



External S.W.O.T. Analysis (Advisory Board)

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (S.W.O.T.)

Office of Institutional Effectiveness (01-2010)

Halifax Community College

External S.W.O.T. Analysis (Advisory Board)



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S.W.O.T. Analysis

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Note:

Responses are presented as written except where information is not clear or evident.

Some units have students as part of the Advisory Committee Members.

Responses received are from the units shown above.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES - CHILD CARE CENTER

Halifax Community College

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

HCC strives to meet the diverse needs of our community. In order to meet these needs continuously, the College must assess the environmental trends relative to the rapidly changing and globally competitive marketplace. Please give us your opinion in the categories below for the program you are affiliated with that will help HCC in the 21st century:

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

STRENGTHS: *Qualities and competitive advantages of HCC*

- Cameras (internet/observational)
- Security codes on entry door
- Multiple resources on campus (Library, Early Childhood Programs/Instructors, Interns, and Work Study)
- Student convenience
- Security on campus
- Highest voluntary child staff ratio
- 5-Star center lead teachers with degrees

WEAKNESSES: *Factors that may prevent optimum achievements*

- Lack of funding to replace broken toys and/or update items in classroom
- Floor and rugs not polished/clean on regular basis
- Later opening hours than some centers

OPPORTUNITIES: *Trends and forces in our environment*

- Direct withdrawal/credit card payments for convenience
- Parents' jobs requiring them to need earlier childcare.

THREATS: *Factors that can hinder success if not recognized and addressed*

- Lack of keeping a clean environment to meet requirements for the sanitation guidelines set out by the state.

Your RECOMMENDATIONS to:

1. Mitigate against Weaknesses

- More grant writing and fundraising
- New landscaping on playground
- Open earlier

2. Exploit Opportunities

- Offer direct withdrawal/credits card payments
- Open earlier

3. Defend against Threats

- Write for more grants, conduct fundraising, and follow up on reports of insufficient cleaning by cleaning services.

4. Future trends of our Programs

- Outdoor cameras for playground

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

STRENGTHS: *Qualities and competitive advantages of HCC*

- Fair fees; good, clean and modern facility; College affiliations and access to in-field interns; award-winning staff

WEAKNESSES: *Factors that may prevent optimum achievements*

- Playground not optimal; no infant care.

OPPORTUNITIES: *Trends and forces in our environment*

- Good teacher with good ideas; use of community resources to bring things into the school; good support of the College; keep the 5-Star Rating and Exceed It!

THREATS: *Factors that can hinder success if not recognized and addressed*

- Lack of parents' participation- although seems to be improving; budget to provide activities and supplies; better playground with track, soft matting, more play space

Your RECOMMENDATIONS to:

1. **Mitigate against Weaknesses**
 - Improve/remodel/upgrade playground, add infant care.
2. **Exploit Opportunities**
 - Highlight the exception staff, 5-Star Rating, and bargain cost for exceptional care
3. **Defend against Threats**
 - Look for opportunities to expand, especially with other facilities closing.
 - Being the Best/Biggest in a small pond is easy; being the same and excelling as if it's an ocean makes it great.
4. **Future trends of our Programs**
 - Improve playground for outside activities, add infant care, add additional classes, and become an exceptional training center for Early Childhood Education (ECE) students.

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

STRENGTHS: *Qualities and competitive advantages of HCC*

- The teachers desire to be “at the top of their game”

WEAKNESSES: *Factors that may prevent optimum achievements*

- Lack of parental involvement

OPPORTUNITIES: *Trends and forces in our environment*

THREATS: *Factors that can hinder success if not recognized and addressed*

- Lack of some parental involvement with their children can directly relate to misbehaving and disruption of classes.

Your RECOMMENDATIONS to:

1. Mitigate against Weaknesses

- I do not have any idea for mitigating.

2. Exploit Opportunities

- Since field trips and such are out due to location, exploit the Internet use to bring it into the classroom-especially, the 4 year olds.

3. Defend against Threats

4. Future trends of our Programs

- Don't let the weakness (lack of parent involvement) weaken your resolve to give the best to these children.

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

STRENGTHS: *Qualities and competitive advantages of HCC*

- Web Cams are a complete advantage because it allows those who want to check on their children a chance to do so. And also the meetings w/parents and teachers.

