

President's Performance Survey Report
2016-2017 Academic Year

Faculty Senate Committee on Provost and Presidential Performance (CPPP)
Senators: Gloria Delany-Barmann (Chair), Dennis DeVolder, Kishor Kapale, Brian Locke,
Heather McIlvaine-Newsad

Thank you to David Towers, CITR, for creating and distributing the survey

Executive Summary

A survey was conducted of the WIU Macomb and Quad Cities faculty asking them to evaluate President Thomas's performance in 2016-2017 academic year. A total of 156 faculty members opened the survey instrument and 131 actually submitted the survey, out of a population of 553 in the Spring of 2017. They evaluated the President's Overall Performance on a five-point rating scale at a mean value of 3.15, with a standard deviation of 1.34. The respondents also provided evaluations of the President's performance in the areas of Total Campus Enterprise; Student Success; Academic Goals; and Personnel, Faculty Relations and Campus Issues. A summary of those respondents' quantitative ratings follows. Finally, the respondents were given opportunities to comment on the President's performance. The comments provided are summarized at the end of this report, and representative comments are shown.

The quantitative responses to the survey show that faculty ratings of the President rose slightly from the previous year. Qualitative comments were both positive and negative, with some being mixed.

Overview and Methodology

At the request of the Board of Trustees' standing Presidential Evaluation and Assessment Committee, the Faculty Senate conducts an annual survey of the faculty regarding their views on the President's performance. The data in Figure 4 includes the previous evaluations for comparative purposes. The Committee on Provost and Presidential Performance (CPPP) maintained the same format used last year to evaluate the President so as to have some consistency.

The survey was conducted on-line by e-mailing each eligible faculty member (553 faculty were invited to participate) a web link to complete the survey. Eligible faculty members had three weeks to respond (opened March 10, and closed March 31) and were given two separate reminders in addition to the initial invitation to complete the survey. 28% of the total faculty opened the survey (compared to 45% last year), and 23% of the total faculty submitted their survey (compared to 40% last year).

For the survey questions, a 5-point rating scale was used (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree), with the additional options of No Basis for Response and Decline to Respond. The survey instrument asked questions divided into four focus areas: Total Campus Enterprise; Student Success; Academic Goals; and Personnel, Faculty Relations and Campus Issues. The responses of No Basis for Response and Decline to Respond are not included in the sample sizes on which statistical analyses are provided below (for these totals see Appendix 2). Open comment sections were provided at the end of each focus area. Items requesting demographic information were also included in the survey. The quantitative results of the survey can be seen in Figure 4: President's Survey Quantitative Data.

Demographic Overview

Of the 132 survey participants who indicated their gender, 46% identified as male, 54% identified as female. Among 131 faculty respondents who provided their years of service at Western, 47% have been at Western 11-20 years, 26% have 6-10 years' experience, 11% have 0-5 years' experience, and 16% have more than 20 years' experience. Of those who indicated their college affiliation, 41% belonged to the College of Arts and Sciences, 6% were affiliated with the Library, 21% were affiliated with the College of Education and Human Services, 17% were from the College of Fine Arts and Communication, and 14% identified with the College of Business and Technology. Of 132 participants who indicated how often they interact with the President, 46% interact with him 1-3 times a year, 23% interact with him 1-3 times a semester, 19% never interact with him, and 11% interact with him 1-3 times a month. One respondent indicated interaction 1-3 times a week. Finally, of 131 participants who indicated their campus, 94% of the respondents indicated they were from the Macomb campus, and 6% indicated they were from the Quad Cities.

Overall Effectiveness

The faculty reported (Figure 1) an overall mean rating of effectiveness for the President of 2.96, as compared to 2.47 from last year's survey.

Overall the President is highly effective in performing his duties

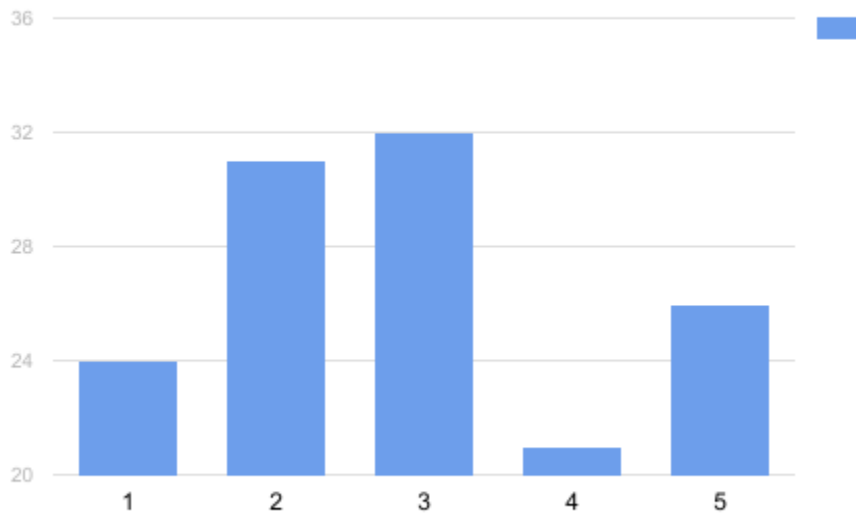


Figure 1. Distribution of 137 responses to the survey prompt: "Overall, the President is highly effective at performing his duties (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree)." The mean of the responses was 2.96 (compared to 2.47 from last year's survey). These responses exclude two "No Basis for Response" and one "Decline to Respond" answers.

