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Strategic Compass Technical Report
for the University of Illinois Springfield

Submitted by COHRE Senior Consultants

Richard G. Moffett III, Ph.D.
Michael Hein, Ph.D.
Patrick M. McCarthy, Ph.D., J.D.

Center for Organizational and Human Resource Effectiveness
www.COHRE.net

Middle Tennessee State University   (615) 898-5458
1301 East Main Street
Box 506
Murfreesboro, TN 37132   cohre@mtsu.edu

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of Illinois – Springfield's (UIS) Chancellor Susan J. Koch and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost Dennis Papini sought assistance in helping develop a "Strategic Compass" to clarify UIS's identity and guide the strategic direction of the university. They commissioned the Center for Organizational and Human Resource Effectiveness (COHRE) at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) to design and conduct the process for this effort. The goal of project was to engage the UIS stakeholders to collectively develop a common identity and vision for UIS. The resulting Strategic Compass will help provide a general framework of guiding vision and principles for UIS that align with the University of Illinois identity.

The UIS Strategic Compass was collaboratively developed, utilizing input across UIS stakeholders. COHRE used a community-building approach to assure a more representative vision with shared commitment throughout UIS. Four phases were used: background research on UIS and its environment; focus groups involving a wide range of UIS stakeholders to identify issues and perspectives that they deemed important; surveys of students and of the faculty, staff, and administration; and analysis of the information collected in the previous phases.

Overall there were significant positive views about the Strategic Compass process and effort. Results indicated strong support for the decision by UIS leadership to conduct the strategic compass process and significant agreement that positive changes will come from it. Survey respondents saw the process as a means to foster open communication to help UIS set priorities and help develop a consensus about the current and aspirational identities of UIS.

Results revealed that the future identity of UIS should focus on providing a high quality education for its students. Key factors in achieving this goal involve:
- providing applied and experiential learning opportunities,
- using personalized and student-focused attention,
- being teaching focused,
- meeting the educational and social needs of a diverse student population, and
- integrating a liberal arts education with public affairs education, professional programs, and science/technology/engineering/mathematics education.

The results also served as a primary foundation for drafting the UIS Strategic Compass. The UIS Strategic Compass provides a concise description of what UIS aspires to be, the general means for achieving that aspirational identity, and the core values that drive the environment to achieve those means. COHRE delivered a Strategic Compass concurrently with this technical report to the Strategic Compass Steering Committee, the Chancellor, and the Provost. These stakeholders will confirm or further develop the final UIS Strategic Compass to guide the University through the opportunities and challenges of the coming decade.

PURPOSE, CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND, AND METHODOLOGY

Purpose

The University of Illinois – Springfield's (UIS) Chancellor Susan J. Koch and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost Dennis Papini sought assistance in helping develop a "Strategic Compass" to clarify UIS's identity and guide the strategic direction of the university. They commissioned the Center for Organizational and Human Resource Effectiveness (COHRE) at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) to design and conduct the process for this effort. COHRE served as a neutral third party in guiding this process, with full independence for all aspects of the project.

The goal of project was to engage the UIS stakeholders to collectively develop a common identity and vision for UIS. The resulting Strategic Compass will help provide a general framework of guiding vision and principles for UIS that align with the University of Illinois identity. The UIS Strategic Compass will also enable each UIS college and department to see and subsequently develop their role in realizing the UIS vision. Three key questions provided an initial general framework for this effort: (a) *How has the unique history of UIS shaped it as a university?* (b) *Where is UIS now?* (c) *What do you want UIS to become? This foundation of identity, strengths, and ambitions transitioned into a series of more specific questions for each stakeholder group.*

From that framework, the future vision, processes to achieve the vision, and guiding values for UIS would be developed. COHRE used a community-building approach to assure a more representative vision with shared commitment throughout UIS.

For more details about the UIS Strategic Compass project, and the members of the UIS Strategic Compass Steering Committee (SCSC) and ex-officio team, please see: https://www.uis.edu/academicaffairs/strategic-compass/.

Conceptual Background for the Strategic Compass

The conceptual framework for the Strategic Compass is based on the work by Buller (2015)[1] who developed the idea for higher education institutions. According to Buller, a strategic compass is an alternative to traditional strategic planning in that it helps provide a general direction for a university but avoids doing so in "an overly detailed and costly manner" (p. 122). A strategic compass allows for flexibility for how a university can adapt to evolving circumstances found in the dynamic environments in which universities operate.

Buller's strategic compass approach will help UIS answer some basic questions about itself. First, what is it that UIS does best? UIS should find out what it does best and do more of it. This will allow UIS to avoid "mission drift." It also directs attention to the strengths of UIS and the things it does well. Second, what do the strengths of UIS say about its identity? As Buller said,

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[1] Buller, J. (2015). *Change Leadership in Higher Education: A Practical Guide to Academic Transformation.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

"It's always better to be excellent at something you know how to do well than to try to be only adequate at something that someone else will always do better" (p. 123).

Three by-products of the UIS Strategic Compass are: a concise description of what UIS aspires to be, the general means for achieving that aspirational identity, and the core values that drive the environment to achieve those means.

Methodology

The UIS Strategic Compass was collaboratively developed, utilizing input across UIS stakeholders. COHRE used a community-building approach to assure a more representative vision with shared commitment throughout UIS.

There were four phases used in the process to develop the UIS Strategic Process. The first phase was conducting background research on UIS and its environment. This included a review of relevant UIS electronic and print documents such as previous strategic plans; promotional materials; personnel policies; organizational, staffing, and student data; UIS website; selected educational institutions who are UIS competitors – both within and beyond the State of Illinois; and documents of the University of Illinois System (e.g., strategic framework and guiding principles).

The second phase used interviews and focus group interviews ("focus groups") from a wide range of UIS stakeholders to identify issues and perspectives that they deemed important. The focus groups also provided qualitative descriptions of these perspectives. Focus groups were conducted from October 2017 through February 2018 with stakeholders that included UIS faculty, staff, administrators, students, alumni, and community collaborators. Details about the focus group methodology are provided below.

The third phase developed and administered online surveys to provide additional input. Participation in the surveys was fully anonymous with high security protections. A link to one survey was sent to all full-time faculty, staff, and administrators. Another survey link was sent to all students. These surveys provided further qualitative and quantitative descriptions of some of the issues raised by participants in the interviews and focus groups. Details about the survey methodology are provided below.

In the fourth phase, the data collected in the previous phases were analyzed. The participation of a broad base of UIS stakeholders across multiple data collection methods provided a solid foundation for generating conclusions, particularly since consistent findings emerged across the varied sources. The resulting UIS Strategic Compass can be found in a separate document, *Strategic Compass for the University of Illinois Springfield*.

Focus Group Process

Focus groups were conducted from October 2017 through February 2018 with stakeholders that included UIS faculty, staff, administrators, students, alumni, and community collaborators.

COHRE Senior Consultants facilitated the focus groups while COHRE Project Associates served as confidential notetakers.

