

To: Members of the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees
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From: Joe Rives, Interim Executive Assistant to the President, Quad Cities, Planning and Technology

Date: November 30, 2007

Re: November 2007 Strategic Plan Update

This month's Strategic Plan Update summarizes actions called for in Higher Values in *Higher Education*, *Campus Master Plans*, and the *Institutional Strategic Plan for Technology* that reinforce our social responsibilities and institutional commitments to statewide, regional, and national leadership in sustainability. Special thanks go to Physical Plant Director, Mr. Charles Darnell, for serving as the primary author of the following update, which shows that:

- Western Illinois University has applied to be a pilot university in a new American Association of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) initiative that will examine standards for benchmarking (i.e., measuring and reporting) sustainability commitments and accomplishments. The STARS program (Sustainability Tracking and Rating System) requires pilot schools to complete a checklist of sustainability indicators and report these over the next 12 months to AASHE. As the program begins in **January 2008**, the University should know before the end of this year if it has been selected for the pilot. A future *Strategic Plan Update* will keep you posted on the University's status for inclusion on this important initiative.
- The University has hired a professional architectural and engineering (A/E) firm (Woolpert) to complete Facility Condition Assessments on campus buildings. The streamlined assessments of major campus academic and housing facilities will quantify condition and cost of renovation or replacement for all major building system groups. The completed facility condition assessments will also help prioritize maintenance needs, inform capital planning and housing studies, and quantify the total deferred maintenance and capital renewal liability on the Macomb campus.
- An A/E firm is currently engaged in chiller equipment specification and design for replacing three building chillers at Currens, Horrabin and Stipes halls. As these will be electric chillers as opposed to the original steam absorption chillers, they will save on utility costs through increased energy efficiency and avoided natural gas cost savings at the heating plant.

- An A/E firm is currently being contracted to develop a comprehensive utility infrastructure master plan. When complete, the plan will outline needed capital requirements for the exiting heating plant over the next five to ten years. The plan will also evaluate the economic, environmental, and reliability issues involved with building a new campus utility plant.
- Western Illinois University has initiated discussions with the top seven energy-consuming state universities regarding the development of the State University Wind Generation Consortium. The concept would include solicitation of a major state wind generation asset that would potentially offset 15 percent of the participants' electrical consumption with renewable wind energy. There are many financing, legal, logistical, and procurement issues to be understood before any such consortium would be officially initiated.
- The Campus Sustainability Committee is currently engaged in planning the Campus Environmental Summit for [April 2, 2008](#). The summit combines several influential keynote speakers with a campus sustainability visioning exercise and will incorporate the annual Green Solutions Exposition. The one-day educational and awareness event is expected to draw numerous students, faculty, and staff. A similar event is in the very early planning stages for the Quad Cities campus. This April or May event will focus on showcasing state agency environmental resources, and it will include Quad City-specific "green" vendor participation. The event is currently scheduled for outdoors on the newly developing Western Illinois University-Quad Cities Riverfront Campus.
- A new dedicated campus sidewalk snow route was developed by Physical Plant and Disability Support Services. This high priority route is intended to provide single route access between all campus facilities. New cherry-beet derivative de-icers will be tested as a pretreatment on these sidewalks. It is hoped this "green" product will offset some salt use and prevent bonding of ice to these sidewalks. If successful, fuel costs will be saved and campus pedestrian safety enhanced as fewer tractor plow passes will be needed to clear these sidewalks of snow and ice.
- Western Illinois University will be ordering 234 new faculty and staff computers in Academic Affairs as part of the computer upgrade program by the end of this year. In providing Dell and Macintosh options to colleges and departments, the University has identified high capacity machines that achieve gold, silver, or bronze certification by the Green Electronics Council, www.greenelectronicscouncil.org/. Specifically, and quoting from their Website, the levels of certification "help institutional purchasers in the public and private sectors evaluate, compare and select desktop computers, notebook computers and monitors based on their environmental attributes. At the same time it helps manufacturers promote environmentally preferable products." The levels of certification are based on the the *1680 Standard for Environmental Assessment of Personal Computer Products*.

As always, if you have any questions or feedback about the continued successful implementation of *Higher Values in Higher Education*, please contact me.

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