

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

Date: February 25, 2015

Re: February 2015 Strategic Plan Update

This month's *Strategic Plan Update* provides background information, process and results, and next steps for updating Western Illinois University's peer groups used for evaluating non-salary comparisons of institutional effectiveness. Results from peer group analyses and benchmarking continually informs university planning, *Strategic Plan* implementation, and institutional accountability reporting. The latter includes annual *Performance Reports* provided to the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees. These are available at www.wiu.edu/university_planning/annualperformancereports.php.

Background

Western Illinois University established peer groups for non-salary comparisons of institutional effectiveness in 2005. Use of peer group results and benchmarking provides a proven methodology to evaluate and plan for the successful implementation of the vision, mission, goals, and priorities of *Higher Values in Higher Education*. The peer groups for the Macomb and Quad Cities campuses (displayed below) were reaffirmed with the implementation of the updated *2008-2018* and *2012-2022 Strategic Plans*.

Western Illinois University Peer Groups for Non-Salary Comparisons	
<u>Macomb Campus</u>	<u>Quad Cities Campus</u>
Appalachian State University	Arizona State University West
California State University-Chico	Augustana College
Central Washington University	Governors State University
College of Charleston	Pennsylvania State University-Harrisburg
Eastern Illinois University	Saint Ambrose University
James Madison University	Texas A & M-International
Missouri State University	Texas A & M-Texarkana
Montclair State University	University of Baltimore
Sam Houston State University	University of Houston-Clear Lake
Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville	University of Illinois-Springfield
University of North Carolina-Wilmington	
University of Northern Iowa	
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater	
Western Kentucky University	
Western Washington University	

As mentioned above, these peer groups exclude salary comparisons. Setting of salary peer groups is made by contractual agreement between the University Professionals of Illinois and Western Illinois University; and is outside the purview of the project reported in this month's *Update*.

Western Illinois University has a decade of excellence in advancing national ranking systems. University advancements include, but are not limited to increases in national comparisons (e.g., U.S. News and World Report and the Princeton Review), specialized ranking systems including Washington Monthly and Money Magazine (described in *November* and *December 2014 Strategic Plan Updates*), Military Friendly distinctions recognized by Military Times Edge Magazine and G.I. Jobs Magazine, and receipt of the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification.

Western's continued advancement in these ranking systems coupled with updating of non-salary peer groups will enable the University to benchmark and adapt national best practices as we further our collective institutional effectiveness and achieve the *Strategic Plan* vision of being the leader in educational quality, opportunity, and affordability among regional public universities.

Process and Results

The President's Leadership Team carefully evaluated data from top regional public universities, criteria related to benchmarking (from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems), and results of institutional location, size, presence of a branch campus, enrollment and graduation rate trends, student quality measures, affordability, and alumni satisfaction rates at potential peer institutions. This evaluation resulted in an identification of three potential aspiration institutions and 16 non-salary benchmark institutions for the Macomb campus.

Next Steps

Following past practice and recognizing that the selection of peer institutions is based on both quantitative and qualitative data, I will be meeting with each of the shared governance groups in Macomb to further refine the benchmarks before the President's Leadership Team finalizes updating to non-salary peer groups. These meetings are scheduled for the following dates and times.

- Civil Service Employees Council: March 5th at 1:00 PM.
- Faculty Senate: March 10th at 4:00 PM.
- Council of Administrative Personnel: March 12th at 10:00 AM.
- Student Government Association: Meeting is being scheduled at the time of writing this *Update*.

After updating the Macomb non-salary peer groups, the President's Leadership Team will follow the same data collection strategy and shared governance process to form non-salary peer groups for the Quad Cities campus. The Quad Cities Faculty Council, Student Government Association, and campus community will review potential benchmark institutions before the President's Leadership Team finalizes selection.

The target is to present the updated non-salary peer groups for both campuses at your June 2015 Western Illinois University Board of Trustees meeting. If you have any questions regarding peer group updating and/or feedback for the continued successful advancement of the University's *Strategic Plan*, please contact me.

cc: President Thomas CSEC Pres. Mattson Associate Provost Neumann
 Provost Hawkinson COAP President Shoemaker Associate Provost Parsons
 Vice President Bainter Faculty Council Chair Pillutla Assistant Vice President Williams
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