COHRE consultants scheduled 86 total focus groups. Faculty, staff, and administration participated in 79 focus groups, students participated in 5 sessions, and members of the UIS Campaign Planning Committee and members of Innovate Springfield each participated in separate sessions. Focus groups with faculty, staff, and administrators were scheduled for 90 minutes. Student focus groups were scheduled for 75 minutes.

There was a total of 268 people who participated in the focus groups. Faculty, staff, and administration focus groups included 251 participants; the student focus groups had a total of 17 participants. Each focus group contained 10 or fewer individuals, which helped facilitate the engagement of each participant.

Participants in the focus groups were asked three broad questions:
- How has the unique history of UIS shaped it as a university?
- Where is UIS now?
- What do you want UIS to become?

Follow up of questions for each of the broad questions were developed.

The note-taking protocol for the focus groups was designed to protect the identity of the participants. The names of the participants were not recorded.

As soon as possible after each interview and focus group was completed, the Senior Consultants and Project Associates reviewed the notes from the session and developed an executive summary of the information participants provided. The executive summaries and sessions notes from all the interviews and focus groups resulted in over 500 pages of materials. The consultants reviewed all of the materials and met multiple times to identify major themes from the participants' input.

Survey Process – Faculty/Staff/Administrators and Students

Survey Development
Consultants analyzed the content of the results from the interviews and focus groups to create themes to guide the development of the faculty, staff, and administration survey as well as the student survey. A draft faculty, staff, and administration survey was created which contained quantitative and qualitative questions. The draft survey was pre-tested by 16 members of the Strategic Compass Steering Committee. Their feedback about the survey (108 comments) was reviewed by the consultants, and revisions were made based on their feedback.

A similar process was used to develop the student survey. Some items in the faculty, staff, administration survey were included (e.g., items about the UIS identity, attitudes about faculty and staff, and campus life). However, unique items were developed for the student survey (e.g., general attitudes about faculty and classes, and satisfaction with their experience at UIS).

Survey Format

Survey items were rated using a 5-point scale indicating the level of agreement with each statement. Most items were positively worded, with agreement indicating favorable opinions. A few items were negatively worded, and these have been reverse-scored (i.e., disagreement indicating favorable opinions).

The survey also included open-ended items that provided all participants with opportunities to add clarifying comments. Over 170 faculty, staff, and administration participants responded to the open-ended questions, resulting in 1,000 comments. Those comments were consistently aligned with the descriptions obtained from the interviews and were used to help better understand the quantitative results.

Survey Administration

All full-time faculty, staff, and administration members were invited to participate in the survey by an invitation email sent to their individual UIS email address. This email was sent from the COHRE Qualtrics Survey account. The email contained a brief description of the Strategic Compass process, anonymity information, COHRE contact information, and a unique/one-time use survey link. A unique survey link was used to avoid having a person respond multiple times.

The survey was fully anonymous with high security protection. COHRE did not collect IP addresses or emails when people responded to the survey. Although COHRE could determine if the invitation email was successfully sent to an email address, the consultants had no way of knowing whether the person associated with that email address actually took the survey. The student survey was administered in a similar process. As an additional protection, only authorized COHRE personnel have access to the database. The above procedures enhanced the likelihood of open and honest responding.

The faculty, staff, and administration survey was launched April 9, 2018 and was closed April 23, 2018. The student survey was launched April 25, 2018 and was closed May 2, 2018.

Analysis Approach

The results from both the focus group phase and the survey phase were analyzed and integrated.

For the survey results, tables organize the ratings into three categories: favorable (positive views), neutral, and unfavorable (negative views). The total percentage of favorable ratings shown for each item includes subscript breakdowns of how much of that total came from "5-level" ratings (strongly positive) versus "4-level" ratings (positive). The total percentage of unfavorable ratings shown for each item includes subscript breakdowns for how much of that came from "1-level" ratings (strongly negative) versus "2-level" ratings (negative). This is also detailed in the footnote of Table 2.

Also, for the survey results, means were computed. Subgroup comparison analyses were computed for the faculty, staff and administration survey results as well as for the student survey results.

Finally, content analyses of the qualitative data from the open-ended questions from the surveys were conducted to help better understand the quantitative results. The faculty, staff, administration survey yielded 1,673 comments; the student survey yielded 1,351 comments.

Email invitations were sent to 743 faculty, staff, and administration members. The total number of completed surveys for the faculty, staff, and administration survey was 246, which is a response rate of 33.1%. This is an adequate response rate relative to what is typical for such surveys, and provides a solid foundation for interpreting the results.

Email invitations were sent to 4,372 students. A total 266 students completed the survey. While that provides input from a substantial number of students, generalizing the results to the overall student population should be done with caution since the response rate is only 6.1%.

Demographics

The demographic profiles of the participants of the two surveys are presented in the tables below.

Faculty, Staff, Administration Survey Respondents
(Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

1.1 -- *Demographics of Faculty, Staff, Administration Survey Respondents*		
Do you identify as a …	Count	Percentage
Man	68	31.3%
Woman	107	49.3%
Other	0	0.0%
Prefer not to answer	42	19.4%
Total Responses:	217	
Do you identify as a racial or ethnic minority?	Count	Percentage
Yes	26	12.0%
No	145	67.1%
Prefer not to answer	45	20.8%
Total Responses:	216	

I have worked for UIS for …	Count	Percentage
Less than 2 years	27	12.4%
2 years to 6 years	56	25.8%
7 years to 11 years	47	21.7%
12+ years	67	30.9%
Prefer not to answer	20	9.2%
Total Responses:	217	

Of the following, which would you say is your primary role?	Count	Percentage
Faculty (including instructors)	69	31.8%
Staff (Civil Service)	50	23.0%
Administrative Support (Academic Professional, except Directors, Deans, and above)	60	27.6%
Administrator (Directors, Deans, and above)	29	13.4%
Other	9	4.1%
Total Responses:	217	

Student Survey Respondents

(Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

1.2-- Demographics of Student Survey Respondents		
Do you identify as a …	Count	Percentage
Man	82	35.5%
Woman	140	60.1%
Other	2	1%
Prefer not to answer	7	3%
Total Responses:	231	

With which ethnic/racial group do you most identify?

White	166	72.5%
Black or African American	17	7.4%
Latino(a)/Hispanic	8	3.5%
Asian	18	7.9%
Multiracial	4	1.7
Other	5	2.2%
Prefer not to say	11	4.8%
Total Responses:	229	

Please indicate your class standing

Freshmen Less than 2 years	11	5%
Sophomore 2 years to 6 years	14	6%
Junior 7 years to 11 years	35	15%
Senior 12+ years	68	29%
Graduate Student Prefer not to answer	98	42%
Non-degree seeking student	3	1%
Total Responses:	231	

What is your age?

