

AD HOC REPORT

Submitted to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

Western Washington University

September 27, 2018

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INTRODUCTION

On July 10, 2017, Western Washington University received notice from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities that our accreditation had been affirmed on the basis of the Spring 2017 Year Seven Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Evaluation. In reaffirming accreditation, the Commission determined that its expectations regarding Recommendations 1 and 2 of the Spring 2014 Year Three Peer-Evaluation Report had been fulfilled. However, The Commission requested that the University submit an Ad Hoc Report with a visit in fall 2018 to address Recommendation 4 of the Spring 2017 Year Seven Peer-Evaluation Report.

RECOMMENDATION 4

The Evaluation Committee recommends the institution document and evaluate regularly its cycle of planning, practices, resource allocation, application of institutional capacity, and assessment of results to ensure their adequacy, alignment, and effectiveness. It uses the results of its evaluation to make changes, as necessary, for improvement. [5.B.2]

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

Western's long tradition of planning occurs at several levels and is informed by our state system, iterative feedback and evaluation, and the high value we place on encouraging broad participation in the budget and legislative processes (collectively referred to as the budget process below).

As a state institution, our cycles of planning are necessarily structured according to the various deadlines and processes imposed by the State of Washington, which operates on a biennial budget period. This budget period is divided into: 1) the biennial operating budget, and 2) a supplemental operating budget for the biennium's second year. The State expects budget proposals from its agencies, including universities, in September of the previous year (September 2018 for the 2019-21 operating budget, for example). Therefore, Western has at least two processes for each budget year: 1) preparation for State proposals, and 2) allocation of institutional resources (such as net new tuition revenue).

Corresponding biennial capital budgets are also due in September of the previous year, along with capital budget project requests. Since no internal resources are specifically devoted to new capital projects, this process is in some respects less complex. Yet with capital and project requests due each year, their timing overlays the state budget process.

Western historically has included between two and five "decision package" proposals as part of its operating budget proposal. Decision packages are high-impact proposals that typically involve new programs or large enhancements to current programs that cannot be accomplished through internal allocation. Because of their importance and the internal campus interests and external support dynamics around them, decision package proposals must be carefully planned, thoroughly reviewed, and written to be clear and compelling cases. The proposals are assessed through the lens of the following criteria: 1) aligning with Western's mission, 2) fulfilling State needs, 3) garnering the most support by State policy makers, and 4) leveraging external funding and support. Consequently, we devote substantial time to their preparation and provide multiple opportunities for input and feedback from faculty, staff and other stakeholders. These decision

packages are key to changes in our institutional capacity and are informed by assessment at both the state and institutional level. Internal assessments have informed decision packages which increased institutional capacity for serving STEM majors, for instance, while state assessments have resulted in decision packages to expand our institutional capacity to serve the Kitsap Peninsula.

The basic structure of Western’s planning process has been similar for many years and balances broad, “bottom-up” participation within the context of a unified strategic plan. Reflective of our goal to empower units and to encourage broad participation in the budget process, proposals originate at the unit level and are discussed at the college/division level but must be linked to the University’s strategic goals. In most cases, a subset of proposals is forwarded from the college or division to the University level. These are posted online for comment; they also are presented to the University Planning and Resource Council (UPRC), a Faculty Senate committee that also includes the Vice Presidents and representatives from classified and exempt staff and student government.

The UPRC makes recommendations to the Vice Presidents and Deans, who then recommend to the President proposals for inclusion in the budget. These recommendations also are posted online for comment. The President’s recommendations are then presented to the Board of Trustees for final approval. All recommendations are based on fulfillment of mission and strategic goals, which is true for all biennial budget processes, including operating, capital and internal budgets, as well as what is submitted to the State. Depending on their timing, supplemental proposals to the State may use a more truncated process but the full process remains our template. Illustrated as a flow chart, the process is as follows:

Step 1 (Unit):

Unit (academic department or support office) drafts funding proposal informed by emerging needs, strategic plan, and assessment data. Proposals are submitted to the appropriate College/Division (With decision packages, this process is amended slightly to include initial pre-proposal submissions to the UPRC).



Step 2 (College/Division):

College/Division reviews unit proposals; selects those to formally develop and to advance to the UPRC.



Step 3 (UPRC):

UPRC discusses and evaluates all proposals; simultaneously, the proposals are published for public comment. UPRC ranks and recommends proposals for Vice Presidents and Deans.



Step 4 (VPs/Deans):

Vice Presidents and Deans recommend proposals to the President; recommendations are published for public comment.



Step 5 (President):

President makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees, who act on the recommendations.

An example of this process can be seen in the strategic decision-making process and funding that led to this year's expansion of our Honors first-year class.

Step 1 (Unit): This decision chain began with triangulated sets of assessment data. First, assessment analyses performed by our Office of Institutional Research demonstrated that participation in Western's Honors program correlated positively with higher rates of retention and graduation, and with higher rates of enrollment—even when Honors participants were compared with similar “honors qualified” students who elected not to participate in the program. Second, separate analyses within Admissions concluded that increasing the size of the Honors program would increase Western's yield of highly-prepared students. Third, retention rates within Honors demonstrated that more Honors students were electing to remain in the program until graduation, suggesting the program was providing value for participants.

In addition, the over-representation of Honors students among our distinguished fellowship winners suggested the program was providing academic value for our students. Finally, Honors findings noted positive results from a pilot recruitment strategy in which the Director and Assistant Director visited high schools with diverse student populations to guest lecture and to speak about the value of Honors programs.

Because “enhancing academic excellence” and “advancing inclusive success” were emerging as key elements of the new strategic plan, Honors—working within its unit with the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education—wrote an emerging needs proposal to fund recruitment visits to

diverse high schools and to expand the entering class from 150 to 170 students. The proposal was submitted to the Office of the Provost. (See [Honors Proposal](#).)

Step 2 (College/Division): The Provost, after reviewing all emergent needs proposals, selected the Honors proposal to be submitted to the UPRC.

Step 3 (UPRC): The UPRC discussed and evaluated the Honors proposal; public comments on the proposal were solicited through UPRC representatives and Budget Office Website. The UPRC ranked the Honors proposal in the top third of its recommendations and submitted it to the Vice Presidents and Deans.

Step 4 (VPs/Deans): The VPs and Deans discussed the Honors proposal in terms of its relation to the emerging strategic plan and recommended it to the President.

Step 5 (President): The President reviewed all proposals and recommended funding of the Honors proposal to the Board of Trustees as part of the next year's operating budget. The Board of Trustees passed an operating budget with the Honor proposal included. Finally, Honors enrolled 170 new students—its largest class ever—this fall. The results of this funding, including changes in the diversity and composition of next year's Honors first-year class, and the impact of the Honors expansion upon the enrollment, retention and achievement of Honors students, will be reported out in the annual report of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and shared with the UPRC.

While complicated, Western's strategic budgeting process is well documented. The most current process document is attached as Appendix A. Timing details, as well as documents related to the proposals and the budget, are posted on the Budget Office website.

The planning process is evaluated annually by a strategic review committee which includes:

- the Provost,
- the Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs,
- the Director of the Budget Office,
- the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, and
- the UPRC, which provides feedback through its chair and through discussion at UPRC meetings.

This evaluation focuses on what worked and what didn't in the past year, feedback received from stakeholders and the UPRC, as well as needs and structural elements—such as state deadlines—to be kept in mind for the following year. This results in material changes, such as a revised process, as well as timeline adjustments presented to the UPRC in the form of a draft planning calendar. The UPRC reviews and confirms this calendar in early fall quarter. Consequently, our new budgeting process, and deadlines, is not yet posted on our web sites but will be as soon as the UPRC has confirmed it.

These evaluations of the planning process have led to substantive changes in the planning process. For example, review of the planning process in 2016-17 led to a change in the strategic review of state decision-package proposals in that units submitted pre-proposals to UPRC for early review and comment. This early review reduced the number of full proposals submitted,

saving units time while yielding a smaller set of more competitive proposals to be considered in the full process. Another material change can be seen at the college level. Previously, detailed six-year plans were required from colleges and divisions. However, this process did not sufficiently result in a planning process guided by a unified, strategic plan. Consequently, this system of independent, 6-year plans was replaced by the current system, wherein colleges and divisions produce SCOT analyses and strategic plans tied to both to unit-level documents and the University's strategic plan.

Evaluation of the planning process revealed other inadequacies that we have also responded to. For instance, Western's previous strategic plan, adopted during the recession and the accompanying state budget cuts, purposely did not have specific objectives or metrics by which Western could be judged as having succeeded in meeting those objectives. As mentioned, initiatives were linked to goals in the strategic plan, and institutional progress, relative to the core themes, was widely published and discussed, but these were linked only generally to the strategic planning and budgeting process and existed on something of a parallel track, alongside but separate from strategic planning. While this process was, arguably, a reasonable response to a fiscal crisis, it did not adequately permit evaluation of whether resources were being allocated efficiently, effectively and in keeping with the institution's mission and strategic plan. Consequently, only in a general sense could Western's administration understand the effectiveness of its efforts to allocate resources where they were most needed. Further, the plan itself did not inspire discussions around indicators of success or encourage an evidence-based approach to the budgeting process.

Efforts to respond to these shortcomings were catalyzed by the hiring of President Sabah Randhawa, who began his tenure as Western's President in the summer of 2016. His examination of the previous plan, informed by the Board of Trustees and discussions with faculty and other stakeholders, confirmed the inadequacies described above and led to a desire for an improved, more aligned and evidence-based planning cycle. Fortunately, the timing of these changes perfectly coincided with the onset of Western's new accreditation cycle.

President Randhawa, in consultation with the Faculty Senate leadership, formed a strategic planning committee that began its work in January 2017. The President's charge to the committee, informed by evaluation of the previous process, instructed the committee to develop a plan that would "contain some three to five specific goals and associated objectives, with related metrics." The committee's work took just over a year and included meetings with departments, programs and units across campus—as well as several university-wide or "open" meetings. The final plan was approved by the Board of Trustees in April 2018. (See Appendix B.)

As noted in Appendix B, four goals were developed, along with objectives that will help guide Western's efforts to reach those goals. As requested in the President's charge, each objective has associated metrics. These metrics were intentionally broad, often encompassing the objectives in more than one goal, and were meant to provide a blueprint for moving the new strategic plan forward. For example, faculty satisfaction was one metric identified by the strategic planning committee. This metric is associated with many objectives, including 3.a, 3.b, 3.d, 3.e, 3.f, 4.a, 4.b, and 4.g.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

In this report we have documented our strategic planning and budgeting cycle, and our processes for evaluating and improving the processes which comprise that cycle. These strategic planning and budgeting processes result in our resource allocations, the application of Western's institutional capacity, and assessment processes that ensure their adequacy, alignment, and effectiveness. As noted in the report, we have used the results of our evaluation of this cycle and our processes to make changes for improvement

These changes inform our current strategic planning activities, which we are enthusiastically implementing this fall. While informed by evaluations of the former planning process, implementation of Western's new strategic plan is a work in progress. For instance, we are currently engaged in discussion and fine-tuning of the institutional metrics by which we will track progress toward completion of our strategic goals. We expect these metrics—and the process by which progress relative to the metrics is reported, evaluated and used—will be scrutinized, debated and updated. (See Appendix C.) Whereas we previously reported institutional results in [reports](#) distributed to the University community and discussed with the Faculty Senate, we are creating public dashboards for doing so in this strategic planning and accreditation cycle. This will make the reporting and discussion of institutional assessment results ongoing rather than episodic.

In addition, the manner of data collection is also being improved. For example, the Office of Survey Research is charged with collecting survey data, while the Office of Institutional Research is charged with collating supporting internal data—both on an annual basis. To ensure that all data collection runs smoothly, an Office of Institutional Effectiveness is being created that will ensure all relevant data will be collected by the appropriate units.

Also, recently developed is a comprehensive set of very specific metrics that will provide a measure of Western's overall academic health. These "Benchmarks for Success" can be found in Appendix D.

With a new strategic plan just adopted that, unlike the previous plan, includes specific objectives under each goal and specific metrics on which to judge progress, the planning process must again be adjusted to include feedback on progress. As a quarter-based school, we are just gathering again on campus as of this writing. We expect the process to be in place beginning this year. That process also will include more integration between the operating and capital budgeting processes; in this way, the capital request will be better aligned with the operating request.

Finally, our new core themes and indicators of achievement were selected to align with the strategic plan. This was achieved by selecting core themes drawn from those elements of the strategic plan that focus on student success and achievement and the institution's impact in the state and the region. In this way, too, we have made planning improvements informed by evaluations of the previous process.

Appendix A
Western Washington University
Integrated Planning and Budgeting
(All dates approximate and subject to change)
Major Procedural Steps

Steps	2017-19 Budget	2019-21 Budget
1. <u>Update University SCOT and strategic plan</u>		Winter and Spring 2016
2. <u>Update unit SCOT and strategic plans</u>		Fall 2016 and Winter 2017
3. <u>Update and review six year plans and initiatives</u>		Winter and Spring 2017
4. <u>Formulate biennial operating and capital budget requests</u>	Fall 2015 through Summer 2016	Fall 2017 through Summer 2018
5. <u>Prepare biennial operating budget and finalize first-year operating budget</u>	Fall 2016 through Spring 2017	Fall 2018 through Spring 2019
6. <u>Prepare supplemental budget decision packages</u>	Spring and Summer 2017	Spring and Summer 2019
7. <u>Prepare and finalize second-year operating budget with modifications for emergent issues</u>	Fall 2017 through Spring 2018	Fall 2019 through Spring 2020

Procedural Timeline

Timeline	2017-19 Budget	2019-21 Budget
Fall 2015	1. Formulate biennial operating and capital budget requests	
Winter 2016		1. Update University SCOT and strategic plan
Spring 2016		
Summer 2016		
Fall 2016	2. Prepare biennial operating budget and finalize first-year operating budget	2. Update unit SCOT and strategic plans
Winter 2017		3. Update and review six year plans and initiatives
Spring 2017	3. Prepare supplemental budget decision packages	
Summer 2017		
Fall 2017	4. Prepare and finalize second-year operating budget with modifications for emergent issues	4. Formulate biennial operating and capital budget requests
Winter 2018		
Spring 2018		

Operational Procedural Steps

1. UPDATE UNIVERSITY SCOT AND STRATEGIC PLAN	
January even year	University administration prepares draft SCOT.
February even year	Board of Trustees reviews draft SCOT.
March even year	UPRC, Vice Presidents and Deans, and campus review draft SCOT.
April even year	University administration revises draft SCOT; administration presents SCOT to campus and Board of Trustees.
May even year	UPRC and Vice Presidents and Deans recommend revisions to strategic plan based on SCOT.
June or August even year	Board of Trustees approves revised strategic plan.

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2. UPDATE UNIT SCOT AND STRATEGIC PLANS	
September-October even year	Departments/units update SCOT analysis.
October even year	Departments/units submit updated SCOT analysis to college/division.
October-November even year	Colleges/divisions update SCOT analysis and strategic plans incorporating department/unit SCOTs.
November even year	Colleges/divisions present updated SCOT analysis and strategic plans to UPRC and Vice Presidents and Deans.
December even year	UPRC and Vice Presidents and Deans review all college/division SCOTs and strategic plans for themes, synergies, and opportunities.
January odd year	Colleges/divisions revise SCOTs and strategic plans based on feedback.
January odd year	College/divisions present strategic plans to UPRC, Vice Presidents and Deans, and campus.

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3. UPDATE AND REVIEW SIX-YEAR PLANS AND INITIATIVES	
January-February odd year	Departments/units submit six-year planning initiative ideas to college/division.
February odd year	Colleges/divisions review department/unit initiative ideas.
March odd year	Colleges/divisions formulate six-year plans with initiatives and financial strategies.
March odd year	College governance committees review six-year plans and initiatives for their college.
April odd year	Colleges/divisions present six-year plans with initiatives and financial strategies to UPRC, Vice Presidents and Deans, and campus.
April-May odd year	UPRC and Vice Presidents and Deans review all college/division six-year plans, initiatives, and financial strategies for themes, synergies, and opportunities.
June odd year	Colleges/divisions finalize updates to six-year plans and post them to the Web.

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4. FORMULATE BIENNIAL OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET REQUESTS

4A. FORMULATE BIENNIAL BUDGET DECISION PACKAGES	
October odd year-January even year	Colleges/divisions prepare initiatives for decision packages, including financial data.
January even year	College governance committees review potential decision packages in their colleges.
February even year	Colleges/divisions submit decision package requests to the Budget Office.
February-March even year	UPRC, President's Cabinet, and the campus review decision package requests.
March even year	Vice Presidents and Deans review decision package requests.
April even year	Board of Trustees reviews decision package requests.
April-May even year	Vice Presidents and Deans prepare and present recommendations to UPRC, President's Cabinet, and the campus for comment.
May even year	President receives feedback from Board of Trustees, UPRC, Vice Presidents and Deans, President's Cabinet, and the campus, and prepares final recommendations for Board of Trustees.
June even year	President presents recommended decision package proposals to Board of Trustees.
August even year	Board of Trustees approves biennial budget proposal with decision packages.

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4B. FORMULATE BIENNIAL CAPITAL BUDGET MINOR WORKS	
October odd year-January even year	Colleges/divisions prepare project requests. Meet with UPRC to discuss & confirm criteria to assist with prioritizing projects.
January even year	Colleges/divisions submit project requests to Facilities Development & Capital Budget.
February even year	Vice Presidents consider submittals and recommend divisional priorities, establish broad categories of university priority and present/gather input from UPRC and the campus community.
March even year	Vice Presidents consider feedback from UPRC and the campus community.
April even year	President presents recommended funding levels for minor works to Board of Trustees as part of draft ten-year plan.
April-May even year	Capital Planning Working Group reviews Operating budget decision packages and recommends to Vice Presidents any revisions to minor works requests to further support packages. Vice Presidents make refinements to minor works priority lists based upon feedback and present final recommendations to UPRC and the campus community then make recommendation to President.
June even year	President presents recommended minor works as part of ten-year plan to Board of Trustees for approval.

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4C. FORMULATE CAPITAL BUDGET TEN-YEAR PLAN*	
August odd year	Vice Presidents discuss potential revisions to previous ten-year plan caused by latest SCOT assessments/strategic plans/six-year plan updates and initiatives.
September odd year	FDCB Director meets with individual Vice Presidents to discuss divisional projects and emergent needs. Vice Presidents confirm projects to be considered in ten-year plan.
October odd year-January even year	Meet with UPRC to discuss & confirm criteria to assist with prioritizing projects. Capital Planning Working Group provides information to assist Vice Presidents in analyzing major and intermediate-sized projects and considering ten-year plan options – determine “fits and gaps” between requested projects and identified space and infrastructure issues, maintenance backlogs, and emergent trends. FDCB Director provides Nov. & Jan. status reports to UPRC regarding development of ten-year plan.
February even year	Vice Presidents present their recommended draft ten-year plan to UPRC and the campus community.
February-March even year	Vice Presidents consider feedback from UPRC and campus community to develop final recommendation on ten-year plan.
April even year	Vice Presidents present draft ten-year plan to UPRC and the campus community. President presents draft ten-year plan to Board of Trustees.
April-May even year	Vice Presidents make refinements to ten-year plan based upon input from Board of Trustees, UPRC, and the campus community then make recommendation to President.
June even year	President presents recommended ten-year plan to Board of Trustees for approval.

*Ten-Year Plan includes priority listing of major and intermediate-sized Capital projects and requested omnibus funding level for minor works programmatic and preservation projects

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5. PREPARE BIENNIAL OPERATING BUDGET AND FINALIZE FIRST-YEAR OPERATING BUDGET	
September even year-March odd year	Colleges/divisions formulate operating budget requests as part of the strategic/six-year-plan development process (step 3).
March-April odd year	Colleges/divisions submit operating budget requests to the Budget Office as part of six-year plans.
April odd year	Vice Presidents present requests to UPRC, Vice Presidents and Deans, and the campus for comment.
April-May odd year	Vice Presidents and Deans prepare and present recommendations to UPRC, President's Cabinet, and the campus for comment.
May odd year	President recommends operating budget to Board of Trustees.
June odd year	Board of Trustees approves first-year operating budget.

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6. PREPARE SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET DECISION PACKAGES	
April odd year	Outcomes known for decision packages submitted to Legislature.
April-May odd year	Vice presidents review unfunded decision packages and emergent items.
June odd year	President presents potential supplemental budget decision packages to Board of Trustees, UPRC, and Vice Presidents and Deans for feedback.
August odd year	Board of Trustees approves supplemental budget decision package.

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7. PREPARE AND FINALIZE SECOND-YEAR OPERATING BUDGET WITH MODIFICATIONS FOR EMERGENT ISSUES	
September odd year-February even year	Colleges/divisions identify emergent issues.
March even year	Colleges/divisions present proposed modifications for emergent issues to the Budget Office.
April even year	Vice Presidents present requests to UPRC, Vice Presidents and Deans, and the campus for comment.
April-May even year	Vice Presidents and Deans prepare and present recommendations to UPRC, President's Cabinet, and the campus for comment.
May even year	President recommends second-year operating budget to Board of Trustees.
June even year	Board of Trustees approves second-year operating budget.

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Appendix B
WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
Strategic Plan 2018-2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a leading public comprehensive institution, Western Washington University serves the state of Washington and beyond through a focus on academic excellence and inclusive achievement by its students, staff, and faculty.

Western prides itself on providing quality education and a broad range of programs that lead to professional and academic careers. Western grounds every program in the liberal arts and sciences, enhancing student knowledge, skills, and creativity, and developing engaged citizens who are prepared to solve the increasingly complex and interdisciplinary challenges facing the state, the nation, and the world.

Established in 1893, Western is one of the top public Master's granting universities in the nation. Western is the highest-ranking public, master's-granting university in the Pacific Northwest and ranked second in the West, according to the U.S. News & World Report college rankings. Kiplinger's ranks Western among the top 100 public colleges and universities in the nation that offer the best quality and affordability. Western's recognition for academic excellence is further underscored by its third-place ranking among all master's-granting institutions nationally, for the number of its graduates awarded Fulbright Fellowships and by its ninth-place ranking, among all masters-granting institutions nationally, public or private, for the number of undergraduates who go on to earn doctorates.

Western's Strategic Plan provides a roadmap and vision for our future. Led by a university-wide Strategic Planning Committee, the process actively and extensively engaged the university community and relevant external stakeholders in the development of the plan.

The plan recognizes that higher education in the U.S. faces significant challenges, including affordability and student debt, stagnating graduation and retention rates, growing achievement gaps for historically underrepresented groups, public skepticism of the value of college education, globalization and the role of technology, and diminishing state and federal investments in higher education. It is informed by the Washington Student Achievement Council's Roadmap Report on education attainment goals and the projected workforce trends in the state. Most of all, this plan reaffirms our commitment to higher education as a public good which should be accessible to all qualified students.

The Strategic Plan (SP) articulates four goals to advance Western:

1. Provide a transformative education grounded in the liberal arts and sciences and based on innovative scholarship, research, and creative activity.
2. Advance a deeper understanding of, and engagement, with place.
3. Foster a caring and supportive environment where all members are respected and treated fairly.
4. Pursue justice and equity in its policies, practices, and impacts.

The strategic goals and objectives make good on our commitment to an equitable and transformative education for all students, and on our commitment to increasing Western's impact in Washington and

beyond. Three unifying and recurring ideals emerge from the four goals and associated objectives—Advancing Inclusive Success, Increasing Washington Impact, and Enhancing Academic Excellence. These ideals are the essential pillars of institutional mission fulfillment and represent our commitment to each other, to our communities, and to the state of Washington.

CONTEXT FOR THE PLAN: CHALLENGES FACING HIGHER EDUCATION

While there is much to celebrate about Western’s success over the past decade, higher education is faced with pressures and challenges that we must address, intentionally and effectively.

The Roadmap Report produced by the Washington Student Achievement Council, and adopted by the Washington legislature in 2013, set the foundation for Washington’s educational attainment goals, that by 2023:

- All adults in Washington, ages 25–44, will have a high school diploma or equivalent
- At least 70 percent of Washington adults, ages 25–44, will have a postsecondary credential

Currently, these numbers are 90 percent and 51 percent, respectively. In the next decade, workforce projections in Washington indicate that two-thirds of the jobs in Washington will require some form of post-secondary education, yet Washington currently ranks 46th in the nation in college continuation rates. Additionally, there are about 700,000 adults in the state who have earned some college credits, but haven’t completed a degree; nationally, this number is nearly 40 million.

In addition to the economic imperative, we also believe there is a moral imperative to improving degree attainment. Six-year graduation rates from four-year college degree programs have been relatively stagnant, varying between 53 and 58 percent, and graduation rates of underrepresented groups are even lower—between 1970 and 2013, degree attainment for students from the bottom family income quartile has remained essentially constant at about nine percent. We are going to see increasingly more students attending our universities from the bottom family income quartiles, which also tend to be more ethnically and racially diverse.

The country as a whole is experiencing significant differences by region in high school graduates, with the Northeast and Midwest showing a continued and steady decline. According to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, the projected total increase in high school graduates from 2017-18 to 2022-23 in the state of Washington is a mere 0.8 percent, with the white, non-Hispanic population expected to decrease by 2.7 percent, while the Hispanic population is expected to increase by 34.3 percent.

Government funding for higher education has been declining since the start of the Great Recession, and though funding has recently rebounded as the economy has steadily improved, Washington state still experienced a 20 percent decrease in state spending per student, after inflation adjustment, between 2008 and 2016. At the same time, the future of federal funding for academic research, grants and loans is, at best, uncertain.

The decline of state and federal funding has shifted more of the cost burden for higher education to students and their families, with the price of attending college rising significantly faster than growth in median income. Current student debt, not including family debt, is about \$1.45 trillion; nationally, for the graduating class of 2016, the average student debt was \$31,172, up six percent from the previous year. Consequently, students and their families, who are paying for an increasingly larger proportion of educational expenses, are asking for the “return on their investment.” There is a growing expectation from the public and lawmakers for institutions to demonstrate relevance and outcomes, with several states now experimenting with performance-based funding measures.

Competition for recruiting and retaining human talent—faculty, staff and students—has intensified nationally, as well as globally, as countries outside the U.S. place greater emphasis on higher education, and an increasing array of online educational offerings and providers are reshaping the higher education landscape. Artificial intelligence, machine learning, adaptive learning, robotics, and cloud technology are just a few of the innovations changing the nature of jobs in the future. Employers expect that institutions will graduate students who are better prepared and workforce ready, including proficiency in skills like communications, critical thinking, problem solving and emotional intelligence, which are critical to the life-long learning and growth of individuals and their organizations.

The extraordinarily complex and important challenges facing our world, including issues like climate change, biodiversity, sustainable energy, and physical, mental and psychological health, require an interdisciplinary and integrative approach to education and research, and an educational model that extends beyond the traditional programmatic structures and more intentionally engages undergraduate and graduate students in the creative work of faculty to understand and address those issues.

Higher education is being challenged in many additional ways. Increased compliance laws have placed significant financial burden on many institutions. Campus health and wellness services are being stretched due to increased mental health and disability service needs, and sustaining a campus climate and an institutional culture that addresses sexual violence, promotes student safety, and encourages conversation on controversial issues, while affirming the fundamental dignity and respect that people of all identities deserve, are issues that will continually challenge campus communities.

Our 2018-2024 strategic plan is informed by our challenges and constraints, but it is not limited by them. The plan asserts our uncompromising commitment to student success, to positively impacting the state of Washington, the nation, and the world, and to further strengthening our academic and co-curricular programs.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2024

Western prides itself on providing quality education. A major strength of Western is our liberal arts and sciences foundation. We believe that preparing students for a job is not enough. The world needs graduates who have a strong foundation in the liberal arts and sciences—already a major strength of Western—so that they can become life-long learners, creative thinkers and determined problem solvers. Another strength of Western is the emphasis upon faculty/student interactions in research, scholarly and creative activities, classes, and community engagement. These strengths help foster informed, engaged, and creative graduates. Western is committed to enabling all students to have high-impact experiences and finding resources to allow all this to occur. We recognize that more can be done to prepare our graduates for success and are committed to continually improving our programs.

We recognize the importance of investing in a faculty culture of innovation and creativity that cuts across disciplines and integrates knowledge and exploration in our undergraduate and graduate programs. An innovative culture also means that we are open to new opportunities, including partnerships with other educational institutions and community organizations, public-private collaborations, new models for providing support services, and creatively and selectively using technology to enhance our institutional impact.

Western's location, on the Salish Sea, near an international border, among sovereign Native nations, positions us to better engage with the environment, communities, and cultures, both local and global. To do

this, we must respect and better understand the varied cultures and histories of the Pacific Northwest and the world at large in our teaching, research, and service.

Western aspires to be a caring community. Our greatest strength is our people—our students, staff, faculty, and alumni. Our community cannot be taken for granted, and much work needs to be done to ensure that every individual at Western can thrive professionally and personally. We must aim at student success, at a workplace where all employees have a voice that is heard and the opportunity to grow. It also means we must connect students, staff, faculty, and alumni to support and sustain each other.

Western is committed to justice and equity, to inclusive achievement and academic excellence, and to providing a safe, just, and equitable University for all students and employees. We must open our doors wider to welcome a more diverse student body, and we must ensure that we provide the environment and resources all students need to be successful. We must also ensure that Western more closely reflects the local and global diversity in which we live and we seek to advance. As such, we are committed to cultivating global citizenship in our graduates so they have the perspective to make well-informed judgements, the curiosity to learn about others' values and cultures, and the wisdom to challenge their own preconceived notions.

MISSION AND VALUES

Western Washington University is a public comprehensive institution dedicated to serving the people of the state of Washington. Together our students, staff, and faculty are committed to making a positive impact in the state and the world with a shared focus on academic excellence and inclusive achievement.

As a community, we uphold certain basic values. These include:

- Commitment to student success, critical thought, creativity, and sustainability
- Commitment to equity and justice, and respect for the rights and dignity of others
- Pursuit of excellence, in an environment characterized by principles of shared governance, academic freedom and effective engagement
- Integrity, responsibility and accountability in all our work

VISION

Western Washington University prepares and inspires individuals to explore widely, think critically, communicate clearly, and connect ideas creatively to address our most challenging needs, problems, and questions.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Strategic Plan articulates four goals to advance Western. Our approach is somewhat non-traditional; we articulate our goals as *values* that we aspire to advance.

This work complements another important effort completed recently, the Sustainability Action Plan: 2015-2035, which builds on Western leadership in many areas of sustainability to define a comprehensive sustainability plan for the future (<https://sustain.wvu.edu/sustainability-action-plan/>).

A comprehensive list of institutional performance associated with each of the four goals is provided at <http://www.wvu.edu/provost/strategicplanning/index.shtml>.

Goal #1: Western will provide a transformational education grounded in the liberal arts and sciences and based on innovative scholarship, research, and creative activity.

Western's educational experience will continue to be rooted in an active teaching and learning environment with a liberal arts and sciences foundation and robust co-curricular, internship, research, creative, and community engagement opportunities. Western will prepare students to be successful and engaged members of society, and will provide the tools to work in and across disciplines to identify and creatively solve key societal problems, both local and global. Western will recruit the best faculty and staff to support the growth and sustained flourishing of programs, departments, and centers that do this vital work.

- A. Strengthen the liberal arts and sciences foundation to ensure and expand student access to the breadth of our undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs.
- B. Provide tools and experiences for all students to follow their intellectual curiosity, to work across disciplines, and to develop the skills, knowledge, and habits of mind that will enable them to effectively contribute to evolving societal needs.
- C. Increase support and infrastructure for all types of scholarship, research, and creative activity.
- D. Ensure that all students have access to high quality educational experiences beyond the classroom.
- E. Review and improve general education requirements and programs of study at the undergraduate and graduate levels to ensure they foster the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind required in a dynamic world.
- F. Through shared governance, align budgeting, capital planning and development to allow for agility in response to changes in student interests, state needs, and knowledge production and dissemination.
- G. Provide technological and other academic infrastructure to support curricular innovation, research, scholarship, and creative activity, civic engagement and social justice.

Goal #2: Western will advance a deeper understanding of and engagement with place.

At Western, we seek to engage place in all of its complexity. Place calls us to recognize debts and obligations to indigenous and Native nations, to the environment and sustainability, and to diverse and rich cultures within and across borders. Place inspires us to study with rigor and precision the complexity, vibrancy, and beauty of land and sea in Washington State and in the Pacific Northwest. Place moves us to think and act thoughtfully and creatively about where we are and how we connect with the wider world. Place beckons us to look at the past with care and to envision the future with curiosity, innovation, and creativity.

