Year Three Self-Evaluation Report

Submitted to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

Western Washington University
Winter, 2014
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## List of Recurring Acronyms

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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAAC</td>
<td>Accreditation and Assessment Advisory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAC&amp;U</td>
<td>American Association of Colleges and Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>Academic Coordinating Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALO</td>
<td>Accreditation Liaison Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBA</td>
<td>Collective Bargaining Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIIA</td>
<td>Center for Instructional Innovation and Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLA</td>
<td>Collegiate Learning Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTC</td>
<td>Community and Technology Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUE</td>
<td>Committee on Undergraduate Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EOO</td>
<td>Equal Opportunity Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIG</td>
<td>Freshman Interest Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTE</td>
<td>Full-time Equivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUR</td>
<td>General University Requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWCCU</td>
<td>Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSSE</td>
<td>National Survey of Student Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSR</td>
<td>Office of Survey Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO</td>
<td>Student Learning Outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEM</td>
<td>Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UFWW</td>
<td>United Faculty of Western Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WELS</td>
<td>Western Educational Longitudinal Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Western Washington University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWU</td>
<td>Western Washington University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VPUE</td>
<td>Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Western Washington University (Western) is located in Bellingham, Washington, a city of 82,000 nestled in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains on Puget Sound, 50 miles south of Vancouver, British Columbia, and 90 miles north of Seattle. Fall, 2013, enrollment was 14,950, with 94% undergraduate students. Females made up 58% and males 42% of the 2013 class, while students of color made up 25%. Western is the third largest institution of higher education in the state.

In 2012, Western had 659 full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty, 90% of whom hold terminal degrees. The student-to-faculty ratio was 21:1. The majority of classes are small: 77% of classes have 39 or fewer students; only 17% of Western's classes enroll 50 or more students.

In 2013, as in years past, Western was the highest ranking public, master's-granting university in the Pacific Northwest, according to U.S. News & World Report. Since the first U.S. News rankings in 1987, Western has been highly rated in 24 of 26 years and continues to improve, relative to its peers. Other performance transparency initiatives, such as the Education Trust, now rank Western alongside the University of New Hampshire as one of the nation's highest performing mid-sized public universities. (See College Results Online.)

Western has also received recent national recognition for the efficiency with which it operates (U.S. News and World Report), for being one of the “Best Values in Public Colleges and Universities” (Kiplingers), and for its community engagement activities. Western was awarded the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement in 2010 and is the only public institution in the state to have been named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, with Distinction in each of the last three years.

As President Bruce Shepard points out: “Western is the premier public masters-granting university in the Pacific Northwest and we seek to be the best in the nation.” In some areas, Western has already won this distinction. In 2014, Western ranked first in the nation among medium-sized universities for Peace Corps participation for the second straight year. In 2013, Western ranked first in the nation among public, masters-granting institutions for the number of its graduates awarded Fulbright Fellowships. We are also proud to have been designated a “Military Friendly School,” (see National Recognition: Military) and one of the nation’s top institutions for women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) fields (see Women in STEM).

As a result of its national surveys of faculty, The Chronicle of Higher Education has twice rated Western a “Great College to Work For,” designating specific praise for the University's teaching climate, the clarity of its tenure and promotion procedures, and the faculty’s confidence in the upper administration. Information and references on these, and other distinctions of excellence, can be found at Western’s “National Recognition” site. (See National Recognition: WWU.)

Western’s national recognition for achievement, efficiency, value, and service is underscored by benchmarked assessments of student learning. In its most recent ratings,
the Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) ranked Western 13th among all masters-granting institutions, public and private, for the number of its undergraduates who went on to earn a research doctorate in the past decade. The SED is widely recognized as a key measure of university quality; a high ranking indicates that a university’s undergraduate curriculum successfully prepares students for advanced study and research. Western was previously ranked 19th. A ranking of 13th places Western in the top 2% of all masters-granting institutions. (See SED Rankings: WWU.)

In addition to the recognitions noted above, assessments of student learning within the student body overall also demonstrate superior achievement. In 2012, Western’s seniors scored in the 88th percentile on the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), a nationally benchmarked “value added” measure of improvement in the core liberal arts abilities of writing, analysis, critique, synthesis and source assessment. This achievement of our seniors was “greater than predicted” by their entering SAT scores, suggesting that Western students “learn more” over their four years of education than do students at other universities which use the CLA in their assessment processes. (See CLA: WWU and Supporting Documentation: CLA.)

Western is organized into a Graduate School and seven undergraduate colleges: the College of Business and Economics, the College of Fine and Performing Arts, Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Huxley College of the Environment, the College of Sciences and Technology, and Woodring College of Education.

To fulfill its academic objectives, Western’s curriculum includes a program of broad general education; intensive studies designed to develop scholarly competence in the arts and sciences; professional programs for public school personnel and other professionals; and graduate programs in professional education, the arts, the sciences, humanities, and business.

Western offers the following degrees: Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Arts in Education, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Master of Arts, Master of Business Administration, Master of Education, Master of Music, Master in Teaching, Master of Science, and Master of Professional Accounting.
Preface: Institutional Changes since Last Accreditation Report

There have been several institutional changes since our last accreditation report. The most important of these changes concern achievements related to our core themes, enhancements to our joint governance processes, and strategies with which we responded to dramatic reduction in our state support.

Core Theme Achievements

Western made significant progress relative to its strategic goals and core themes. Specific achievements include the following:

Core Theme 1: Serve the State of Washington by Expanding Student Access

- Western strategically increased access to majors designated “high-demand” by the State of Washington by expanding capacity in Computer Sciences, and other areas, and by creating a new minor in Renewable Energy. (See STEM Access, and Renewable Energy.)
- Western established a Bachelor of Science in Nursing program to provide area nurses access to a BSN education and to respond to a regional need for highly-qualified nurses. (See Nursing.)
- Western began the process of transitioning its Engineering Technology degree to three Engineering degrees. (See Engineering.)
- Western dramatically increased its enrollment of low-income and historically underserved students. The percentage of PELL Grant-eligible students at Western increased from 16% in 2004 to 23% in 2013; the percentage of enrolled students of color in the first-year class increased from 17% in 2004 to 25% in 2013.
- Western initiated new partnerships with Bellingham Technical College, Whatcom Community College, and Olympic College to provide more access to four-year degrees for students in Washington's Community and Technical Colleges (CTC) system. (See New Partnerships.)
- Western opened an Office of Veteran Services and increased its enrollment of veterans. (See Veterans.)