WEAKNESSES: *Factors that may prevent optimum achievements*

- (NO written Response)

OPPORTUNITIES: *Trends and forces in our environment*

- I think that as a Child Care Center, you all take advantage of the many opportunities in the community that no other child care center in this community does. For example, the Book Fair and the Bike-a-thon.

THREATS: *Factors that can hinder success if not recognized and addressed*

- Lack of outdoor is an advantage to the children. I know that a lot of times when it rains, it prevents the use of the outdoors even after the rain has been gone for days.

Your RECOMMENDATIONS to:

1. Exploit Opportunities

- Continue to come up with the many ideas and doing different things that you have been doing.

2. Defend against Threats

- Come up with a long-term plan to utilize the outdoors more.

3. Future trends of our Programs

- Making each event better and better every year.

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS - MEDICAL OFFICE SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY

Halifax Community College

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

STRENGTHS: *Qualities and competitive advantages of HCC*

- HCC currently provides quality graduates from their programs with diverse knowledge and backgrounds. The college seeks out opportunities for their students to be involved in learning. Students are placed at job sites which relate to what they will be doing in the future. Some of the sites have state of the art technology the student is exposed to. Job opportunities have been plentiful in the area of medical office systems. The economic downturn has forced many people to return to school increasing the pool of potential students.

WEAKNESSES: *Factors that may prevent optimum achievements*

- Funding for replacement of state of the art equipment for serving medical office needs might be a problem. As we move more towards a computerized medical record, the students will need to be trained with more technology to assimilate what is currently being done in the work force.

OPPORTUNITIES: *Trends and forces in our environment*

- Healthcare reform will be one of the trends with a significant impact on medical office systems. It will mean a lot more people will have access to medical care creating an increase in the number of people in the system. Future generations seeking health care will have a greater demand for more services and will communicate with their health care provider through electronic means

THREATS: *Factors that can hinder success if not recognized and addressed*

- Success could be hindered if job opportunities are not publicized to make students aware of current and future opportunities in health care for medical office systems. With the healthcare reform, there will be a tremendous need for people in this profession. It is important to start the education process early to be able to take advantage of the job opportunities anticipated.

Your RECOMMENDATIONS to:

1. Mitigate against Weaknesses

- Adequate funding to ensure student success with newer technologies and computer software applications for medical office systems

2. Exploit Opportunities

- Marketing to increase awareness of the job opportunities in medical office systems. Increase enrollment in the medical office systems program.

3. Defend against Threats

- Increase enrollment in this program. Research job opportunities and where the opportunities will be.

4. Future trends of our Programs

- As the health care industry becomes wider spread with information and technology, there will be increased need for competent graduates able to function efficiently in these roles. There are more rules related to the medical record from state and federal laws as well as for the insurance industry. The role for medical office systems becomes more critical in the future with increased job opportunities for those in this field with a good knowledge of medical billing and coding as well as storing and maintaining electronic medical records and maintaining the confidentiality of these records as information is shared electronically. Health care is on the beginning edges of electronic records and there will be many opportunities available for graduates of medical office programs in the future. Especially with the changes anticipated with healthcare reforms and the numbers of baby boomers expected to utilize the system and future generations with vast knowledge of computer systems who will access healthcare information electronically. Much of the future communications will be electronic.

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS - MEDICAL OFFICE SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY

Halifax Community College

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

STRENGTHS: *Qualities and competitive advantages of HCC*

- Strong local curriculum, reasonable cost, and few barriers to admission

WEAKNESSES: *Factors that may prevent optimum achievements*

- Curriculums could be more in line with job market. Need to continually update and revise certification and degree programs. There is a fine balance when asking a potential employer to accept students as interns. Students need to be well prepared and paperwork for the employer should be minimal.

OPPORTUNITIES: *Trends and forces in our environment*

- Need continuous increase for technical health related skills. Improved partnering with graduating students and local employers to secure local employment.

THREATS: *Factors that can hinder success if not recognized and addressed*

- Repeating the need to update programs, for instance, medical office technologies was continuing to have a detailed module on medical transcription. Most clinics/hospitals now use electronic medical records making transcription skills virtually obsolete.

Your RECOMMENDATIONS to:

1. Future trends of our Programs

- Partnerships in Dental and Medical fields

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Halifax Community College

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

STRENGTHS: *Qualities and competitive advantages of HCC*

- HCC offers a tutoring program and along with this you can rent movies, books, and also get a laptop loan. We have a good security system that makes me and most other students comfortable when in the buildings.