When asked at the end of the section on Total Campus Enterprise if "overall, the President fosters the mission of the University," the mean rating was 3.15 (compared to 2.83 from last year's survey).

The respondents were first asked to rank the President's initiatives for the current year in order of importance to them. Figure 2 lists each initiative, and how these initiatives were ranked in importance by the respondents, from most to least important. Consistent with previous years, the greatest number of respondents indicated that Academic Programs was the most important. This is consistent with responses from prior years, reflecting the faculty's concern that President Thomas prioritize the quality of students' academic experiences. Budget was second in terms of initiatives chosen as most important by the faculty, also consistent with the previous year. Enrollment management was rated as the third most important initiative. Committees were the least important initiative by a wide margin (same as in the previous two years).

President Initiatives for 2016-2017

	Mean
Academic Programs	2.23
Budget	2.58
Enrollment Management	2.91
Facilities	4.73
Governmental Relations	4.86
Alumni Relations and Development	6.03
Professional Development	6.35
Campus Collaboration	6.76
Committees	8.55

Figure 2. The President's initiatives for 2016-2017, and how they were ranked in importance by the faculty respondents (1 = most important, 9 = least important).

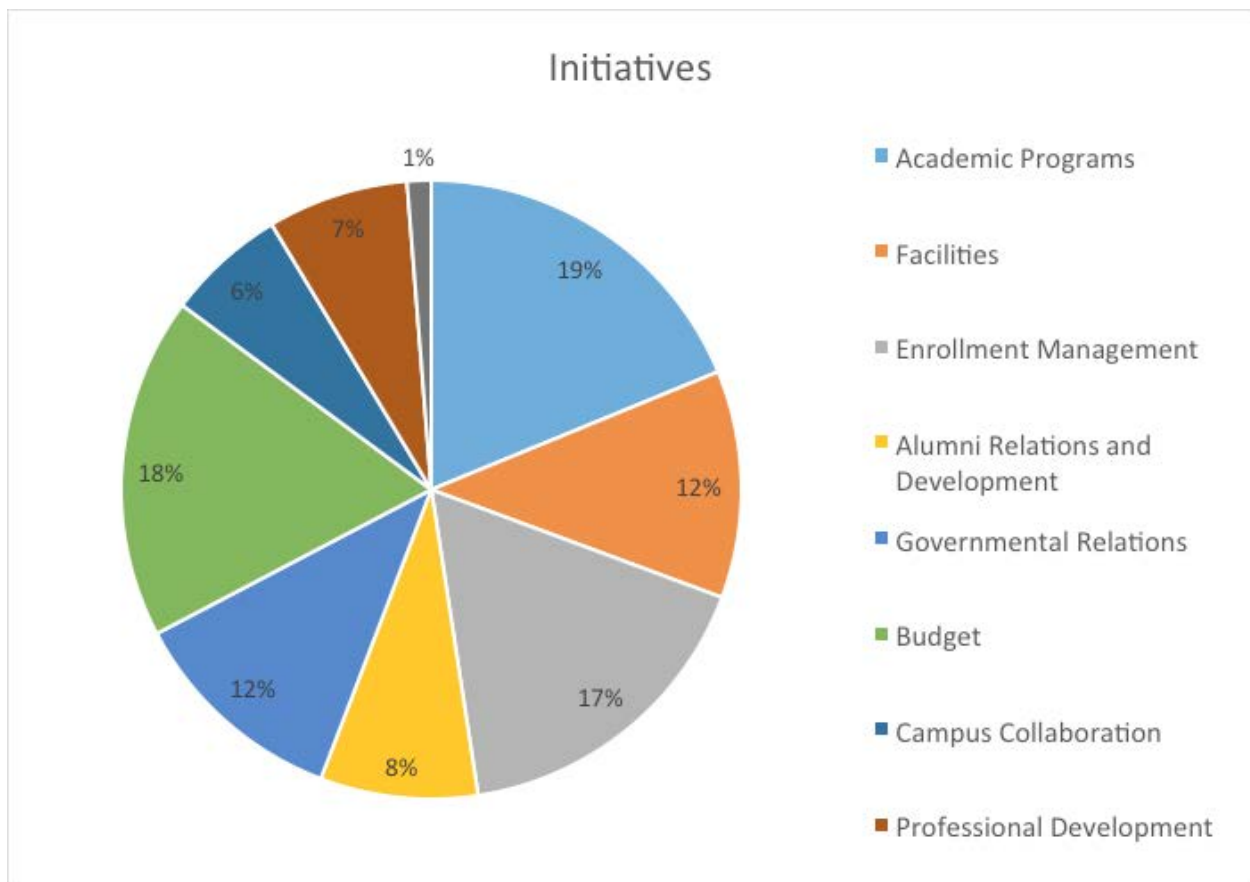


Figure 3. Pie chart showing the relative importance among faculty of the President's 2016-2017 initiatives (9=most important, 1=least important)

Areas of Performance

Discussion of ratings below is based on a rating scale of 1 to 5, where 1 meant faculty “strongly disagreed” with the statement, and 5 meant “strongly agreed” with the statement.

Total Campus Enterprise

Support for Scholarship, Teaching and Students

When asked if the President effectively promotes an environment for excellence in scholarship, the mean response from the faculty was 2.99. When asked if the President effectively promotes an environment for excellence in teaching, the respondents rated his performance at 3.15. The President’s performance was rated at 3.31 for “effectively promoting an environment for excellence in student learning.”

