

D. SWOT Analysis-Tulsa Welding School Tulsa, OK

Strengths:

1. *Brand Name*-The Tulsa Welding School brand name remains our salient strength. Tulsa Welding School is very well known and respected throughout the welding industry. We have been placing welders since 1949 in over 15 states. Many students attend our school whose brothers, sisters, fathers, and grandfathers have attended. The Tulsa Welding School represents quality in education for the welding industry. Tulsa Welding School graduates can be found throughout the welding industry and its various applications. Therefore our reach is significant and our graduates serve as ambassadors and attest to the stellar education they received at our institution.

2018 Update: This strength is unchanged and remains one of Tulsa Welding School's greatest assets.

2. *Faculty Tenure and Experience*-The Tulsa, OK campus has many instructors who have been at the schools for over 10 years. Many instructors celebrate annual anniversaries of 15 to 25 years of service. On top of the years they have spent teaching welding, they have many years of experience in the field. This experience not only in the field, but in teaching provides a firm foundation for our students to learn from the best welding has to offer.

2018 Update: This strength is unchanged. Tulsa Welding School remains committed to identifying, developing, and retaining the best possible instructors.

Weaknesses:

1. *Technologically Deficient Faculty*-Prior SWOTs have identified this weakness, and it remains. Prior SWOT discussed the need for the faculty to be trained to allow for a smooth transition when we roll out the CampusNexus Portal for faculty. Although this particular technology rollout has not occurred, our U-Linc online curriculum has. Now all students receive a tablet versus a hard copy book. Although the transition for students has been relatively smooth, the transition for faculty has posed some challenges as they do not readily accept change, especially involving technology. To attempt to provide the faculty with some training and support, one-on-one time with the Learning Resource Center Coordinator has been scheduled and held to help them learn and transition.

2018 Update: This particular area remains a challenge; however, the needs change over time. Introducing U-Linc definitely enhanced our technology in the classroom; however, it changed some of the challenges we face. For instance, the instructors are certainly improving in their comfort with the electronic interface – that said, they continue to struggle with how to handle the service going down. Part of that is TWS as an organization needing to do a better job training and preparing our instructors to deal with those circumstances. The other part is holding U-Linc accountable for not meeting expectations in the area of reliability. We have plans in place to improve both.

Opportunities:

1. *Accredited Testing Facility*-Our Jacksonville campus has been successful in establishing their location as an accredited testing facility due to some of the instructors receiving the CWI certification. Tulsa already has CWIs on staff and had them prior to Jacksonville. An Accredited Testing Facility could be created to allow students and individuals in the welding industry to test at the school, thus increasing the exposure of the campus to the community and the industry.

2018 Update: This opportunity remains unchanged. We hope to replicate the Jacksonville campus' success in this area.

2. *Retention Rate*-Tulsa has a great opportunity to achieve its highest retention rate since rates have been tracked with our organization. At the end of the fiscal year, September 30, 2017 the campus will achieve its highest retention rate, roughly 80%. Next year's retention budget has been increased to align it with the other schools in our system to 83%. The infrastructure is in place to make this a reality.

2018 Update: This weakness is unchanged. Although the school's retention rates remain strong, we have not consistently met the 83% goal we have set. Therefore, we continue to strive for the 83% mark and will list this area as a weakness until we meet that mark on a consistent basis.

Threats:

1. *Regulatory Environment*-The ever changing and uncertain regulatory environment remains our biggest threat. This threat is also facing the for profit industry as a whole. Although we have taken significant strides as it relates to debt to income ration, 30% discretionary income ratios, and gainful employment, the current environment poses great uncertainty about future regulations or actions to be taken.

2018 Update: The environment appears to be shifting to a fairer situation for institutions like ours. That said, this is a cyclical issue that will never fully go away. Therefore, it remains a threat going forward.

2. *Aging workforce*- Oftentimes a strength could also pose a threat. Due to the tenure of many of our faculty members, some of them are approaching retirement age. Therefore, we must be vigilant in identifying "next generation" talent to assume the role vacated by those that may want to retire or reduce their hours of working.

2018 Update: This threat is unchanged. As was discussed above, Tulsa Welding School remains committed to identifying, developing, and retaining the best possible instructors. In anticipation of these needs, we have made the necessary adjustments to our recruiting efforts.

Goals (Strengths and Weaknesses)

1. *Improve technology awareness level of instructional staff by the conclusion of FY18 (September 30, 2018) – In Process*
2. *Hold CampusNexus Instructor Portal trainings before the portal is rolled out. Should be completed by March 2018. – Completed*
3. **New Goal to replace #2 above:** Take a close look at U-Linc as a provider in order to strengthen our commitment to progress in the area of integrating better technology in our classrooms and curriculum. Should be completed by the end of this calendar year (December 2018).

Goals (Opportunities and Threats)

1. *Begin the process to establish an Accrediting Testing Facility by December 2018 and rollout the ATF by the conclusion of FY19 (September 2019) – In Process*
2. *Build a solid bench of qualified faculty to replace those who have identified they will retire in the coming year or two by May 2018. – In Process: Steps taken in recruiting, more retirements and replacements anticipated.*

3. *Consistent and thorough auditing to ensure we are remaining in compliance with all of the latest regulations; this is an ongoing process that will continue through FY18. – In Process*