Core Theme 2: Foster Student Success

- The Faculty Senate established a new “Academic Integrity” initiative to better prepare students for campus and work environments characterized by the digital sharing of information. The initiative includes resources for students, for faculty, and a campus-wide effort to establish a new ethos of academic integrity. (See Integrity.)
- Western initiated a pilot of the Student Success Collaborative (SSC), a data-analytics and advising platform designed to identify pathways to graduation and to permit early identification of students in need of advising and tutoring services. The SSC
Western Washington University also provides output performance data for deans and chairs so that they can chart the percentage of their students on track to graduate.

- Western changed its practice of course registration and mandatory advising for undeclared students. Previously, course registration holds were placed at 120 credits; now holds are placed at 105 credits.
- In 2013, Western was the top national producer among public masters granting institutions for Fulbright Scholarship winners. The nine winners were an institutional record. (See Western Fulbright.)
- Western increased the number of its first-year students who participate in first-year programs. (404 participants in 2009; 564 participants in 2013.) This expansion was informed by assessment data indicating that participants in academic first-year programs earn more credits, and higher fall grades, than non-participants.
- Western has piloted enhancements to its General Education program informed by assessment of that program.
- Western opened the Learning Commons in the fall of 2011. This service brought together resources and programs to advance teaching and learning, online and across the physical space of Western Libraries. Programs include: Circulation Services, the Tutoring Center, the Writing Center, Instruction and Research Services, the Student Technology Center, the Teaching-Learning Academy, and Writing Instruction Support. In its first year, dramatic increases in visits were noted. (Examples: Tutorial Center = 31% increase; Writing Center = 78% increase.)
- The Academic Care Team (ACT) was created in the fall of 2011 to identify and coordinate support for students failing academically. Both cross-functional and cross-divisional, in its first year the team focused on meeting the needs of students identified to be at high risk for academic failure, and on identifying and responding to patterns of student support needs.

Core Theme 3: Strengthen Communities Beyond the Campus

- Western received the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement. (See Community Engagement.)
- Western institutionalized and expanded Compass to Campus, our regional effort to increase access to higher education by providing an opportunity for 5th-12th grade students from traditionally underrepresented and diverse backgrounds in Whatcom and Skagit counties to be mentored by university students. (See Compass to Campus.)
- Washington Monthly magazine ranked Western 10th nationally for its service to its community and region. (See Service Ranking.)
- Western established “The Front Door to Discovery,” an initiative to centralize our many pathways to the community via a new office and outreach effort. (See Discovery.)
Enhancements to Western’s Joint-governance Structures and Processes

- The United Faculty of Western Washington (UFWW) and the administration of the University established a new Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). (See UFWW CBA and Praise for WWU CBA: NEA.)
- The UFWW and the administration of the University agreed upon and carried out compression adjustments and pay raises for faculty. (See Supporting WWU Faculty.)
- The UFWW and the administration of the University agreed upon and carried out a new compensation package for departmental chairs.
- The Faculty Senate President was added to Provost Council.
- “Faculty Affairs” governance committees were added to all colleges which previously lacked them.
- The Faculty Senate and University administration initiated discussions to better align departmental planning with the University’s strategic planning and budgeting processes and to ensure more robust faculty participation.

Strategies to Address Dramatic Reductions in State Allocations

Arguably, the most significant institutional changes since Western’s last accreditation report reflect its response to the dramatic reductions in state allocations. As illustrated in Figure 1 below, Western saw its state allocations drop by more $32 million.

Figure 1: State Appropriations for Western Washington University
2001-02 to 2014-15
These cuts, representing a reduction that approached 50% of our previous state support, challenged the University to preserve the integrity of its core academic programs during a period of tumultuous fiscal change. To meet this challenge, the University undertook a campus-wide planning initiative strategically designed to include bottom-up recommendations, multiple opportunities for participant input, and transparency. President Bruce Shepard provided regular updates to the campus community about Western’s declining state support, the necessity of involving the entire campus in responding to the reductions, and the many opportunities provided to faculty, students, staff, families and other stakeholders to suggest ideas and to otherwise participate in the University's planning efforts surrounding these reductions. (See Presidential Messages.)

Ultimately, the University’s strategies for bearing the reductions while preserving the quality of a Western education included:

- Focused staff reductions in areas with the least impact upon instruction.
- Elimination of under-enrolled programs and streamlining course and program offerings.
- Implementation of technological innovations to improve efficiencies and ensure the most efficient use of instructional resources.

Because of the importance of these efforts to the integrity and continuity of our academic programs, examples of each of these efforts appear below.

**Focused Staff Reductions that Least Impact Instruction.**

Early in the budget-reduction process, protecting core academic commitments was established as the foremost guiding principle. In order to reallocate funding to support classroom instruction and to address students’ access to courses in high-demand fields and enhance their ability to finish their degrees in a timely fashion, Western budget planners cut more deeply into non-instructional areas. (See Budget Requests: 2011-13.)

Wherever possible, Western achieved its reductions through retirements and attrition. However, eliminations were necessary in some areas in order to preserve our core educational services. This was a difficult period, but one in which the campus pulled together in an “All hands on deck” manner. Human Resources provided job placement services for staff whose positions were eliminated, a special pool was created to hire back qualified employees when new positions opened, faculty taught compensated overloads, and some administrators gave up course releases to return to teach in high-demand areas. Consequently, and as demonstrated in the following chart, Western reduced staff and administrative positions in order to protect faculty. The student to faculty ratio declined only slightly in this period, rising from 20.6 in AY 2011 to 21.0 in AY 2012. (See Table 1 below.)
Table 1: Budgeted Personnel Changes from 2011 to 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Professional Staff</th>
<th>Classified Staff</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>-4.9%</td>
<td>-6.0%</td>
<td>-2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business &amp; Financial Affairs</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-8.4%</td>
<td>-4.2%</td>
<td>-4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment &amp; Student Services</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-10.0%</td>
<td>-18.3%</td>
<td>-11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Advancement</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-15.1%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>-10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Relations</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>-8.5%</td>
<td>-2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>-6.4%</td>
<td>-5.3%</td>
<td>-3.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Equally as important, while little faculty hiring occurred during the period of deepest cuts and the state hiring freeze, Western aggressively directed new resources toward the hiring of additional faculty as soon as such resources became available. This is demonstrated in the following summary of tenure-track faculty hiring over the period 2010-2015. (See Table 2 below.)

Table 2: Tenure-track Faculty Hiring, 2010-15

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>58 (expected)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Elimination of Under-enrolled Programs, Streamlining Offerings.

In order to ensure the integrity of our core academic programs over the period of the recession, departments eliminated or placed into moratorium more than 36 non-essential and under-enrolled programs. This further permitted us to direct resources toward the courses and programs students most needed. However, precautions were established so that any students remaining in an eliminated program would be “taught out” and provided the courses needed to graduate. (See Supporting Document: Preface (a): Programs.)
Implementation of Technological Innovations to Improve Efficiencies

The University initiated several key innovations to help ensure the quality and integrity of our curriculum throughout the period of state reductions. Two of these innovations are Waitlisting and the Rebasing Process.

Waitlisting

Waitlisting, a part of Western’s registration system, was first used in fall of 2010. Since then it has been refined and enhanced, continuing to provide valuable real-time assessment data regarding course access. At its simplest, Waitlisting allows students to get in an electronic queue for seats that may become available after a class has filled. Besides creating a fair process for assigning seats as openings open up, it also helps faculty and administration determine when extra class sections should be added due to demand.

Waitlisting data provides chairs, deans and the Provost with easily-used course supply and demand data. When combined with the Banner Sections Projection Report, it helps chairs to more accurately predict future course demand and to better serve students by making evidence-based decisions regarding resource allocations to reduce bottlenecks and increase time-to-degree.

Here, for instance, is a recent screenshot of the waitlists for our introductory Biology sequence. The blue lines indicate students waiting for seats in Biology 204 on one day during the registration period. (See Figure 2: Waitlist/Course Enrollment below.)

Figure 2: Waitlisting Example, Biology 204

The Rebasing Process

Importantly, the waitlist technology was matched with the “rebasing” process in an effort to address areas of high student demand. In this way, Western was able to make rapid and data-driven budgetary decisions based on real-time assessment data, “rebasing” funds to Biology and other high demand areas in order to maintain course access. In addition, Western created an emergency “bottleneck” fund and procedure for opening up temporary additional sections of required courses. (See 2.B.4, page 59.) This process enabled the
University to adapt quickly when course bottlenecks developed. In some instances a choke point was identified, an instructor secured, an additional section funded, and seats were released for registration on the same day.

In keeping with the University’s “bottom-up” processes, and commitment to broad participation from all stakeholders, President Shepard summarized the “rebasing” process whereby the campus would propose and carry out reductions and funding shifts. The process itself was as significant as the reductions and funding shifts themselves, allowing multiple opportunities for faculty, staff, students and other stakeholders to participate. (See Rebasing.)

While inevitably more time-consuming and difficult than authoritative, top-down downsizing would have been, our participatory process successfully enabled us to bear these dramatic reductions while preserving the integrity and quality of our academic programs. This is demonstrated in the following outcome assessment results:

- Western’s low average time-to-degree for students who enter the institution as freshman was sustained at 4.3 years. (See Factbook: Years to Degree.)

- Student satisfaction with the quality of their instruction, their educational experience at Western, and other measures, remained extremely high, as demonstrated in our senior exit surveys. For instance, the percentage of seniors reporting that they were satisfied to very satisfied with their experience at Western remained over 85%. (See Exit Surveys.)

- Student satisfaction with the quality of their educational experience at Western also remained extremely high. For instance, the percentage of surveyed seniors who reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of instruction in their major actually rose over the period of greatest cutbacks, rising from 82% in 2009 to 89% in 2011 and 85% in 2012, respectively. (See Exit Surveys.)

- Western’s 6-year graduation rates rose over the period of the recession, peaking in 2012 at 73%.

- The “value added” by a Western degree, as measured by the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), increased over this period. (See CLA: WWU and Supporting Documentation: CLA.)
Response to Topics Previously Requested by the Commission

Western received the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) Year One Peer Evaluator Report in May, 2011. (See Year One Peer Evaluation Report.)

This report included commendations for the university’s efforts to “increase transparency and faculty participation in resource decisions,” for articulation of mission fulfillment, and for use of both output and impact-oriented indicators of achievement.

The report also included two recommendations:

1. Incorporate “more evidence of student learning outcomes data throughout the educational experience and within academic programs.”

2. Clarify “the relationship between the core theme indicators and mission fulfillment.”

NWCCU reaffirmed the accreditation of Western Washington University. In affirming accreditation, the Commission requested that Western address the recommendations from the May, 2011, Peer Evaluator Report (above) in its updated response to Standard One in its Spring 2013 Year Three self-evaluation report. (See Accreditation Reaffirm: August, 2011.) As instructed by the Commission:

- Evidence of improvement in assessment and of incorporating “more evidence of student learning outcomes data throughout the educational experience and within academic programs” appears immediately below in “Improvement in Assessment.”

- Evidence of how Western has clarified the relationships between core theme indicators and mission fulfillment appears in the updated Standard One section. (Begins on page 22.)

Improvement in Assessment

Improvements in assessment have occurred throughout the University over the last three years. For the purposes of this report, we have focused upon progress and improvement in program and departmental assessment, and on progress and improvement in assessment of our General University Requirements (GUR) core program. Brief descriptions of improvements in assessments in other areas follow these larger accounts.

Progress and Improvement in Departmental and Program Assessment

Following Western’s Interim Report and the subsequent visit by the NWCCU evaluator in the fall of 2010, Western’s Accreditation and Assessment Advisory Committee (AAAC) met to outline a plan for carrying out further improvements in Western’s student learning assessment structures and processes. By the winter of 2011, the AAAC had:

- Reviewed and inventoried existing campus assessment tools, including the Western Educational Longitudinal Studies (WELS) series: Senior Exit Survey, Alumni Survey, Freshmen Baseline Survey, Sophomore Survey.
• Reviewed departmental assessment plans and selected exemplary plans to be used as “best practice” models on campus.
• Reviewed Barbara Walvoord’s *Assessment Clear and Simple* and accepted its emphasis upon faculty judgments and course-embedded assessment activities as guiding parameters for the improvement of the campus assessment plan.
• Established a three-year timeline for the review and improvement of departmental missions, outcomes and assessment plans.
• Brought Barbara Walvoord to campus for workshops on departmental and general education assessment.

In addition to these accomplishments, the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education—who also serves as Western’s Director of Academic Assessment and Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO)—met with the associate deans to align and coordinate the end-of-year Department Chair reports with the annual AAAC assessment reports, as well as met with departmental and program assessment coordinators to present and explain the AAAC’s four-step timeline.

**Four Step Time-Line for Academic Departments**

• Review and revise or affirm departmental mission outcomes in light of the new University mission, and changes in each academic field since its previous mission review.
• Review and revise or affirm departmental learning outcomes in light of new departmental mission.
• Establish a new departmental Master Assessment Plan to describe the processes and procedures for assessing each outcome.
• Annually select 1-2 departmental outcomes and assess them in an Annual Assessment Report describing the assessment procedure, the findings, and program improvements made on the basis of the findings.

Specific due dates for each task were provided in annual assessment reminders distributed to Chairs each fall by the Director of Academic Assessment/ALO. (See Assessment Checklist @ VPUE Assessment.)

Support and guidance for chairs and Departmental Assessment Coordinators was provided for each of the above steps.

• To begin, the Master Assessment template and Annual Assessment Report template was created through a consensus process that accompanied a departmental assessment workshop provided by Barbara Walvoord, who outlined a variety of proven assessment plan templates and procedures in a workshop for department chairs and Assessment Coordinators. Participants were also provided copies and chapters from her book, *Assessment Clear and Simple*. Participants recommended one of her recommended templates, which was revised in discussions with the AAAC and then submitted to Associate Deans and Chairs for approval.
• Next, workshops on the revision of departmental missions and the establishment of departmental learning objectives were provided for Chairs and Departmental
Assessment Coordinators by David Bover, then Chair of the Department of Computer Science. An ABET evaluator, Professor Bover, had successfully led the Department of Computer Science through its own mission and student learning outcome review and was widely respected on campus for these achievements. Professor Bover provided two workshops. The Powerpoint of his presentation was also distributed by e-mail to chairs and assessment coordinators. (See Bover Powerpoint @ VPUE Assessment.)

- Upon revision of departmental missions and degree learning outcomes, departments were instructed to revise their master assessment plans. The following document, "When? How and How Much? A Guide to Designing and Implementing a Departmental Assessment Plan based on Barbara Walvoord’s Assessment Clear and Simple," was distributed to each department, together with the assessment plan templates, instructions and completed models. (See “Walvoord” How-to @ VPUE Assessment.)

- Presentations on this material and a workshop for the drafting and design of the departmental assessment plans was also held for Chairs and Departmental Assessment Coordinators. Professor Bover, members of AAAC, the Director of the Center for Instructional Innovation and Assessment (CIIA), and the Director of Academic Assessment attended the workshop to assist participants.

- Each faculty member received a copy of Praxis, the faculty-development newsletter of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (VPUE), on best practices in syllabus construction. This issue of Praxis included advice on how to incorporate program and course-learning outcomes into syllabi. (See Praxis Fall 2013.)

The combination of the clarity of these tasks and the support provided has allowed the University to hold to this timeline for improvement. Each of the assessment improvement steps outlined by the AAAC has been carried out and fulfilled. Specifically:

- Chairs and Departmental Assessment Coordinators submitted their Master Assessment Plan and Annual Assessment Report with their annual reports to their Deans in 2012. Each college’s Assessment Director reviewed the plans and submitted them to the Director of Academic Assessment/ALO. (See Department and College Assessment Plans.)

- The ALO and Director of Academic Assessment maintained an archive of these plans and reports, which were posted to the new Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) website created by the CIIA. (See SLO.)

- The University created an Assessment/Student Learning Outcome footer for the new departmental web page template so that each department could in a consistent and transparent manner link to its mission, program learning outcomes, master assessment plan, and annual improvement reports. (To see an example, go to English and scroll to bottom of page.)

- Nearly every department on campus now has a published, transparent and public record of three years of continuous annual documentation of the program outcomes they assessed, the results they found, and the use of that data in program improvement (See SLO.)
Further Department and Program Improvement

We are very pleased that regular documentation of student learning outcomes pertaining to departmental assessment, and the use of that data in program improvement, is now integrated within Western’s institutional culture and practices. In addition to sustaining this practice, the AAAC has planned the following further improvements for 2014-2015:

- Master assessment plans are to be expanded in order to accommodate the annual assessment of multiple programs within departments.
- To continue increasing the percentage of course syllabi which reference departmental and program-level student learning outcomes.

Progress and Improvement in General University Requirements (GUR) Program Assessment.

Western’s Committee on Undergraduate Education (CUE) was created in 2009 to concentrate within a single faculty body responsibility for the assessment and improvement of Western’s core liberal arts and sciences curricula. The establishment of CUE included an agreed-upon transfer of authority over general education from the administration to the Faculty Senate and is widely recognized as one of many recent successes in Western’s efforts to continuously improve its joint-governing processes and structures. The following outline highlights key achievements in CUE’s short history.

2009-2011

Immediately upon its establishment, CUE:

- Reviewed the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)’s Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) materials on general education, received briefings from two committee members who were sent to an AAC&U General Education conference, and otherwise acquainted itself with national discussions and best-practice research on general education and the assessment of general education programs. (See LEAP.)
- Reviewed Western’s General Education outcomes, which we call “competencies,” and affirmed them for continued use at Western.
- Revised the general education course proposal form to require a written rationale of how each course meets one or more of the competencies.
- Reviewed the AAC&U value rubrics and revised them for use with Western’s general education competencies.
- Distributed the rubrics to be piloted by faculty and revised them in light of faculty comments and experience. (This process is ongoing.)

2011-2013

Following receipt of the NWCCU Peer Evaluation Report in 2011, CUE continued to study research and best practices in general education. The committee studied additional AAC&U resources, including Revising General Education—And Avoiding the Potholes: A Guide for Curricular Change. It brought to campus Jennifer Summit, a Stanford faculty member who helped lead her university's restructuring of general education, for a series of discussions on her experience and advice. In addition, the committee studied follow-up assessment
data on general education from Western’s participation in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and its in-house Sophomore Survey conducted by the Office of Survey Research (OSR). (See Supporting Documentation: NSSE.) Following from these efforts, CUE more intentionally divided its work into three components:

- Program improvements based upon assessment data.
- Further development of its GUR assessment plan.
- Deliberate and campus-wide consideration of whether Western should pursue restructuring its entire GUR program.

**Program Improvements Based upon Assessment Data.**

In 2011, CUE reviewed all available assessment data pertaining to Western’s GUR program, including data from the CLA, the NSSE, and two WELS studies: the Senior Exit Survey and Sophomore Survey. In addition, CUE teamed with the Teaching-Learning Academy, a campus-wide dialogue forum, to triangulate data gained from these sources with qualitative data from student focus-groups discussions of general education. Following this assessment review, CUE concluded that:

1. Most Western students cannot articulate the value of their liberal arts and sciences core curriculum. This inability reflects the fact that the institution and its GUR faculty do not sufficiently communicate the value of the core curriculum.
2. Most Western students do not sufficiently experience their GUR courses as components of an integrated and meaningful liberal arts and sciences core curriculum.
3. Western students do not write enough as part of their GUR experience. The GUR curriculum would be improved by requiring more writing, both informal and formal, as well as more writing instruction.

For each of these three findings, CUE initiated improvement efforts.

**Finding 1**

To better communicate the value of a liberal arts and sciences education, CUE:

- Held a well-attended faculty colloquium on the value of a liberal arts education and on the importance of communicating that value to students.
- Purchased several thousand copies of the AAC&U LEAP pamphlet for students, “What is a Liberal Education and Why is it Important to My Future?” for distribution and use in GUR core courses—especially in the Freshman Interest Group (FIG) program. In most FIG clusters, discussion of the pamphlet is followed by informal presentations in which the GUR faculty describe the role and value of their discipline and course within a liberal arts and sciences education. The Teaching-Learning Academy participants also used the pamphlet in their year-long dialogue around what a liberal arts and sciences education means.
- Initiated a regular series of messages to GUR faculty at the beginning of each quarter suggesting ways to make students more aware of the value of their GUR courses.
• Initiated “Viking Landing: Making the Most of Your GURs,” a quarterly open-house and advising event, held in the Learning Commons, where students can meet with faculty, advisors, and upper-class students to learn more about Western’s GUR program and courses. Viking Landing has now been offered six times. (See Viking Landing.)

• Created a general education page as part of the VPUE website and continues to develop its content including offering suggestions for best practices. (See Best Practices: GUR.)

Finding 2
To create more meaningful sequences of GUR courses, CUE:

• Created “Strands,” year-long sequences of GUR courses for first-year students that are integrated according to a theme or essential questions. Participating faculty received course-development stipends for both the creation and the assessment of the strands. This pilot is ongoing. (See Strands.)

• Piloted GUR "Links" that pair two courses at the 200-300 level (one of which must be designated as a GUR course) to facilitate more coherence across the general education offerings, especially for sophomores, and with a special emphasis on enhancing Competency 1. Participating faculty received course development stipends for both the creation and the assessment of the Links. This pilot is ongoing. (For details, see Supporting Documentation: Praxis Winter 2013.)

• Encouraged and supported the VPUE in efforts to expand the FIG program to include science options. CUE members participated in this pilot expansion.

Finding 3
To enhance, increase, and improve the teaching of writing within the GUR core curriculum, CUE:

• Supported the VPUE in his pilot to expand and create 2-credit, elective writing courses for first- and second-year students, and to build more writing into the FIG program. This initiative has included additional sections of a 2-credit grammar and editing course offered by journalism and a pilot of a 2-credit creative writing course offered by English. This pilot was informed by assessment data concerning writing and freshman credit-loads.

• Supported Western’s Writing Instruction Support (WIS) program in the expansion of its teaching/writing retreat and faculty fellows program. Over the last three years (with funding from Western Libraries and Learning Commons) this program has sponsored numerous professional development efforts and funded year-long efforts to support dozens of faculty in the design and implementation of writing enhancements in their courses.
**Further Development of the GUR Assessment Plan**

In addition to the program assessment data it gathers from CLA, the NSSE, and WELS surveys, CUE has taken specific steps to build a system for collecting course-level GUR assessment data. Specifically:

- All academic departments were asked to select the GUR outcomes most taught in their GUR courses and to designate procedures for assessing these outcomes within their master assessment plans. As demonstrated in our SLO website, most departments have completed this step. (See [SLO](#).)
- GUR Competency 1, “Analyze and communicate ideas effectively in oral, written and visual forms,” was selected as the first outcome to be assessed via departments. (See [GUR Competency 1](#).)
- All departments selecting Competency 1 were asked to assess this outcome in their departmental assessment procedures and to submit results through their colleges in July, 2014.

**Deliberate and campus-wide consideration of whether Western should restructure its entire GUR program.**

As a consequence of its review of national literature, its discussions with consultant Jennifer Summit, and its improvement and assessment efforts, CUE began to discuss whether Western's entire GUR program warranted restructuring. After lengthy discussions, CUE concluded that restructuring the GURs could indeed be advantageous for Western’s students—but only if there was strong campus support for such restructuring.

CUE then initiated an information campaign to inform the campus of its assessment findings and discussions. This effort culminated in reports to and discussions with the Academic Coordinating Commission (ACC) and Faculty Senate and in a white paper, “On General Education Requirements at Western Washington University,” which was posted on websites of the Faculty Senate, the Provost Office, and distributed to each faculty member for review. (See [GUR White Paper](#).)

This paper described the mission of the GURs, the history of GUR reform at Western, a review of assessment data pertaining to the GURs, and CUE’s recommendation that the Faculty Senate convene a high-profile taskforce, the Western Study of General Education, to assess the desirability and feasibility of GUR reform at Western.

After lengthy discussion in the ACC, the Faculty Senate, and other forums, the CUE White Paper recommendation was accepted and the WSGE Committee was convened and charged. The full text of the Committee’s charge to consider the “desirability and feasibility” of GUR reform occurs in the ACC minutes of October 8, 2013. (See [ACC Minutes: 10-08-13](#).)

The membership of the committee is described in the ACC minutes of November 5, 2013. (See [ACC Recommendations: 11-05-13](#).) WSGE has met regularly since its establishment. Paul Chenn, of the Department of Political Science, was elected Chair; Sean Murphy, of the Department of Liberal Studies, Associate Chair.
Progress and Improvement of Assessment in other Areas of Campus.

- Western remains a full participant in the Voluntary System of Accountability’s “College Portrait,” a national initiative to collect and transparently share assessment data for prospective students, parents and other stakeholders. (See College Portraits.)

- Western recently joined the Student Achievement Measures (SAM), a national initiative to create more transparency in the publication of student performance data concerning graduation, retention, and time-to-degree. (See Student Achievement Measures.)

- Western has begun use of the Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED), an NSF-funded initiative to track the baccalaureate origins of earned doctorates, in order to better assess the quality of a Western education. We were pleased to find that Western is currently ranked 13th of 560 masters-granting universities, public and private, for the number of our graduates who go on to earn a research Ph.D. (See SED.)

- Enrollment and Student Services' Division Assessment Resource Team (DART) restructured in 2011-12, moving from a train-the-trainer model of practitioners to a membership that now includes at least one representative from all departments. In the past three years, DART has revised its mission statement, developed and adopted a common template for assessment planning and reporting purposes, supported various departments in developing key performance indicators, and integrated the use of iPods for immediate data collection during various events. The division has also dedicated resources to contract with CampusLabs (formerly StudentVoice). Access to CampusLabs’ resources and consultation services has led to easier data collection and analysis, leaving more time and opportunity to focus on using assessment results to improve services and program delivery and sharing those results with students, other campus colleagues, and externally at various conferences. DART meets regularly to review and share results of assessment projects, provide feedback on assessment projects, and engage in discussions of best practices.

- Western is a pilot participant in the Student Success Collaborative (SSC), a data-analytics system which permits each department and college to track the percentage of its majors on track to graduate.

- Western’s Office of Survey Research (OSR) has made several improvements in its efforts to make its data more useful and more widely used in program improvements. Specifically:
  - OSR now publishes “Data Snippets,” brief snapshots of assessment data. (See Data Snippets.)
  - OSR has continued to help departments migrate from the use of their own exit surveys to the use of the OSR exit survey by incorporating departmentally-specific questions into the exit survey. This has increased validity, response rates, and benchmark comparisons across campuses.
- OSR has increased the number of programs which rely on its exit surveys for assessment data by incorporating program-specific questions into its format. Programs which have recently adopted OSR surveys for their assessment include the Academic First-Year Programs, Western Reads, and International Programs and Exchanges.

- OSR is working with Administrative Computing to make its Exit Survey data easier to use and access by department chairs, deans and others by providing graphic displays of departmental data, and by linking the material to the University Factbook. At this time the site is still in test mode. A screen shot of what users will see is available here. (See Supporting Documentation, Response to Topics Previously Requested: Exit Survey Data Interface.)
Updated Standard One: Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations

Executive Summary of Eligibility Requirements 2 and 3

**Authority:** The institution is authorized to operate and award degrees as a higher education institution by the appropriate governmental organization, agency, or governing board as required by the jurisdiction in which it operates.

The Revised Code of Washington designates Western Washington University as a “regional university” to “offer undergraduate and graduate programs through the master’s degree, including programs of a practical and applied nature, directed to the educational and professional needs of the residents of the regions they serve; to act as receiving institutions for transferring community college students; and to provide extended occupational and complementary studies programs that continue or are otherwise integrated with the educational services of the region’s community colleges.” (See Title 28B.35.010-010 and Title 28B.35.050.)

**Mission and Core Themes:** The institution’s mission and core themes are clearly defined and adopted by its governing board(s) consistent with its legal authorization, and are appropriate to a degree-granting institution of higher education. The institution’s purpose is to serve the educational interests of its students and its principal programs lead to recognized degrees. The institution devotes all or substantially all, of its resources to support its educational mission and core themes.

The mission and core themes of Western Washington University are clearly defined, concise, and deliberately embedded within the University’s strategic plan, adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2011. The mission and core themes are prominently published on the university website.

Standard 1.A Mission Statement, Vision, and Statement of Strategic Goals:

The institution articulates its purpose in a mission statement, and identifies core themes that comprise essential elements of that mission. In an examination of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations, the institution defines the parameters for mission fulfillment. Guided by that definition, it identifies an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.

**Mission Statement**

Western Washington University serves the people of the State of Washington, the nation, and the world by bringing together individuals of diverse backgrounds and perspectives in an inclusive, student-centered university that develops the potential of learners and the well-being of communities.
Vision

Western will build a stronger Washington by being an international leader in active learning, critical thinking, and societal problem solving.

Statement of Institutional Strategic Goals

1. Build upon Western's strengths to address critical needs in the State of Washington.
2. Expand student access and opportunities in baccalaureate and graduate education.
4. Apply Western's expertise and collaborative approach to scholarship, creativity, and research in ways that strengthen communities beyond the campus.
5. Serve as a model for institutional effectiveness, innovation, diversity, and sustainability.

Interpretation of Mission Fulfillment

Western's mission will be fulfilled when we have significantly improved our service to the state of Washington and become a premier undergraduate-centered university that fosters a dynamic, inclusive and collaborative environment at an intimate scale, where students fully engage in their education, and whose alumni and faculty both address social problems and serve as leaders—at the state, national, and global level.

Articulation of an Acceptable Threshold, Extent, or Degree of Mission Fulfillment

Over the last number of years, Western has experienced a radical restructuring in state support. Most critically, the proportion of the operating budget provided by the state has fallen from more than 60% to just over 30%. This rapid and continued reduction in resources directly impacts the institution's ability to fulfill its mission. Because we do not know if state support will be sufficiently restored to permit us to achieve the aspirational components of our mission, we have articulated “Sustaining” indicators of mission fulfillment and “Aspirational” indicators of mission fulfillment. The “Aspirational” indicators assume a return to previous levels of state support.

Sustaining Indicators of Mission Fulfillment

- 85-90% of seniors continue to rate their entire educational experience as good or excellent (NSSE).
- More than 50% of graduating seniors continue to report that they collaborated with a professor on a research or creative activity outside of course or program requirements (OSR Senior Exit Survey).
- Graduation rates for students of color remain at least 10% better than the mean rate of our IPEDS comparison group.
- The four-year graduation rate is 40% or better.
Aspirational Indicators of Mission Fulfillment

The aspirational components of our mission require improvement in key areas. Specifically, we will take great pride in mission fulfillment if we can:

- Document 1,000,000 annual hours of community service and engagement among faculty, students and staff.
- Increase state-defined “high-demand” graduates to 830 a year.
- Increase the six-year graduation rate to 71%.
- Increase the graduation rate for low-income students to 65%.
- Increase the student of color graduation rate to 66%.
- Increase total BA degrees to 3,245 per year.

Relationship of Mission Fulfillment to Core Theme Fulfillment

Western’s mission, vision, strategic goals, and Core Themes have not changed since submission of our Year 1 Report. However, Western’s definition of mission fulfillment, core theme objectives and the indicators of objective fulfillment have received careful analysis and have been updated, simplified and clarified. Importantly, these changes make mission fulfillment more objectively measurable. This updating was spurred by the following recommendation included in Western’s Year One Peer-Evaluation Report, received in the spring of 2011: Clarify the relationship between the core theme indicators and mission fulfillment (Recommendation One).

Clarification of the Relationship between Core Theme Indicators and Mission Fulfillment

Western’s Core Themes comprise the means by which Western’s mission is fulfilled. Consequently, indicators of mission fulfillment are not repeated in the core themes. Instead, the core theme indicators of achievement address the steps we must take along the journey to mission fulfillment. For instance, increasing the percentage of low-income students returning for the second year is a step we must take to raise the graduation rate for low-income students.

Standard 1.B Core Themes

Core Theme 1: Serve the State of Washington by Expanding Student Access

Expanding access is essential to the success of our students, our university and our state. Indeed, Washington has one of the nation’s lowest rates of access to higher education. To serve the state Western must expand educational access to more students, and to a more diverse array of students. Access does not, however, stop at admission. To fully provide access to a rigorous and engaging education, Western must also provide access to courses, majors, and academic and co-curricular support. Western’s definition of access, therefore, refers to the gamut of a student’s academic career: from admission to graduation.

