

Western Illinois University - Quad Cities

Strategic Initiatives and Actions

2021-2028

Foundation

Western Illinois University was founded in 1899 as a teacher-training school, and over the years, expanded into a comprehensive university with a variety of academic and extracurricular options. WIU began offering extension courses in Rock Island as early as 1912. In 2012, WIU opened the LEED-certified Quad Cities riverfront campus in Moline on the banks of the Mississippi River. Western Illinois University - Quad Cities now offers 47 degree programs, including 2 doctoral programs. Students experience a high-quality education enhanced by the amenities and resources offered by the Quad Cities metropolitan area and beyond.

Purpose and Intention

This document serves to define strategic initiatives and actions that position Western Illinois University for success in the Quad Cities region. The purpose of this planning document is to present opportunities unique to the Quad Cities campus and to inform broader institutional strategic planning. This plan will continue to evolve with further development and input from WIU shared governance structures, integration within upcoming institutional planning discussions and processes, and ultimately through the infusion of Quad Cities-focused initiatives and actions into the Western Illinois University Strategic Plan.

WIU Quad Cities Mission

Western Illinois University – Quad Cities is dedicated to interactive and applied education, advanced research and development, and invigorating public service. As the only public four-year University serving the region, the WIU – Quad Cities campus is a hub of innovation and educational access for citizens in the Quad Cities and beyond and is committed to the growth and sustainability of local and global partnerships, personal and cultural health, and social and environmental justice.

Vision

Western Illinois University - Quad Cities, as an integral part of Western Illinois University, will be the leader in educational quality, opportunity, and affordability among regional public universities.

Alignment

Strategic Initiatives for the Quad Cities campus are centered on the Western Illinois University Strategic Plan, and are further defined to meet the specific goals and needs of our community and region. Western Illinois University Quad Cities will engage in actions that 1) recruit and retain

students, 2) enrich academic excellence, 3) provide educational opportunity, 4) support personal growth, 5) promote social responsibility, and 6) demonstrate accountability.

WIU Quad Cities Campus Strategic Initiatives demonstrate responsiveness to State of Illinois and the Quad Cities region's focus on providing citizens with skills and competencies to contribute to a sustainable economy and community, to close equity gaps for those who have been traditionally underserved by the higher education system, and to improve access by managing the cost of college.

Strategic Initiatives and Actions

Strategic Initiative 1 - Foster personal growth through engaging and meaningful college experiences centered on experiential learning, wellness, and success on campus and throughout the Quad Cities region.

Actions:

- 1) Ensure a welcoming campus environment for students, faculty, staff, and visiting community members that promotes inclusion and cultivates social justice.
 - a) Recruit and retain students, faculty, and staff that reflect the diversity of our community and both represent and contribute a variety of perspectives that shape the classroom and workplace. [President, Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, Finance and Administration, Admissions, Human Resources, Equal Opportunity and Access, Diversity and Inclusion, All hiring departments/supervisors.]
 - b) Create interdisciplinary educational opportunities for diversity, equity, inclusiveness, and social justice themed dialogue, presentations, and forums in collaboration with community partners. [Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, Retention, Student Success, Quad Cities, Faculty Council, Faculty Senate.]
 - c) Collaborate with community partners to host interdisciplinary dialogues, presentations, and forums that engage issues of diversity, equity, inclusiveness, and social justice. [Quad Cities, Career Development and Workforce Preparation, Student Success, Advancement, Department Directors/Chairs, Faculty, Diversity and Inclusion.]
- 2) Increase access and social mobility for traditionally underrepresented minority communities.
 - a) Create meaningful partnerships with Quad Cities organizations that serve diverse populations to generate awareness, build mentor connections, offer hands-on learning opportunities, and activate WIU alumni. [Academic Affairs, Quad Cities, Student Success, Career Development and Workforce Prep Center, Disability Support, Center for Global Studies, Alumni Relations.]
 - b) Implement WIU retention and enrollment plan strategies to promote access and retain students from diverse backgrounds. [Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, Deans, Admissions, Retention, Student Success, Center for Global Studies, Disability Support.]

