

# Strategic Plan 2007–2012



[Home](#) » [About](#) » [Strategic Plan](#) » [Archive](#) » [Agendas and Minutes](#) » Minutes from April 1, 2005

## Minutes from April 1, 2005

Members absent: Michael Maggiotto, Kimberly Miller, and Don Whitaker

Provost Pitts convened the meeting at 7:35 a.m. The minutes of March 25, 2005, were approved.

### Announcements

Provost Pitts announced that this would be her last meeting with the task force due to her pending departure from the university. Beginning with the April 8th meeting, Deborah Balogh and Tom Kinghorn will serve as co-chairs of the task force. Provost Pitts thanked the group for its hard work to date. She stated that its members are representing the university well and that she has every reason to believe that the momentum will continue.

### SWOT Analysis

An updated SWOT analysis was prepared this week by Frank Sabatine and Lynne Cooper and sent to members by e-mail. (Paper copies also are available.) The agenda for today is to group items and then to prioritize them in importance.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of the items under "Strengths." Comments included the following:

- o It was decided to delete "Challenge of Brain Drain" and substitute "Incorporation of technology into the curriculum." Related strengths are our Center for Media Design and the infrastructure we have put in place. This infrastructure allows the campus community to access a great deal of information. Another strength is that technology is centralized. It was suggested that we need to define "technology." A side

note was that we could add to "Opportunities" the idea of bringing companies onto campus to test our technology and see firsthand the capabilities of our students.

- o A strength is that we represent the four types of scholarship cited in the Boyer model.
- o Item 5: We may need to define "stable." The consensus was that the word means that we are on track for success. Stability means setting a direction and acting consistently. (Not all institutions engage in a planning process.) A suggestion was that we reword Item 5 to read "Continuity of thought and direction."
- o Items 8 and 9 can be combined, but we need to clarify their meaning. We need to paint the picture of who Ball State is. Raising admission standards, working on economic development initiatives, and demonstrating flexibility are things we have done. They are strengths, but it may take another list of combined items to "paint the picture of who Ball State is." Perhaps we can pick 3-5 emphases to be used in marketing ourselves. For example, we could talk about the kind of faculty we hire, the kind of students we admit, our community engagement, and our commitment to the physical environment. However, we must beware of this "picture" looking too much like that of the current plan.
- o The suggestion was that "Nimble" means that we can try new things. We can also discontinue things. For example, we have not been in remedial education for ten years or so. Someone else suggested that a strength is our size. For next week's meeting, Tom Kinghorn and Roger Wessel will write a statement, choosing modifiers that describe "Who We Are."
- o We are a Division I school. A related strength is our athletes' graduation rate.
- o Our facilities are a strength.
- o We are cooperating with the state by establishing a strong K-16 program. We are the only public institution requiring the Core 40 for admission.
- o We are an early "adopter." Our charter school initiative is an example.
- o Item 3: We should expand this statement to include experiential learning and student leadership development as strengths.
- o It seems that "Strengths" and "Weaknesses" relate to our internal qualities while "Threats" and "Opportunities" relate to external matters.
- o We have one of the largest study abroad programs in the country.
- o We have a strength as a teacher education institution.
- o We have some nationally recognized programs that can be advertised more fully.
- o Item #11: We have a record of improvement and commitment to the 6-year graduation rate.
- o Our commitment to improving retention is a strength.

- o Item # 12: Our student/faculty ratio is a strength.
- o Item 6 has two separate components.
- o We have a commitment to the core curriculum, which truly is a *common* core. We were early adopters, and we have continued to refine it. Other institutions have not been able to have a *common* core. However, we need to communicate more fully its importance internally and also communicate externally to help the public understand its importance.
- o A strength is that we prepare students for the workplace.
- o Our central budget model is a strength.
- o A caveat was that we should not just "pat ourselves on the back." We must recognize the difference between innovators and early adopters. Adopters take hold of something that is "already out there."
- o Items 10 and 21 can be combined. We have been responsive to the Legislature, and we do have a strong and experienced lobbying team.
- o Perhaps we can lump together early adopter programs as a strength.
- o Item #14 may present some problems to define as a strength. Other institutions would say that they, too, have experienced growth in the quality of their faculty, and there are many different measures of this quality.

Dr. Sabatine and Ms. Cooper will re-do the "Strengths" list by the next meeting, incorporating the suggestions from today's discussion. Provost Pitts asked that all members look at the rest of the SWOT analysis in preparation for discussion next week. The April 8th meeting will be held from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. in the Forum Room.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

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