

Engagement and Data Gathering Session

Group: SFA ROTC Cadets

SPT Partners: Justin Blount, John Calahan

Date: October 24, 2014

Design: Interview

Attendees: 23

KEY DATA:

1. **If you were describing SFA to your peers at other universities, what about SFA would you say is special or unique?**
 - A) Truths
 - i) Traditions (Battle of the Piney Woods, Spirit Rock, axe handles/axe'em, firing ROTC cannon, homecoming bonfire)
 - ii) Small class sizes/size of student population (not too big, but big enough)
 - iii) Clean, pretty campus/well taken care of (one student said has a "private school look"), small size makes it easy to navigate, pretty natural features (Azalea Garden, etc.)
 - iv) Good, close relationships between student and faculty.
 - v) Parking policies are too strict and limiting.
 - B) Trends
 - i) Great ROTC program
 - ii) Small town festivals in Nac/small town feel (Blueberry Festivals, Milford's Barber Shop, farms, etc.)
 - iii) Diverse and large number of student organizations
 - iv) Diverse student body
 - v) Professors dedicated to student success
 - vi) Large number of majors/fields of study; school does not seem to emphasize one school over any other.
 - vii) East Texas location/naturally pretty area
 - C) Unique Ideas
 - i) Surfin' Steve is cool
 - ii) Lot of running trails
 - iii) REC Center looks nice, but is not well equipped (restrictive policies)

- iv) Specialized off campus private services
- v) Chester the Ghost in the theater
- vi) Theme of purple

2. What could SFA do or be to encourage you to support the university both while a student and after graduation?

- A) Truths
 - i) More school spirit/continuous school spirit activities throughout the year, not just at certain times.
 - ii) More advertising/support for ROTC
 - iii) More entertainment events (concerts, etc.)
 - iv) More advertising for SFA
- B) Trends
 - i) More alumni based events/student alumni interaction
 - ii) Separate weight room for ROTC/let them use football weight room.
 - iii) Better on campus food/more options
 - iv) Stop nickeling and diming students on fees/lower tuition
- C) Unique Ideas
 - i) Create a student government body with more power/allow student organizations to do campus projects for things they care about
 - ii) Higher wages for student employees
 - iii) Keep frats/sororities from crowding up the Student Center with fundraisers
 - iv) More educated staff in weight rooms
 - v) Financial incentives to better school spirits
 - vi) More grad level research opportunities
 - vii) Get SFA name in front of more high-schoolers

3. What is one innovative idea that SFA could implement to improve the student experience?

- A. Truths
 - i) Better parking for students/more commuter parking
 - ii) Technology upgrades/improvements (specifically wi-fi)
 - iii) Better/healthier food in cafeterias
- B. Trends
 - i) More outdoor activities
 - ii) More advertising for ROTC program
 - iii) More student on-campus jobs
 - iv) Smoke-free campus/restricted smoking areas

- C. Unique Ideas
- i) New Military Science building
 - ii) Allow alcohol on campus
 - iii) Get rid of campus bus to encourage more walking, or change campus bus to pick students up off campus (apartment complexes, Walmart, etc.) and then they can walk around campus
 - iv) More nutritionists/dieticians for students
 - v) Private College of Business fund for student entrepreneurship (student/faculty get together and actually start businesses).
 - vi) Restrict sitting on Rusk building steps in front of the student center.
 - vii) Give the faculty more discretion to treat students like adults and not baby them.

4. How has your experience at SFA prepared you to be successful in life?

- D. Truths
- i) Improving basic skills (studying, time management, work ethic, organization & leadership).
 - ii) Frequently it was noted that good quality professors/interaction with professors in smaller class sizes helped with this.
- E. Trends
- i) School supports the ROTC program well/gaining leadership skills from ROTC.
 - ii) Learn the value of money and being responsible with it.
- F. Unique Ideas
- i) Have not been here long enough to know.
 - ii) First time being away from parents has taught responsibility/independence.
 - iii) Friends for the future/networking/have become more socially active.
 - iv) Real world challenges/experiences in the classroom. Curriculum that builds on itself to become more challenging.
 - v) Opened eyes to diversity/how big and different the world is.
 - vi) Improved writing and communication skills
 - vii) Hasn't taught me anything other than how hard life is away from your parents.

5. Why did you choose SFA?

- G. Truths
- i) Location (close to home, or just far enough away, but not too far)
 - ii) Good ROTC Program

- H. Trends
 - i) Affordable tuition
 - ii) Small class size
 - iii) Pretty campus/big enough, not too big.
 - iv) Variety of majors
 - v) Got accepted

- I. Unique Ideas
 - i) Good running trails in town
 - ii) Nice college town/away from a bigger city
 - iii) Lumberjack is a cool mascot
 - iv) Variety of organizations
 - v) REC was nice
 - vi) "All you need is a heartbeat to get in."
 - vii) Fast response to application

6. What have we not asked you that you would like to discuss?

- A) Truths
 - i) Too much faculty/staff parking, not enough student or commuter parking.
 - ii) Too many restrictions in the REC weight room/unknowledgeable staff
 - iii) Improvement in online services (too many different things to log-in to, change to single log in to access services for class, administration, etc.).
- B) Trends
 - i) Clean the ag pond
- C) Unique Ideas
 - i) Students should be able to carry concealed weapons.
 - ii) Students are required to live on campus for too long.