

To: Members of the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees
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Roger Clawson
Lyneir Cole
Cathy Early
Carolyn Ehlert Fuller
Phil Hare
Yvonne Savala
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From: Joe Rives, Vice President, Quad Cities and Planning

Date: February 28, 2013

Re: February 2013 Strategic Plan Update

This month's *Strategic Plan Update* provides you with an update on the team analyzing trends in higher education and recommended actions for the University in the near-, five-, and 20-year time frames.

Background

Your *January 2013 Strategic Plan Update* provided the Long Term Planning Team's methodology for changing focus from challenges and opportunities for Illinois higher education in general to Western Illinois University in particular. The planning matrix starting on page two has four components:

- Goal/Action displays general recommendations for advancing quality, opportunity, and affordability at Western Illinois University;
- Strategic Plan Item indicates whether team recommendations are in the latest edition of *Higher Values in Higher Education* or if there are additional actions that should be taken;
- Innovation lists new action items to advance recommendations; and
- Elimination suggests items not to do or what effect(s) innovation eliminates.

In looking at Quality and actions to advance institutional identity, draft recommendations are listed below.

- Form a task force that makes WIU nationally known for engaged learning.
- Receive approvals for new doctoral programs in Environmental Science, Law Enforcement and Justice Administration, and a new undergraduate degree in pharmacy.
- Form a task force to study the implications of transitioning from a regional masters granting institution to a national doctoral university.
- Provide staffing for on-campus degree programs that do not rely on travel or distance education, unless to enrich educational opportunities.
- Receive blanket approval for distance education programs from the Higher Learning Commission.
- Centralize university-wide enrollment planning.
- Determine appropriate and fiscally sustainable student-to-faculty ratios
- Develop a Linkages agreement with Spoon River College in Macomb.
- Develop Linkages agreements with other community colleges using Western distance classes.
- Allow admission of full-time non-OAS freshmen to Western Illinois University-Quad Cities.
- Expand the enrollment target of 30 WIU-QC Cohort freshmen for fall 2013.
- Form an institutional task force to implement alternative semester lengths.
- Benchmark whether other Illinois public universities require advisement before registration every semester.

When the planning matrix is complete, the team will prioritize recommendations, and add suggested performance metrics, time frames for completion, and entities responsible for implementation for each recommendation. The team will also suggest an accountability reporting structure to provide transparency on approved recommendations by President Thomas and the Board of Trustees.

Current Team Draft

1. **Quality is identity and experience.**

Western Illinois University must continue to provide high-quality programs and services to support enrollment and external funding. The University serves both urban and rural locations in preparing students for the workforce and/or advanced study. However, a future cannot be assumed. Competition for students continues to intensify. There are demographic constraints (a smaller state and national recruitment pool), escalating costs, and aggressive competition for fewer applicants coupled with more educational options. Therefore, the University must afford an educational experience that students and employers value and eagerly pursue if we are to sustain our future.

Identity focuses on distinguishing Western Illinois University from other Illinois public and national competitor institutions, articulating the University's mission and focuses (similarities and uniqueness between our two campuses), identifying niche programs and opportunities, clarifying the role of distance education, achieving enrollment targets, preparing to serve new populations (changing demographics, internationalization, non traditional students, more transfer students), providing alternative semester lengths, and improving retention and graduation rates.

The hallmark of a Western Illinois University education focuses on supporting active and engaged learning, helping students learn how to learn (e.g., requiring a distance education course to teach self-directed learning), maintaining agility in planning new programs, providing high quality, viable and sustainable programs, supporting interdisciplinary inquiry, emphasizing currency (e.g., engaging advisory boards), internationalizing the curriculum, and increasing diversity.