17-24 years	86	37%
25-39 years	96	42%
40+ years	43	19%
Prefer not to say	5	2%
Total Responses:	230	

Do you attend UIS…

Part-time	77	67%
Full-time	154	33%
Total Responses:	231	

Do you primarily take UIS classes...			
In a classroom		87	38%
Online		99	43%
50/50		45	20%
	Total Responses:	231	

Have you ever lived in any of the dorms or housing on campus?			
Yes, and I currently live on campus		45	20%
Yes, but I no longer live on campus		13	6%
No, I have never lived on campus		173	75%
	Total Responses:	231	

Do you identify as LGBTQ+?			
Yes		23	10%
No		197	86%
Prefer not to answer		9	4%
	Total Responses:	229	

Did you transfer to UIS?		Count	Percentage
Yes		104	45%
No		127	55%
	Total Responses:	231	

Are you an international student?			
Yes		21	9.1%
No		209	90.9%
	Total Responses:	230	

Do either of your parents have a college degree?		Count	Percentage
Yes		147	63.6%
No		84	36.4%
	Total Responses:	231	

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

RESULTS

Support for the Strategic Compass Process and Effort

Overall there were significant positive views about the Strategic Compass process and effort. The results from the survey of faculty, staff, and administration (see Table 2) indicated strong support for the decision by UIS leadership to conduct the strategic compass process (78% favorable) and significant agreement that positive changes will come from it (61%). This is consistent with the opinions expressed in the interviews and focus groups.

Survey respondents saw the process as a means to foster open communication and to help UIS set priorities and help develop a consensus about the current and aspirational identities of UIS. The following comments are representative of that optimism:

> *"Process seemed open and useful: Looking forward to the report and discussions about how to improve communication and a sense of transparency, planning and forward movement at UIS."*

> *"I think a lot of healthy dialogue is needed right now about what UIS needs to focus on (help set priorities for UIS) ..."*

> *"... I am very happy that we have embarked on the Strategic Compass. I think it is long overdue and I am optimistic that it will help us do something that we have needed to do for as long as I have been here. By that I mean we have to figure out exactly what we are and what we want to be."*

However, a minority of participants who saw things more negatively. This seemed to relate to skepticism about whether there will be follow through in implementing the Strategic Compass:

> *"Is this going to be another half-finished endeavor – like the half completed circle road [and] the temporary buildings which are barely standing?"*

Significant effort and resources will need to be provided for implementing the Strategic Compass. Otherwise, the skepticism of the minority will become the majority view. One way to help maintain and develop confidence in the Strategic Compass effort will be to identify tangible, meaningful changes that are relatively easy to implement and have a high likelihood of being successful. This has the potential to create optimism in implementing future aspects of the Strategic Compass.

2 -- *Support for Strategic Compass*	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
I support UIS's decision to conduct this Strategic Compass process. (*n* = 209)	4.11	**9%**		14%	**78%**	
		3	6		32	45
I believe that positive changes will follow the completion of this Strategic Compass. (*n* = 196)	3.52	**22%**		17%	**61%**	
		11	11		37	24

Note (regarding tables in this format):
  Unfavorable = sum of (1) and (2); Favorable = sum of (4) and (5);
    Sum differences of one percentage point are possible due to rounding figures to nearest whole number.
  (1) = % Strongly Negative (Strongly Disagree if item is positively worded; Strongly Agree if item is negatively worded)
  (2) = % Negative (Disagree if item is positively worded; Agree if item is negatively worded)
  (3) = % responding "Neither Agree nor Disagree"
  (4) = % Positive (Agree if item is positively worded; Disagree if item is negatively worded)
  (5) = % Strongly Positive (Strongly Agree if item is positively worded; Strongly Disagree if item is negatively worded)
  Mean score is based upon this 5-point scale

Effective leadership will be important to the success of the Strategic Compass. Results from the focus groups indicate widespread recognition that UIS leaders at the top (i.e., Chancellor and Provost) and at lower levels will be critical for translating the ideals in the Strategic Compass into actions that are implemented.

Faulty staff, and administration view both the Chancellor and the Provost as effective leaders (see Table 3). Their views of the Chancellor are stable, while their views of the Provost lie somewhere between stable and moving in a positive trend (see Table 4). Survey results cannot be reported for lower level leaders due to insufficient samples sizes at those levels. However, attention to the effectiveness of leaders below the level of Chancellor and Provost must be diligently addressed in order to ensure successful implementation of the Strategic Compass.

3 -- *Leadership Effectiveness*	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
The Chancellor is an effective leader. (*n* = 210)	3.60	**21%**		13%	**63%**	
		9	12		37	26
The Provost is an effective leader. (*n* = 174)	3.70	**17%**		20%	**63%**	
		6	7		26	24

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 2

4 -- Leadership View Trends	Mean	Getting worse		Neutral	Getting better	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
With regards to the Chancellor, my views are … (*n* = 208)	2.94	**21%** 10	11	61%	**18%** 11	7
With regards to the Provost, my views are… (*n* = 178)	3.22	**19%** 7	9	45%	**36%** 18	12

Note (regarding tables in this format):
  Getting Worse = sum of (1) and (2); Getting Better = sum of (4) and (5);
    Sum differences of one percentage point are possible due to rounding figures to nearest whole number.
  (1) = % Strong Negative [Getting far worse]
  (2) = % Negative [Getting somewhat worse]
  (3) = % Neutral [Neutral/not changing much]
  (4) = % Positive [Getting somewhat better]
  (5) = % Strong Positive [Getting far better]
  Mean score is based upon this 5-point scale

Future Identity of UIS

The UIS Strategic Compass needs to align with the University of Illinois System Framework[2], honor the UIS history, leverage UIS's strengths, and help evolve and clarify UIS's identity and direction. An agreed upon future identity of UIS is an important starting point in the development of the UIS Strategic Compass.

To help clarify the future identity of UIS, a list of items that could be important to the future identity of UIS were developed from the focus groups and review of UIS documents. Survey ratings of these items were consistent with the opinions expressed in the focus groups. All of these items were viewed as being important to the future identity of UIS. As one respondent opined:

> *"Each (of these items) is a vital part of overall institutional success."*

The faculty, staff, and administration ratings of importance (see Table 5) were quite similar to the student ratings of importance (see Table 6). Results indicated that a providing a quality education is central to the identity of UIS. More importantly, participants' responses provided insight into what a quality education should consist of and how it should be achieved at UIS.

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[2] University of Illinois System (May 20, 2016). *The 2016-2026 Strategic Framework*. Retrieved from https://www.uillinois.edu/strategic_framework

5 -- *Importance to Future of Identity of UIS* *Faculty, Staff, Administration Perspective*	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Liberal arts (*n* = 228)	3.87	**11%** 2	9	20%	**69%** 39	30
Public affairs (*n* = 230)	4.10	**5%** 1	3	16%	**79%** 46	33
Science, technology, engineering, & math (*n* = 227)	4.11	**6%** 0	6	15%	**80%** 43	37
Professional programs (*n* = 226)	4.09	**4%** 1	4	19%	**77%** 39	38
Integration of liberal arts and professional programs (*n* = 219)	3.74	**14%** 3	11	23%	**64%** 37	26
Application/experiential learning (including internships) (*n* = 230)	4.34	**3%** 1	2	11%	**86%** 34	52
Teaching-focused (*n* = 229)	4.26	**1%** 0	1	16%	**83%** 39	44
Online education (*n* = 229)	3.93	**5%** 2	3	29%	**66%** 32	34
Small class size (*n* = 232)	3.88	**8%** 2	6	28%	**63%** 29	34
Personalized, student-focused attention (*n* = 231)	4.30	**2%** 0	2	12%	**86%** 40	46
Quality of education (*n* = 231)	4.82	**0%** 0	0	1%	**99%** 16	83

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 2.