Campus Mission

There were several questions in the survey related to the President’s effectiveness in carrying out the University’s mission, or in his support of others in accomplishing their mission. With regards to short-range planning, the President’s policies were rated at 3.11, while his policies related to long-range planning were rated at 2.86. The higher rating for short-range planning is reflected in some comments of the respondents that credited the President for actions in the face of severe financial exigency.

With regards to the President’s effectiveness in promoting the University’s mission to the local community, the western Illinois region, and beyond the region, his actions were rated at 3.25, 3.32 and 3.26, respectively. The rating indicates that the faculty respondents consider President Thomas to be most effective in promoting the University to the local community. His effectiveness decreases for the western Illinois region, and he is least effective beyond the region.

With regards to the President’s effectiveness in fostering relationships among the relevant constituencies on campus, the ratings for his effectiveness with government agencies was 3.60, with potential donors was 3.46, with alumni was 3.52, with the local community was 3.33, with the Board of Trustees was 3.76 and with the University Professionals of Illinois (UPI) was 2.60. His lowest ratings were for relationships with the UPI and the local community. The highest ratings were for his relationship with the Board of Trustees and government agencies.

The next questions concerned how effectively the President has managed and provided resources to the departments, colleges and overall University. The faculty respondents rated his performance in supporting their department or academic unit at 2.77. They rated his performance in managing University resources at 3.06, and his effectiveness in securing funding at 2.79.

Overall Rating

Respondents rated the overall effectiveness of the President in fostering the mission of the University at 3.15.

Student Success

The faculty were asked to rate the President's demonstration of effort to ensure student success. In terms of increasing access, retention, and graduation of new high school graduates, respondents rated his performance at 3.33. In terms of increasing access, retention, and graduation of community college transfers, he was rated at 3.31. In terms of making undergraduate education affordable, he was rated at 3.81, and making graduate education affordable, 3.61. Concerning his effort to increase the availability of student financial aid, the President's performance was rated at 3.54, and in advocating policies to moderate debt load of students, he was rated at 3.57.

Academic Goals

Working with the Provost, Deans, and Student Services

The faculty were asked to rate the President's effectiveness in working with the Provost and the Deans to allocate resources to the departments. The respondents rated his work with the Provost at 3.14, but somewhat lower with the Deans at 2.98.

The faculty were asked to rate the President's effectiveness in working with the Provost to anticipate the future needs of the faculty, students and staff. The respondents rated his effectiveness in doing so at 2.73 for the faculty needs, 3.00 for student needs, and 2.93 for staff needs. Again, a consistent message from the faculty comments was the need to provide more opportunities and support for faculty research.

The faculty rated the President's effectiveness in working with Student Services to foster policies for student leadership and co-curricular participation. The respondents rated the President's effectiveness in fostering student leadership at 3.49, for co-curricular participation at 3.42, and for student quality of life (only second year for this category) at 3.56.

Academic programs in the Quad Cities and Macomb

Those taking the survey were asked about the President's support of the academic programs at the Quad Cities campus. The number of respondents to these questions, from 47 to 52, was significantly lower, indicating that most faculty having no experience with the Quad Cities refrained from responding. The respondents rated the President's leadership in planning for the QC academic programs to be 3.33, in developing the QC academic programs to be 3.27, in

implementing the QC academic programs to be 3.20, and in assessing the QC academic programs to be 3.23.

A parallel question regarding the President's support of the academic programs at the Macomb campus had from 101 to 110 respondents. The respondents rated his leadership in planning for the Macomb academic programs to be 3.13, in developing the Macomb academic programs to be 3.07, in implementing the Macomb academic programs to be 3.07, and in assessing the Macomb academic programs to be 3.13.

Overall Academic Standards

The faculty were asked to rate the President's effectiveness in fostering high academic standards for students at WIU. Respondents rated the President's performance at 3.08.

Preparing Students for a Globally Competitive Environment

In this relatively new category, the faculty rated the President's effectiveness in promoting enhancement of student learning outcomes for a globally competitive environment at 2.87.

Support for research

When asked to respond to the statement, "The President allocates resources so that your department or academic unit's faculty can accomplish their research mission," the respondents rated the President's performance at 2.32. The comments indicate widespread dissatisfaction with the support they receive for carrying out their research agenda.

Personnel, Faculty Relations, and Campus Issues

A series of two questions were asked regarding faculty, staff and student activities. The first question was whether the President's management practices promote excellence. The respondents rated the President with regard to faculty at 2.80, with regard to staff at 2.93, and with regard to students at 3.21. The second question was whether the President's management practices promote diversity. The respondents rate the President with regard to faculty at 3.41, with regard to staff at 3.51, and with regard to students at 3.67. Consistent with last year, the President's highest ratings of effectiveness are for his work in promoting diversity. More participants responded to the item pertaining to faculty (126-128 respondents) as opposed to staff (91-92 respondents) and student activities (92 respondents).

The faculty members being surveyed were then asked to evaluate whether the President is "responsive to your concerns." The President's responsiveness was rated at 2.88.

Macomb Campus

The survey asked the respondents to evaluate whether the President promotes the Macomb campus work environment to be healthy, safe, and pleasant. The respondents rated his effectiveness in promoting these characteristics at the Macomb campus to be 3.33, 3.50 and 3.18, respectively. The number of respondents averaged 124.

Quad Cities Campus

The same questions were asked regarding the Quad Cities campus, for which an average of 37 people responded. The respondents rated his effectiveness in promoting a healthy, safe, and pleasant environment to be 3.68, 3.62 and 3.71, respectively.

Faculty governance

The respondents were asked to evaluate whether the President supports faculty governance at all levels. The respondents' rating was 2.89.

Administrative appointments

The respondents were asked to evaluate whether the President makes effective administrative appointments. They rated his effectiveness of making appointments at 2.63.

Physical facilities

In response to the statement, "The President directs the University's physical facilities so that they meet the needs of your department or academic unit," the respondents rated the President's performance at 2.67.

Figure 4: President's Survey Quantitative Data

For each of the following series of questions the respondents were asked to rate how effective President Thomas is in performing various aspects of his responsibilities. The scale ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). If the respondent felt he or she couldn't or shouldn't answer, he or she could answer "No Basis for Response" or "Decline to Respond."

NB: "No Basis for Response" and "Decline to Respond" numbers were not used in calculating the mean or standard deviation. The totals of these responses for each question are reported in Appendix 2. The labeling of the years in the columns refers to the academic year being evaluated.

Q #	Question Text	Mean (Average) Score			Standard Deviation*			N # of respondents per question**		
		2016-2017	2015-16	2014-15	2016-2017	2015-16	2014-15	2016-2017	2015-16	2014-15
A1-	The President									

3.	effectively promotes an environment for excellence in: i. Scholarship ii. Teaching iii. Student learning	2.99 3.15 3.31	2.69 2.91 3.05	3.09 3.23 3.26	1.42 1.32 1.27	1.33 1.37 1.30	1.44 1.34 1.29	142 141 141	240 244 243	147 145 142
A4-5.	The President effectively promotes policies that support the mission of the University relative to: i. Short term strategic planning ii. Long term strategic planning	3.11 2.86	2.68 2.57	3.22 3.02 ^a	1.39 1.47	1.39 1.42	1.31 1.43	142 142	242 240	143 142
A6-8.	The President effectively promotes the University's academic mission to: i. The local community ii. The western Illinois region iii. Beyond the region	3.25 3.32 3.26	2.96 2.93 2.81	3.16 3.14 3.19	1.43 1.40 1.38	1.38 1.42 1.41	1.48 1.44 1.43	141 142 141	228 220 201	141 136 128
A9-14.	The President fosters effective relationships with: i. Government agencies ii. Potential donors iii. Alumni iv. Local Community v. Board of Trustees vi. UPI (University Professionals of Illinois)	3.60 3.46 3.52 3.33 3.76 2.60	2.93 2.97 3.14 2.91 3.42 2.05	3.24 3.32 3.31 3.17 3.78 2.95	1.35 1.40 1.30 1.42 1.31 1.40	1.42 1.37 1.33 1.34 1.34 1.32	1.41 1.33 1.32 1.45 1.23 1.38	142 142 141 142 142 142	209 158 184 223 199 243	119 111 121 131 112 132
A15.	The President effectively promotes policies that foster the activities of your department or academic unit.	2.77	2.44	2.76	1.38	1.37	1.46	138	234	147
A16.	The President manages the University's resources well.	3.06	2.65	3.06	1.38	1.43	1.47	139	240	147
A17.	The President effectively secures funding to support university initiatives.	2.79	2.28	2.83	1.37	1.38	1.43	140	213	138
A18.	Overall, the President fosters the mission of Western Illinois University.	3.15	2.83	3.23	1.34	1.40	1.39	140	242	147
B1-6.	To ensure student success, the President									

	demonstrates effort to: -increase access, retention, and graduation of new high school graduates	3.33	3.13	-	1.26	1.36	-	140	216	-
	-increase access, retention, and graduation of community college transfers	3.31	3.05	-	1.20	1.34	-	140	203	-
	-make undergraduate education affordable	3.81	3.69	-	1.11	1.25	-	139	217	-
	-make graduate education affordable	3.61	3.41	-	1.13	1.26	-	139	187	-
	-increase the availability of student financial aid	3.54	3.34	-	1.19	1.36	-	140	174	-
	-advocate policies to moderate debt load of students	3.57	3.25	-	1.28	1.35	-	139	174	-
C1- 2.	The President works effectively with ____ to allocate resources for your department or academic unit to achieve WIU's mission i. Provost ii. Deans	3.14 2.98	2.88 2.62	3.32 3.01	1.41 1.42	1.45 1.39	1.41 1.43	139 139	189 199	126 129
C3- 5.	The President works effectively with the Provost anticipating future needs (i.e., technology, infrastructure, or student services) of: i. faculty ii. students iii. staff	2.73 3.00 2.93	2.48 2.77 2.58	2.75 3.10 2.97	1.43 1.38 1.40	1.43 1.40 1.39	1.53 1.43 1.49	139 139 139	208 196 175	177 158 134
C6- 7.	The President works effectively with Student Services to foster policies for: i. student leadership ii. co-curricular participation iii. student quality of life	3.49 3.42 3.56	3.23 3.14 3.12	3.46 3.35 -	1.46 1.41 1.37	1.35 1.35 1.37	1.38 1.41 -	139 139 138	132 123 128	103 98 -
C8- 11.	Regarding the Quad Cities academic programs, the President provides leadership in: i. planning ii. developing iii. implementing iv. assessing	3.33 3.27 3.20 3.23	2.70 2.75 2.74 2.62	3.24 3.23 3.12 3.08	1.57 1.62 1.61 1.64	1.48 1.50 1.52 1.50	1.49 1.49 1.54 1.50	138 136 137 134	113 110 111 105	80 80 78 75
C12- 15.	Regarding the Macomb academic programs, the									

