To: Members of the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees  
Bill Epperly, Chair  Carolyn Ehlert Fuller  
Roger Clawson  Phil Hare  
Lyneir Cole  Yvonne Savala  
Cathy Early  D'angelo Taylor  

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

Date: March 29, 2013  

Re: March 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 present, five-year, and 20-year time frames.  

Background  
Your February 2013 Strategic Plan Update provided the Long Term Planning Team’s external environmental scanning methodology for challenges and opportunities for Illinois higher education in general and Western Illinois University in particular. It also contained a planning matrix with initial draft recommendations that were based on external environmental scanning.  

During three March meetings, the Long Term Planning Team focused on internal environmental scanning and combined results of internal and external environmental scanning to update and refine initial draft recommendations. From environmental scanning, we identified six key issues for the University and these issues focus on four guiding principles:  

1) The strengths and signature components of the WIU educational experience is that all programs and services are committed to internationalizing the curriculum, active and engaged learning, using technology, and capstone experiences.  

2) WIU has a long history of academic excellence, educational opportunities, and innovation. We created the State’s first and largest extension program, our Cost Guarantee was the basis for state legislation on tuition setting, and most recently our Linkages (dual enrollment) program with community colleges received national recognitions.  

3) Now is the time for continued educational innovation by using our strengths to distinguish us from state and national institutions. With agility and responsiveness to changing market forces, emphasis on partnerships and entrepreneurism, and challenging the status quo, WIU will increase enrollment, student success, and revenue. If WIU does not respond, enrollment will decline and there will be lost revenue for the institution.  

4) The value of a WIU education, and what will attract future students, is our strengths, signature components, and cost predictability that enables students to earn a degree in a timely manner. It is our social responsibility to aggressively pursue our future.  

A summary of draft recommendations appears below. The Planning Team recognizes that the materials are a draft and all items are subject to change pending further conversations and input from the campus.
community. When completed, the recommendations, as charged by the Board of Trustees, will be presented to President Thomas and the Board for consideration. To advance the University and Higher Values in Higher Education:

1) Distinguish WIU from other Illinois public and national competitor institutions.
   a) Receive approvals for new doctoral programs in Environmental Science, Law Enforcement and Justice Administration, and a new undergraduate degree in pharmacy.
   b) Form a task force to study the implications of transitioning from a regional institution to a national doctoral university.
   c) Engage in discipline-specific and university-wide discussions to discuss the application of our strengths and signature components in academic and administrative units; and form a task force that makes WIU nationally known for our strengths and signature components.
   d) Identify opportunities to increase faculty engagement in Program Review; and include analyses of our strengths and signature components in the revised program review process.
   e) Highly publicize signature programs.
   f) Determine if required advisement before registration every semester is the most effective use of staff expertise or if advising efforts should focus on select populations after the first semester/year.
   g) Modify the mentoring program on both campuses based on successes and challenges.

2) Emphasize yearlong educational opportunities to decrease time-to-degree, without lowering credit hour requirements.
   a) Receive blanket approval from the Higher Learning Commission for all WIU programs to be approved as distance education programs.
   b) 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.
   c) Form college task forces to evaluate alternative semester lengths.
   d) Increase summer course offerings and related academic and student support services.
   e) Support internships within and outside our host communities.

3) Form new and expanded partnerships with all levels of the educational system and business and industry.
   a) Reinvigorate dual enrollment partnerships with local high schools.
   b) Implement actions to support the new Council for the Accreditation of Educational Preparation (CAEP) standard for teacher education programs to establish PreK-12 partnerships. The final standard will be released in early 2014.
   c) Extend the Linkages model to Spoon River College and other community colleges via distance education.
   d) Follow WIU’s success in community college relations to develop articulation agreements between four-year institutions (e.g., earning one degree at WIU and a second degree a partner institution whether through traditional timeframes or integrated degree programs).
   e) Develop new partnerships between institutions that have not sent graduate students to WIU in the last three years.
   f) Identify opportunities to provide lower division courses to degree completion (junior/senior only) institutions.
   g) Centralize record keeping of internship opportunities for WIU students locally, nationally, and internationally.

4) Enhance enrollment planning.
   a) Designate institutional office(s) responsible for collecting departmental and college five-year enrollment targets by campus to form one institutional enrollment plan.
   b) Have the above office(s) work with the Deans and President’s Leadership Team to evaluate and adjust university enrollment goals.
   c) Specifically define and evaluate student-to-faculty ratio goals.
d) 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.

c) Expand Linkages agreements.

e) Expand enrollment target beyond $30$ WIU-QC freshmen for fall 2013.

f) Allow admission of non-OAS freshmen to WIU-QC.

