PERCEPTIONS OF ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AS SEEN BY SMALL BUSINESSES AND COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Marilyn Young
The University of Texas at Tyler
Tyler, TX
myoung@mail.uttyl.edu

ABSTRACT

Many common perceptions exist among the small business sector and educational institutions regarding the assistance and services they provide. This study is based on two mail questionnaires from 687 small businesses and 89 educational institutions in Texas. Small businesses indicated they have used many university programs and saw the role of higher education in providing these services. Both small businesses and institutions agreed that colleges and universities should play a role in assisting small business and build bridges within the business sector. Small businesses agreed that institutions should work closely to meet the needs and provide new ideas and technology to small business and industry. Few in both sectors perceived that higher education was responsive to small business needs and it was easy to work with faculty and staff. Perceptual differences were examined according to the type of institution and minority status. Institutions should improve perceptions including affordability, response rate, and ease of working with faculty and staff.

Introduction

Both four-year universities and community/technical colleges have provided a wide variety of training, assistance, and information to assist the small business sector. The number of campus economic development-oriented programs appeared to be increasing, but the participation has not always been high (Udell, 1990). Although educational institutions have made progress, the need to evaluate programs and the nature of higher education’s role continues. Roles have changed within many institutions in that the missions have included economic and entrepreneurship development. This research examines differences in perception of higher education’s role in assisting small businesses. Information derived from such a study should clarify the role of institutional planners in examining the overall mission. Also, understanding institutional roles may be used to assess programs and provide better insight into improving public policy decisions concerning efficient resource allocation.
This study is important in that clarification of perceptions will provide an understanding for institutional planners in examining the overall mission. Also, this information may be used to assess programs and improve public policy decisions concerning efficient resource allocation.

**Literature Review**

The entrepreneurial role of colleges and universities has increased as they attempt to provide information and assistance to small businesses. Research shows small business assistance programs have generated primary benefits to the clients and may also generate secondary benefits to the economy at large (Wood, 1994).

Institutions of higher education have several programs, including Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and Small Business Institute (SBI), and others. Sonfield (2008) stated a major aim of SBI is to assist in long-run survival and strong small business performance that meets the realistic expectations and objectives of the client.

Witten (1990) stated that the new economic environment requires institutions of higher education to expand their roles in providing an educated workforce. In response, institutions have developed new programs and proactive measures to encourage, promote, and assist in developing entrepreneurship. According to Colglazier (1991), universities placed a greater emphasis on their roles and relevancy to economic development in the 1980s. For instance, institutions provided new ideas with new processes and technologies that helped society on a regional and national level. State governments have recognized that one of the largest attractions in developing entrepreneurship is the higher education system.

The Department of Education and Employment and the Management Charter Initiative have supported several higher education programs that are tailored toward small business. Such
courses enabled participants to assess their business performance against successful models. These courses enabled participants to assess their business performance against models of best practice and took action to develop their skills (Broak, 1998).

Institutions have expanded their assistance to include manufacturing and technical assistance. One resource for high-tech economic development began in 1994. The Small Business Technology Transfer (SBTR) program funds cooperative research and development projects involving a small company and a researcher at a university or other institution. Its propose is to create an effective vehicle for moving commercially promising ideas from research institutions to the market. In addition, some state-level programs, which fund cooperative R & D between university researchers and small companies, reported success in stimulating economic development (Baron, 1993).

The transfer of intellectual property from universities to corporations specifically accentuates this interdependence with universities (Stevens & Bagby, 1999). However, the economic and contractual imperatives of the business organizations may not conform to the traditional research, instructional, and service roles of the universities.

Synder (1985) conducted a survey to determine the services provided by high-tech business usage of university-affiliated research centers. The study suggested that these centers were not used because small businesses were unaware of their existence or services and were often reluctant to use any new external assistance.