As stated in its mission, Western is a “student-centered university that develops the potential of learners.” In order to develop the potential of learners, Western must first identify, recruit, admit and assemble an appropriate student body. Western’s admission
Western Washington University

processes consider not only an applicant’s academics—both rigor and history—but also talents and experience, thereby keeping access both flexible and sensible. Western promotes itself as an inclusive and supportive institution. The manifestation of this principle begins with admissions.

Once enrolled, nurturing a student’s potential must begin with the basics: course access and student success. It is essential that students can access courses, majors, and academic-support and co-curricular programs. Many of Western’s majors are currently operating beyond capacity. Given decreasing state support, it will be difficult to ensure access to high demand fields—such as the STEM areas—identified by the state as high priority. Similarly, Western will be challenged to sustain academic and co-curricular support programs. Nevertheless, access to courses, majors and support remains key to the overall success of the student, and therefore the mission of the University.

Access to fiscal resources is similarly essential. A student’s success may hinge solely on finances. Can they pay their tuition, fees, and housing? Are they in a position to accept a non-paying but noteworthy internship? To this end, Western must actively pursue revenue streams that can support its student-centered mission: scholarships and grants, prevailing high-end technologies, reasonably priced overseas service-learning opportunities—to name just a few.

**Objectives and Indicators of Achievement**

- **Objective 1a:** Sustain total enrollment at 2010 levels, while also sustaining total enrollment of academically-talented students, and expanding the percentage of students from underrepresented groups (students of color and Pell Grant recipients).

  **Indicators**
  1. Undergraduate headcount.
  2. Academically-talented students as a percentage of enrollment. (Based on Academic Index.)
  3. Headcount of students served through Extended Education.
  4. Students of color and Pell grant recipients as a percent of total enrollment.
  5. Average academic index (AI)
  6. Annual scholarship funds provided to students through the Western Foundation.

- **Objective 1b:** Students successfully negotiate the academic and personal opportunities and challenges of their first year.

  **Indicators**
  1. Percentage of freshmen retained to the 2nd year.
  2. Percentage of students of color and Pell Grant recipients retained to the 2nd year.
  3. Student/faculty interaction reported by freshmen (NSSE).

- **Objective 1c:** Students progress toward graduation in a timely manner.

  1. Average, cumulative time-to-degree for “native” and transfer students.
2. Percentage of students graduating in 4, 5 & 6-years.
3. Students of color and Pell Grant recipients’ graduation rates.

Rationale for Core Theme #1 Indicators

The indicators for Objective 1a (1-4) are assessable because enrollment is indicated in admissions data and accessible via our data warehouse. The indicator is meaningful because it is a direct measure that targets the goal described in the objective. Indicator 1a.5 is assessable because it is easily accessible via registrar records. The indicator is meaningful because it is a direct measure that targets the appropriate population and control for the appropriate variable (Admissions Index). Indicator 1a.6 is assessable because the Financial Aid Office tracks all scholarship funds and their sources.

The indicators for Objective 1b are assessable because they are easily accessible via registrar records, because the registrar data is easily manipulated to reveal predicted versus actual retention, and because Western administers the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) on a regular timeline. Indicator 1b.1 is meaningful because it is a direct measure of student behavior (they are retained or they are not). Indicator 1b.2 is meaningful because it is a direct measure of student behavior and targets the appropriate variables (students of color and Pell Grant recipients). Indicator 1b.3 is meaningful because it is an indirect measure of student-faculty interaction, which Western (and student success studies and literature) considers an important aspect of student success.

The indicators for Objective 1c are assessable because they are easily accessible via registrar records. The indicators are meaningful because they are direct measures that target the appropriate variables (time to degree, graduation rates overall, and graduation rates for students of color and Pell Grant recipients).

Core Theme 2: Foster Student Success

In order for Western to serve “...the people of the State of Washington, the nation, and the world” it must serve first the students it welcomes into its community. Fostering student success is paramount to its mission to “develop the potential of learners.” Only by accomplishing this central tenet can Western expect to also develop the “well-being of communities.” Western branding indicates that “...for ambitious, open-minded learners, [it] is the premier undergraduate-centered university that fosters a dynamic collaborative environment at an intimate scale, where students fully engage, reveling in the freedom to develop their intellectual potential and achieve their personal goals.”

In service to the State of Washington, the nation, and the world, Western aspires to be a model for institutional effectiveness and innovation, and to become an international leader in advancing active learning, critical thinking, and societal problem solving. The affirmation of these aspirations will become manifest in student success.

Objectives and Indicators of Achievement

- **Objective 2a:** Students are able to acquire, construct, and apply complex knowledge and theories.
Indicators

1. NSSE section 11 and Western Senior Exit Survey section B.12, asking about the frequency with which Western students are asked to think critically, synthesize information, form complex interpretations, judge the value of information, arguments and methods, and apply course concepts and theories to new problems.
2. Annual number of students who co-author published articles, book chapters, papers, or creative projects with faculty.

- **Objective 2b:** Students are adequately prepared to succeed in their chosen fields.

Indicators

1. Admission rates to graduate schools.
2. Career Services employment survey.
3. Alumni survey.
4. Employer surveys and feedback.
5. NSSE #11b: “Acquiring job and work-related knowledge and skills.”

- **Objective 2c:** Students apply their classroom learning to co-curricular, employment, and residential experiences.

Indicators

1. Total service-learning and community engagement hours served by students.
2. NSSE question 7: “Have done practicum/internship, community service or volunteer work.”
3. NASPA (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education) survey data on student employment experiences.
4. Data from Residence Life Education Assessment Model.

Rationale for Core Theme #2 Indicators

The indicators for Objective 2a assess the opportunities students have to acquire, construct, and apply complex knowledge and theories, and how well students perform in using, applying and demonstrating this knowledge. Indicators 2a.1 and 2a.2 are assessable because they rely on established assessments for which validity and reliability have been demonstrated. They are meaningful because they generate data that allow Western to assess its progress on the objective relative to its previous performance and relative to other universities. The Collegiate Learning Assessment, for instance, reports improvement in critical thinking, problem solving and analysis between the freshman and senior year and compares this improvement to the improvement demonstrated by students at other universities. Indicator 2a.3 is assessable because it is annually tracked by each college and aggregated for the University. It is meaningful because research is the quintessential example of acquiring, constructing, and applying complex knowledge and theories.
The indicators for Objective 2b are assessable because they track metrics that can be collected, quantified, and compared over time. They are meaningful because they triangulate 1) student self-perception of whether the objective has been achieved, 2) employment evidence of whether the objective was achieved, and 3) employer reports of whether the objective has been achieved. In addition, this triangulation achieves increasing validity, moving from perception upon graduation, to acquiring employment, to success in employment over time. Our employer report, documenting professional assessments of our students in the workplace, is a particularly meaningful indicator for this objective.

