

DRAFT

To: Members of the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees
 Bill Epperly, Chair Carolyn Ehlert Fuller
 Roger Clawson Phil Hare
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 Cathy Early D'angelo Taylor

From: Joe Rives, Vice President, Quad Cities and Planning

Date: April 30, 2013

Re: April 2013 Strategic Plan Update

This month's *Strategic Plan Update* provides a fourth draft report from the Long Term Planning Team for your review and feedback. Draft #4 begins with a statement of guiding principles based on the Planning Team's internal and external environmental scans. These guiding principles were also the basis for the Team's draft recommendations.

Draft #4 no longer contains a planning matrix. This was a useful tool to collect and organize data. In the new display, the Team presents six recommended actions. A short paragraph follows each recommended action to describe why each action is important to the future of Western Illinois University. Under each paragraph are the Team's suggested draft recommendations. These draft recommendations represent what we believe are the necessary action steps to achieve the draft recommendations.

We did not suggest who will be responsible for implementing recommendations, when recommendations will be implemented, or how progress will be measured. We believe the next steps are to have two more campus reviews of the plan via April and May *Strategic Plan Updates* and then submit our report to President Thomas for the Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees to approve and/or modify our recommendations and to identify implementation structures and processes. Following precedent of other university plans, we believe that the Vice President for Quad Cities and Planning should report progress on this plan to the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees and campus community.

Should you have questions about the materials in this *Update*, and/or if you have feedback for the continued successful advancement of *Higher Values in Higher Education*, please contact me.

cc:	President Thomas	CSEC Pres. Rupert	Associate Provost Neumann
	Provost Hawkinson	COAP President Grimm	Associate Provost Parsons
	Vice President Bainter	Faculty Council Chair Pillutla	Assistant Vice President Williams
	Vice President Biller	Faculty Senate Chair Rock	Planning, Budget, and IR Staff
	Vice President DeWees	SGA Chair Markey	President's Office Support Staff

(ITEMS BELOW REPRESENT DRAFT #4)

Introduction

The next draft will contain our charge and the process used to develop recommendations, ending in a transition to the guiding principles.

Guiding Principles

In determining assessment of trends facing higher education in the next twenty years, we believe institutional sustainability is predicated on four guiding principles, reflecting the four core values of Western Illinois University.

- 1) The strengths of Western Illinois University are grounded in active and engaged learning through a personalized educational experience with faculty, staff and peers that leads to intellectual transformation, career opportunities, and personal growth through a lifetime of learning.
- 2) WIU achieves academic excellence through educational innovations that meet student and community needs while creating new opportunities for partnerships and growth.
- 3) WIU adapts to changing social and economic climates to meet the needs of students and community thereby increasing enrollment and student success.
- 4) The value of a WIU education is underscored by our strengths: Personal attention to our students' educational opportunities from classroom to career, affordability that does not compromise quality, social responsibility, and signature programs that meet a market need in our region.

Recommendations

- 1) **Distinguish WIU from other Illinois public and national competitor institutions.** Students have choices and quality, distinctiveness, value, environment, and experience all effect college selection and continuation. Therefore, we must articulate our strengths to attract students and live those strengths to support student success and graduation.
 - a) Engage in discipline-specific and university-wide discussions about the application of our strengths in academic and administrative units (1,4).
 - b) For all vice presidential areas and areas reporting to the president, identify evaluation methods used to ensure institutional effectiveness in applying our strengths (1,4). For example, in Academic Affairs, identify opportunities to increase engagement in Program Review and explore the Program Review process, including analyses of our strengths in the review process.
 - c) Invest in opportunities that make WIU nationally known for our strengths and signature programs (1,2,3,4).
 - d) Continue to build a culture of mentoring that supports personalized attention, undergraduate student success and graduation (1,3,4). Recent examples include establishment of undergraduate and graduate research days, mentoring programs on both campuses, expanded tutoring, including one-on-one tutoring, and the recent hiring of an Assistant Director of Retention and Student Success in Student Development and Orientation on the Macomb Campus.
 - e) Support high need, viable programs to meet student and regional needs (2,3) and ensure that new programs include our strengths in design and practice (1,4). For example, academic year 2012-2013 Presidential Initiatives include short- and long-term goals to establish new doctoral programs in Environmental Science, Law Enforcement and Justice Administration, and undergraduate degree in pharmacy.
 - f) Establish a task force to study the implications of transitioning from a regional institution to a national doctoral university. Whether agreed with ranking systems or not, rankings influence perceptions of institutional quality and the fact is that WIU would change from a top tier national master's granting institution to a lower tier national doctoral institution if a transition is made. Therefore, we should have a strategy in place to emphasize the strengths and value of a WIU education (1,4) and an understanding of where we would place in the rankings will help to define benchmarks for organizational effectiveness.

