



The State of Northeastern University

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Northeastern is making an admirable expansion into research, but in doing so, it is neglecting its history as a trade school. These two things can coexist, but the current implementation is a deal with the devil, and the tradeoff is likely to come back to bite the university in the coming years as technical revolutions and social forces make a university education an increasingly hard sell.

Northeastern should immediately consider the following:

1. Focus considerably more effort back to the trade school philosophy of producing highly capable professionals in advanced fields
2. Find a niche area of research that Northeastern can excel in (Computer Security?) and re-think very carefully about competing in all branches against MIT and a revitalized Harvard.
3. Use the new Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering Building to the greatest advantage by making it a hyper-collaborative space like Building 20 at MIT
4. Investigate and implement innovative uses of online technologies in the education process
5. Move away from the lecture format of classes to modular, project based courses
6. Implemente courses personalized to individual students' preferences, interests, and talents instead of producing generic degree holders
7. Invest in post-graduate services that make being a Northeastern graduate a desirable and valuable thing for alumni, even many years after graduation