(Note: Planning matrix begins on the next page)

(ITEMS IN THE PLANNING MATRIX REPRESENT DRAFT#2)

Goal/Action	Strategic Plan Item(s)	Innovation	Elimination
<i>Identity</i>			
Distinguish WIU from other Illinois public and national competitor institutions.	Action not called for in the Strategic Plan. Additional attention is needed.	<p>The values of Western Illinois University emphasize engaged learning. Form a task force that makes WIU nationally known for engaged learning. This follows the model successfully used at Truman State University, Miami University, Evergreen State University, and Alverno College for national recognition in an area of excellence across the institution.</p> <p>Receive approvals for new doctoral programs in Environmental Science, Law Enforcement and Justice Administration, and a new undergraduate degree in pharmacy. (Note: new doctoral programs require Illinois Board of Higher Education and Higher Learning Commission approval before classes are offered).</p> <p>Adding a third doctoral program will most likely change the University's Carnegie classification. Form a task force to study the implications of transitioning from a regional institution to a national doctoral university.</p>	<p>Action assists with recruitment and retention by changing perception of WIU as another, undifferentiated regional university to an institution with a nationally recognized area of excellence across all disciplines and services.</p> <p>These are high-need programs. Students must currently leave the region to achieve their educational goals, representing lost revenue to the University.</p> <p>Western will move from a top tier master's institution to a lower tier doctoral institution.</p>
Articulate the mission and focus of WIU (similarities and uniqueness between our two campuses).	Goal 1, Action 2 requires annual updating of the <i>Growing Our Two Campuses</i> Special Emphasis to the Higher Learning Commission.	The similarity between campuses is engaged learning. Programs offered at the different campuses should continue to be based on	Provide staffing for on-campus degree programs that do not rely on travel or distance education, unless to enrich

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		regional needs. Action supports efficient allocation of institutional resources.	educational opportunities. Action will reduce institutional travel expenditures.
Update niche programs and opportunities.	Academic Affairs is currently updating signature program list that identifies areas of distinctiveness for Western Illinois University.	High-need distinctive programs help recruit students, and represent a source of revenue for the University.	
Clarify the role and policy of distance education.	<p>Goal 1, Action 4g requires annual updating of the <i>Strengthening Distance Education</i> Special Emphasis to the Higher Learning Commission.</p> <p>New federal and Commission guidelines define distance education programs as over 50% of the degree offered on-line, as opposed to 100% of the degree. WIU on-line and CODEC offerings push most programs above the 50% threshold. Any distance program over 50% requires Commission approval.</p> <p>Academic Affairs should articulate which WIU programs will be actively promoted as distance programs, compared to those that currently use distance modalities so degrees can be completed without students having to travel between campuses or to another institution.</p> <p>New federal and Commission guidelines require that the University receive state</p>	<p>With a strong recruitment plan, more distance options increase educational opportunities for potential new students, place bound students, working professionals, and transfer students with articulated course credit, which increases potential revenue for the University.</p>	<p>Receive blanket approval for distance education programs from the Commission to prevent multiple submissions and submission costs.</p> <p>Where pedagogically appropriate, using new on-line or hybrid programs may offer cost efficiencies to the University.</p>

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	<p>approval for every state in which it has a student enrolled in distance education. The Vice President for Quad Cities and Planning and the Director of Distance Learning are working on achieving these approvals.</p>		
<p>Achieve enrollment targets.</p>	<p>Goal 1, Actions 1 and 2 do not identify enrollment targets for Macomb, but do for the Quad Cities (3,000 students). Increased enrollment planning and coordination is needed.</p> <p>Goal 2, Action 2 calls for maintaining historically low student-to-faculty ratios There is need to specifically define and evaluate student-to-faculty ratio goals.</p>	<p>Centralize university-wide enrollment planning by designating institutional office(s) responsible for collecting departmental and college five-year enrollment targets by campus to form one institutional enrollment plan. And have the above office(s) work with the Deans and President’s Leadership Team to evaluate and adjust university enrollment goals.</p> <p>After appropriate student-to-faculty ratios are determined, use WIU’s student-to-faculty ratios in recruitment materials to support the distinctiveness of small class sizes and engaged learning as a means to attract students and revenue to the University.</p>	<p>More precise enrollment planning increases precision to financial planning.</p> <p>Appropriate student-to-faculty ratios promote organizational efficiencies, and are fiscally sustainable.</p>
<p>Serve new populations (changing demographics, internationalization, non</p>	<p>Goal 1, Actions 5, 6, and 7 address this recommendation.</p>		