(ITEMS BELOW REPRESENT DRAFT #4)

- 2) **Emphasize and enhance educational opportunities to decrease time-to-degree.** The strengths and value of a WIU education attract students to the University from around the world (1,4). WIU can grow enrollment by exercising innovation and by increasing educational access to opportunities other than the traditional 16-week semester and through distance education (2). Changing economic circumstances and issues of price sensitivity and elasticity may inhibit enrollment in the traditional eight, 16-week semester model (3). Traditionally students saved money during the summer to pay for fall and spring costs. It may now be that students need more time to save for college expenses.
- a) Reinvigorate dual enrollment partnerships with local high schools.
 - b) Receive blanket approval from the Higher Learning Commission for all WIU programs to be approved as distance education programs.
 - c) Articulate which WIU programs will be actively promoted as distance programs.
 - d) Form college task forces to evaluate alternative semester lengths as well as January and May Term opportunities.
 - e) Integrate where appropriate to the discipline new and existing service learning, student involvement and leadership experiences, experiential learning, and education abroad opportunities more fully into major and minor requirements, and identify those opportunities in which students may participate during semesters, breaks, and alternative terms.
 - f) Increase summer course offerings and related academic and student support services.
 - g) Expand educational access in the Quad Cities. Examples include expanding the enrollment target beyond 30 freshmen for fall Honors Cohorts and allowing admission of non-OAS, full- and part-time, freshmen to WIU-QC. Limiting cohort enrollment to full time freshmen who meet Western Commitment Scholarship criteria denies access to full- and part-time students eligible for enrollment and represents foregone revenue to the University.
 - h) Study the appropriateness of increasing accelerated degree programs. For example, WIU offers 18 integrated baccalaureate and master's degree programs where students can earn two degrees in as little as five years, and the accelerated degree in Recreation, Park and Tourism offered in the Quad Cities earned national best practice status by the *Wall Street Journal* and *University Business Journal*.
 - i) Participate in innovative national initiatives aimed at increasing retention and graduation rates.
 - j) Engage in strategies to meet the long-term goal of enrolling 1,000 international students at Western Illinois University.
- 3) **Form new and expanded partnerships with all levels of the educational system, business and industry, and the not for profit sectors.** The strengths of Western and commitment to advancing state, national, and professional standards in the discipline help to make WIU the university of choice for students and employers (1). For example, the university-wide signature teacher education program supports teacher education and graduate education programs; links field and clinical (student teaching) experiences; and serves the needs of students, graduates, and professional communities. As noted above, changing social and economic climates lead to an increase in students who want to begin their education with WIU, but are unable to finish (3). With institutional innovation, these same students will be able to persist and graduate from WIU (2).
- a) Establish new and enhanced K-12 partnerships to increase enrollment and professional preparation. One such action will be implementation of actions to support the new Council for the Accreditation of Educational Preparation (CAEP) standard for teacher education programs to establish PreK-12 partnerships. The final standard will be released in early 2014.
 - b) Extend the Linkages (dual enrollment) model used with Black Hawk College and Eastern Iowa Community Colleges to Spoon River College and other community colleges.
 - c) Follow WIU's success in community college relations to develop articulation agreements with other four-year institutions. Examples include earning one degree at WIU and a second degree a partner institution whether through traditional timeframes or integrated degree programs; 3+1 agreements; 2+1+1 agreements, and other forms of innovation.

