

Prompt:

Higher education in the United States has faced a series of challenges in the past decade, ranging from declining enrollment figures since 2012 to increasing inequality in accessibility for marginalized communities. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has placed further strain on the system, challenging the resilience of the existing modes of education.

Hypatia University (HU) is a private non-profit liberal arts university with a scenic campus located in rural USA. The motto “knowledge is the fundamental right of all humanity” has guided the university’s priorities since its inception. Thus, the first and foremost mission of the university has always been securing access to quality education for all those who seek it, regardless of their background. The leadership of Hypatia University is keenly aware of the issues facing higher education and believe that recent advances in online education technology will be critical in tackling these challenges head-on. The university has thus announced a new initiative, HU Lighthouse, which will be an online expansion of the university. The HU Lighthouse initiative is envisioned as a modern approach for the university to stay true to its motto and mission, as well as a strategic response to overcome the challenges facing higher education today. In doing so, the university seeks to employ creative solutions and novel technologies to ensure the quality and affordability of its new online initiative.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, HU has developed reasonable accommodations for online learning (access to Zoom for faculty and students, cameras in classrooms, and wifi on campus). A key goal of HU Lighthouse is to break from current molds and re-imagine online education, taking into consideration the feedback and challenges of online learning throughout the pandemic.

You have been hired by the university as external consultants to design a 5-year rollout strategy for HU Lighthouse that aligns with the university’s overall mission and fully executes the vision of the leadership team for this initiative.

Hypatia University profile:

Academics:

- The university has the following departments:
 - Department of Humanities
 - Department of Social Sciences
 - Department of Art and Music
 - Department of Architecture & Design
- Degrees offered:

Online Education Strategy

- o Bachelor's degree
- o Master's Degree
- o Course certificate

Current Enrollment:

- 10,000 students
- 750 faculty
- 18-24 general age range of students
- 6% international students
- 75% undergraduate; 25% graduate
- 50/50 male/female ratio

Finances:

- School currently has a balanced budget sheet.
- School has been able to secure generous donations from alumni to fund the new online initiative.

Technology:

- School has access to a high speed stable internet.
- School currently utilizes a free open-source learning management system (LMS), e.g. Canvas.

Questions to consider:

- What key factors do you need to consider for this rollout?
- What degrees (bachelor's, master's, etc) will be offered in your HU Lighthouse implementation? What disciplines (digital art, philosophy, ancient Greek, etc..) will these degrees be in ? Will those disciplines be within existing departments or would they be in completely new departments? And why?
- What are the specific milestones and timelines of your rollout strategy?
- Would you recommend any partnerships (with tech companies or others) that HU could make to assist in this transition?
- How would you market these programs to potential students? How many students do you plan to enroll? Things to consider:
 - o Employment trends
 - o Targeted student segment
 - o Program offerings
 - o Unique advantages that your implementation of HU Lighthouse will offer
- How would you maintain the quality of education?
- What is the estimated cost of your proposed rollout strategy? Things to

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consider:(feel free to estimate if you can't find specific sources but be prepared to back up your numbers)

- o Tuition
 - o Cost to hire new faculty and staff
 - o Cost of additional technology
- What is the competitive landscape of current online education programs and how does your strategy compare?
- How would you avoid common pitfalls of current online learning approaches?

Governing case prompt assumptions

- The leadership is willing to expand its online offering beyond the expertise of its current departments, but is also concerned with the additional cost associated with hiring more faculty, especially in new departments.
- HU has a small global presence due to niche course offerings and targeted exchange programs with universities abroad.
- HU is open to collaborations with external parties and organizations.