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) reported that 95% of its members participated in customized training for business or industry. The community colleges usually were established members of the local community and had a long-term investment in providing
training (Craft, 1995). These programs ranged from workplace literacy, English as a second language and basic mathematics to specialized programs in total quality, ISO 9000, information technology, business writing, strategic planning, supervisory management and sophisticated manufacturing technologies. Further, Stamps (1995) reported that community colleges perceived that they were suited to serve local business interests, and four-year colleges and universities were not. Many colleges saw this role as a natural extension of their mission to serve the local community.

University-funded programs have been a significant source of information to benefit small business. Jones (1996) found that small- and medium-sized firms rarely possessed adequate R&D assets and generally needed to acquire new technologies from external sources. Therefore, he recommended collaboration between the firms and higher education.

Methodology

This research effort is descriptive in nature and is based on results from two surveys of the following populations: (1) small businesses and (2) institutions of higher education. The study sought to analyze role perceptual differences between the small business sector and the institutions of higher education. Further, the study examines perceptual differences according to minority ownership and the type of institution (2-year community/technical college and 4-year college or university).

Survey of Institutions of Higher Education

The population for this study consisted of colleges and universities in Texas. A four-page questionnaire was developed, pretested, and mailed with a cover letter to the presidents of Texas educational institutions, resulting in a return rate of 48%. Some 60% of the institutions
were four-year public and private colleges and universities, while 40% were considered junior, community, and technical institutions. Table 1 shows the location of responding institutions.

Table 1. Location of Responding Institutions of Higher Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Texas</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulf Coast</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas/Fort Worth</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Texas</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Plains</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Other includes Upper East Texas, Northwest Texas,
Table 2 shows the two types of institutions according to size of enrollment. Only a slight majority had enrollments under 5,000 students.

Table 2. Size of Institutions according to Enrollment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Assistance</th>
<th>4-Year College or University</th>
<th>2-Year Technical/Community College</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 2,000</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,001 – 5,000</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,001 – 10,000</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,001 – 20,000</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,001 – 30,000</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 30,000</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey of Small Businesses

A total of 10,000 questionnaires were mailed to Texas businesses with less than 500 employees and fewer than $5 million in gross revenues per year. A random stratified sample was designed with small businesses selected by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes. A total of 687 surveys were returned producing a response rate of 7%. A majority of the
businesses (94%) had less than 50 employees, and a little more than one-half of the businesses (54%) had gross annual incomes of less than $500,000. Minority businesses (those with at least 50% minority ownership) represented 30% of the sample. The major categories were services (53%); followed by the wholesale/retail sector (21%); agricultural, mining, and construction (18%); and other responses (5%). The smallest response category was public administration (2%).

**Analysis and Hypothesis**

T-tests at the .05 and .01 levels of statistical significance were performed to determine if significant differences existed between the two samples. Statistical analysis using percentages and means were used throughout most of the analysis. Also, several survey questions allowed comparison when applicable. When analyzing role perception, comparisons were made between the perceptions of small businesses and institutions of higher education. The following hypothesis was formulated below:

**H₁**: No significant difference exists in institutional role perception between colleges and universities and the small business sector.

**H₂**: No significant difference exists in institutional role perception and minority or non-minority status of the small business sector.

**H₃**: No significant difference exists in institutional role perception and types of institution (community/technical vs. four-year college and universities).
Findings

Role of Higher Education

Both educational institutions and small businesses were asked to relate their perceptions of college/university roles in providing assistance and information to small businesses. A wide majority of small businesses and institutions agreed that colleges and universities should play a role in providing assistance to small businesses, serve as educators, and provide new ideas and talent.

Both samples were asked to rank several statements on a Likert scale using strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree (See Table 3). In assessing differences, mean scores of small businesses were higher indicating an agreement regarding institutions working together to meet the needs of small business and serving as educators in providing talent. These differences were significant at the .01 level (See Table 3). However, mean scores were lower among institutions of higher education in two areas which were significant at .01 level. The differences involved the role of colleges and universities playing a role in assisting small business and providing new ideas and technologies to small business and industry.
Table 3. Perceived Role of Institutions of Higher Education

(Frequencies and percentages represent institutions that agree with the statements)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement/Disagreement</th>
<th>Small Business Sample (n=687)</th>
<th>Institution of Higher Education (n=92)</th>
<th>t-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Play a role in assisting small businesses.</td>
<td>480  87%</td>
<td>89  100%</td>
<td>8.17**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work closely together to meet the needs of small business.</td>
<td>451  86%</td>
<td>62  73%</td>
<td>-2.03*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build more effective bridges to the small business sector</td>
<td>483  91%</td>
<td>80  95%</td>
<td>4.59**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving as educator and provide talent to small businesses.</td>
<td>562  96%</td>
<td>65  79%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide new ideas and technologies to small business and industry</td>
<td>505  92%</td>
<td>72  96%</td>
<td>8.57**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be involved with small business in technology transfer and technology commercialization activity.</td>
<td>439  89%</td>
<td>68  94%</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give a high priority to providing assistance to small business.</td>
<td>394  76%</td>
<td>63  76%</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A large majority, 91%, of the small business sample and 95% of institutions of higher education perceived that higher education should build bridges with the business sector. Both small businesses (96%) and colleges and universities (79%) agreed that higher education should provide the talent and education opportunities needed by small businesses. A t-test of -4.34 showed a significant difference at the .01 level.

The perception that higher education should be involved with small business in providing new ideas and technologies is strongly endorsed by sectors, 92% and 96%, respectively. Furthermore, both sectors agreed that higher education should be involved with the small business sector in technology transfer and commercialization. Eighty-nine percent of the small business sector and 94% of colleges and universities education supported this position. Further, 76% of both sectors agreed that higher education should give a high priority to providing assistance to the small business sector.

| Role Effectiveness                  | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Easy Access                        | 372 | 74% | 504 | 2.13 | 50 | 74% | 68 | 2.23 | -1.38 |
| Quick response                     | 86  | 28% | 307 | 2.89 | 22 | 37% | 59 | 2.75 | 1.52 |
| Ease to work with faculty          | 168 | 58% | 292 | 2.47 | 34 | 52% | 67 | 2.26 | 1.69 |
| Easy to work with staff            | 165 | 53% | 309 | 2.53 | 46 | 72% | 64 | 2.25 | 3.14** |
| Affordable                         | 170 | 54% | 317 | 2.49 | 53 | 79% | 65 | 2.51 | -0.19 |

Strongly agree=1; agree=2; no opinion=3; disagree=4; and strongly disagree=5.

*p < .05.  **p <.01
Program Effectiveness

Both small businesses and colleges and universities were asked to rate the effectiveness of five important characteristics of program effectiveness. These characteristics were: (1) accessibility; (2) responsiveness; (3) ease of working with faculty and staff; and (4) affordability (See Table 3). Although both business and institutions perceived that higher education should be involved in serving small business, limitations do exist.

Accessibility. Both groups were asked if they had accessibility to institutions of higher education. Approximately 75% of both small businesses and the institutions agreed that they had easy access to institutions; however, educational institutions had a mean rating of 2.13 (No significant differences existed between the two samples).

Responsiveness. Only 28% of the small businesses (x=2.89), and 37% of the small businesses (x=2.75) agreed that the response rate in assisting small businesses was fast (No significant difference existed between the two samples at the .05 level).

Ease of Working with Faculty. Slightly over one-half of small businesses agreed that it was easy to work with faculty, while 52% of the institutions agreed. Mean ratings were 2.47 and 2.26, respectively (No significant difference exited between the two samples).

Ease of Working with Staff. A larger proportion of colleges and universities, 72%, perceived that it easy for small business to work with staff. However, only 53% with a mean rating of 2.53, perceived it was easy to work with staff (A significant difference existed between the perceptions of small businesses and institutions of higher education at the .01 level).
**Affordability.** Slightly over one-half of both samples agreed that the cost of assistance was affordable with mean ratings of 2.49 and 2.51, respectively. A t-value of -.19 indicated no significant difference existed.

