

Hamilton College Aspen Gathering

Saturday: Sustainability of the Business Model

Revenue generating ideas

1. More effective utilization of the campus in the Summer
2. Build a differentiating brand, perhaps during the summer (Oral and Written Communication?)
3. “Aspen Institute”-like Summer programming
4. Grow enrollment to 2000 students or more
5. Invest in the development office to build the endowment; foster better connections with honorary degree recipients, industry connections, named scholar programs
6. January, May or Summer short term experiences -- ”Hamilton Experiences”
7. Online, hybrid learning. Bring in best practices; explore linkages, differentiation in producing critical thinkers who are also great digital players.
8. Assign each trustee 2-3 qualified alumni to cultivate a long-term relationship with the College
9. Reallocate development resources to raise more money per dollar spent (e.g., increase funding for major gift officers); invest in data mining
10. Move away from tenure by adding more contingent faculty (visiting faculty, adjuncts)
11. Follow through on Marts & Lundy recommendations
12. Consider a 3.5 year degree
13. Stronger West Coast presence

Controlling costs/maximizing returns

1. Address the growth in administration over time. Can we be more efficient?
2. Take a shot at serious zero-based budgeting every couple of years
3. Reorganize some academic and administrative departments for administrative efficiencies; consider additional non-tenure track hires for curricular flexibility
4. Develop a shared faculty/services concept with Colgate
5. Don’t succumb to the “arms race”
6. Monetize non-mission critical assets to build earning assets in the endowment.
7. Accept a higher student-faculty ratio
8. Consider a 10% administrative expense reduction, perhaps with some outside assistance in determining areas to cut spending
9. Consider locating some employees or employee groups off campus

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Improve Financial Sustainability

1. All about endowment growth...High expectations from the capital campaign, Cause based approaches, Bigger tent of donors (why limit maximum focus to alums?), Parents fund, Foundations and other outside groups/individuals for whom Hamilton resonates, turnaround participation rate, figure out the lost decade(s), rejuvenate the GOLD concept, revitalize planned giving, establish a Hamilton Donor Advised program. Lots of energy around this subject.

Change the model ideas

1. Reexamine tenure. Could this be done across NESCAC?
2. Is the existing architecture of academic departments flexible enough to keep pace with the rapidly changing world around higher education?
3. Ensure students are achieving strong outcomes. Should/must digital be a foundation underpinning everything at Hamilton? Not an additional course, but a critical foundation.
4. Hamilton locations ... seize the strengths of upstate NY. Extend to differentiating locations that provide "Hamilton Experiences". How could this interact with a differentiating strategy?

Sunday: What Does and Should Distinguish Hamilton?

Current Strengths

1. Open curriculum
2. Need-blind
3. Beautiful campus
4. Size (small school with small classes)
5. Levitt Center
6. Proximity to Adirondacks
7. Faculty sponsorship and connection
8. Quality of the experience
9. Rigorous, challenging and supportive
10. Advisory system (though needs more ways for faculty and students to connect)
11. Written and oral communication
12. Friendly and approachable character
13. Alumni loyalty and network
14. Excellent, teaching-focused faculty
15. Part of NESCAC brand (do we need a brand separate from/distinctive to the NESCAC brand?)

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What would/should distinguish Hamilton?

1. Oral-intensive requirement
2. Integrate strength in writing and oral expression with cutting-edge digital capabilities
 - a. Becoming leading liberal arts college focused on integrating liberal arts and digital expertise/data science/analytics/algorithmic thinking
 - b. Develop more integrated and current ERP
 - c. Leverage outside resources with digital boot camps, visiting executives from Zillow, Google, Apple, Facebook, Kronos, etc.
3. Academic year and summer programs with leadership/communication focus
4. Stronger focus on outcomes with broad-based approach to career planning
5. Strengthen alumni network
6. Emphasize global citizenship (strong off-campus study)
7. Greater focus on experiential learning (w/summer internship requirement)
8. Linkages with other institutions (e.g., w/Colgate)
9. Well regarded graduate program
10. Increase course and concentration selectivity to focus on core capabilities
11. Develop restructured, simplified, flexible department structures to emphasize cross-disciplinary work
12. Add social/giving back component to guiding educational principles.
13. More aggressive and integrated promotion of the College
14. Foster reputation as a community that values and respects the balanced and free flow of ideas
15. Leverage Alexander Hamilton's reputation (around writing, public service, work ethic, leadership, etc.)
16. Reconsider placement of Athletics under Dean of Faculty