6 -- Importance to Future of Identity of UIS *Student Perspective*	Mean	Unfavorable (1) (2)	Neutral (3)	Favorable (4) (5)
Liberal arts (*n* = 232)	3.70	**16%** 6 10	22%	**62%** 33 29
Public affairs (*n* = 240)	3.94	**8%** 2 7	22%	**70%** 35 35
Science, technology, engineering, & math (*n* = 244)	4.41	**2%** 0 1	11%	**87%** 31 56
Professional programs (*n* = 243)	4.40	**2%** 0 2	11%	**87%** 30 56
Integration of liberal arts and professional programs (*n* = 234)	3.74	**15%** 6 9	21%	**65%** 34 30
Application/experiential learning (including internships) (*n* = 245)	4.24	**5%** 2 3	13%	**82%** 33 49
Teaching-focused (*n* = 232)	4.18	**4%** 1 3	13%	**83%** 43 40
Online education (*n* = 243)	4.19	**8%** 0 7	16%	**76%** 26 51
Small class size (*n* = 243)	3.69	**13%** 3 10	32%	**55%** 25 30
Personalized, student-focused attention (*n* = 245)	4.18	**4%** 1 3	16%	**80%** 38 43
Quality of education (*n* = 250)	4.88	**0%** 0 0	1%	**99%** 10 89

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 2.

Quality Education

It is clear from the results in Tables 5 and 6 that delivering a quality education is critically important to the future identity of UIS. This was the most favorably rated item by the faculty, staff, and administrators (99% favorable) as well as the students (99% favorable). A quote from one of the faculty, staff, and administration participants captures this importance:

> *"Any person that says that Quality of Education is not important should not be working in education."*

The rest of the items on this question (see Tables 5 and 6) provide insights about what might contribute to the UIS identity of a quality education. There are two major themes that to contribute to quality education – the processes used to educate students and the content of the education.

The processes of education include the application of experiential learning; personalized, student-focused learning, and being teaching-focused. Each of these items received favorable ratings in the 80% range for students and faculty, staff, and administration.

Application/Experiential Learning.

This factor can provide students with opportunities to be involved in on-campus activities (e.g., working with faculty on research) or on off-campus activities (e.g., internships). These opportunities help students develop skills that can assist students with career preparation. Faculty, staff, and administration view this as one of the most important items for the future identity of UIS (91% favorable).

Application/experiential learning also relates to other factors identified as important to the UIS future identity: developing community partnerships (79% favorable) and civic engagement (73% favorable). UIS has a significant history of applied/experiential learning from which to build (e.g., Graduate Public Service Internship Program, Illinois Legislative Staff Intern Program, and Illinois Innocence Project). Information from the focus groups identified these three programs as major strengths of UIS, especially since UIS is located in the state capital. If application/experiential learning is to be a significant contributor to achieving the identity of delivering a quality education, then similar programs should be developed in other academic areas. This will require resources: time, funding, and training for faculty and staff.

Personalized/Student-focused Attention

This educational process is seen as an important legacy of UIS as found in background materials and expressed by participants in the focus groups. It is also a critical component for the future identity of UIS (86% favorable rating by faculty, staff, administration; 80% favorable rating by students). From the information provided in the focus groups and surveys, personalized/student-focus attention involves many aspects of UIS: class size, teaching delivery mode (online vs. in-person), being teaching-focused, and meeting the educational and social needs of different student populations.

Class Size

Small class size was mentioned in the focus groups as a key to providing the personalized/student-focused attention that has been a part of the identity of UIS since its inception. Survey results suggest that is also important to the future identity of UIS. Faculty, staff, and administration saw this as important (63% favorable). The students did too, although to a slightly lesser extent (55% favorable). In universities, there is a tension between class size and financial considerations. Smaller classes are typically viewed as pedagogically better for students (i.e., allowing for better personalized/student-focused attention), but financial considerations create pressure to increase class size. Faculty, staff, and administration recognize this tension but see ways to increase some class sizes without losing the personalized/student-focused attention:

> *"Using technology, modern pedagogies, and staff support, we can offer personalized earning experiences even with large classes."*

Consequently, providing technology, technology support, and requisite training for faculty will be critical for leveraging this idea. It is important to strategically assess the optimal class size in the context of course-specific pedagogical needs and available resources.

Teaching Delivery Mode

While small, traditional classes (in-person) are seen as means to achieve the personalized, student-focused future identity of UIS, online education is also another key to this future identity. Online classes have been an important part of UIS since 1997 and have been growing ever since.[3] Data from the COLRS annual report for AY2016-2017 show that online courses played a significant role for UIS students in 2016-2017 (39.2% took online-only courses, 40.8% took a mix of online and on-campus courses, 20.0% took on-campus-only courses). The report also states that "The trend in course enrollments patterns over the last decade show decreasing numbers of students choosing only on-campus courses, while students choosing online only and mixed formats remains balanced" (p. 3).

Participants in focus groups acknowledged the historical and current importance of online education at UIS and the assistance provided by COLRS. Several participants claimed that UIS has been a national leader in online education, which they believe gives UIS a certain level of distinctiveness. It will be important for UIS to be cautious about these assumptions of distinctiveness due to increasing competition from public and private universities as well as for-profit online universities.[4]

Survey responses by the faculty, staff, administration, and students indicate they view online education as an important part of the UIS future identity (66% favorable by faculty, staff, administration; 76% favorable by students). In the survey, students were asked specific questions

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[3] Center for Online Learning, Research and Service at the University of Illinois Springfield (2017). *AY 2016-207 COLRS Annual Report*. Retrieved from https://www.uis.edu/colrs/about/colrs-annual-report/

[4] Straumsheim, C. (2017, May 22). Signs of a ceiling in online ed market. *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved from https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/05/22/reports-finds-rising-competition-online-education-market

about online classes and traditional classes (see Table 7). Students view online classes as convenient and say they work well for them. At the same time, students report traditional classes work well for them, but may find them to be less convenient.