5) Advance fiscal planning.

a) Evaluate the appropriateness of differential tuition either by campus and/or program.

b) Position the University for the next comprehensive campaign.

c) Conduct cost-benefit analyses when considering renovation, replacement, or demolition.

d) Provide staffing for on-campus degree programs that do not rely on travel or distance education, unless to enrich educational opportunities.

e) Document institutional plans to address proposed decreases in state appropriated funding.

f) Form a long-range bonding plan for facilities, technology, and infrastructure.

g) Expand public-private partnerships to help decrease institutional costs.

6) Help eliminate financial barriers that prohibit college enrollment.

a) Increase need and merit scholarship opportunities for first year students and beyond.

b) Apply for new sources of institutional financial aid.

c) Apply for external funding to support experiential education.

d) Support focused tuition discounting to attract high achieving and diverse students.

e) Evaluate offering lower tuition in the summer session.

The planning matrix on the following pages has three components:

- **Goal/Priority** displays general draft recommendations for advancing quality, opportunity, and affordability at Western Illinois University.

- **Action** includes specific draft recommendations.

- **Rationale** states why draft recommendations were made. Careful consideration to areas of innovation and elimination, as recommended in Association Governing Board methodology were considered in all of the planning matrix. Most of the elimination items focus on lost enrollment and revenue if the University does not successfully respond to changing external environments.

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.

(Note: Planning matrix begins on the next page)
Current Team Draft

Through *Higher Values in Higher Education*, Western Illinois University provides high-quality academic programs in high need areas. Using program approval and review processes, achieving/maintaining discipline-specific accreditation/certification where appropriate to the discipline, and engaging external advisory boards ensures curricular currency and programmatic viability.

Building on these processes, the following recommendations distinguish WIU from our peers by building on our strengths and enhancing our national reputation. Competition for students is regional, national, and international. Distinguishing WIU from our peers underscores the value of a WIU education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal/Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Distinguish WIU from other Illinois public and national competitor institutions.</td>
<td>Receive approvals for new doctoral programs in Environmental Science, Law Enforcement and Justice Administration, and a new undergraduate degree in pharmacy(^1).</td>
<td>Students in these high need programs must currently leave the region to achieve their educational goals, representing lost revenue to the University.</td>
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<td>Form a task force to study the implications of transitioning from a regional institution to a national doctoral university.</td>
<td>Adding doctoral programs will change the University’s Carnegie classification. WIU must fully understand the implications of changing Carnegie classifications, and capitalize on strengths and successfully address challenges.</td>
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<td>Engage in discipline-specific and university-wide discussions to discuss the application of our strengths and signature components in academic and administrative units; and form a task force that makes WIU nationally known for our strengths and signature components.</td>
<td>Actions will inform discipline-specific and university marketing, and follow the model successfully used at other regional universities (e.g., Truman State, Miami University, Evergreen State, and Alverno College) to gain national recognitions in areas of excellence across the institution.</td>
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<td>Identify opportunities to increase faculty engagement in Program Review; and include analyses of our strengths and signature components in the revised program review process.</td>
<td>Recommendations ensure that we measure and demonstrate our values.</td>
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<td>Highly publicize signature programs.</td>
<td>High demand distinctive programs help recruit students to the region, and represent...</td>
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\(^1\) New doctoral programs require Illinois Board of Higher Education and Higher Learning Commission approval before classes are offered.
f. Improve retention and graduation rates.

Determine if required advisement before registration every semester is the most effective use of staff expertise or if advising should focus on select populations after the first semester/year.

Modify the mentoring program on both campuses based on successes and challenges.

increased revenue for the University.

There may be opportunity to reallocate time to increase attention to students who are most at-risk for dropping out, which represents lost revenue to the University.

Students who drop out represent lost revenue to the University.

WIU has a long history of educational innovation. We created the State’s first and largest extension program, our Cost Guarantee was the basis for state legislation on tuition setting, and most recently our Linkages (dual enrollment) program with community colleges received national recognitions.

Now is the time for educational innovation. Through *Higher Values in Higher Education*, we are committed to strengthening distance learning, providing alternative semester lengths, and expanding summer school offerings. Our strategic plan actions above focus on year round education and community vibrancy.

Typically students take eight fall-spring semesters or four calendar years to graduate. If appropriate to the discipline, curriculum, and sequencing, there may be programs where eight semesters can be achieved in three years if there are vibrant summer and distance education opportunities. RPTA received national recognition from the *Wall Street Journal* and *University Business Officer* for providing a three-year accelerated baccalaureate degree. The value of a WIU education, what will attract future students, is our strengths, signature components, and cost predictability that enables the student to earn a degree in a timely manner.