- c) Build synergetic cultural bridges among students, faculty, and staff with a wide range of U.S. and international backgrounds through curriculum, programming, extracurricular activities, and related community partnerships. [Academic Affairs, Student Services, Diversity and Inclusion, Equal Opportunity and Access, Global Education, Quad Cities, Human Resources...]
- 3) Expand and strengthen the Learning Assistant model and embedded tutoring (on campus and online) in order to foster Quad Cities students mastery of academic skills and concepts in mathematics, sciences, and writing. [Academic Affairs, College of Arts and Sciences, Student Services.]
- 4) Develop and open an on-campus, fully-licensed, multidisciplinary, multilingual preschool center serving WIU students and the community. [Academic Affairs, Quad Cities, Finance and Administration, College of Education and Human Services/Center for Best Practices, Advancement.]
- 5) Focus co-curricular and extracurricular student experiences on internships, field experiences, on-campus employment and activities that foster career development, workforce preparation, and citizenship. [Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors, Chairs, Faculty, Career Development and Workforce Preparation Center, Financial Aid, Quad Cities Manufacturing Lab, Student Services, Student Success, Alumni Relations, Advancement, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Small Business Development Center.]
 - a) Through partnerships with area employers, increase the number and type of internships, field experiences, and other applied learning experiences.
 - b) Establish a career center with programs and services available to students from matriculation to post-graduation.
 - c) Infuse career development, networking, and career readiness through collaborations with academic colleges, admissions, and academic advising.
 - d) Offer leadership opportunities on campus for students to gain relevant experience to develop their career portfolio.
 - e) Leverage networking resources and opportunities for student engagement through partnerships with Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Small Business Development Center, and external professional organizations.
 - f) Prepare students for both immediate employment and future successful advancement and credentialing needed for employment.
- 6) Emphasize student success and retention by implementing action items recommended in the WIU Retention Initiative Plan, including strategies to address student access to academic advising, support services, engaging campus spaces, and access to mental health resources. [Academic Affairs, Student Success, Enrollment Management, Retention, Counseling Center, Financial Aid, Quad Cities, Facilities.]
- 7) Engage in partnerships with community organizations that provide engaging on-campus and community-based services, activities, and social opportunities for students. [Quad Cities, Student Success, Career Development and Workforce Preparation, Advancement, Financial

Aid, Quad Cities Manufacturing Lab, WQPT, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs/Small Business Development Center.]

- 8) Promote the value and uniqueness of community-focused student experiences whereby students learn and develop as individuals on campus while contributing to the quality of Quad Cities area cities, towns, and neighborhoods through internships, experiential learning, leadership development, applied projects, and volunteerism. [Enrollment Management, Admissions, Marketing, Academic Affairs, Quad Cities, Student Services.]

Strategic Initiative 2 - Position WIU – Quad Cities as the Quad Cities’ only public regional comprehensive university that serves the area as a hub of transdisciplinary innovation focused on academic excellence and social responsibility, including three strategic domains: Innovation and Science; Health, Education, and Public Service; and Enterprise and Commerce.

Actions:

- 1) Identify an appropriate portfolio of program offerings for the Quad Cities campus honoring our mission as a public regional comprehensive university while developing three strategic domains.
 - a) Integrate findings from the Illinois Board of Higher Education Quad Cities Higher Education Needs Assessment. [President, Provost, Academic Affairs, Finance and Administration, Enrollment Management, Student Success, Quad Cities, Deans, Advancement.]
 - b) Cultivate existing and new programs to fulfill our mission as the Quad Cities’ only public regional comprehensive university. [Provost, Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Chairs, Faculty, Finance and Administration, Quad Cities.]
 - c) Add new academic programs and courses that uniquely align with the three strategic domains, while reviewing possibilities for existing programs and courses to build further connections to these domains. [Provost, Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Chairs, Faculty, Finance and Administration, Enrollment Management, Quad Cities.]
 - d) Determine the right mix of on-campus and online programs and courses by studying current and potential student demand. [Provost, Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Chairs, Faculty, Finance and Administration, Enrollment Management, Quad Cities.]
 - e) Leverage the advantages associated with the WIU Quad Cities location on the Mississippi River in an effort to address environmental and climate opportunities and challenges. [Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Chairs, Faculty, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Quad Cities.]
 - f) Support academic programs with a curricular and research focus on environmental science and innovation. [Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Chairs, Faculty.]
 - g) Provide forums and knowledge resources for Quad Cities area communities facing increasingly frequent and costly flooding and other symptoms of an increasingly

pressing climate emergency. [Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Chairs, Faculty, Student Success.]

- h) Team with environmentally focused nonprofit organizations, governmental entities, and other educational institutions to contribute to the health of our local watershed. [Academic Affairs, College of Arts and Sciences/Environmental Science, College of Business and Technology/School of Engineering and Technology.]
- 2) Enable initiatives by which WIU emerges as a major contributor to scientific research, public health promotion, and community service initiatives.
- a) Establish WIU Quad Cities as a regional hub of transdisciplinary innovation within the Illinois Innovation Network. [Academic Affairs, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Quad Cities, Deans, Sponsored Projects, Quad Cities Manufacturing Lab.]
 - b) Support individual faculty and collaborative research/scholarly activity directed toward making an impact in the three strategic focus areas. [Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Chairs.]
 - c) Partner with public health departments, hospitals, law enforcement, and other related organizations to build the region's preparedness to address community health concerns and to promote healthy lifestyles. [Health-focused programs in the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Education and Human Services, and College of Fine Arts and Communication.]
- 3) Support economic and cultural development through active partnerships and programming with locally and regionally committed businesses and corporations, nonprofit and governmental entities, health and educational systems, and related organizations.
- a) Re-introduce the Executive Outreach Center to provide direct interface between business, organizations, and WIU faculty and staff expertise and research. [Academic Affairs, College of Business and Technology.]
 - b) Maintain a committee with membership representative of community stakeholders to share ideas, trends, and connections to promote awareness of university initiatives. [President, Quad Cities, Academic Affairs.]
 - c) Support and cross-brand initiatives that extend education, entertainment, and cultural programming to promote cultural diversity and quality of life in the Quad Cities region and beyond. [Academic Affairs, WQPT, University Relations, College of Education and Human Services, College of Fine Arts and Communication.]
 - d) Establish an office for strategic partnerships and innovation to lead and collaborate on University and Quad Cities campus initiatives with the Illinois Innovation Network, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Small Business Development Center, and other emerging and future opportunities. [President, Provost, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Quad Cities.]
 - e) Utilize the expertise of the WIU Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs to participate in, demonstrate, and report program impact and contribution to economic development. [Academic Affairs, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Small Business Development Center, Advancement.]

- 4) Cultivate reciprocal relationships with local K-12, preschool, and community college faculty, staff, and students that produce extracurricular and cocurricular learning opportunities and bridge institutional types and fields of study.
 - a) Expand academic pathways via early exposure opportunities for K-12, preschool, and community college students such as summer camps, on-campus events, and engaging presentations in local schools. [Academic Affairs, Quad Cities, Deans, Advancement, Admissions, WQPT, Student Success...]
 - b) Serve local K-12, preschool, and community college teachers and other educational leaders by promoting access to university resources such as databases and other library and literacy resources. [University Libraries, University Marketing, WQPT.]
 - c) Invest in university public lectures and special event planning that will attract K-12, preschool, and community college students and teachers. [Academic Affairs, Quad Cities, Admissions, Student Success, University Marketing, Deans, Quad Cities Graduate Center, WQPT.]
 - d) Leverage the resources of WIU-affiliated WQPT and other local media outlets to extend early childhood educational outreach. [Academic Affairs, Quad Cities, WQPT, College of Education and Human Services.]

Strategic Initiative 3 - Emphasize educational opportunity by promoting high-demand and accessible undergraduate majors, graduate programs, and professional development opportunities.

Actions:

- 1) Develop an enrollment and recruitment plan inclusive of strategies to recruit students with both traditional and post-traditional academic pathways. Increase academics-focused recruitment and outreach initiatives. [Enrollment Management, Academic Affairs, Quad Cities, Student Services, Admissions, Financial Aid.]
- 2) Set enrollment targets for individual academic programs delivered on the Quad Cities campus. Examine historical enrollment data and resource allocation, market analysis, and diversity trends to set goals for recruiting, retention, and completion rates. Develop a decision process to respond to opportunities or deficiencies. [President, Provost, Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, Finance and Administration, Admissions, Deans, Directors/Chairs, Faculty.]
- 3) Support traditional disciplinary program development while incentivizing innovative new and existing transdisciplinary collaborations.
 - a) Conduct regular market analyses and surveys using quantitative and qualitative methods, and collect input from area community college staff to identify opportunities to revise existing and add new high-demand 4-year degrees and graduate programs. [Enrollment Management, Academic Affairs, Quad Cities, Deans.]
 - b) Establish accountability and progress reporting through annual departmental reports on Quad Cities-based programmatic accomplishments, community and transdisciplinary contributions and collaborations, future goals, and needs for

- investment. [Provost, Academic Affairs, Finance and Administration, Deans, Directors, Directors/Chairs, Faculty.]
- c) Investigate and recognize transdisciplinary and indirect contributions to enrollment targets. [Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Chairs, Faculty.]
 - d) Strengthen the brand of existing minors and supplement with new minors and micro credentials that effectively connect students to new and developing areas of expertise, and demonstrate that experience with employers and graduate programs. [Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, Deans, Directors/Chairs, Faculty, Marketing.]
- 4) Deliver programmatic offerings using course formats, alternative schedules, and pedagogy that maintains agility and aligns with population shifts and demographic changes. [Academic Affairs, Registrar, Deans, Directors/Chairs, Faculty.]
 - a) Following State of Illinois approval, develop, support, and expand current and new programs that address the local and state teacher and professional educational staff shortage. [Academic Affairs, College of Education and Human Services.]
 - 5) Develop and strengthen curricula and programs that support broadly applicable skills that are widely sought by employers, such as critical thinking, communication and interpersonal skills, textual analysis, public speaking, and writing. [Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Chairs, Faculty.]
 - 6) Further develop and strengthen curricula and programs that support professional certifications, endorsements, and on-demand educational opportunities that serve regional needs. [Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Chairs, Faculty.]
 - 7) Expand the Transfer Admission Guarantee to enable seamless and meaningful educational pathways in partnership with area high schools and community colleges, and explore similar transfer opportunities with other 4-year colleges and universities. [Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, Finance and Administration, Financial Aid, Admissions, Registrar.]
 - 8) Expand 4-year degree pathways that complement technical and specialized degrees. [Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, Admissions, Registrar.]
 - 9) Demonstrate and promote the value and benefits of WIU academic programs, research, and student experiences via a coordinated media strategy, outreach, and alumni relations. [Academic Affairs, Admissions, Alumni Relations, University Marketing]
 - a) Maintain a marketing and public relations specialist based in Moline and focused on promoting WIU to the Quad Cities region.
 - b) Promote Western Illinois University's Quad Cities location by developing an integrated marketing, recruitment, and career development plan that begins with discovery of WIU programs and continues through career placement.
 - c) Prioritize creating awareness of educational opportunities for students traditionally underrepresented in higher education.
 - 10) Establish a coordinating body with Colleges, Schools, and Departments that offer programs to engage in ongoing dialogue and planning. [Academic Affairs, Quad Cities, Deans, Directors/Chairs, Faculty.]

WIU Quad Cities Strategic Planning Committee

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