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- d) Implement new and innovative articulation agreements with other types of accredited institutions (e.g., foreign universities, vocational/technical institutions) to establish dual, integrated, and other types of articulation agreements.
 - e) Develop new partnerships between institutions that have not traditionally sent students to WIU.
 - f) Identify opportunities to provide lower division courses to degree completion (junior/senior only) institutions.
 - g) Support partnerships that prepare students for graduate education, advanced study, and employment in the global economy. Examples include internships, service learning, and field placements. As WIU continues to grow in these areas, institutional coordination will be important to make experiential opportunities available to students and to provide access to WIU interns for external businesses, agencies, and organizations.
- 4) **Enhance enrollment planning.** There is identified institutional need for macro short- and long-term enrollment planning. This need increases as we innovate to increase enrollment (2). Organizational effectiveness will require evaluation of successes and challenges, and to take advantage of unique opportunities that promote WIU's personalized educational experience (1,4).
- a) Designate institutional office(s) responsible for collecting departmental and college five-year enrollment targets by campus to form one institutional enrollment plan.
 - b) Establish an Enrollment Management Team to work with the Deans and President's Leadership Team to define, evaluate and assess department, college, and university enrollment goals.
 - c) Provide WIU's student-to-faculty ratios that support personalized attention.
 - d) Utilize student-to-faculty ratios in recruitment materials to support the distinctiveness of class sizes and engaged learning.
- 5) **Advance fiscal planning.** Increasing revenue, decreasing expenditures, and containing costs are all essential to advancing the strengths of Western Illinois University (1,4).
- a) Evaluate the appropriateness of differential tuition either by campus and/or program.
 - b) Position the University for the next comprehensive campaign.
 - c) Conduct cost-benefit analyses when considering renovation, replacement, or demolition.
 - d) Study opportunities for enhanced efficiencies on and between campuses.
 - e) Form a long-range bonding plan for facilities, technology, and infrastructure.
 - f) Expand public-private partnerships to help decrease institutional costs and to engage in cost savings and avoidance.
- 6) **Help eliminate financial barriers that prohibit college enrollment.** Together with donors and external funding agencies, WIU will exercise innovation to identify partnerships (2,3) that result in new and enhanced sources of financial assistance, so students can successfully achieve their goals through the personalized educational experience offered at Western Illinois University (1,4).
- a) Increase need-based and merit scholarship opportunities for first year students and beyond.
 - b) Apply for new sources of institutional financial aid.
 - c) Study opportunities for increased student employment.
 - d) Apply for external funding to support experiential education.
 - e) Support focused tuition discounting to attract high achieving and diverse students.
 - f) Evaluate tuition options for summer sessions.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Western Illinois University is a strong institution. We have successfully served students throughout history dating back to our establishment in 1899. However, reliance on past accomplishments will not guarantee a sustainable future in a rapidly changing environment, characterized by increasing pressures for enrollment and decreasing state appropriations—trends that do not appear to be reversible in the foreseeable future.

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Therefore, institutional sustainability, prosperity, and student success will result from planning and innovation. We believe that planning should guide budgeting. WIU should continue to use *Higher Values in Higher Education*, Consolidated Annual Reports, and now this Long Term Plan to guide priority and resource allocation decisions, while recognizing that planning is dynamic and unforeseen circumstances (challenges and opportunities) may warrant attention and resources.

On the fiscal side, increasing revenue, decreasing expenditures, and engaging in cost savings and avoidance positively impacts budgets. This Plan focuses on increasing revenue by emphasizing the quality and value of a WIU education. It builds upon the successes of *Higher Values in Higher Education* since many of the actions in the strategic plan are embedded into daily operations. This is not to negate the importance of efficiencies or cost reductions, some are suggested, but similar to *Higher Values in Higher Education*, this plan should be used as a filter to inform efficiencies and cost reductions when such conversations and actions occur.

This plan also provides recommendations for future actions. Per our charge, this plan suggests what the University should do to sustain our future. After President Thomas and the Board of Trustees review this plan and determine which recommendations should be enacted, the next step will be for University Administration to determine ways to implement actions. Implementation should utilize intact structures and processes, task forces where appropriate, and in all cases, Western's tradition of shared governance. The Vice President for Quad Cities and Planning will provide reports on the status of the recommendations to the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees and campus community.

Long Term Planning Team Membership

The next draft will contain team membership.