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| 2. Emphasize year long educational opportunities to decrease time-to-degree, without lowering credit hour requirements. | Receive blanket approval from the Higher Learning Commission for all WIU programs to be approved as distance education programs. | Action avoids multiple submissions and submission costs. It is also based on new Commission guidelines that define distance programs as over 50% of the degree offered on-line and/or through two-way audio video as opposed to 100% of the degree in the former definition. WIU on-line and CODEC offerings push most programs above the 50% threshold. Any distance program over 50% requires Commission approval.

2 New federal and Commission guidelines also require that the University receive state 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.
(ITEMS BELOW REPRESENT DRAFT #3)

| b. Provide alternative semester lengths. | 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. | With a strong recruitment plan, more distance options increase educational opportunities for potential new students, place-bound students, and working professionals, which represent increased revenue for the University. |
| c. Invigorate summer sessions. | Form college task forces to evaluate alternative semester lengths. | While the College of Education and Human Services has a highly successful weekend academy, there has been limited use of alternative semester lengths at the University. Where pedagogically appropriate, using new on-line, hybrid programs, and/or weekend academies may offer cost efficiencies to the University and entice potential new students, place-bound students, and working professionals who cannot commit to a traditional 16-week semester to enroll at WIU, which represents potential new revenue to the University. |
| d. Expand experiential learning opportunities | Increase course offerings and related academic and student support services. | Increased summer enrollment results in increased revenue and more fully utilized facilities. Working professionals, place-bound students, and nontraditional students may not be able to commit to traditional semester lengths designed for residential students. Not accommodating market demand represents lost revenue to the University. |

| **3. Opportunities through partnerships are essential to the future of Western Illinois University.** |

There are significant opportunities for Western Illinois University to increase partnerships at all levels of the educational experience and with business and industry. Expanding partnerships will increase enrollment, tuition revenue, student capstone experience placement sites, and position the University for success in the next comprehensive fundraising campaign. |
(ITEMS BELOW REPRESENT DRAFT #3)

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<tr>
<td>3. Form new and expanded partnerships with:</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. K-12 education.</td>
<td>Reinvigorate dual enrollment partnerships with local high schools. And implement actions to support the new Council for the Accreditation of Educational Preparation (CAEP) standard for teacher education programs to establish PreK-12 partnerships. The final standard will be released in early 2014.</td>
<td>Local and regional partnerships will reinforce making WIU the “University of Choice” for students and schools from our host communities and regions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Community colleges.</td>
<td>Extend the Linkages model to Spoon River College and other community colleges via distance education.</td>
<td>WIU’s Linkages (dual enrollment) model with community colleges received national recognitions. Increased Linkages opportunities will yield more enrollment and revenue for the University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Other colleges and universities.</td>
<td>Follow WIU’s success in community college relations to develop articulation agreements between four-year institutions (e.g., earning one degree at WIU and a second degree at a partner institution whether through traditional timeframes or integrated degree programs).</td>
<td>All of the recommendations in this section support increased recruitment pipelines to yield more enrollment and revenue for the University.</td>
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3 WIU received statewide and nationally recognition by the Association of Institutional Research, Higher Learning Commission, Illinois Association of Institutional Research, Illinois Student Assistance Commission, and National Association of Branch Campus Administrators for increasing transfer student enrollment and decreasing student costs by up to 25% through implementation of the “Linkages” (dual enrollment) model with community colleges.
d. Business and Industry. Form new and expanded partnerships with the public and private sectors.

publicizes internship opportunities for students from area colleges and universities. Centralizing internship opportunities increases student awareness of interdisciplinary opportunities, can inform institutional planning (e.g., where sites are needed), and can be used in fundraising. Increasing internship opportunities benefits students and employers and over time can be used to increase corporate giving to the University.

4. **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 a 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 cause students to forgo the value of a Western Illinois University education. Privatization divides us from our traditional stakeholders and threatens 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.