- A. Take steps to acknowledge and honor the richness and multiple meanings of place, from local to state, national, and global.
- B. Support teaching, learning, research, scholarship, creative activity, and programming that engages with place in a respectful way.
- C. Support experiences inside and beyond the classroom that help develop an understanding of the region and its communities in all their natural and cultural richness and complexity.
- D. Recognize, honor, and respect the cultures, traditions, languages, rights, and knowledge of the indigenous and Native nations in the region.
- E. Weave the ecological, social, and economic dimensions of sustainability into and through the University's practices.
- F. Give all students educational experiences both in and beyond the classroom that help them develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities to nurture and create the conditions for people and planet to thrive.
- G. Increase engagement between Western and local communities.

- H. Increase the experiences through which students, staff, and faculty can engage with communities and environments in multiple regions in the world, both inside and beyond the classroom.

Goal #3: Western will foster a caring and supportive environment where all members are respected and treated fairly.

Western's greatest strength is the outstanding students, faculty, staff, and alumni/ae who make up its community. Western supports an inclusive governance structure for all and provides a learning and working environment in which everyone can thrive.

- A. Strengthen shared governance to ensure that students, staff, and faculty are meaningfully empowered in the university's policies, decisions, and direction.
- B. Support student, staff, and faculty wellbeing, including physical health and wellness, mental health, and disability resources based on universal design.
- C. Enhance student services and co-curricular opportunities to foster students' intellectual, personal, and professional development and success.
- D. Improve climate and working conditions for student employees, staff, and faculty at all locations.
- E. Provide competitive compensation and professional development for student employees, staff, and faculty.
- F. Expand networks between students, staff, faculty, and alumni/ae.

Goal #4: Western will pursue justice and equity in its policies, practices, and impacts.

Western sees equity, justice, inclusion, and diversity as fundamental principles calling for authentic engagement. Western acknowledges that, as an institution, it has failed to meet the needs of people of many races, ethnicities, creeds, socioeconomic classes, gender identities, sexual orientations, and disability statuses. WWU will contribute to redressing these inequities by transforming policies, structures, and practices to ensure meaningful inclusion.

- A. Foster a positive and collaborative campus climate, including the physical environment, that welcomes and affirms the diversity of individuals, groups, cultures, and ideas.
- B. Establish, fund and sustain practices of self-examination and continuous improvement to identify, understand, and remediate structural injustices and inequities at Western.
- C. Recruit, retain, and support more underrepresented and first-generation students at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
- D. Implement model practices to improve our recruitment and retention of a diverse staff, faculty, and administration.
- E. Increase affordability of and access to high quality undergraduate and graduate education at all Western's locations.
- F. Support and strengthen curricula and other programming that engage issues of access, equity, power, and privilege in and across disciplines.
- G. Expand professional development opportunities for all staff and faculty to provide for additional leadership capacity in the effort toward equity and justice.
- H. Expand and support respectful collaborative relationships with community partners and underrepresented groups to advance equity and social justice.
- I. Pursue just action by taking all appropriate steps to protect survivors and to prevent sexual and other types of violence, discrimination, harassment, and bullying.

CONCLUSION: ACHIEVING OUR MISSION

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, the regional accreditation body for Western, requires that the institution define overarching constructs essential for advancing the institutional mission. Advancing inclusive excellence, increasing Washington impact and enhancing academic excellence represent those overarching constructs. While informed by our work on goals, objectives and associated performance metrics, we believe that progress on advancing institutional mission and vision requires making significant and continuous progress on these ideals.

Advancing Inclusive Success

Education is the most powerful social equalizer, a true engine for upward mobility. While postsecondary institutions become increasingly diverse, the degree attainment gap persists for low-income students and students of color. We are going to see increasingly more students attending our universities from the lowest family income quartiles, which also are more ethnically and racially diverse. At the same time, jobs in our global, knowledge-based economy, increasingly require postsecondary education, as reflected in the statistics that workers with a bachelor's degree or higher accounted for 73 percent of the 11.6 million jobs gained in the recovery after the great recession.

We recognize that our most important challenge is to advance inclusive success, that is, increase retention and persistence rates and the number of graduates, while eliminating achievement gaps for students from diverse and under-represented socio-economic backgrounds. We have a great platform to advance access and completion at Western, starting with a six-year graduation rate of 70 percent, one of the best in the region.

Increasing Washington Impact

In the next decade, two-thirds of the jobs in Washington will require some form of post-secondary education. According to the Washington Roundtable, there will be 740,000 job openings in Washington in the next five years, yet only 31 percent of Washington high school seniors go on to earn a postsecondary credential today.

We recognize that to contribute to the future workforce needs in Washington and the region, we need to expand access to our programs, increase persistence and graduation rates, and partner with other education providers to offer programs and credentials to place-bound and non-traditional students. At the same time, we must prepare our students to be successful in a continuously changing work and social environment, where technology and automation are driving employment trends, and significantly changing the nature of work and relationships.

Enhancing Academic Excellence

Western provides a transformational education grounded in the liberal arts and sciences and based on innovative scholarship, research and creative activity to foster the development of engaged members of a global community. Making progress on critical issues—from environmental sustainability and climate change, to human health, economic vitality and cultural diversity—requires investing in, and nurturing, a faculty culture that integrates knowledge and exploration in our undergraduate and graduate programs.

Western is well positioned to increase its impact and contributions in ways that build upon and maintain the essence of what has made us distinctive. We will continue to enhance the high quality of our undergraduate and graduate programs in the liberal arts and professional programs, while simultaneously extending our reach to become a greater catalyst for regional economic and social development.

