

Columbus State University: 2012 SWOT Table (Draft Version Updated 8/17/12)

<p><u>CSU Strengths:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supportive environment for teaching and learning as evidenced by committed faculty dedicated to teaching, lower turnover rates, and development funds for faculty research ▪ Nationally accredited programs in business, education, music, theatre, art, and nursing ▪ Competitive pricing compared to some larger USG institutions ▪ Positive reputation in the local service area ▪ Robust Servant Leadership program ▪ International Education grants and program opportunities ▪ Geographic location and close proximity to Fortune 500 companies ▪ Two distinctive campuses and downtown area creates a unique and diverse quality of student life ▪ Diversity of student body ▪ Good "town-gown" relations and collaboration opportunities with local industry (in part due to CSU's unique outreach programs) ▪ Foundation assets ▪ Shift towards unit-level generated revenues means increased autonomy for departments/colleges in planning and staffing ▪ Student research programs and grants ▪ Safe campuses, comparatively, with professional police presence 	<p><u>CSU Weaknesses:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Small number of international students ○ Heavy reliance on adjuncts in some key core courses (e.g., Math and English) ○ Low student retention and graduation rates ○ Perceived disparity in the quality of programs -- some perceived as low quality ○ Failure to fully meet the needs of CSU's large population of non-traditional students ○ Lack of on-campus student engagement ○ Weak articulation with Alabama institutions and limited recruitment in other states ○ Lack of name recognition/ranking regionally and nationally ○ Lack of adequate resources to support faculty research ○ Quality of some of the facilities, labs, and classroom instructional technology (e.g., Howard Bldg., Arnold Bldg., Science labs, etc.) ○ Lack of coherence and communication among the different campus communities ○ Lack of communication to students on the availability of course offerings ○ Faculty and staff salaries and training below average --lack of adequate employee training and professional development in key service areas ○ Declining cohesiveness and increased operational costs due to three campuses and outreach operations ○ Shift towards unit-level generated revenues increases vulnerability/exposure to revenue declines which may cause future faculty/staff layoffs and program inequities
<p><u>Opportunities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in the global demand for online/hybrid courses and programs ▪ Global mobility of students, services, and trade creates opportunities for international student recruitment and study abroad programs ▪ Fastest growing jobs in U.S. in the next decade will be related to healthcare, education, technology, and business ▪ Growth in the demand for professional certificates ▪ Growth in the demand for graduate degrees ▪ Growth in STEM-related occupations (science, technology, engineering, math) in the U.S. ▪ Ft. Benning population creates opportunities for new programs/students in that area ▪ Opportunities to continue to build on CSU's positive relations with the community through new outreach programs and initiatives ▪ Opportunity to increase enrollment by adding more relationship-building activities for applicants (e.g., more Visitation Day activities with faculty, etc.) 	<p><u>Threats:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Down economy and the resulting increased focus on college costs by students -- increases in student fees may lead to a decline in enrollment ○ Loss of funding or reduction in student fees could negatively impact student enrollment and retention (creates inability to offer and sustain student programs and activities) ○ Future reductions in financial aid/support for students (e.g., Pell, HOPE, etc.) ○ National shortage of doctorally-qualified faculty in some disciplines increases the cost of hiring ○ Growth in for-profit and online competition (local and national) and a concurrent decline in the growth rate of undergraduate college enrollment ○ Increasing number of "tuition-free" online courses and universities ○ Fast-paced changes in technology increases operational costs due to constant replacement of classroom equipment and training faculty/staff ○ Continual budget reductions due to declining federal/state appropriations (in part due to low student retention/graduation rates) ○ Growth in alternative teacher certification programs (bypassing traditional college education programs) ○ Poor job outlook for students in non-technical majors such as the Arts, Humanities, Liberal Arts, and Social Sciences ○ Peer institutions continue to compete for top undergraduate students by offering Honors programs and scholarships ○ Perceived benefit of higher education is declining