	President provides leadership in:									
	i. planning	3.13	2.56	3.05	1.40	1.44	1.44	138	208	130
	ii. developing	3.07	2.50	2.99	1.44	1.39	1.46	138	202	131
	iii. implementing	3.07	2.55	2.99	1.40	1.44	1.46	138	201	128
	iv. assessing	3.13	2.46	2.91	1.43	1.39	1.47	138	194	126
C16.	The President fosters high academic standards for students at Western Illinois University	3.08	2.77	3.09	1.33	1.37	1.44	139	230	149
C17.	The President promotes enhancement of student learning outcomes for a globally competitive environment	2.87	2.72	-	1.37	1.41	-	138	219	-
C18.	The President allocates resources so that your department or academic unit's faculty can accomplish their research mission.	2.32	2.12	2.43	1.23	1.27	1.44	139	226	149
D1-2.	Regarding faculty, the President's management practices promote									
	i. Excellence	2.80	2.33	2.83	1.47	1.42	1.45	136	235	147
	ii. Diversity	3.41	3.05	3.79	1.45	1.57	1.20	136	225	145
D3-4.	Regarding staff, the President's management practices promote:									
	i. Excellence	2.93	2.52	2.83	1.51	1.48	1.49	137	172	115
	ii. Diversity	3.51	3.12	3.59	1.47	1.54	1.31	135	165	117
D5-6.	Regarding student activities, the President's management practices promote:									
	i. Excellence	3.21	2.87	3.08	1.45	1.46	1.44	137	165	121
	ii. Diversity	3.67	3.40	3.66	1.34	1.43	1.31	137	164	123
D7.	The President is responsive to your concerns.	2.88	2.40	2.89	1.41	1.45	1.55	136	209	118
D8-10.	The President effectively promotes the Macomb campus work environment to be									
	i. healthy	3.33	3.03	3.32	1.38	1.42	1.42	137	219	140
	ii. safe	3.50	3.22	3.33	1.31	1.39	1.36	137	224	142
	iii. pleasant	3.18	2.70	3.23	1.37	1.50	1.45	137	225	142

D11-13.	The President effectively promotes the Quad Cities campus work environment to be									
	i. healthy	3.68	3.37	3.76	1.47	1.49	1.41	137	75	58
	ii. safe	3.62	3.45	3.76	1.50	1.44	1.33	137	74	55
	iii. pleasant	3.71	3.33	3.77	1.49	1.53	1.41	136	78	57
D14.	The President supports faculty governance at all levels.	2.89	2.46	3.15	1.40	1.49	1.35	136	217	142
D15.	The President makes effective administrative appointments.	2.63	2.22	2.64	1.45	1.38	1.46	136	217	137
D16.	The President directs the University's physical facilities so that they meet the needs of your department or academic unit	2.67	2.72	2.88	1.25	1.38	1.37	136	207	145
	Overall, the President is highly effective at performing his duties^a	2.96	2.47	3.10	1.37	1.42	1.41	137	238	147

* Standard deviation is a measure of dispersion. In other words, it measures the degree to which responses are spread out around the mean. The larger the standard deviation, the more the scores differ from the mean. Alternatively, if the standard deviation is small, this indicates that the scores were very close to one another.

** In the 2016-17 survey, 156 faculty members began the survey, and completed it (according to the survey software). However, this includes people who answered some questions and then stopped, or skipped ahead to the end. The best estimate of the number that actually completed would be the number reported for the last question (131 participants). The statistical means were calculated using the number of respondents who responded 1 through 5 on the rate scale provided. This number is indicated in the third column of numbers in Figure 4.

^a In the 2014-15 surveys, this question read, "Overall, I rate the President as".

Qualitative Analysis of Open Ended Comments:

At the end of each of the four sections in the survey and concerning the President's overall performance, faculty were asked to add any additional comments regarding the President's performance in those areas. Representative comments are presented below by the section of the survey in which they were submitted, and within each section, organized as positive comments and negative comments. Additionally, faculty used some comments to make

recommendations to the President for changing his performance in serving the University. A representative number of these are included in Appendix 1.

Total Campus Enterprise

47 faculty offered comments in this section. Of these, 19 were positive, 19 were negative, and nine were not clearly one or the other. One person declined to comment about the President's performance because the comment would identify the individual (this comment appeared in each comment section).

The recurring theme in the majority of the positive comments was the challenge in leading the institution due to the budget crisis and/or the condition of our state government. Comments included, "He is making sure that we can continue to operate." Another wrote, "Dr. Thomas has been an outstanding leader during these unprecedented budgetary times. He continues to ensure that we optimize our resources and are fiscally responsible since we cannot count on the state for support. Dr. Thomas continues to speak eloquently regarding the need for funding for WIU, and the damage that has been caused by the lack of support from the state." "Doing his job well considering the state of Illinois." Apart from the budget issues, other commenters addressed leadership qualities with comments such as, "He engages at all levels and communicates through many channels." "I appreciate that the President is available to faculty as needed." "Best president ever." Additional comments indicate that the state government and his peers recognize President Thomas as a superior leader, and that we are fortunate to have a positive and energetic president.

A broader range of topics was mentioned in the negative comments. Several comments referred to the gradual decline of the University, including declines in enrollment, the physical condition of the facilities, and the morale of the faculty. Comments also criticized the relationship between the President and the leadership of UPI, as well as the management of the faculty layoff processes last year. Some indicated a feeling of disconnect between President Thomas and the WIU community, with the perception that Dr. Thomas is more interested in serving on boards and committees. A final recurring theme is a call for a national search for a permanent Provost. One person commented, "I feel he lacks in his ability to engage our local community. It is my understanding that many local citizens and business owners are not seeing any benefits from his leadership. In fact many would argue the opposite, that his tenure here has not proven to be beneficial for the city of Macomb and its surrounding areas as a result of the constant decline in enrollment under his tenure." Another person stated, "The President goes out of his way to alienate and attack campus unions, and is far more interested in feathering his own nest than in doing what is best for this institution. In a time of declining state support, the President expands his own staff while attempting to get rid of faculty and departments. Leadership requires a willingness to lead by example."

