

To: Members of the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees
Steve Nelson, Chairperson Bill Griffin
Bill Epperly Mike Houston
Carolyn Ehlert Fuller D'Angelo Taylor

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

Date: August 31, 2009

Re: August 2009 Strategic Plan Update

As part of the University's strategic planning process, each vice presidential area and areas reporting to the president are responsible for developing and implementing plans for the continued successful implementation of *Higher Values in Higher Education 2008-2018*. This month's Strategic Plan Update provides a sampling of University plans for academic year 2009-2010.

This year has already seen some significant accomplishments. Preliminary data from the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, to be updated after the 10th day of class, indicates that the average ACT score of first-time freshmen increased for the first time in five years, from 21.2 to 21.3; the average fall-to-fall retention rate of freshmen increased from 72.3 percent in fall 2007 to 73.4 percent in fall 2009; and the University's six-year graduation rate is 59.1 percent, which is a record high for the University and up from 54.9 percent last year.

A complete summary of plans and accomplishments for each of the six goals in the [Strategic Plan](#) will be presented at your October 2009 Board meeting. The campus will review the accomplishments and plans for the next academic year at the April 2010 planning and accomplishment presentations.

Focused Recruitment and Retention

- Supporting the academic mission and service operations that have once again placed Western Illinois University as a "Top Tier" public Midwestern master's degree-granting institution by *U.S. News and World Report*, a "Best in the Midwest" University by the *Princeton Review*, and for the first time Western was named as one of 15 percent of institutions nationally as a "Military Friendly School" by *G.I. Jobs Magazine*.
- Working with a consultant to review and enhance admissions practices and meet enrollment goals.
- Continuing to allocate institutional resources (new and existing) to provide faculty and staff salaries that meet and exceed the average of peer institutions.
- Supporting the work of the University Diversity Council and documenting institutional plans and outcomes for increasing diversity and international enrollment of students, faculty, and staff in annual Underrepresented Groups and Affirmative Action Plans.
- Advancing the comprehensive fund-raising campaign, as the University continues to cultivate \$60 million to advance student scholarships, faculty support, information and technologies, facilities, and the endowment.

Enrich Academic Excellence

- Finishing the institutional self-study for re-accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission-North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and discipline-based accreditation self-study where appropriate and scheduled for the disciplines.
- Supporting strong commitments to teaching and instruction by:
 - Using the academic program review process to ensure the provision of high-quality, viable academic programs and services.
 - Developing and offering new and expanded academic programs in areas of demand and need that are consistent with the academic mission of the University.
 - New programs to be implemented in academic year 2009-2010 include Anthropology (B.A., Macomb), Engineering (B.S., Quad Cities), English (Post-B.A. Certificate, Macomb and Quad Cities), Nursing Basic Licensure (B.S.N., Macomb), R.N. to B.S.N. completion (Quad Cities), and Integrated Baccalaureate/Master's Degrees in Chemistry/Forensic Chemistry and Economics.
 - Continuing with feasibility and needs studies in Criminal Justice (Ph.D., Macomb), Environmental Science (Ph.D., Macomb and Quad Cities), Museum Studies (Post Baccalaureate Certificate, Quad Cities), and International Studies (Bachelor's).
- Supporting interdisciplinary course, program, institute, and center development. Western Illinois University supports 18 interdisciplinary centers and institutes that advance the academic mission and service operations of the University.
- Continuing the Provost's Faculty Travel Awards Program to support and encourage faculty to present their scholarship, research, and activities at conferences and symposia.
- Implementing year three of the faculty computer and electronic classroom upgrade programs, security enhancements, and the priorities and goals from the *Institutional Strategic Plan for Technology*.

Provide Educational Opportunities

- Expanding weekend and summer school offerings in order to meet the needs of student populations on the Macomb and Quad Cities campuses.
- Increasing articulation agreements and student participation in new dual enrollment agreements with regional community colleges that allow students to take courses at both institutions at the same time and save up to 25 percent of their college costs.
- Implementing recommendations from the University Retention Committee, data from Making Achievement Possible and National Survey of Student Engagement surveys, five-year Summit League Plan to increase student-athlete academic achievement, and actions from the First Year Experience as means to increase student involvement, retention and graduation rates.
- Providing late night programming and implementation of a comprehensive alcohol risk-reduction plan.

Support Personal Growth

- Sponsoring University-theme programming and events, Dollars and Sense: Personal Finance to World Poverty, and programming in the First Year Experience that is integrated with the University theme.
- Supporting a broad-based National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I varsity intercollegiate athletics program, and using the NCAA certification and other annual reporting processes to demonstrate strict adherence to operating principles related to governance and rules compliance, academic integrity, equity, and student-athlete welfare; and recognizing academic achievements. In academic year 2008-2009, 56 percent of student-athletes earned a 3.0 or better grade point average (GPA), 79 student-athletes earned a perfect 4.0 GPA, and the overall student-athlete GPA was 2.97.
- Implementing the Strategic Plan for the Alumni Association that includes plans to prepare students to be lifelong, contributing members of the Western Illinois University community.
- Enhancing health and wellness activities targeted at the specific needs of faculty and staff.

Promote Social Responsibility

- Engaging in activities associated with the American Democracy Project.
- Opening the Wright House on the Macomb Campus as a Veterans Resource Center.
- Supporting economic and cultural development of our host communities and regions.
- Continuing implementation of the Western Illinois University *Campus Master Plans* and the *Target Western Forward* athletics facilities plan. Both *Plans* include construction of new and renovation of existing facilities.
- Renovating Corbin and Olson Halls and University Union, in conjunction with the *University Housing and Dining Services Master Plan*.
- Developing and implementing a transition plan for the conversion to a comprehensive data, video, and voice network.
- Using the completed facilities condition assessment to help prioritize permanent maintenance improvements.
- Advancing statewide, regional, and national leadership in environmental sustainability within the curriculum, community and co-curricular events, new construction, and administrative operations; and hiring a sustainability coordinator with internally reallocated funds.

Demonstrate Accountability

- Using annual planning and accomplishment presentations as a means to document how areas that report to the president and vice presidents are advancing divisional and University goals and priorities.
- Continuing to provide monthly and annual Strategic Plan updates to the campus and external community.
- Linking University resource requests to the Strategic Plan.
- Developing/publishing a Website of “dashboard” indicators for monitoring institutional progression on the goals and actions of *Higher Values in Higher Education 2008-2018*.

If you have any questions about or feedback regarding the materials presented in this month’s *Strategic Plan Update* and/or regarding the continued successful implementation of *Higher Values in Higher Education*, please contact me.

cc: President Goldfarb COAP President Meixner Alumni Council Chair Clawson
 Provost Thomas Faculty Council Chair Rowson Associate Provosts Dallinger and Hawkinson
 Vice President Johnson Faculty Senate Chair Devolder Assistant Vice President Williams
 Vice President Thompson Macomb SGA Chair Heard Planning, Budget, and IR Staff
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