**Minority View**

Since institutions of higher education are potential sources of information and assistance to minority businesses, respondents were asked what their roles should be. Table 4 shows six statements with the majority of respondents agreeing that institutions should play an active role in assisting and providing information to small business.

Some 85% of minority-owned businesses perceived that institutions should serve as educators and provide talent to the small business sector. Also, approximately 78% believed institutions of higher education should provide new ideas and technologies to small businesses.

**Institutional View**

Both community/technical colleges and four-year colleges/universities were asked to give their role perceptions of effectiveness of small businesses assistance. The majority of institutions perceived that they had a role in assisting small businesses (See Table 5).

A larger proportion of community colleges, 58%, perceived that higher education should play a role in meeting the needs of small businesses (t-value=-3.96; p < .01). Universities perceived it was easy to relate to small business in research, development, and prototyping (t=3.67; p < .01).
Table 4. Perceived Role of Colleges and Universities by Minority-Owned Businesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions should:</th>
<th>Strongly Agree/Agree</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree/Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serve as educators and provide talent to small businesses.</td>
<td>183 85%</td>
<td>29 14%</td>
<td>3 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build more effective bridges to small business sector.</td>
<td>170 79%</td>
<td>33 15%</td>
<td>12 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide new ideas and technologies.</td>
<td>167 78%</td>
<td>40 19%</td>
<td>8 4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play a role in assisting small businesses.</td>
<td>163 76%</td>
<td>38 18%</td>
<td>14 7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work closely with small business to meet their needs.</td>
<td>155 72%</td>
<td>43 20%</td>
<td>17 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be involved with small business in technology transfer and commercialization.</td>
<td>148 69%</td>
<td>56 26%</td>
<td>11 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give a high priority to assisting small businesses.</td>
<td>143 67%</td>
<td>45 20%</td>
<td>27 13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5. Perceived Role of Institutions of Higher Education
(Frequencies and percentages represent institutions that agree with the statements)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher education should play a role in</th>
<th>College/ University %</th>
<th>Technical/ Community %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
<th>t-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assisting small businesses.</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>-1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building more effective bridges to small businesses.</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>-.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing new ideas and technologies to small business and industry.</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>-.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting the needs of small business in the area.</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>-3.97**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving as educator and provide talent to small businesses.</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing technology transfer and technology commercialization activity.</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilizing institutional research and development in meeting the needs of small business.</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing a high priority in providing research, development and prototyping.</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding it easy to relate to small business in research, development and prototyping.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>3.67**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < .01.
Institutions were asked to rate how they believed small businesses perceived them as sources of entrepreneurial assistance and information. More four-year institutions believed small businesses saw them engaging in basic research, while a smaller percentage, 39%, of the community colleges perceived that small businesses saw them in engaging in basic research. Also, a significant difference existed in that more four-year institutions believed that small businesses perceived that it was easy to work with the staff (See Table 6).

Also, two significant differences existed: (1) more community colleges than four-year college perceived that small business saw them responding quickly ($t=-2.09; p < .05$), and (2) assistance at higher education was affordable. More two-year institutions perceived that small businesses perceived them as responding quickly ($t=-2.78; p < .01$).
Table 6. Perceptions of Small Business Assistance by Institutions of Higher Education

(Frequencies and percentages represent institutions that agree with the statements)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Role</th>
<th>4-Year College/University</th>
<th>2-Year Community College</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>t-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=60</td>
<td>n=41</td>
<td>n=101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small businesses find it easy to work with faculty at institutions of higher education.</td>
<td>24  40%</td>
<td>21  51%</td>
<td>70  69%</td>
<td>-1.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small businesses see institutions of higher education as mainly engaged in basic research.</td>
<td>32  53%</td>
<td>16  39%</td>
<td>48  48%</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small businesses see high value in the research and assistance provided by institutions of higher education.</td>
<td>25  42%</td>
<td>13  32%</td>
<td>38  38%</td>
<td>1.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small businesses believe that higher education responds quickly when providing assistance.</td>
<td>9  15%</td>
<td>12  29%</td>
<td>21  21%</td>
<td>2.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small businesses believe that higher education institutions are affordable when it comes to providing assistance.</td>
<td>27  45%</td>
<td>24  59%</td>
<td>51  50%</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small businesses find it easy to work with the staff at institutions of higher education.</td>
<td>20  33%</td>
<td>8  20%</td>
<td>28  28%</td>
<td>2.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05,  **p < .01.
**Perception of Small Business**