The comments also contained suggestions, including aggressively recruiting local high school students, cutting non-performing programs, and finding better ways to communicate with the faculty.

Student Success

23 faculty provided comments at the end of the Student Success section of the survey. Of these, seven were positive, 11 were negative, and five were not clearly positive or negative.

Many of the positive comments were related to the high cost of education and the related institutional support provided to students. Regarding tuition, one person commented, "Dr. Thomas has been vocal about making education affordable for students. We decreased tuition last year, and will not increase it next year. Dr. Thomas has been very vocal about MAP funding as well. We have given MAP funding to students even when no state funding has been available." Another commented, "Preserving MAP was the right thing to do. Cutting tuition did not seem to increase enrollment--but may have helped stabilize it." Other commenters recognized efforts to insulate students from the budget crisis, increased involvement with parents and prospective students, and support for additional scholarship opportunities.

One common theme among the negative comments is a lowering of academic standards, both for admission in general, and for graduate admission requirements in certain programs. Another theme is a lack of engagement with the student body. Some of these comments include, "I want to be able to respond to these questions but the transparency regarding these issues is just not there. Let's try getting the word out better. I also think that we have too many programs . . . that really have such a low criteria for admission that the Master's degree is worthless. As hard as it may be for Dr. Thomas he has to take a hard look at these graduate programs and cut the ones that are just taking the student's money. " "He does not care about success, only diversity within the student body." "He's not in touch with the day to day lives of our students or their level of preparation and skill."

Commenters also addressed Admissions, expressing frustration over not attracting or losing students, a lack of use of faculty as a resource, and citing the recent faculty layoffs as a disincentive to prospective students. "The president should actively encourage the admissions director to use the resources faculty have offered - themselves and passion for what they do - now. Faculty want to be involved and have offered, but those in Sherman are not taking advantage of our time, eagerness or passion for wanting WIU to be the very best it can be for our students." "Student success depends on strong programs run by faculty working in an environment of open debate and academic freedom. By laying off tenured professors without following the proper procedures, President Thomas has created an atmosphere of fear, which is not conducive to academic excellence at any level." "It's hard to say we're encouraging student success if we are laying off faculty and staff and eliminating majors. Those actions do not inspire students to come to and succeed at WIU."

Included in the more neutral comments were a number of suggestions, such as pursuing activities that set WIU apart from other universities, reducing fees for graduate students, programs to defray external costs (licensure, etc.), and again, initiate a search for a permanent Provost.

Academic Goals

36 faculty members provided comments regarding academic goals. Three comments were positive, 22 comments were negative, and 11 did not clearly fit either category.

The positive comments, in their entirety, included, "Dr. Thomas is very supportive of all departments. I believe he wants each area to succeed and grow." "Western Illinois University is doing well in these unprecedented budgetary times in a large part because of the outstanding leadership of Dr. Thomas and his administrative team. Recruitment and retention remain a top priority. Advocating for funding is a top priority. I am very grateful to Dr. Thomas for his leadership." "High academic standards are encouraged by the President. He is concerned about providing value to the students."

There are several recurring themes among the negative comments. Most prominent are a lack of support for faculty research, the need for a Provost search, and issues surrounding the elimination of academic programs. While some comments were critical of the cutting of essential programs, or the metrics by which programs were selected for scrutiny, others commented that more programs should be cut and the recovered financial resources should be earmarked to support faculty travel and other research-related expenses. Among the comments were, "WIU purports to be a research institution, but trying to conduct research--and especially grant-funded research--at WIU entails an enormous amount of pointless bureaucracy and tremendous costs for the faculty researcher. If WIU truly valued research, policies and administrators would foster a workplace which encouraged it. My experiences make me doubt administrators, from the top down, really know what is involved in a research undertaking at this institution. The fact that WIU says it values research, but then does not actually pay for it or encourage it (beyond requiring some evidence of research for retention and promotion) suggests the institution might achieve better results if it dropped its unfulfilled mission to promote research and instead diverted resources to becoming an outstanding teaching institution." "The president has attacked tenure and academic freedom at WIU, first by putting dozens of faculty on a lay-off list without consulting the faculty senate about how this would impact the curriculum, and second, for laying off tenure-track faculty members just before coming up for tenure, tenuring them, and then insisting they are still laid off. If universities tenure people and say they do not have the protections of tenure, tenure does not exist. These actions threaten the academic freedom of all faculty members at WIU. They create an atmosphere of fear rather than of open, productive debate. They threaten the integrity of our work as scholars and teachers." "Thomas' war on the humanities and CAS continues, this despite his academic background. I still remain stunned that he led the killing of Philosophy, Religious Studies, African American Studies, and Women's Studies. The cost saving has been minimal--the damage to our university immeasurable."

Suggestions taken from the comments include, "Academic goals should be guided by a simple question, "What does an educated person look like in the 21st century?" The next question is, "How does an education at Western help achieve that?"" College and departmental leadership

is needed to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses to better use resources that complement our mission.”

