Illinois Tech – Questions and Responses

RFP for Comprehensive Review and Business Transformation Consultant

1) How do you define program productivity? What metrics are used, and what data will be shared?
   Answer: The efficiency and effectiveness with which an academic program uses its resources (faculty, funding, facilities, etc.) to produce measurable outputs such as graduates, student credit hours, and successful learning outcomes, while aligning with institutional mission and labor market needs.

Key Metrics Include:

Enrollment Metrics
- *Total enrollment*: Number of students currently in the program.
- *Enrollment trends*: Year-over-year growth or decline in student numbers.

Student Credit Hour (SCH) Production
- Measures the total number of credit hours generated by students in the program.
- SCH per faculty FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) is often used to assess teaching productivity.

Graduation Rates
- Percentage of students who complete the program within a set time frame (e.g., 2, 4, 6 years).

Degree Completion Numbers
- Number of degrees or certificates awarded annually.
- Degrees per faculty FTE.

Retention Rates
- First-year to second-year retention, or retention from semester to semester.

Cost Metrics
- *Cost per degree awarded*: Total program cost divided by the number of degrees granted.
- *Cost per SCH*: A measure of financial efficiency.

Employment and Graduate Outcomes
- Job placement rates in fields related to the program.
- Average earnings of graduates.
- Graduate school enrollment for programs feeding into advanced degrees.

Faculty Productivity
- Teaching load (courses taught, SCH taught).
- Research output (especially for research-intensive programs).
- Student advising and service roles.

Program Demand and Relevance
- Alignment with regional or national workforce needs.
- Number of applicants vs. acceptances.
- Industry or community partnerships.

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Results
- Student performance on capstone projects, licensure exams, standardized assessments.
- Evidence of skill and competency development.

Contextual Considerations
- Productivity must be considered in context: a low-enrollment program may still be productive if it's mission-critical (e.g., languages, education, STEM fields with workforce shortages).
- Some metrics (like employment outcomes) may be harder to track but are increasingly emphasized in accountability frameworks.

Program Productivity is Defined as Optimized Program Operations:

We will provide all Enrollment, Registration, Financial and HR data required for the analysis.

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1. Program Optimization Review

A comprehensive evaluation of the faculty structure, financial health, and student outcomes at the college, degree, program, and course level will be conducted.

Key Metrics and Benchmarks:

- **Faculty Composition:** – Benchmarked against AITU and National Standards.
    - Number of Tenured Faculty, Full-Time Faculty, and Adjunct Faculty.
    - Faculty Teaching Course Load vs. Research Volume, Publications
- **Financial Performance:**
    - Revenue vs. Expenses – By College, Degree, Program, and Course.
    - Capacity vs. Actual Enrollment – Efficiency analysis at program and course levels.
    - Revenue Per Seat, Cost Per Seat and Revenue Per Student, Cost Per Student – Evaluating profitability and cost efficiency.
- **Program Market Review:**
    - Market competitiveness of each program within the local, state, and national context.
    - Benchmark against peer institutions, focusing on market demand and employment outcomes.

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2. Curriculum and Learning Outcomes Review

- Evaluate the curriculum design and learning outcomes for:
    - Academic rigor and relevance.
    - Alignment with industry standards and workforce needs.
    - Flexibility to adapt to evolving academic and professional trends.
    - Balance between foundational knowledge and applied learning.

3. Enrollment and Competitive Positioning

- **Enrollment Trends:**
  - Domestic vs. International enrollment by program and degree level.
  - Modalities offered (on-campus, hybrid, and online) and learner size by modality.
- **Graduation and Persistence Rates:**
  - Number of graduates by CIP Code in Chicago, Illinois, and Nationally – Benchmarked with Illinois Tech.
  - Transfer and dropout rates.
- **Competitive Review:**
  - Enrollment trends compared with competitor institutions.
  - Tuition and fee structures – Comparison with peer and competitor institutions.

4. Career and Market Outcomes

- **Career Outcomes Benchmarking:**
  - Job placement rates and average starting salaries.
  - Graduate school continuation rates.
  - Industry and employer feedback on graduate performance.
  - National Student Clearinghouse data for career and academic outcomes.
- **Cost, Ranking, and Reputation:**
  - National and regional ranking analysis.
  - Brand perception and market reputation analysis.
  - Correlation between program cost and student outcomes.

5. Operational Efficiency and Resource Allocation

- **Faculty Deployment:**
  - Teaching load and research commitments.
  - Faculty-to-student ratios and staffing alignment with program needs.
- **Administrative Processes:**
  - Streamlining program administration.
  - Improving student support and academic advising.
- **Resource Optimization:**
  - Identifying underutilized resources and infrastructure.
  - Strategic investment in high-demand or high-growth programs.

6. Compliance and Accreditation
- Ensure compliance with:
  - Regional Accreditation Standards (e.g., Higher Learning Commission).
  - Program-specific accreditation (e.g., ABET, AACSB).
  - State and federal regulatory requirements.

