Our Team:  Lee Ann Henry, Len Lennergard, Greg Long, Cheryl Ross, Aaron Vermedal, Candy Buie

We have chosen a couple sample questions to ask the students we interviewed.

1. Why did you choose to come to NIU?
2. What are some of your most positive experiences since coming to NIU?
3. What are some of your most negative experiences since coming to NIU?
4. Any suggestions for thing NIU can do to improve the campus experience and make you want to stay for the weekends?

Our responses are summarized in the following:

1. A popular response was proximity and affordability that NIU offers as a “commuter” school! We have discovered that kids like NIU as a commuter school, close enough they can return home on the weekend, work and take care of family. Maybe we need to take into consideration we have many, many students that DON’T want to stick around on the weekend, but they come to NIU because of affordability. Maybe we need to work on those community connections for the students in a broader scope – 60 mile radius. Not just reach out to DeKalb community, but Geneva, Rockford, and Chicago, where we find many of our graduates already working.

2. We discussed assistantships as a positive thing at NIU. As well as the curriculum and professors. Again we hit on, if we have the classes and the excellent teachers to teach them, the students will come.
   Social was a big issue too. The need to know what is going on on campus. Currently social groups have their clicks, but not a lot of interaction between the groups. We can possibly do more things that would bring ALL groups together.
   Another suggestion, since we are an electronic world these days, digital signs around campus. Students are beyond the email phase and onto more up to date technology. There seem to be complaints about finding out after the fact for many activities on campus. Possibly electronic billboards with campus events flashing before their eyes would get attention!
   We suggested getting the Student Association more involved but that would have to be an ongoing communication, as the Association members change frequently.

3. Negative things consist of 24/7 dining halls and study halls not available. Students that stay on campus should have access to food 24/7, as well as computer labs.
   Safety on campus as well as within the dorms seemed to be an issue. Many students do not feel safe within their own dorm halls and in area’s on campus.
   Parking for commuter students is always raised as an issue on campus.

4. Some mentioned more “live music” on campus, places for “under 21” to hang and have a good time.
   NIU needs more activities for students and ways to interact and meet more people.

We discussed strategic planning committee meeting and how they never go anywhere, just talk, talk, talk.