Personnel, Faculty Relations, and Campus Issues

Comments from this section of the survey included three positive, 21 negative, and 10 that were not clearly positive or negative, or contained only suggestions. 34 faculty members provided comments.

The positive comments, in their entirety, included, “Dr. Thomas has created the President's Faculty Roundtable, the President's Staff Roundtable, and the President's Student Roundtable. He is most certainly aware of today's challenges, and is extremely responsive to our concerns.” “It is hard to function in this current climate and I do not envy Dr. Thomas for the decisions he has to make on a daily basis. It cannot be easy under these hard fiscal times. Keeping open lines of communication is very important. I hope that Dr. Thomas continues to do this. “ “President Thomas has created a strong leadership team. He is accessible to visit with regarding ideas or concerns. He has done the best he could with facilities but again the lack of a State Budget for two years has hurt his initiatives.”

Negative comments again include several common themes. Criticism of hiring a Chief of Staff and low campus morale are most frequently mentioned. Also mentioned multiple times are layoffs, an overabundance of interim administrators, and a feeling of animosity toward faculty on the part of the president as well as from other faculty. “Why does a president need a chief of staff, who gets \$30,000 added to his salary? This, in a time when staff were laid off over the summer and faculty are still slated to be laid off at the end of this academic year? What a great message. I know WIU does really well in the number of administrators that we have, but that chief of staff hire gave a TERRIBLE message. And this isn't about who was appointed... it's the fact that our president needs a chief of staff.” “The president's lay-offs confirmed what I feared: lip service for diversity in faculty. The lay-offs disproportionately hurt women and people of color. We all know it. I also see zero commitment to faculty scholarship. Finally, the president is SO hostile to the faculty union that it's a major problem. Rather than working together--as we are on the same team--he barely acknowledges UPI exists. The fact that the union needs to FOIA so many public documents is one of countless examples of his administration's hostility. So, too, the dragging out of grievance hearings re: the mass firings. Thomas gives lip service to shared governance when, in actuality, he and his senior admin. team don't want to share anything except the pain of financial and job cuts.” “Regarding personnel--upper administration seems laden with interim appointments. This does not inspire full confidence. It seems we always hire from within (the President was himself hired from within when he was Provost). We need outside talent and new ideas.”

Among the more neutral items were some suggestions, including exercising greater care with internal hiring, paying closer attention to the condition of buildings, and improving university infrastructure.

Overall Performance

35 faculty members provided comments regarding the President's overall performance. Eleven comments were positive, fourteen were negative, and ten were mixed or offered suggestions.

The positive comments universally characterize Dr. Thomas as a strong leader. Some of the comments include, "We are fortunate to have his leadership during this time. We will look back years from now and realize how effectively he led us through the crisis." "Has lead in negotiating with the state on budget." "Overall, President Thomas does an outstanding job leading WIU. He has to deal with a very difficult situation with no state budget, yet he still plans for the future of WIU and is appropriately adjusting the future vision for WIU. I support President Thomas."

There are recurring themes in the negative comments. Some question the President's leadership and vision, there is again the mention of program elimination and faculty layoffs, and low morale. Some of these comments were, "I am dismayed that the president has eliminated departments against faculty consent for what appear to ideological reasons. I am dismayed that he has shown a lack of respect for faculty governance, and that many consequential decisions seem to take place in "smoke filled rooms." When I have asked basic questions about why decisions were made to lay off particular faculty members, I have received vague and conflicting answers." "Stop focusing on LOOKING good and promote things that allow us to actually BE good!" "Dr. Thomas needs to decide who we are/want to be. Are we a STEM school? A Liberal Arts University? Those are two very different things; he must decide and move forward with that decision as we can no longer be all things to all people." "Every time I hear from the president, it's about the budget. Again, I appreciate how hard this situation has been. After all, I have seen colleagues fired and wages cut, I have seen student numbers decline, etc. All I ever hear from Thomas is how great WIU is doing (like in his pro forma, we're now #9 instead of #14). It's boosterism at its worst, a la Sinclair Lewis. I wish our president was committed to the intellectual experience of students and faculty instead of being a president in absentia." "The President should be the main spokesman to the media, not necessarily Matt Bierman. Someone watching or reading many news stories might think Matt is the WIU President."

Among the suggestions were a call for collaboration between academic affairs and student services, looking for novel ideas and programs that will make WIU unique, listening to faculty and making use of them as a resource, mobilizing alumni and donors in our struggles with Springfield, and an increased use of social media to enhance communication.

Appendix 1 Recommendations by Faculty Expressed in 2016-17 Survey

Total Campus Enterprise

1. "There is a major need to engage in a more aggressive recruitment at the local level. Parents complain of the lack of connectivity between WIU and our local high schools. We

should make our local WIU students an example of how local students can be successful at WIU.”

2. “Cut non-performing programs and support programs that are growing and contributing to the growth of enrollment and satisfying the needs of the region.”
3. “We need to fill interim positions to allow new individuals to develop new institutional objectives and mission.”
4. “. . . more transparency would be helpful during these difficult times. There may be good reasons to hire a Chief of Staff or an outside attorney as chief negotiator for the contract talks, but they are not apparent. It would be useful to communicate why resources should be allocated in these ways when they are so scarce.”

Student Success

5. “. . . take a hard look at these graduate programs and cut the ones that are just taking the student's money.”
6. “Fees should be reduced for graduate students. There are several programs that besides the online library resources the students do not access them because they are off-campus and commute in for classes. The Macomb fees are exorbitant for graduate students.”
7. “The president should actively encourage the admissions director to use the resources faculty have offered - themselves and passion for what they do - now.”