WEAKNESSES: *Factors that may prevent optimum achievements*

- There could possibly be more classes that may need to be offered for this curriculum. I think that some classes that are available should have more time put aside for them.

OPPORTUNITIES: *Trends and forces in our environment*

- In my opinion, I don't believe there are enough jobs available in this area for this career, and the ones we do have, need to look into possibly changing the pay scale according to education and experience.

-

THREATS: *Factors that can hinder success if not recognized and addressed*

Your RECOMMENDATIONS to:

1. Mitigate against Weaknesses

- **Look into making classes longer for the more intense classes.**

2. Exploit Opportunities

- The school could get together with the employment security commission and see if there is a way that we can make more jobs possible.

3. Defend against Threats

- Pell Grant should not be so harsh with regards to eligibility.

4. Future trends of our Programs

- Listen to the students and take their comments and suggestions more seriously.

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

STRENGTHS: *Qualities and competitive advantages of HCC*

- Up-to-date software - offering students the latest technology
- Offer traditional and on-line course offerings

WEAKNESSES: *Factors that may prevent optimum achievements*

- Too many on-line and not enough traditional course offerings (on-line classes work great in some areas, but not as effective in our service area)

OPPORTUNITIES: *Trends and forces in our environment*

- Market the program more effectively
- Offer what the other colleges in the area don't offer

THREATS: *Factors that can hinder success if not recognized and addressed*

- Similar programs at nearby colleges/community colleges

Your RECOMMENDATIONS to:

1. Mitigate against Weaknesses

- Offer more traditional and less on-line courses

2. Exploit Opportunities

- Development of better marketing strategies

3. Defend against Threats

- Again, offer more in class and less on-line courses and promote the program

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Halifax Community College

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

STRENGTHS: *Qualities and competitive advantages of HCC*

- Location of campus

WEAKNESSES: *Factors that may prevent optimum achievements*

- Economy and economic area

OPPORTUNITIES: *Trends and forces in our environment*

- High Unemployment rate should open the doors for HCC. Marketing to those unemployed. Offering new learning tools. Need to focus on skills needed in this area

THREATS: *Factors that can hinder success if not recognized and addressed*

- Need to market to unemployed but somehow HCC needs to market to ambitious students who would otherwise go to university or larger college. Need to improve the reputation at HCC. Offering more exciting, rigorous, competitive courses

**SCHOOL OF LEGAL & PUBLIC SERVICE -
EARLY CHILD EDUCATION / TEACHER ASSOCIATE**

Halifax Community College

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

STRENGTHS: *Qualities and competitive advantages of HCC*

- HCC is located in a Tier I county, giving it opportunities to reach out to individuals who never considered college as an option. HCC is "just the right size," meaning that it is large enough to offer options that can help students with career choices, including transferring to 4-year institutions. However, it is small enough that students do not "get lost" in the crowd. Instructors and advisors are able to connect with students and stay in touch, of which they do an exemplary job!
- One of the main strengths of the early childhood education program is its commitment to children and to HCC students learning how to interact with children in positive ways. HCC students also learn how to create learning environments for children that include age-appropriate materials and activities. There is emphasis on the value of "play," and this is always a "good thing."

WEAKNESSES: *Factors that may prevent optimum achievements*

- I strongly believe that we do many students a disservice by not helping them make the transition from personal to professional presentations in their speech, appearance, and writing. Faculty and staff do not consistently encourage students to step-up for fear of offending someone. However, I contend that this is a teaching institution; therefore, it is our duty to set a standard and to continuously help students strive to meet and exceed that standard. For example, in public speaking classes, instructors require students to "dress up" on days they give speeches. Additionally, appearance is graded. Every faculty and staff member should insist that students adhere to the rules of Standard English as they apply to grammar, punctuation, and spelling in every written communication, including e-mail.
- As for the early childhood education program, I feel that another full-time instructor is needed to share the teaching load so that more time can be available for advising and recruiting.

OPPORTUNITIES: *Trends and forces in our environment*

- With the reduction of teaching assistants in classrooms, the early childhood program at HCC is doing an excellent job in expanding courses so that students will have experiences with children of various ages, allowing graduates to seek employment opportunities in child care centers.
- This program also serves as a conduit through which students may come to realize their desire to pursue a 4-year degree and enter the teaching profession. Many of the courses they take are excellent foundations for this transition.
- I would like to see additional education courses added that will transfer to a 4-year institution, helping students to graduate with more credit hours that will help them complete a 4-year degree.