(ITEMS IN THE PLANNING MATRIX REPRESENT DRAFT#2)

<p>traditional students, more transfer students).</p>	<p>Additionally, the University has a statewide and nationally recognized (by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, Illinois and national Association of Institutional Research, Higher Learning Commission, and National Association of Branch Campus Administrators) program for increasing transfer student enrollment through “Linkages.”</p>	<p>New Linkages (dual enrollment) agreements with Quad Cities community colleges increased WIU-QC freshmen and sophomore enrollment from 26 in fall 2012 to 105 in fall 2013.</p> <p>Develop a Linkages agreement with Spoon River College in Macomb and set enrollment targets for the agreement.</p> <p>Develop Linkages agreements with other community colleges using Western distance classes and set enrollment targets for these agreements.</p> <p>Expanding Linkages agreements increases potential tuition revenue.</p> <p>In June 2012, the University started Quad Cities General Education/Honors Cohorts. With just 8 weeks to recruit, the program yielded 9 students.</p> <p>Expand enrollment target beyond 30 WIU-QC freshmen for fall 2013. As of February 22, 44 freshmen have applied for admission to WIU-QC.</p> <p>Expanding Honors Cohort sizes increases potential revenue for the University.</p>	
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(ITEMS IN THE PLANNING MATRIX REPRESENT DRAFT#2)

		<p>Develop new partnership agreements with institutions that have not sent graduate students to WIU in the last three years and develop enrollment targets for these partnerships.</p>	<p>Allow admission of full-time non-OAS freshmen to WIU-QC. Currently, full-time freshmen who do not meet Honors Cohort standards must take at least one course each semester at the community college, which represents lost revenue to the University. However, OAS admission should be restricted to the Macomb Campus. WIU-QC does not have the resources to support these students.</p>
<p>Provide alternative semester lengths.</p>	<p>Called for in Goal 3, Action 2C.</p>	<p>RPTA and Western Illinois University-Quad Cities received national recognition from the Wall Street Journal and University Business Officer for providing a three-year accelerated baccalaureate degree.</p> <p>While the College of Education and Human Services has a highly successful weekend academy, there has been very limited use of alternative semester lengths at the University. Form an institutional task force to implement alternative semester lengths.</p>	<p>Working professionals, place bound students, and nontraditional students may not be able to commit to traditional semester lengths designed for traditional-aged students. Not accommodating market demand represents lost revenue to the University.</p>
<p>Improve retention and graduation rates.</p>	<p>Stated in Goal 1, Action 9f. There are additional</p>	<p>Benchmark if other Illinois public</p>	<p>There may be opportunity to reallocate</p>

(ITEMS IN THE PLANNING MATRIX REPRESENT DRAFT#2)

	opportunities to focus attention on at-risk students.	universities require advisement before registration every semester or if advising efforts are focused on select populations after the first semester/year.	time to increase students most at-risk for dropping out, which represents lost revenue to the University.
<i>Experience</i>			
Focus on active and engaged learning.		Require internships and other capstone experiences to reinforce engaged learning and make students more prepared for workforce entry.	
THIS IS AS FAR AS THE COMMITTEE HAS GOT			
Help students learn how to learn (e.g., requiring a distance education course).			
Maintain agility in planning new programs.			
Provide high quality viable and sustainable programs.			
Support interdisciplinary inquiry.			
Emphasize currency (e.g., engaging advisory boards).			
Internationalize the curriculum.			
Increase diversity.			

2. **Opportunities through partnerships are essential to the future of Western Illinois University.**

Partnerships within and outside the educational system will promote a sustainable future for recruitment, retention, funding, and economic development if the University increases agility, responds to new windows of opportunity, and emphasizes regional stewardship in serving our host communities and regions.

Forming new and expanded educational partnerships with K-12 education, increasing collaboration with community colleges and other colleges and universities, and developing new forms of articulation agreements beyond 2+2's.

Forming new and expanded external partnerships with the public and private sectors, linking programs and services with corresponding external entities (e.g., LEJA and correctional institutions), supporting economic development of our host communities and regions, and identifying new sources of funding given state declines (e.g., federal grants).

(ITEMS IN THE PLANNING MATRIX REPRESENT DRAFT#2)

Goal/Action	Strategic Plan Item(s)	Innovation	Elimination
<i>Partnerships</i>			
Form new and expanded educational partnerships with K-12 education.			
Increase collaboration with community colleges and other colleges and universities.			
Develop new forms of articulation agreements beyond 2+2's.			
Form new and expanded external partnerships with the public and private sectors.			
Link external programs and services with external entities (e.g., LEJA and correctional institutions).			
Support economic development of our host communities and regions.			
Identify new sources of funding given state declines (e.g., federal grants).			

3. **Affordability requires entrepreneurialism, prioritized resource allocation, and an institutional commitment.**

We are a public institution founded for the express benefit of the public. Western serves that part of the public that is least able to afford private education and most in need of the benefits that higher education provides—"the level playing field." However, declining state appropriations, state cash flow issues, shifting costs from appropriations to institutions and students (e.g., insurance, state pensions, deferred maintenance), and eliminating increases in state and federal financial assistance result in the continued privatization of public higher education with clear and concerning implications for the University.

Issues of price sensitivity and elasticity are and will cause students to forgo the value of a Western Illinois University education. Privatization is dividing us from our traditional stakeholders and threatening our core mission. Therefore, we must become increasingly fiscally self sufficient by engaging in entrepreneurial activities, prioritizing resource allocation (not being all things to all people), and maintaining affordability to ensure the long-term viability of the University.

Engaging in entrepreneurial activities includes evaluating the appropriateness of differential tuition either by campus and/or program, identifying new sources of revenue, controlling institutional expenditures, and enhancing organizational efficiencies.

Prioritizing resource allocation includes supporting high demand and growing programs, addressing deferred maintenance in facilities, technology, and infrastructure; providing competitive residence halls, and supporting academic and administrative technology.

Maintaining affordability requires increasing need and merit scholarships, adding scholarships beyond the freshman year, implementing new models of financial assistance, expanding paid internships and other forms of experiential education, engaging tuition discounting, and emphasizing the value of a Western Illinois University education.

(ITEMS IN THE PLANNING MATRIX REPRESENT DRAFT#2)

Goal/Action	Strategic Plan Item(s)	Innovation	Elimination
<i>Entrepreneurial Activities</i>			
Evaluate the appropriateness of differential tuition either by campus and/or program.			
Identify new sources of revenue.			
Control institutional expenditures.			
Identify opportunities for organizational efficiencies.			
<i>Prioritized Resource Allocation</i>			
Support high demand and growing programs.			
Address deferred maintenance in facilities, technology, and infrastructure.			
Provide competitive residence halls.			
Support academic and administrative technology.			
<i>Affordability</i>			
Increase need and merit scholarships.			
Add scholarships beyond the freshman year.			
Implement new models of financial assistance.			
Expand paid internships and other forms of experiential education.			
Engage in tuition discounting.			
Emphasize the value of a Western Illinois University education.			

Next Steps

The team will continue its work and meetings scheduled for March 5th, 19th, and 26th. At the request of Trustee Ehlert Fuller, your March 2013 Western Illinois University Board of Trustees meeting will include a brief power point summary of the quantitative data supporting the opportunities and challenges for higher education and an update on the work of the team.

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