7. Stakeholder Engagement and Feedback

- **Faculty and Staff:**
  - Input on curriculum updates and faculty support needs.
- **Students:**
  - Feedback on program relevance, support services, and learning experiences.
- **Industry Partners**:
  - Feedback on graduate skills and industry alignment.

8. Deliverables and Reporting

Final Report Components:
- Program strengths and weaknesses.
- Competitive analysis.
- Financial and operational performance.
- Recommendations for improvement and strategic growth.

Strategic Action Plan:
- Short-term and long-term goals for curriculum, enrollment, and market positioning.
- Resource reallocation and investment priorities.
- Proposed changes in program delivery and structure.

2) What data on student outcomes will be available? **Answer:** Information will be provided upon engagement. IPEDS data are readily available.
   - Student Career Outcomes –
     - https://elevate.iit.edu/undergraduates-outcomes
     - https://elevate.iit.edu/graduates-outcomes/

3) Will the analysis include academic program efficiencies in addition to non-academic operational efficiencies? **Answer:** Yes.

4) Are there specific enrollment or revenue growth targets tied to innovations such as online learning, hybrid models, micro-credentials, or experiential learning?
   Answer: We currently categorize programs into scalable, growth and stable programs based on enrollments. These Programs that perform well on ground then move to online modality development with stackable structure. This engagement will help develop a yearly review and goal setting process structure to establish goals.

5) Are offerings currently available on third-party platforms (e.g., Coursera) within the scope of this project, and will related data be shared? **Answer:** Yes.

6) Is a risk and compliance assessment expected under the Enterprise Risk Management and Compliance portion of the scope? **Answer:** Yes.

7) Do you have cost share and revenue share allocations between the university and colleges?
   Answer: We currently do not have a set structure but allocation happens on a case-by-case basis. Please provide recommendations and best practices in higher education for cost share and revenue share allocations between the university and the colleges

8) Are the priorities listed in the 2020–2025 Strategic Plan the most current? If not, can updated priorities/goals be shared?

Answer: Below are the updated priorities and goals.

Meet the learners where they are – Affordability, Preparedness, Modality and location.

1. Career-Focused Opportunity Engine
2. Value Chain to Value System
3. Expand Digital assents and learning
4. Scale Through New Markets and Modalities
5. Embed Innovation and Entrepreneurial Thinking
6. Align Systems, Policies, and Processes for Scalable Change

9) Can you provide documentation or links showing outcomes associated with the 2020–2024, 2014–2019, and 2010–2014 strategic plans?

Answer: We would like to work with the engaged partner cataloging successes of prior plans and communication strategies for the current engagement.

10) Is the project scope limited to U.S.-based operations, or does it include recently announced international expansions?

Answer: While the RFP is primarily focused on its US operations, it is not exclusive to US based operations.

11) What is the estimated or anticipated budget for this engagement?

Answer: Please submit a bid for consideration. While a portion of the selection criteria will be based on price, the final scope may be subject to further negotiation. Cost savings generated through the project will help offset associated fees. We encourage fee proposals that align with our shared interests and objectives.

12) How is "return on investment" (ROI) defined for this project?

Answer: For this project, we define return on investment (ROI) broadly to include both quantitative and qualitative outcomes. Quantitatively, ROI will be measured through cost savings, operational efficiencies, improved resource utilization, and potential revenue enhancements. Qualitatively, we also value improvements in service delivery, stakeholder satisfaction, student outcomes and the institution's ability to achieve strategic goals. We are particularly interested in proposals that demonstrate a clear linkage between the transformation efforts and measurable, sustainable value for the organization, including policies, process and structures that will drive this efficiency review culture on a yearly basis.

13) Do you have a preferred timeline or any key milestones in mind for the project?

Answer: We have a general timeline in mind and anticipate that key milestones will be defined collaboratively during the initial planning phase. In order to effectuate changes for fiscal year 2027 (6/1/26-5/31/27), the project must be completed by the end of 2025. We are open to working with the selected partner to establish a realistic and effective schedule. Critical milestones—such as stakeholder engagement, assessment and analysis, solution design, implementation planning, and execution—will be finalized jointly to ensure alignment with institutional priorities and capacity.

14) Who will serve as the executive sponsor(s) of this project, and has a committee been formed to partner with the chosen consulting partner? If so, what organizational units are represented on the committee?

Answer: We expect the team to include cross-functional leadership to ensure alignment across academic, administrative, and financial units. This will involve executive leadership—including the President, members of the Provost's Cabinet, and Deans—as well as other key stakeholders. A steering committee and working groups are anticipated, with this role serving as the change management lead.

15) What governance entities are involved in this project—e.g., faculty, board, or other bodies?

Answer: Governance entities include, Board, President and Cabinet members, Deans and unit leaders and faculty governance bodies.

16) Is there a preference for onsite versus remote work as part of this engagement?

Answer: We anticipate a hybrid engagement.

Reminder:

The 'Final Proposal Submission Deadline' date has been revised to a due date of **Monday, July 7, 2025, by 5:00 pm. CT** for Illinois Tech's Comprehensive Review and Business Transformation Consultant RFP.