Small businesses were asked what factors influenced their choosing an institution for assistance and information. Table 7 shows that the small businesses desired accessibility (92%) and proximity (86%).

Certainly having a broad range of services and having faculty with research and technical skills were both found to be important by a wide majority of the small businesses. Also, 67% of the small businesses indicated it was important to receive help with research. The results showed that the most respondents did not perceive the following factors to be important in deciding where to go for assistance: (1) being a technical or community college; (2) focusing on basic research; or (3) prestige of the institution.
Table 7. Small Businesses Perception of Importance of Higher Education Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional Characteristic</th>
<th>Strongly Agree/Agree</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad range of services</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong research/technical skills of faculty</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides research at my request</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong research/technical skills of staff</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical or research specialization</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past experience</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a college or university</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focuses on basic research</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestige of institution</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being technical college</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a community college</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions

Similar perceptions were found regarding institutional roles as perceived by the small business sector and higher education sectors. Colleges and universities strongly agreed or agreed that higher education should play a role in assisting small business. Both small businesses and institutions of higher education strongly agreed or agreed that they should work closely together. Small businesses perceived that higher education was providing a valuable role in assisting entrepreneurship development through centers and outreach programs. Further, both community
colleges and four-year institutions agreed the importance of playing a role in assisting and providing information to the small business community.

Since both sectors perceived the institutions had a role as assisting and meeting small business needs, perhaps they could collaborate to enhance their overall program effectiveness. Further, they should examine the possibility of offering new and improved programs, particularly concerning manufacturing assistance. It seems appropriate that institutions of higher education should continue to build bridges and explore methods to assist the small business sector in technology transfer and commercialization. The role of turning basic research into commercial applications is complex and, therefore, requires extensive involvement of many disciplines and significant resources.

Information derived from this study should clarify the role of institutional planners in examining their overall mission. Also, understanding institutional roles may be used to assess programs and provide better insight into improving public policy decisions concerning efficient resource allocation. Institutions of higher education should continue to promote partnerships with the small business community in an effort toward entrepreneur development. Furthermore, partnerships between academia, industry, local government, and financial institutions should be explored. The mission of each institution should be clearly defined to create a network designed to help small businesses without overlaps or gaps.

**Limitations and Direction Future Research**

Though the research provides interesting insights into the program and centers of the two institutions, limitations do exist. Although the theory proposed in this study may have universal application, the empirical tests rely on data collected from institutions of higher education and small businesses within the state of Texas. While no research has identified that this area is
fundamentally different, regional differences may exist that this work would not have discovered.

References


What is SBI?

The mission of the Small Business Institute is to strengthen the small business/entrepreneurship sector of the free enterprise system, provide entrepreneurship education, and support economic development and diversification through teaching, consulting, training, and field research with small businesses and local communities. Teaching, consulting, training, and field research are provided to small, entrepreneurial, family-owned businesses, students, and local business communities.

SBI programs serve to:

1. Act as a vehicle to improve and expand educational programs for small business/entrepreneurship in colleges and universities.

2. Enhance the relationship between faculty of schools with the small business, entrepreneurship and family business programs and the business community by developing educational programs that meet community needs.

3. Encourage the relationship and cooperation between faculty of schools with approved member Small Business Institutes (SBIs) and other organizations—academic professional, and service-concerned with the small business community.

4. Provide a supportive, constructive, and mentoring environment for existing and new SBI members.

5. Enhance and promote opportunities for publication and dissemination of applied research, case projects, and SBI material.