7 – Student's General Attitudes about Classes at UIS	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1)　　　　　(2)		(3)	(4)　　　　　(5)	
Online classes work well for me. (*n* = 228)	4.21	**10%** 4　　　　　7		11%	**79%** 24　　　　　55	
Online classes are convenient for me. (*n* = 231)	4.54	**3%** 2　　　　　1		7%	**90%** 21　　　　　69	
I wish more of my classes were online. (*n* = 220)	3.49	**24%** 12　　　　　12		26%	**50%** 15　　　　　35	
Overall, I prefer online classes. (*n* = 231)	3.53	**31%** 13　　　　　17		15%	**54%** 11　　　　　43	
Traditional (in-person) classes work well for me. (*n* = 230)	3.78	**21%** 10　　　　　11		9%	**70%** 29　　　　　40	
Traditional (in-person) classes are convenient for me. (*n* = 229)	3.02	**41%** 22　　　　　18		13%	**47%** 28　　　　　18	
I wish more of my classes were traditional (in-person) classes. (*n* = 227)	3.04	**36%** 20　　　　　16		26%	**38%** 16　　　　　22	
Overall, I prefer traditional (in-person) classes. (*n* = 229)	3.28	**34%** 16　　　　　17		19%	**48%** 17　　　　　31	

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 2

Students were asked to compare the quality of online classes with the quality of traditional (in-person) classes (see Table 8). Overall, it appears that students have mixed opinions with the largest percentage of response indicating similar in quality (46% neutral).

8 – Quality of Online Classes at UIS	Mean	**Unfavorable**		**Neutral**	**Favorable**	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
I believe that online classes at UIS are usually [lower/similar/higher] in quality than traditional (in-person) classes. (*n* = 225)	2.89	**32%**		46%	**21%**	
		8	24		13	8

Note (regarding tables in this format):
   Unfavorable = sum of (1) and (2); Favorable = sum of (4) and (5);
    Sum differences of one percentage point are possible due to rounding figures to nearest whole number.
   (1) = % Strong Negative [Online far lower quality than traditional (in-person) classes]
   (2) = % Negative [Online somewhat lower quality than traditional (in-person) classes]
   (3) = % Neutral [Online similar in quality than traditional (in-person) classes]
   (4) = % Positive [Online somewhat higher quality than traditional (in-person) classes]
   (5) = % Strong Positive [Online far higher quality than traditional (in-person) classes]
   Mean score is based upon this 5-point scale

Faculty, staff, and administration responses to an open-ended survey question regarding the quality of online courses to on-ground courses also may add some clarity. These 145 participants expressed two major opinions. The most frequent theme that occurred (n = 44) was that they perceived these types of courses were equivalent or comparable in quality. An additional theme was they believe that quality varies by faculty, program, or department (n = 20).

Therefore, to ensure high quality teaching of online classes (or traditional classes for that matter), UIS will need to provide adequate support (e.g., time) for faculty as pointed out by one respondent:

> *"Without the necessary support that the university needs to provide to its faculty, the online course will not be of good quality. Professors and instructors that can't dedicate time to updating material, or are forced to go back and rebuild an entire class will merely do the bare minimum …"*

COLRS appears to be a comprehensive resource available at UIS to help meet online teaching development needs. For on-ground teaching, UIS lacks a Faculty Development Center to serve a similar function. A series of questions targeting faculty beliefs about how well UIS is supporting them in their responsibilities was asked in the survey (see Table 9). A slight majority of faculty report that UIS provides the support they need for their on-ground teaching efforts (60%), and perceptions of online teaching support rise to 68%. However, it appears that faculty do not believe UIS provides enough support for all of their responsibilities, especially their research/scholarship responsibilities (26% favorable), and perceived support for service responsibilities was mixed. Additionally, faculty see this trend getting worse (see Table 10).

9 – Resources to Support Faculty Responsibilities	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
UIS provides the resources faculty need for research/ scholarship. (*n* = 68)	2.41	**60%**		13%	**26%**	
		19	32		24	3
UIS provides the resources faculty need to support on-ground teaching. (*n* = 68)	3.41	**26%**		13%	**60%**	
		9	18		44	16
UIS provides the resources faculty need to support online teaching. (*n* = 62)	3.63	**21%**		11%	**68%**	
		11	10		40	27
UIS provides the resources faculty need to support their service responsibilities. (*n* = 68)	2.79	**46%**		10%	**44%**	
		22	24		41	3
UIS provides faculty with enough resources to support all of their responsibilities. (*n* = 69)	2.51	**55%**		20%	**25%**	
		20	35		23	1

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 2.

10 -- Faculty Resources Trend	Mean	Getting worse		Neutral	Getting better	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
With regards to UIS providing faculty resources, things are… (*n* = 65)	2.49	**51%**		29%	**20%**	
		22	29		18	2

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 4.

Teaching-Focused

In order to achieve the goal of being known as an institution that provides a quality education, being teaching-focused is a critical element. This element aligns with the significant legacy of UIS being a teaching-focused institution. This was a common and widespread theme throughout many of the interviews and focus groups, as well as the survey responses of the faculty, staff, and administration. Faculty, staff, and administration rated being teaching-focused as highly important to the future identity of UIS (83% favorable; see Table 4.) This importance of being teaching-focused was also supported by a faculty-only question (n=66) in which faculty answered "What should be the relative emphasis of these three priorities (teaching, research, service) at UIS?" For this question the overall total must equal 100%. The mean percentage for teaching was 54.6%, while research was 23.6% and service was 21.8%.

If faculty are teaching-focused, then students should see faculty in a positive light; in fact, students see faculty in a very favorable manner. Students reported that UIS faculty teach very well (see Table 11), and see faculty as fair, available, genuinely concerned for their needs, and treat them with respect (see Table 12).

11 -- *Teaching at UIS* *Student Perspective*	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Overall, how well do the professors at UIS teach? (*n* = 239)	3.89	**7%**		19%	**74%**	
		3	5		49	25

Note (regarding this table format):
   Unfavorable = sum of (1) and (2); Favorable = sum of (4) and (5);
    Sum differences of one percentage point are possible due to rounding figures to nearest whole number.
   (1) = % Strong Negative [Not well at all]
   (2) = % Negative [Slightly well]
   (3) = % Neutral [Moderately well]
   (4) = % Positive [Very well]
   (5) = % Strong Positive [Extremely well]
   Mean score is based upon this 5-point scale

12 -- *General Attitudes about Faculty* *Student Perspective*	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
During my time at UIS, I have been treated fairly by professors. (*n* = 242)	4.47	**5%**		5%	**90%**	
		2	4		26	64
Overall, professors are available to students when students need them. (*n* = 246)	4.21	**10%**		7%	**83%**	
		3	7		33	51
Overall, professors display genuine concern for students' needs. (*n* = 247)	4.30	**7%**		8%	**85%**	
		2	5		32	53
Overall, professors treat students with respect. (*n* = 247)	4.49	**3%**		8%	**89%**	
		1	2		24	64

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 2.

The faculty, staff, and administration see faculty similarly as students see them (see Table 12 vs. Table 13): available, genuinely concerned for their needs, and treat them with respect. While each group rated these issues favorably, the student ratings were higher overall (faculty, staff, administration ratings ranged from 55% to 75% favorable; student ratings ranged from 83% to 89% favorable).