THREATS: *Factors that can hinder success if not recognized and addressed*

- I feel that the program needs at least one more full-time instructor so that advising and recruiting efforts can be increased. While this is not a weakness or threat, it is an area that can always benefit from additional instructors to share the teaching load so that more attention can be given to advising and recruiting.

SCHOOL OF LEGAL & PUBLIC SERVICE -
EARLY CHILD EDUCATION / TEACHER ASSOCIATE

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

STRENGTHS: *Qualities and competitive advantages of HCC*

- High-quality associate degree program; provides effective preparation for students who intend to work in roles that do not require teacher licensure; lays a good foundation for students who plan to pursue a baccalaureate degree in child development and early childhood education.

WEAKNESSES: *Factors that may prevent optimum achievements*

- Course work should not create barriers to students who desire to transfer to four year institutions.

OPPORTUNITIES: *Trends and forces in our environment*

- Seek national program accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

THREATS: *Factors that can hinder success if not recognized and addressed*

- Prospective students may opt to enroll in the college's associate in general education curriculum versus the early childhood curriculum in order to obtain more credits that will transfer to a four year college or university.

Your RECOMMENDATIONS to:

1. Mitigate against Weaknesses

- Change some courses to meet requirements of four year colleges and universities.

2. Exploit Opportunities

- Make prospective students aware that the Early Childhood Associate Program offers a good foundation in early childhood education and - upon completion of the program the educational opportunities they will have available to build on that foundation.

3. Defend against Threats

- Continue to align courses to meet requirements of four year institutions so that courses offered will transfer.

4. Future trends of our Programs

- Since the emphasis is on education for those who teach children more than ever before, early childhood associate degree programs should continue to prepare students to build on what they have learned – taking the knowledge they have gained to the next level.

SCHOOL OF LEGAL & PUBLIC SERVICE -
BASIC LAW ENFORCEMENT TECH / CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

STRENGTHS: *Qualities and competitive advantages of HCC*

- The training is local.
- Programs more cost effective/ in savings
- Good Community relations
- More individualized training programs class sizes, as oppose to on site academy programs.

WEAKNESSES: *Factors that may prevent optimum achievements*

- The availability of classes for individuals with other jobs or personal distractions.
- Not being able to participate in group studies at night.

OPPORTUNITIES: *Trends and forces in our environment*

- Fill vacancies here locally within our agencies.
- Increases the opportunity for the Community College to generate students locally.
- Programs that teach general instructors and in turn can carry training back to their perspective agencies and teach staff.

THREATS: *Factors that can hinder success if not recognized and addressed*

- The economy and funding for programs.
- The current employment rate for targeted students.

Your RECOMMENDATIONS to:

1. Mitigate against Weaknesses

- Offer varied class hours making programs available to the working public day and night if possible.

2. Exploit Opportunities

- Develop better working relations with the different agencies and the college.
- Availability of instructors for former students locally.

3. Defend against Threats

- Give agencies the encouragement to be actively involved.

4. Future trends of our Programs

- There will be an increased need for new and improved programs. Programs with better designed training to assist agencies in performing their duties better.
- Well trained staff will be in high demand. Newer and innovative programs are essential to this goal.

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CONTINUING EDUCATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES - SMALL BUSINESS CENTER

Halifax Community College

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

STRENGTHS: *Qualities and competitive advantages of HCC*

- Quality of programs and depth of knowledge of speakers
- Free classes - most places in larger cities would charge

WEAKNESSES: *Factors that may prevent optimum achievements*

- Public knowledge of (free) classes - we have been working on this for the

OPPORTUNITIES: *Trends and forces in our environment*

- Starting a business within current economic climate
- Resume writing and coaching within class (role playing maybe) to polish interviewing skills and follow up
- Outstanding customer service is always needed

THREATS: *Factors that can hinder success if not recognized and addressed*

- Constant, continued PR/marketing into the community at large

Your RECOMMENDATIONS to:

1. Mitigate against Weaknesses

- Continued support and acknowledgement from Chamber, newspaper, radio spots, etc.

2. Exploit Opportunities

- Newspaper or radio spot of someone who has drastically improved their status thru classes