

To: Members of the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees  
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From: Joe Rives, Vice President, Quad Cities and Planning

Date: July 2, 2018

Re: July 2018 Strategic Plan Update

The *June 2018 Strategic Plan Update* provided an update on Western Illinois University's continuous improvement effort in serving military students through institutional participation United States Department of Defense's Voluntary Education Institutional Compliance Program. Likewise, this month's *Strategic Plan Update* provides a second continuous improvement process that will occur during Fiscal Year 2019. Western will participate in the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning's Community Engagement Self-Study and Certification process.

Dr. Chris Merrett, Director of the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs will lead the Carnegie Self-Study. He will be supported by members of the President's Executive Institute (membership displayed below).

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Dr. Merrett led the last institutional self-study where Western Illinois University joined 310 other institutions across the United States in achieving the 2011 Community Engagement Classification. Our achievement placed the University in the top 11% of the nation's 2,870 four year institutions in the area of community engagement.

Specifically, we achieved national leadership in "The collaboration between our communities (local, regional/state, national, global) ... in forming partnerships that enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching, and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good." In fact, the Carnegie Foundation indicated that Western's 2010 application documented "excellent alignment among mission, culture, leadership, resources, and practices that support dynamic and noteworthy community engagement."

Included in University's 2010 application were community engagement materials related to the Go West transit system, College of Fine Arts and Communication concerts and performances, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs programs and services, Western's All Volunteer Effort, and service learning and internship opportunities within our host communities and regions.

The Fiscal Year 2019 internal self-study and external validation will focus on the following areas as related to community engagement: (1) Leadership Commitment, (2) Institutional Identity and Culture, (3) Institutional Commitment (i.e., infrastructure; funding; tracking, monitoring, and assessment; professional development; and faculty roles and rewards), and (4) Curricular Engagement, Outreach, and Partnerships.

With all of the aforementioned activities continuing, many more expanding, and the University launching President's Executive Institute, acquiring WQPT-Quad Cities Public Television, establishing a Master's degree program in Community and Economic Developing, expanding the Small Business Development Center, opening an International Trade Center, and expanding internship and clinical placement sites, Western is well positioned to advance in the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification.

Copy of the self-study materials will be provided at your September 2018 Board of Trustees meeting. In the interim, please contact me if you have any questions about the materials presented in this *Update*, would like to join the President's Executive Institute, have feedback for the continued successful advancement of *Higher Values in Higher Education* and/or recommendations on the University's community engagement goals and priorities.

cc:      President Thomas                      CSEC President Dorethy                      SGA President Ramos  
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