13 -- General Attitudes about Faculty Faculty, Staff, Administration Perspective	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Overall, faculty are available to students when students need them. (*n* = 201)	3.40	**27%** 8	19	17%	**55%** 35	20
Overall, faculty display genuine concern for students' needs. (*n* = 204)	3.83	**15%** 4	11	14%	**71%** 39	32
Overall, faculty treat students with respect. (*n* = 203)	3.98	**8%** 2	6	17%	**75%** 43	33

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 1.1

To become known for being excellent in teaching, UIS will need to build on the above foundation. UIS will need to hire faculty with strong teaching skills, develop faculty teaching skills in current and innovative skills, measure teaching performance effectively, and reward faculty for high quality teaching. UIS appears to have challenges in some of these areas

After being hired at UIS and continuing throughout their career, faculty must receive support in developing effective, evidence-based, teaching skills. When faculty were asked questions about UIS providing resources for them to perform their jobs, many faculty believe that overall UIS does not do a good job (55% unfavorable, see Table 14). This appears to be related to their beliefs about support for research (60% unfavorable), and may be somewhat related to support for service (46% unfavorable, 44% favorable). Support for on-ground and online teaching is viewed more positively (60% vs 68% favorable, respectively). However, it appears that when it comes to UIS providing these resources, things are getting worse, including support for faculty in learning how to effectively to work with the diverse student population at UIS (see Table 15). Diversity at UIS can include a wide variety of characteristics such as race/ethnicity, gender, national origin, LGBTQ+, traditional freshman, transfer students, first generation students, commuter students, and non-traditional students.

14 – Faculty Views of Resources to Support Their Work	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
UIS provides the resources faculty need for research/ scholarship. (*n* = 68)	2.41	**60%**		13%	**26%**	
		19	32		24	3
UIS provides the resources faculty need to support on-ground teaching. (*n* = 68)	3.41	**26%**		13%	**60%**	
		9	18		44	16
UIS provides the resources faculty need to support online teaching. (*n* = 62)	3.63	**21%**		11%	**68%**	
		11	10		40	27
UIS provides the resources faculty need to support their service responsibilities. (*n* = 68)	2.79	**46%**		10%	**44%**	
		22	24		41	3
UIS provides faculty with enough resources to support all of their responsibilities. (*n* = 69)	2.51	**55%**		20%	**25%**	
		20	35		23	1

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 2.

15 – Faculty Views of Trends in Providing Faculty Resources	Mean	Getting worse		Neutral	Getting better	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
With regards to UIS providing faculty resources, things are… (*n* = 65)	2.49	**51%**		29%	**20%**	
		22	29		18	2
UIS provides faculty the training needed to handle diversity of students in the classroom. (*n* = 66)	2.91	**42%**		20%	**38%**	
		15	27		27	11

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale listed in this table's middle row

Another important component of promoting excellence in teaching is having clear expectations about priorities and about rewards systems for faculty, especially regarding promotion and tenure. Focus groups sessions revealed concerns relating to a lack of clarity and consistency when it comes to full professor and tenure. Survey results indicate that faculty see the path to tenure as being somewhat clear and reasonable, but inconsistently applied (See Table 16). Comments related to this question suggest some of these perceptions are due to a lack of consistency across departments and colleges.

When it comes to promotion to full professor, faculty viewed things more negatively with the path to full professor being unclear, unreasonable, and inconsistently applied (See Table 16). One theme that emerged from the comments regarding tenure was that the standard of excellence required for all three dimensions (teaching, research, service) to be promoted to full professor is unreasonable.

It is important to align the promotion and tenure standards with the vision of what UIS wants to be. It is also important for UIS to develop tenure and promotion systems that allow faculty to see a clear path to achieve these goals and to allow committees and administrators to apply the standards consistently and fairly:

> *"In general I have felt tenure at UIS works well, though in recent years we had an unusual number of administrative reversals and faculty recommendations (contributed to bad morale). Full professorship has been a problem. Service is not valued in promotion to full, and the standard for "excellence" in all 3 areas leads to arbitrary decision-making."*

An additional theme suggested by participants in the focus groups and the comments in the faculty-only survey questions was a need to vary the paths to advancement so that faculty can choose the path (i.e., workload balance among teaching, research, and service) that builds on faculty member's strengths. These systems would need to be aligned with UIS vision.

16 – Tenure and Promotion	Mean	Unfavorable (1)	(2)	Neutral (3)	Favorable (4)	(5)
The path to tenure is clear. (*n* = 60)	3.58	**22%** 7	15	13%	**65%** 43	22
The path to tenure is reasonable. (*n* = 60)	3.70	**10%** 2	8	27%	**63%** 45	18
The path to tenure is consistently applied. (*n* = 57)	2.44	**58%** 30	28	18%	**25%** 18	7
The path to full professorship is clear. (*n* = 55)	2.64	**53%** 35	18	7%	**40%** 29	11
The path to full professorship is reasonable. (*n* = 51)	2.39	**61%** 39	22	10%	**29%** 20	10
The path to full professorship is consistently applied. (*n* = 45)	2.16	**60%** 44	16	22%	**18%** 16	2

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 2.

Meeting Educational and Social Needs of Students

Overall diversity and inclusion

The previous UI System[5] and the UIS[6] strategic frameworks have committed to embracing diversity and inclusiveness. Information gathered in focus groups and surveys indicate that faculty, staff, and administration believe that diversity and inclusion of faculty, staff, administration, and especially students are important to the future identity of UIS (see Table 17). The perspectives of students regarding diversity and inclusion is important as well, especially how they experience diversity and inclusion on at UIS. Students reported on their survey (see Table 18) that they are satisfied with their diversity experience (74% favorable), and feel welcome (84% favorable). Additionally, students reported feeling that UIS encourages them to develop an appreciation for diversity. However, some students (17% out of a total of 191 students responding) reported witnessing discriminatory (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) behavior on campus. Of those who said they had witnessed discriminatory behavior, race or ethnicity (33%) and gender (21%) were the most frequently reported types of discrimination (see Table 18). There were also some students in the focus groups who reported such incidents, and the micro-aggression report authored by McChesney and Moranski (2016) reinforces the importance of continued diligent attention to such issues. The above results suggest that the intentions and actions of UIS regarding diversity and inclusion have had a positive impact, but UIS must continue to monitor and address these concerns to strengthen the desired campus environment.

17 -- Future Identity of UIS – Diversity and Inclusion Faculty, Staff and Administration Perspective	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Diversity and inclusion of faculty at UIS (*n* = 228)	3.95	**8%**		24%	**69%**	
		3	4		32	36
Diversity and inclusion of staff at UIS (*n* = 227)	3.83	**11%**		23%	**66%**	
		4	6		34	32
Diversity and inclusion of administration at UIS (*n* = 227)	3.80	**12%**		24%	**64%**	
		5	7		32	33
Diversity and inclusion of students at UIS (*n* = 227)	4.15	**6%**		16%	**78%**	
		3	3		32	46

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 2.