Academic Goals

8. “Academic goals should be guided by a simple question, "What does an educated person look like in the 21st century?" The next question is, "How does an education at Western help achieve that?"”
9. “We need to reconsider the teaching evaluation process and encourage review of curricula that are demanding of student developing critical skills, this is not currently the system.”
10. “More support for student tutoring and success;”
11. “Faculty need travel funds, increased technology in the classroom and support!”

Personnel, Faculty Relations, and Campus Issues

12. “We need to be more careful with the internal hires process. I understand that the budget situation is difficult but this university is not moving forward in part for the lack of fresh novel ideas and the constant internal hires at department and major positions at the university level.”

13. "Many faculty have been ostracized, bullied and mobbed, or otherwise targeted by others who have something to gain by eliminating their voice. This is more prevalent in some colleges than others. The relationship between the Union and the President seems to be particularly contentious. We need to have some options for mediation in the University. We also need a mechanism in human services or equal opportunity that address these situations that are not based upon sexual harassment or protected class issues. In some cases, individuals are targeted and currently have no recourse except to accept the health consequences resulting from years of abuse or leave WIU altogether."

14. "I think that the campus infrastructure needs a lot of attention. I am not sure if President Thomas can do anything about it without support from the State."

Overall Performance

15. "There is a need to take WIU to the next level looking for novel ideas and programs that will respond to the market demands and we need to support strongly the things that make us unique as an institution. We have been in damage control mode for far too long. That may take to hire external people in key positions for the development of successful programs."

16. ". . . listen more closely to the advice of the very smart and longitudinal thinking faculty he has at his disposal."

17. "Perhaps using a social media platform (e.g., Facebook) from the President's office (e.g. "This Week at Western") that gives honest updates about positive and negative things happening at Western and to Western would improve the feeling of communication/transparency. This might demonstrate the importance of the Chief of Staff position, because it is likely that person would be responsible for such an information resource."

18. "We are not carefully enough considering changes that are happening in K-12 education to prepare us for the future student. When we do this, when we address the real needs of what students both want and need to be successful adults, then recruitment will be less an issue. Students will choose WIU because we are forward thinking and our graduates will be highly sought after in greater numbers."

Appendix 2

Number of questions answered “No Basis for Response” or “Decline to Respond”

Question	No Basis for Response	Decline to Respond
The President effectively promotes an environment for excellence in:		
i. Scholarship	3	2
ii. Teaching	2	2
iii. Student learning	6	2
The President effectively promotes policies that support the mission of the University relative to:		
i. Short term strategic planning	5	2
ii. Long term strategic planning	5	2
The President effectively promotes the University’s academic mission to:		
i. The local community	10	2
ii. The western Illinois region	12	2
iii. Beyond the region	23	2
The President fosters effective relationships with:		
i. Government agencies	22	2
ii. Potential donors	42	2
iii. Alumni	30	2
iv. Local Community	14	2
v. Board of Trustees	26	3
vi. UPI (University Professionals of Illinois)	13	3
The President effectively promotes policies that foster the activities of your department or academic unit.		
	5	0
The President manages the University’s resources well.		
	4	3
The President effectively secures funding to support University initiatives.		
	15	4
Overall, the President fosters the mission of Western Illinois University.		
	3	1
To ensure student success, the President demonstrates effort to:		
-increase access, retention, and graduation of new high school graduates	22	3
-increase access, retention, and graduation of community college transfers	28	3
-make undergraduate education affordable	9	3
-make graduate education affordable	22	3
-increase the availability of student financial aid	30	3
-advocate policies to moderate debt load of students	42	3
The President works effectively with ____ to allocate resources for your department or academic unit to achieve WIU’s mission		
i. Provost	35	5
ii. Deans	32	6
The President works effectively with the Provost anticipating future needs (i.e., technology, infrastructure, or student services) of:		
i. faculty	26	4
ii. students	36	4
iii. staff	49	4
The President works effectively with Student Services to foster policies for:		
i. student leadership	67	4
ii. co-curricular participation	68	4
iii. student quality of life	63	4

Question	No Basis for Response	Decline to Respond
Regarding the Quad Cities academic programs, the President provides leadership in:		
i. planning	81	5
ii. developing	80	4
iii. implementing	83	4
iv. assessing	83	4
Regarding the Macomb academic programs, the President provides leadership in:		
i. planning	22	6
ii. developing	23	6
iii. implementing	25	6
iv. assessing	31	6
The President fosters high academic standards for students at Western Illinois University	4	0
The President promotes enhancement of student learning outcomes for a globally competitive environment	19	3
The President allocates resources so that your department or academic unit's faculty can accomplish their research mission	3	1
Regarding faculty, the President's management practices promote		
i. Excellence	5	3
ii. Diversity	6	4
Regarding staff, the President's management practices promote:		
i. Excellence	41	5
ii. Diversity	37	6
Regarding student activities, the President's management practices promote:		
i. Excellence	41	4
ii. Diversity	41	4
The President is responsive to your concerns	23	4
The President effectively promotes the Macomb campus work environment to be		
i. healthy	12	3
ii. safe	10	3
iii. pleasant	10	3
The President effectively promotes the Quad Cities campus work environment to be		
i. healthy	97	3
ii. safe	97	3
iii. pleasant	97	3
The President supports faculty governance at all levels	12	2
The President makes effective administrative appointments	13	3
The President directs the University's physical facilities so that they meet the needs of your department or academic unit	15	1
Overall, the President is highly effective at performing his duties	2	1