

I have tried to focus only on h/e trends in identifying some critical issues facing Xavier.

Higher education is in fundamental transition. The drivers are demographics; technology, communication and connectivity; more broadly international competition and globalization of the international economy.

We are not well positioned regarding demographics. Our traditional local base in New Orleans is diminished; Louisiana is not one of the areas projected for major population growth over the next ten to twenty years. (We will have to collect demographic data for our market areas to have a better sense of how local, state and regional trends will impact our current position.)

- How will Xavier respond to changes in our local base? Will we attempt to become more of a national university? If so, what will be the implications?

A major segment of higher education is tending toward commoditization--consumers purchasing specific course or course bundles to meet specific credentialing or skill/information needs. This is being responded to by for-profits, by specialty institutions and by structural differentiation within more traditional h/e institutions.

- How will this trend affect traditional liberal arts colleges, historically black colleges in general and Xavier in particular? Will Xavier choose to enter this market (how strong is the local market and what is the competitive lay of the land?)

A major force acting on h/e is technology, communication and connectivity. Broadly this opens the field of e-learning and the possibility of reaching large numbers of students remote from campus.

- How will Xavier respond to these developments and how will these possibilities be integrated into Xavier's traditional "core"?

We appear to be in the early stages of international competition in h/e. New large scale universities are emerging in India and China, for instance. American universities are opening branch campuses in Paris, Singapore, Beijing and a host of other locations. European universities appear to be making initial entries into these emerging markets (surmise, I haven't seen data on this). European universities are also re-engineering and may soon compete more vigorously for American students.

- How will Xavier take advantage of these trends? What is their likely impact on HBCU and Xavier?

Globalization (ala Tom Friedman, THE WORLD IS FLAT) appears to be opening new careers and professional opportunities. Work in the global economy appears to require new skills and competencies. Exactly what the broad career opportunities are and what the set of new skills and competencies will be is not yet clear.

- To what extent will Xavier attempt to tap into this trend and where is its area of comparative advantage?

Competition in h/e is likely to intensify substantially. Xavier currently has staked out a strong comparative advantage in science and math, driven by solid professional tracks in premed and pharmacy. (My

sense is that our dominance in these areas is being challenged--see exchange among yourself, Warren Bell and Wayne Harris about black pharmacists.)

- What other traditional professions will we stake out?
- What will be our position vis-à-vis incipient or emerging new fields, especially in the globalized market place?

Occupying a single niche permits brand differentiation and specialization but leaves one vulnerable when a total environment is in transformation. Smaller colleges have moved into adult and continuing education; graduate education, e-learning, and partnerships with for-profit organization. They have created remote site education; attempted to recruit foreign students; expanded their core areas; and identified other strategies to diversity their revenue streams.

- Will Xavier continue to specialize; expand its areas of focus and specialization; move into new educational venues; explore additional partnering with other institutions?

Historically black colleges and universities have provided educational opportunity for talented African American students. As society has changed and as a strong black middle class has emerged, there is increasing competition for talented minority students, including competition from the Ivies and top liberal arts colleges.

- How will this competition affect HBCU and Xavier more particularly. What will make us attractive to talented minority students--what will be our comparative advantage?