[5] University of Illinois System (May 20, 2016). *The 2016-2026 Strategic Framework.* Retrieved from https://www.uillinois.edu/strategic_framework
[6] University of Illinois Springfield (January 6, 2006). *UIS Strategic Plan.* Retrieved from https://www.uis.edu/strategicplan/

18 -- Diversity and Inclusion Student Perspective	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
The environment at UIS encourages students to develop an appreciation for diversity. (*n* = 204)	4.11	**9%** 3	5	16%	**75%** 28	48
Overall, I feel like UIS is a welcoming university. (*n* = 220)	4.28	**8%** 2	6	8%	**84%** 29	55
Overall, I am satisfied with my campus experience regarding diversity at UIS. (*n* = 183)	4.11	**7%** 4	3	19%	**74%** 26	48

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 2.

19 -- Basis of the discrimination witnessed by Students	Frequency	%
Race or ethnicity	28	33%
Gender	18	21%
Sexual orientation	12	14%
National origin	10	12%
Socioeconomic status	6	7%
Religion	5	6%
Age	3	4%
Disability	3	4%
Veteran status	0	0%
Other (please describe)	0	0%
Total Responses:	85	
Total *n*:	33	

Respondents were asked to check all that apply for this question.
Total number of respondents for this question is 33, but some selected more than one response option.

Meeting educational needs

Given the diversity of the student population at UIS (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, undergraduate, graduate, residential, commuter, transfer, honors, and student athletes), a key aspect of ensuring personalized/student-focused attention is that the educational needs of the various student segments must be met. UIS has a number of resources targeting various student segments. Faculty, staff, and administration were asked to rate how well UIS currently serves various student segments (see Table 20). Student athletes (83% favorable) and Capital Scholars Honors Students (74% favorable) were seen as being the best served.

Those viewed as most poorly served were transfer students (24% favorable), commuter students (27% favorable), and international undergraduate students (30% favorable). Table 20 reveals additional groups with favorability ratings below 50%. However, several had a plurality of neutral ratings, and the remaining percentages for these groups often showed favorable outpacing unfavorable ratings. Focus group comments reinforced the views of the survey items in Table 20.

20 – How Well Student Segments are Served	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Student athletes (n = 193)	4.17	**4%**		14%	**83%**	
		2	2		44	39
Capital Scholars Honors students (n = 169)	3.98	**10%**		16%	**74%**	
		5	5		34	40
LGBTQ+ students (n = 159)	3.64	**11%**		35%	**54%**	
		2	9		31	23
Primarily/fully online students (n = 161)	3.39	**16%**		39%	**45%**	
		3	14		32	13
Residential students (n = 191)	3.37	**13%**		43%	**44%**	
		3	10		35	9
First-generation students (n = 172)	3.35	**18%**		38%	**44%**	
		5	13		30	14
Traditional freshmen (n = 180)	3.27	**18%**		40%	**42%**	
		6	13		32	9
Domestic graduate students (n = 161)	3.27	**15%**		45%	**40%**	
		3	12		35	5
International graduate students (n = 153)	3.15	**27%**		34%	**39%**	
		8	19		29	10
Racial/ethnic minority students (n = 189)	3.28	**18%**		45%	**38%**	
		4	14		26	11
Professional/non-traditional students (n = 170)	3.11	**25%**		42%	**33%**	
		5	19		25	8
International undergraduate students (n = 173)	3.01	**30%**		41%	**30%**	
		8	22		23	8
Commuter students (n = 186)	2.84	**34%**		39%	**27%**	
		13	20		23	4
Transfer students (n = 185)	2.86	**33%**		43%	**24%**	
		10	23		20	4

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 12.

Meeting social needs

Another important facet of personalized/student-focused attention is that the social needs of students must be met. While various student segments share some common social needs, some may have unique needs that must be identified and addressed. Information shared in focus groups and in results from the student and faculty, staff, administration surveys provide some insights about this topic.

Students who responded to the survey, have a moderately positive view of campus life at UIS (see Table 21.1) – they view that there are places on campus to socialize (79% favorable) and ample opportunities to be involved in leadership activities (73% favorable). However, students believe that there need for more campus activities (51% unfavorable vs. 12% favorable) and there are mixed views on the hours of operation for the Student Union (57% favorable vs. 28% unfavorable).

Faculty, staff, and administration responded in a similar fashion (see Table 21.2): agreeing with students that there are places on campus for students to socialize (86% favorable) and ample opportunities for students regarding leadership activities (76% favorable). They also agree with the students that there need to more campus activities for students (69% unfavorable). They also share in the student's desire to have more social activities on campus for faculty, staff, and administration (56% unfavorable) and have mixed views on the hours of operation for the Student Union (44% favorable; 39% unfavorable). It appears that these views may be related to overlooking the needs of some student segments and when events are being held on campus:

> *"It's not only the number of activities that need to be increased but it is the variety of offerings to meet the interests of all students – especially our adult student population, transfer and commuter students …"*

> *"Most activities are designed for residential and/or traditional age student involvement."*

> *"More activities need to be arranged for graduate students, as well as commuter and transfer students to acclimate to campus life."*

> *"If this is to be student space, the hours need to reflect the hours students keep."*

> *"Starbucks should remain open before, during, and after community events."*

Focus group and faculty, staff, administration survey comments suggest there are some additional challenges to meeting the social needs of students at UIS. One challenge is that perception that the campus is isolated from the Springfield community.

> *"While we may have a sense of community on campus, our sense of belonging does not extend to the Springfield community."*

This includes being geographically located a distance from the core of Springfield, and is exacerbated by lack of shopping, restaurants, and entertainment options near campus. Limited public transportation can be a challenge for certain segments of the student population.

21.1 -- Campus Life at UIS Student Perspective	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Extracurricular activities on campus are well organized. (*n* = 120)	3.68	**14%**		25%	**61%**	
		6	8		34	27
There are places on campus for students to socialize. (*n* =151)	4.21	**9%**		12%	**79%**	
		2	7		28	52
The Student Union's hours of operation meet the needs of the campus community. (*n* =124)	3.48	**28%**		15%	**57%**	
		15	13		23	34
Social events are communicated well on campus. (*n* = 152)	3.61	**24%**		13%	**63%**	
		9	16		32	31
There needs to be more activities for students on campus. (*n* = 138)[R]	2.40	**51%**		36%	**12%**	
		25	26		7	5
It seems like students have ample opportunities to get involved with leadership activities on campus. (*n* = 148)	4.02	**5%**		22%	**73%**	
		1	5		38	35
Our campus life builds a sense of belonging for students. (*n* =141)	3.57	**19%**		27%	**54%**	
		7	12		25	29

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 2.
[R] indicates the item has been reverse-scored (i.e., disagreement indicating favorable opinions).

