

Virtual U “Icebreaker”



Engineering Education Leadership
Institute

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Virtual U Website <http://www.virtual-u.org/index.asp>

Virtual U Gameplay “Path”

- Stop time, and
 - Familiarize yourself with current situation, i.e. campus/department strengths and weaknesses
 - Based on this assessment and scenario goals, decide on and put into place overall policies
- Run through first year
 - Take notes!
 - Address Board-identified problems
 - Assess and adjust budget at end of first year
- As game progresses, monitor and tune variables
 - Be patient

Scenario 1:

Improve Research Performance

- Faculty research and scholarship at the university are mediocre by national standards.
- The Faculty Senate Research Committee attributes this condition to a lack of commitment by both faculty and administrators rather than a lack of resources. The committee blames excessive teaching loads and insufficient research support. They blame low faculty morale. Most departments require improvement.
- Goal: In ten years, the University's performance rating in scholarship should be *strong*. The rating reflects the scholarship of integration, application, and teaching as well as knowledge creation.

Notes:

Scenario 2:

Increase Emphasis on Teaching

- The Board sees a need to increase the emphasis, in time and effort, that the faculty puts on teaching.
- In hiring, faculty activity priorities and faculty salary, increased consideration is given to teaching ability and performance.
- Goal: To the extent possible, maintain this increased emphasis on teaching while also avoiding potential declines in other areas, such as Institutional Prestige and Research Performance.

Notes:

Scenario 3:

Improve Student Morale

- Student morale, particularly in the Engineering department is low. Left unattended, this situation will negatively affect graduation rates.
- Goal: Over 5 years, improve morale by 25%

Notes:

Scenario 4:

Enroll More Minority Students

- There is a scarcity of minorities in the student population. Further, because minorities are equally scarce among freshmen as among seniors, there is no evidence that time will cure the problem.
- Goal: Boost the number of minority students twofold in ten years, from 9% to 18%.

Notes:

Scenario 5:

Hire More Minority Faculty

- Dramatically alter the diversity of your faculty in a relatively short time.
- Goal: Boost minority representation by 50% & female representation by 25% increase in five years.
- How you will accomplish these goals and with what change in budget and staff size?

Notes:

Scenario 6: Raise Educational Quality

- A recent report by an accreditation team has cited the University for poor teaching.
- The team attributes performance to inattention to education, rather than lack of resources. Specific shortcomings include: *discontinued courses, student demoralization, insufficient faculty time and attention devoted to students, and poor classroom teaching.*
- Goal: Within five years achieve an educational quality rating of *good*. In ten years, the teaching quality should be rated *excellent*.
- Since the team's opinion that a lack of physical and financial resources did not cause our poor teaching, the Board does not expect a mere plea for more money to achieve accreditation.

Notes: