distance learning programs.
- Lack of enrollment growth.
- Attracting high quality faculty/retaining quality faculty.

- Lack of local employment opportunities.
- Incoming students are not really prepared for college.

Other strengths listed:

- City understands importance of FA
- Lots of winning sports teams
- Strong programs such as Fine Arts, Forestry, Horticulture/Arboretum
- International outreach
- Stable enrollment
- Campus beauty

Other weaknesses listed:

- Getting information out to community about university activities
- Not viewed as a resource for businesses/need more collaboration between SFA and local businesses.
- Distance from metropolitan areas.
- Computer Science department needs to be improved.
- Distance from commercial air service.
- Lack of explaining historical connections between Nacogdoches and SFA.
- Lack of school spirit.
- Need to strengthen employment success upon graduation.

Other Opportunities listed:

- Establish an entrepreneurship program to incubate student (and former student) owned businesses.
- Focus resources on specific programs that are of national and regional prominence/be the best in certain programs.
- Work with community on using the performance arts to drive tourism.
- Pursue development of I-69 corridor.
- Focus on building alumni organizations/alumni pride. Try to bring alumni back to Nacogdoches.

Other threats listed:

- Limited night life/weekend opportunities for college students.
- Dual credit high school students (large number of students come to college with a lot of college hours already built up).
- Retaining quality students.
- All SFA employees not focused on quality growth, but need to be.