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<th>Goal/Action</th>
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<td><strong>Entrepreneurial Activities</strong></td>
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<td>4. Enhance enrollment planning.</td>
<td>Designate 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.</td>
<td>The Strategic Plan includes an enrollment goal for the Quad Cities, but does not contain specific goals for Macomb or colleges and departments. More precise enrollment planning increases precision to financial planning and accountability for achieving enrollment targets.</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. Centralize university-wide enrollment planning.</td>
<td>A Strategic Plan priority is to maintain historically low student-to-faculty ratios. However, there is need to</td>
<td>Appropriate student-to-faculty ratios promote organizational efficiencies, and are fiscally sustainable.</td>
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<td>b. Set student-to-faculty ratios.</td>
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<th>c. Anticipate and proactively respond to market changes.</th>
<th>specifically define and evaluate student-to-faculty ratio goals.</th>
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<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Our strengths, signature components, year round education, and low student-to-faculty ratios are all defining characteristics of a WIU education that, when aggressively marketed, should increase enrollment and revenue for the University.</td>
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<td>Expand Linkages agreements.</td>
<td>New Linkages (dual enrollment) agreements with Quad Cities community colleges increased WIU-QC freshmen and sophomore enrollment from 26 in fall 2011 to 105 in fall 2012. Expanding Linkages agreements increases potential revenue for the University.</td>
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<td>Expand enrollment target beyond 30 WIU-QC freshmen for fall 2013.</td>
<td>As of March 22, 44 freshmen have applied for admission to WIU-QC. Expanding Honors Cohort sizes increases revenue for the University.</td>
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<td>Allow admission of non-OAS freshmen to WIU-QC.</td>
<td>Currently, full-time freshmen who do not meet Honors Cohort standards and all part-time freshmen 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.</td>
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<th>5. Advance fiscal planning by:</th>
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<tr>
<td>a. Determine programmatic and locational costs of education.</td>
<td>Evaluate the appropriateness of differential tuition either by campus and/or program.</td>
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<td>b. Identify new sources of revenue.</td>
<td>Position the University for the next comprehensive campaign.</td>
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<td>Opportunities may exist to increase revenue for programmatic expenses.</td>
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<td>The current successful comprehensive campaign has a significant component of alumni donors. Advancement of current</td>
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### March 2013 Strategic Plan Update

**March 29, 2013**

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(ITEMS BELOW REPRESENT DRAFT #3)

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<th>c. Support opportunities for organizational efficiencies.</th>
<th>Conduct cost-benefit analyses when considering renovation, replacement, or demolition.</th>
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<tr>
<td>d. Address deferred maintenance in facilities, technology, and infrastructure.</td>
<td>Provide staffing for on-campus degree programs that do not rely on travel or distance education, unless to enrich educational opportunities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Engage the public and private sectors.</td>
<td>Document institutional plans to address proposed decreases in state appropriation funding.</td>
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- Donors on the giving pyramid and cultivating more corporate donors will advance the success of the next campaign.
- Imploding Wetzel Hall reduced the deferred maintenance backlog for the auxiliary facilities system by $32 million. It also results in an annual cost savings and avoidance of $1.0 million annually, since there was excess capacity in the residential hall system.
- Action will reduce institutional and student travel expenditures.
- The President and each Vice President is currently working with their areas on strategies to address budgetary reductions.
- Maintaining currency in facilities, technology, and infrastructure is essential to recruitment, retention and scholarly productivity, all of which have revenue implications to the University.
- WIU has been highly successful in these regards. The University only pays 1/3 of the cost for GoWest transit system. The remaining 2/3 are paid from other sources of funds.
- WIU’s partnership and Renew Moline’s successful recruitment of a private developer to complete a two-phase $80 million construction project bringing food service, student and faculty housing, pharmacy, bookstore, and other retail next to Riverfront saves the University and students building, maintenance, operations, and personnel costs.
Goal/Priority | Action | Rationale
--- | --- | ---
6. Help eliminate financial barriers that prohibit college enrollment. | Increase need and merit scholarship opportunities for first year students and beyond. | When students cannot afford higher education, it represents lost revenue to the University.
   a. Increase private support. | Apply for new sources of institutional financial aid. WIU-QC is part of a Lumina grant that will provide loan forgiveness if a student graduates and remains in the Quad Cities for one year after graduation. | Action incents students to graduate, because loan forgiveness does not occur unless the student graduates and stays in the region.
   b. Implement new models of financial assistance. | Apply for external funding to support experiential education. WIU-QC applied for an AmeriCorps grant that will award students $13,000 for one-year of community volunteerism and a $5,000 educational stipend. | If received, the grant would add to the WIU financial aid portfolio. Over 75% of WIU students receive financial assistance.
   c. Expand paid internships and other forms of experiential education. | Support focused tuition discounting to attract high achieving and diverse students. WIU introduced new Western Commitment Scholarships for fall 2012 and will be introducing Western Transfer Commitment Scholarships for fall 2013. | Applications for students meeting the scholarship criteria are currently up 12% (+181) overall and 955% (+86) for students scoring in the top one percent of all test takers on the ACT.
   d. Reduce the net cost of education. | Evaluate offering lower tuition in the summer session. | Peer institutions engage in such practices for summer and winter intersessions.

**Next Steps**
The team will continue its work and meetings scheduled for April 2nd, 23rd, and 30th. Future Strategic Plan Updates will continue to discuss team progress and seek feedback on the team’s draft reports. 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
Provoest 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