We recognize that excellence and diversity go hand in hand. Our community will be richer and stronger if members of our community—students, faculty, staff and administrators—are drawn from the widest possible range of socioeconomic and multicultural groups. We strive to expand and deepen our work to build a diverse, inclusive and equitable community and culture: in terms of access and success, curriculum, learning, shared experiences, embedded values and beliefs, and engagement opportunities to create enduring change.

Appendix C

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Guiding Strategic Plan Metrics

METRIC	Education	Place	Community	Justice/Equity
Graduation rate: overall and minority ¹	X		X	X
Retention rate: overall and minority ²	X		X	X
Post-graduation placement ³	X			
Percent of students with high-impact, co-curricular, and extra-curricular experiences ⁴	X	X	X	
Internal research support	X			
Grant dollars received	X			
Overall research productivity	X			
Number of curricular and co-curricular offerings addressing regional/indigenous issues		X		
Number of curricular and co-curricular offerings addressing global issues		X		
Community engagement opportunities		X		X
Community engagement hours		X		X
Percent international students		X		
Percent students studying abroad		X		
Percent of students, staff, and faculty of color ⁵			X	X
Percent of women students, staff, and faculty			X	X
Percent of LBTGQ+ students, staff, and faculty			X	X
Net cost of attendance				X
Scholarship dollars awarded				X
Employee satisfaction			X	X
Employee retention			X	X
Student satisfaction			X	X

Economic mobility and satisfaction ⁶			X	X
Number of curricular and co-curricular offerings addressing issues of justice and equity				X
Effectiveness of policies and practices addressing justice and equity			X	X
Average student debt at graduation ⁷				X
Salary differentials across demographic groups				X
Workload differentials ⁸				X
Operating and capital State support	X	X	X	X
Endowment assets	X	X	X	X
Number of seats in GUR courses	X			
% Seats filled in GUR courses	X			
Number of interdisciplinary curricular and co-curricular offerings	X			
Student learning outcome achievement	X			
Assignable classroom square footage per FTE student	X			
Assignable lab square footage per FTE faculty	X		X	
Administrative square footage per FTE staff	X		X	
Assignable square footage per FTE maintenance staff	X		X	
IT staff per FTE student, staff, faculty	X		X	
Impact of community engagement hours		X		X
STARS rating		X		
Number of curricular and co-curricular offerings addressing sustainability issues		X		
Percent of international students		X		
Percent of Pell-eligible students				X
Percent of state need grant-eligible students				X
Percent of first-generation students				X
Percent of underrepresented students				X
Time-to-degree				X

Professional development opportunities addressing diversity, justice, and equity				X
Degrees awarded	X			
Off-campus enrollment		X		X
Number of T/TT faculty	X			
High-demand degrees awarded	X	X		
Community partner satisfaction		X	X	
Carnegie engaged campus		X	X	X

¹ Standard practice is to measure the six-year graduation rate; we suggest also using four- and five-year graduation rates as metrics.

² We suggest we look at each level of retention: freshman-sophomore, but also sophomore-junior, junior-senior, and first-second year at the graduate level.

³ This includes employment, graduate school, and other activities such as Peace Corps service.

⁴ Such experiences include scholarship and creative activity with faculty, internships, service learning, study abroad, and nationally competitive scholarships and fellowships.

⁵ “Levels” for students means undergraduate and graduate; for staff it means classified, professional, and executive; for faculty it means instructor, senior instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor.

⁶ This measures the extent to which Western helps students move from lower to higher levels of economic mobility as well as the extent to which Western helps students find careers with which they are satisfied.

⁷ This will include both the percentage of students graduating with debt and, for that percentage, the average debt at graduation, for both undergraduate and graduate students.

⁸ This is a measure of the extent to which members of groups are called upon differentially for committee service, student advising, and other activities.

Appendix D

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Benchmark Metrics for Success

A comprehensive list of performance measures associated with goals and objectives is provided at <http://www.wvu.edu/provost/strategicplanning/index.shtml>. The following is a summary of some of the most important metrics which we believe are critical to mission fulfillment.

Metric	2015-16	2016-17	Target 2024-25
INCLUSIVE SUCCESS			
<u>First-year Retention Rate</u>			
Overall	82.4%	82.1%	87-90%
Students of Color, Underrepresented	80.0%	79.8%	87-90%
Pell Grant Eligible	78.4%	79.5%	87-90%
<u>Six-year Graduation Rate</u>			
Overall	71.2%	69.5%	75-80%
Students of Color, Underrepresented	61.8%	64.8%	75-80%
Pell Grant Eligible	65.4%	65.4%	75-80%
<u>Transfer Four-year Graduation Rate</u>			
Overall	77.6%	71.9%	75-80%
Students of Color, Underrepresented	72.6%	69.5%	75-80%
Pell Grant Eligible	73.6%	72.4%	75-80%
WASHINGTON IMPACT			
<u>Degrees Awarded</u>			
Total	3,645	3,783	4,300-4,600
Graduate	309	293	350-375
State's High Need Areas	1,207	1,276	1,450-1,500
Students of Color, Underrepresented	24.9%	25.3%	30-35%
Enrollment FTE for Off-campus & Extended Education	6.2%	6.5%	8-10%
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE			
<u>Tenure/Tenure-track Faculty</u>			
Total Faculty	500	514	600-625
Faculty of Color, Underrepresented	15.2%	15.7%	18-23%
Students Graduating with High-Impact Experiences			
<u>Research</u>			
Research & Sponsored Programs Annual Revenue	\$12.5M	\$9.9M	\$15-20M
University Supported Research & Creative Activity	\$4.5M	\$5.9M	\$7-9M