

## Transcript Episode 7 Criterion 5 Institutional Effectiveness, Resources, and Planning

### Bookend

[Renee]: Welcome to another edition of the *Leatherneck Accreditation Lab*. This is Renee Georges, University Budget Officer and I am here with Ketra Roselieb, Executive Director of Personnel and Financial Affairs to discuss the financial and personnel functions discussed in Criterion 5. So let's get to it.

[Renee]

1. Can you talk about measures that are in place to ensure sound financial decision making based on current environments?

[Ketra]

*WIU takes a multifaceted approach to ensure sound financial decision making.*

- *At the local level, there are spending limit thresholds in place, approval requirements, and multiple cross checks through our business office operations to confirm spending is necessary.*
- *Through the CFO, University leadership is kept apprised of outstanding student debt, cash flow needs, and state appropriation disbursements on a weekly basis.*
- *In addition, our CFO participates in monthly state CFO calls, Budget Director meetings, and is in regular contact with the Illinois Office of the Comptroller to maintain a handle on the State of Illinois budget situation.*
- *Finally, in order to glean an external perspective of regional and economic impacts, the CFO and business services leadership team are in constant communication with the University's financial advisor to assist WIU in making rational and well informed decisions.*

[Renee]

2. Describe the fiscal allocations process and how it effectively meets the needs of all constituents.

[Ketra]

*Absolutely. The University has practiced multiple allocation processes in the past just dependent on current fiscal climates. This has been done through:*

- *public annual reports,*
- *we've had departments provide a presentation of upcoming financial investments needed,*
- *as well as through departmental and administrative strategic planning.*

*An example of a fiscal allocation process through administrative strategic planning happened recently when the University Administration identified student recruitment and retention as specific goals that needed to be addressed in the immediate term. To aid in the success of these goals, University funds were reallocated to develop the division of Enrollment Management to supervise and administer the success of Admissions, Retention and Financial Aid. A similar process has been done in the past to increase financial aid packages through reallocation of University funds, all for the success of our students.*

[Renee]

3. What data is utilized to project revenues and build tuition, fees, housing and dining rates? How are these rates then communicated to students and families?

[Ketra]

*Our rate establishment process encompasses months of analysis between the Budget and Finance Division, Student Services and Enrollment Management. A number of indicators are considered ranging from historical data, enrollment trends, economic outlook, housing contracts, admission information, student input and local market rates and competition. The final step in the establishment process is Board of Trustee approval.*

*Revenue projections are built utilizing the same indicators that we just discussed for establishing the rates. It is important to then remember that WIU locks in all tuition, fees, housing and dining charges for it's students -- so revenue projections take into account that new rates will only be applied to the incoming classes.*

*This information is then disseminated through a variety of methods to parents and students ranging from press releases to the University website to multiple admission communications.*

[Renee]

4. You mentioned the Board approves these rates, in what other ways does the Board of Trustees participate in the financial decision making process?

[Ketra]

*The Board of Trustees is involved in the financial decision making process in multiple ways. Quarterly, the Board of Trustees is receiving updates as it relates to spending and our financial position. Purchases exceeding a \$500,000 threshold are also directly voted on and approved by the Board.*

*The Board also approves significant financial transactions such as the issuance of debt or the refinancing of larger projects.*

*In addition to quarterly reports, the CFO and the Financial Leadership team meet regularly with the Board of Trustees Financial Representative to discuss more details of the University financial position.*

[Renee]

5. Switching to the talent management side, what are the key elements in recruiting talent within the University? How does WIU enlist support of the faculty and administration in the development of talent?

[Ketra]

*Great question! When over half of all University expenditures are attributed to personnel, the investment in our human capital must remain a priority. This starts with our recruitment process where Human Resources works to ensure marketing of a position recruits a qualified and diverse candidate pool. Faculty and Administrative positions are facilitated through a selection process that includes a search committee made up of current faculty, staff, administration and students.*

*Once qualified candidates are selected, it is also just as important that we retain them as employees. With limited financial resources, investment in these employees has looked different than in years past, however Human Resources continues to offer many opportunities for personal and professional development. Human Resources has offered a professional supervisor training certificate program, as well as multiple training and development seminars throughout the years. For example, with COVID many employees had to quickly adapt to a remote working environment. Many of us were not "Zoom experts" prior to March 2020, but Human Resources partnered with the Chief Information Officer to offer multiple webinars about the usage of zoom.*

*Human Resources and University Administration work to maintain constant communication with our collective bargaining units to work together to provide for and meet the needs of represented employees.*

*In addition, the University continues to support and provide learning opportunities in a multitude of subjects for employees by offering tuition and fee waivers for University courses.*

[Renee]

6. How has WIU fared during the pandemic and what financial tactics have been utilized to address critical needs during this time?

[Ketra]

*Prior to any state shut down, WIU created a strong working "COVID" task force that met daily in the early stages of the pandemic to create a plan to ensure a safe working and learning environment. This task force was charged with evaluating learning environments, establishing protocols, and maintaining compliance on the ever changing state and federal regulations.*

*Through this committee, WIU has had success allocating federal stimulus dollars (known as CARES funds) on expenses such as cleaning supplies, testing supplies, PPE, technology upgrades, and providing financial aid to students.*

*The WIU COVID task force also implemented a robust protocol for taking care of WIU students in quarantine and isolation. The Division of Student Services staff volunteered their time and safety for the success and support of our students.*

*Throughout the pandemic the university also maintained its commitment to the public good, including but not limited to the continued operation of Small Business Development Centers on both campuses, IIRA's MAPPING Program, and hosting a county emergency operations center on the Macomb campus.*

*WIU's success in COVID response can be measured by low positivity rates and quick responses. With decisions like remote learning after Thanksgiving break and constant surveillance testing, WIU has far succeeded their peers in being forward thinking for the safety of our campus community.*

**Bookend**