21.2 -- Campus Life at UIS Faculty, Staff, Administration Perspective	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1) (2)		(3)	(4) (5)	
Extracurricular activities on campus seem well organized. (*n* = 177)	3.55	**20%** 5 15		18%	**63%** 46 16	
There are places on campus for students to socialize. (*n* = 211)	4.14	**8%** 2 6		6%	**86%** 48 38	
The Student Union's hours of operation meet the needs of the campus community. (*n* = 143)	3.08	**39%** 15 24		17%	**44%** 26 18	
Social events are communicated well on campus. (*n* = 198)	3.28	**31%** 10 21		18%	**51%** 33 18	
There needs to be more activities for students on campus. (*n* = 189)[R]	2.16	**69%** 29 40		20%	**11%** 8 3	
There needs to be more social activities for faculty/staff/admin on campus. (*n* = 217)[R]	2.45	**56%** 22 35		24%	**19%** 14 5	
It seems like students have ample opportunities to get involved with leadership activities on campus. (*n* = 201)	3.97	**8%** 1 7		16%	**76%** 45 30	
Our campus life builds a sense of belonging for students. (*n* = 182)	3.16	**31%** 10 21		21%	**47%** 36 11	

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 2.
[R] indicates the item has been reverse-scored (i.e., disagreement indicating favorable opinions).

Content of Education

UIS has a lengthy history of being a small, public university that focuses on liberal arts education, professional programs, and public affairs activities.[7] The focus groups indicated that these components of education at UIS continue to be a source of identity and pride, and are

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[7] University of Illinois Springfield (January 6, 2006). *UIS Strategic Plan*. Retrieved from https://www.uis.edu/strategicplan/

viewed as strengths of UIS. In addition, the focus groups revealed an evolving belief of a fourth component that will be important for the future identity of UIS and for the success of its students: science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

It was apparent from the focus groups that there are significant tensions among some of the stakeholders about these four content areas of education. However, there was a theme that also emerged suggesting that an integration of liberal arts and the other areas, especially, professional programs, is an important direction for the UIS identity.

Results from the faculty, staff, administration survey indicates that all four areas are viewed as important to the future identity of UIS (see Table 22). Students also reported in their survey that these four areas are important to the future identity of UIS. Each of these four content areas (liberal arts, public affairs, professional programs, and STEM) received substantially favorable ratings (62% to 87%) from students and faculty, staff, and administration.

In addition, it is apparent from both surveys is that students and faculty, staff, and administration believe that these areas can be integrated. One theme that was revealed in the survey comments was that this integration is an opportunity that should be taken advantage of, as it will help with recruiting students because this is what students, parents, and employers seek. Comments from the faculty, staff, and administration survey include:

> *"Most faculty on our campus see Liberal Arts and Professional Programs as having to choose between the two. However, employers want students to be educated in both areas. We need more multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary opportunities aligned with labor market demand (perhaps liberal arts and public affairs knowledge and skills could be incorporated into innovative academic major offerings)…"*

It will be critical for the UIS community to overcome "zero sum" views about the four education content areas and develop an integrative, win-win perspective. The above survey results suggest that there is a solid foundation of positive opinions upon which UIS can build.

22 -- Importance of Content of Education to Future of Identity of UIS Faculty, Staff, Administration Perspective	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Liberal arts (*n* = 228)	3.87	**11%**		20%	**69%**	
		2	9		39	30
Public affairs (*n* = 230)	4.10	**5%**		16%	**79%**	
		1	3		46	33
Science, technology, engineering, & math (*n* = 227)	4.11	**6%**		15%	**80%**	
		0	6		43	37
Professional programs (*n* = 226)	4.09	**4%**		19%	**77%**	
		1	4		39	38
Integration of liberal arts and professional programs (*n* = 219)	3.74	**14%**		23%	**64%**	
		3	11		37	26

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 2.

23 -- Importance of Content of Education to Future of Identity of UIS Student Perspective	Mean	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Liberal arts (*n* = 232)	3.70	**16%**		22%	**62%**	
		6	10		33	29
Public affairs (*n* = 240)	3.94	**8%**		22%	**70%**	
		2	7		35	35
Science, technology, engineering, & math (*n* = 244)	4.41	**2%**		11%	**87%**	
		0	1		31	56
Professional programs (*n* = 243)	4.40	**2%**		11%	**87%**	
		0	2		30	56
Integration of liberal arts and professional programs (*n* = 234)	3.74	**15%**		21%	**65%**	
		6	9		34	30

Mean score is based upon 5-point scale (1=strongly negative, 5=strongly positive), as detailed in the footnote of Table 2.

Comparative Analysis

Potential differences in survey results were examined for the various subgroups in the faculty, staff, and, administration participants. Similar analyses were conducted for the student subgroups. The results of the comparative analyses are presented separately for each survey.

Faculty, staff, and administration comparative analysis

Over 200 subgroups comparisons (one-way ANOVAs) were conducted to explore possible differences in faculty, staff, and administration responses. There was only one significant difference found (at the $p < .01$ level). Members of Academic Affairs Division viewed non-traditional students as more of a priority for the future of UIS than did members of Student Affairs Division and Chancellor's Division.

Student comparative analysis

Similar comparative analyses were conducted to explore possible differences in student responses.

Race

There were no differences across racial groups on any of the items in the student survey. However, concerns about issues regarding discriminatory behavior (as noted in Table 19 and discussed in the section on overall diversity and inclusion) must be monitored and addressed.

Gender

Women and men students differed on four items. Two items relate to factors important to the future identity of UIS: professional programs and personalized/student-focused attention. Women were higher than men in their ratings for both of these items. However, each subgroup's means were on the favorable end of the scale, meaning they saw these as important factors to the UIS future.

Another difference was found for the item regarding whether they perceived that professors treated students with respect. Again, women rated this item higher than men rated it. However, both groups rated the item on the favorable end of the scale, indicating that they saw faculty as treating students with respect.

The final gender difference item was found for the item asking if there was a need for more activities for students on campus. Women saw a greater need for this than men did, but both groups agreed that this is a need to be addressed.

Type of Student

Three groups of students were created to explore potential differences among freshmen/sophomores, juniors/seniors, and graduate students on the survey items. Results indicate that a) juniors/seniors want more traditional classes, b) none of the subgroups are satisfied with the Student Union hours, c) graduate students are less likely to say that an appreciation of diversity is fostered at UIS, and d) juniors/seniors are very satisfied with the quality of teaching; however, freshmen/sophomores and graduate students are somewhat satisfied with the quality of teaching.

Next Steps

The results of the analyses of the information provided by the focus groups and the surveys served as a primary foundation for drafting the UIS Strategic Compass. The UIS Strategic Compass includes a concise description of what UIS aspires to be, the general means for achieving that aspirational identity, and the core values that drive the environment to achieve those means. COHRE delivered a Strategic Compass concurrently with this technical report to the Strategic Compass Steering Committee, the Chancellor, and the Provost. These stakeholders will confirm or further develop the final UIS Strategic Compass to guide the University through the opportunities and challenges of the coming decade.