Participants:

Objective:

**Assess strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Helpful**to achieving the objective | **Harmful**to achieving the objective |
| **Internal origin***(attributes of the course and department)* | *Strengths** Type strengths here
 | *Weaknesses** Type weaknesses here
 |
| **External origin***(attributes of the institution and environment)* | *Opportunities** Type opportunities here
 | *Threats** Type threats here
 |

Here are some specific questions to help you and your colleagues fill in the SWOT matrix. For each question, think about adding the phrase, "and how do we know?" In other words, consider what evidence you have for your strengths and weaknesses.

**Strengths**

* What is particularly effective about our introductory courses? (For students, for faculty, for graduate students, for the department.)
* What resources do we have for our course (personnel, space, equipment, field opportunities)?
* What other departments and programs are we serving well through out introductory courses?
* Is our course competitive with other intro courses on campus? At other institutions?

**Weaknesses**

* Where are our introductory courses ineffective?
* What resources do we need, but lack?
* What annoys, frustrates, or disappoints our students? What about our colleagues? The department?
* What are other departments doing that make their introductory courses more appealing than ours?

**Opportunities**

* Are we hiring new faculty?
* Are there new strategic plans or initiatives in the institution that we can jump on?
* Is enrollment changing (increasing, reaching a different group of students, etc.)?
* Is the institution interested in new educational opportunities (such as MOOCs or inter-department collaborations)?

**Threats**

* Is enrollment falling in our courses while increasing elsewhere?
* Are budgets being cut?
* What are other departments doing that we aren't?
* Are key faculty retiring?

**Analyze the SWOT matrix**

After you have filled in the matrix, you can **rank** the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within it.

Matches between strengths and opportunities:

Vulnerabilities where weaknesses correlate with threats:

Ideas for converting threats to opportunities or weaknesses into strengths:

**Taking the next steps**

What is your **revised objective** now that you have completed the SWOT?

What **evidence** you need to gather to make your case?

Who are your potential **allies** and what strategies do you have to bring them on board? *(These are the people that are central to moving the project forward.)*

Who are your potential **collaborators** and what do they bring to the table? *(These are the people who can support your efforts.)*

Who are the key **administrators** you need to approach, and what are your strategies?

How will you know if you have been **successful**?

Sketch out a timeline for your plan to achieve your objective: