

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

October 10, 2016

Report 16.10/5

The Statewide Budget Context and Western Illinois University's Mission-Driven Planning and Results Fiscal Year 2017 Update

This *Report* and Power Point presentation made at today's Western Illinois University Board of Trustees meeting represents the second in a series. The Board received its first *Report* (*Western Illinois University Board of Trustees Report Number 16.3/6*) and presentation (available at www.wiu.edu/university_planning/presentations.php) on this topic in March 2016 at the request of President Thomas.

The materials presented to the Board in March included historic information on institutional and state funding. It also included mission-driven plans and results to increase revenue, decrease expenditures, and reduce reliance on state appropriations, while continuing to deliver a high-quality educational experience grounded in the core values of the University.

Illinois public higher education was in the eighth month of the historic and unprecedented state budget impasse at the time these items were presented. The Board was promised an update to the March materials as funding circumstances changed.

Since that time the Governor and General Assembly have made two emergency (stopgap) appropriations to Illinois public higher education.

- *Illinois Senate Bill 2059*: The General Assembly and Governor released \$167.6 million from the Educational Assistance Fund (EAF) to support higher education on April 25th. Western's portion of this bridge funding totaled \$14.9 million. The University also received an additional \$5.0 million for Illinois Monetary Assistance Program (MAP) grant reimbursements for student need-based financial assistance.
- *Illinois Senate Bill 2047*: The General Assembly and Governor released \$1 billion of stopgap funding from the EAF to support higher education on June 30th. Western's portion of this bridge funding totaled \$31.4 million. The University also received an additional \$5.1 million for Illinois Monetary Assistance Program (MAP) grant reimbursements for student need-based financial assistance.

Combined, Western's appropriated funding totals \$46.3 million, with an additional \$10.1 million in MAP grant reimbursements. Per state legislation, the \$46.3 million can be applied to expenses incurred during Fiscal Year 2016 and the first six months of Fiscal Year 2017.

Partial resolution of the continuing state budget impasse ensured that Western Illinois University continues its proud tradition of providing students a quality and well-rounded education. Partial

resolution of the continuing state budget impasse is also helping to restore public confidence in Illinois public higher education.

For example, Western Illinois University stabilized fall new freshmen enrollment at 1,527 students in fall 2016 compared to 1,535 students in fall 2015. This enrollment stabilization occurred despite the “crisis of confidence” caused by the state budget impasse, a smaller number of graduating high school seniors from across Illinois, more competitive financial aid packages in other states, and increased competition for new students.

A second accomplishment in restoring public confidence for Illinois public higher education was the University’s increase in the freshmen-to-sophomore (first year) retention rate. The retention rate increased from 67.7% of new freshmen starting in fall 2014 to 69.2% of new freshmen starting in fall 2015.

The quality of the new freshmen cohorts, as measured by ACT scores and high school grade point average, also continued to increase during this time and beyond. In fall 2014, 441 or 28.8% of the new freshmen enrolled at the University qualified for Western Commitment Scholarships (WCS). These numbers and percentages continued to increase from 631 award recipients or 41.1% of the fall 2015 new freshmen cohort to 641 award recipients or 42.0% of the fall 2016 new freshmen cohort. Students who earn a minimum ACT score of 20 and 3.0 high school grade point average automatically qualify for the WCS awards.

The results (accomplishments) of Western Illinois University’s mission-driven planning are clear. We are withstanding the state budget impasse, stabilizing enrollment, improving retention, and increasing student quality. All of the accomplishments demonstrate the strength and resiliency of the University community and our key role in restoring public confidence in Illinois public higher education.

Despite these accomplishments, the importance of continued mission-driven planning and results, coupled with conservative fiscal management remains top priority. Western Illinois University, and all other Illinois public universities, has not received full funding for Fiscal Years 2016 or 2017. The current stopgap budget expires at the end of the calendar year, with the Illinois Board of Higher Education retaining a \$20 million appropriation for emergency institutional funding during this time.

Stated differently, the last 15 months of state appropriations compared to Fiscal Year 2015 levels should have totaled \$77.1 million. Therefore, Western Illinois University, and similar to other Illinois public universities, has only received 60% of it’s appropriated funding for the last year and a half.

The Power Point presentation made at today’s Western Illinois University Board of Trustees meeting will show that while these are fiscally challenging times, the University continues to move ahead. Together, we continue to build an even stronger and better University for the future. We have done so by making necessary but difficult decisions and continuing to advocate for the restoration of full funding for Illinois public higher education.