The indicators for Objective 2c are assessable because they track metrics that are easily tracked over time. They are meaningful because they combine direct measures of total participation in service, practica, and internships with self-report data regarding the application of classroom learning to co-curricular activities and experience in the residence halls. Indicators 2c.1 and 2c.2 permit Western to track its success on this objective over time; 2c.3 provides meaningful benchmark data to allow Western to compare its success on this objective to that of other universities; 2c.4 provides meaningful indirect data that permits Western to track its success on this objective over time.

Core Theme 3: Strengthen Communities beyond the Campus

As stated in its mission, “Western serves the people of the State of Washington, the nation, and the world…” Strengthening communities beyond Western’s campus purposefully addresses this stated mission. Accomplishing this goal requires understanding the needs, resources, and cultures of those communities. Understanding a community, wherever it may exist, means understanding that its world, however large or small, is diverse. Thus strengthening a community entails understanding its diversity. And the commitment to the concept of diversity is equally part of Western’s mission of “…bringing together individuals of diverse backgrounds and perspectives in an inclusive, student-centered university.”

Once part of the Western community, Western strives to provide students from these diverse communities with a positive experience and to integrate those experiences as much as possible through a liberal arts education and co-curricular programs. The cornerstone of the Western experience is the idea that a Western student will take with them when they leave experiences of diversity that they wouldn’t have experienced otherwise. President Shepard notes that Western is itself a community that values diversity in all its forms, and where “…themes of civic engagement and giving back to the community run deep.” Western expects students to be actively involved in their own learning and all its community members to be actively involved in collaborative scholarship and creative activities, but always with an overarching commitment to service to the broader community.

Objectives and Indicators of Achievement

- **Objective 3a:** Students develop respect for and integrate diverse perspectives of others.
  
  **Indicators**
  
  1. Number of Western students participating in study abroad programs.
2. Number of exchange, international and non-resident students attending Western.
3. NSSE question 11: “Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds” and “Working effectively with others.”

- **Objective 3b**: Students contribute to positive change as citizens in diverse communities.

  **Indicators**
  1. Student community service hours (number of hours contributed)
  2. Student community service participation (number of participants)
  3. NSSE questions 7 and 11: volunteerism, voting in elections, contributing to welfare of community.
  4. Peace Corps and Fulbright placement data.

- **Objective 3c**: The Western community (faculty, staff and administration) contributes to positive change in communities beyond the campus.

  **Indicators**
  1. Western community service hours (number of hours contributed).
  2. Western community service programs (list of examples).
  3. Western community service participation (number of participants).

*Rationale for Core Theme #3 Indicators*

The indicators for Objective 3a track participation in study abroad programs, trends in the number of international and non-resident students who attend Western, and survey data concerning student opportunities to understand interact and hold serious conversations with students who hold a different point of view or who are from a different race or ethnicity. Indicators 3a.1 and 3a.2 are assessable because they are coded and counted in our registration data and data warehouse. Indicators included in 3a.3 are assessable because they are derived from the NSSE and asked of our seniors. These indicators are meaningful because experiences abroad and with international and non-resident students help to strengthen respect for diverse perspectives within the campus. Moreover, when diverse groups become part of Western’s community, not only do they bring new and different perspectives to the campus, thus influencing respect for diverse perspectives locally, they take the Western experience back to a community beyond Western’s campus. More specifically, indicator 3a.1 is meaningful because students are motivated to study abroad by respecting diverse perspectives and because the experience of studying abroad further develops respect for such perspectives and assists students in integrating diverse perspectives. Indicator 3a.2 is meaningful because bringing international and non-resident students to campus increases the diversity of perspectives in our classrooms and on our campus, thereby fostering respect and the integration of such perspectives. Indicator 3a.3 is meaningful because it assesses how often students try to understand someone else’s point of view, how their Western education contributed to their understanding of people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds, and what percentage of students had serious
conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity. Moreover, indicator 3a.3 permits us to 1) compare our progress on these self-report metrics over time because these questions are asked of both freshmen and seniors and, 2) compare our progress with that of other universities because the results are benchmarked.

The indicators for Objectives 3b and 3c are assessable because they are coded and counted as part of our program assessment, our participation in NSSE, and the data reported by the Peace Corps and Fulbright Fellowship program. The indicators are meaningful because they provide both direct and indirect measures of the target objective. Whereas Objective 3a focuses on Western’s ability to draw to and send forth from its campus populations of students appropriate to the objective, Objectives 3b and 3c are concerned with tracking the potential for positive change via action—by the entire Western community: students, faculty, administrators, and staff. Six out of seven of the combined indicators are assessable because they are number counts. They are meaningful because they are direct measures that target appropriate actions: the number of hours, programs, and participants. Indicator 3b.3 is meaningful because it is an indirect measure of self-reflection appropriate to the intent of the objective.
Standard 2.A • Governance

2.A.1 = The institution demonstrates an effective and widely understood system of governance with clearly defined authority, roles, and responsibilities. Its decision-making structures and processes make provision for the consideration of the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students on matters in which they have a direct and reasonable interest.

There is perhaps no area at Western that has changed more over the last five years than the university governance system. Upon his arrival in the summer, 2008, President Bruce Shepard began work with faculty and staff to improve the transparency of the operating budget process and to increase participation in budgetary decision-making. The need for these changes, made evident in previous NWCCU recommendations, was further affirmed by comments President Shepard heard while meeting with faculty and staff during the “Listening Campaign” he conducted over the first months of his tenure. In fall, 2008, informed by these comments, Shepard and the Vice Presidents, in collaboration with Faculty Senate President Matthew Liao-Troth, restructured university governance committees and processes to increase budget transparency and participation. These strategies included “bottom up” processes for widely soliciting input and participation in budgeting and resource decisions, increased faculty representation in budgetary processes, public announcement of the processes and assumptions by which budget decisions are to be made, and the subsequent regular and updated publishing on the web of the details of the budget for public comment. All units involved in budget processes were expected to adopt and integrate these strategies, beginning with the Budget Office. (See Budget Office.)

The changes and improvements have been structural as well as procedural. Western has revised its faculty governance structure, the committees responsible for joint governing arrangements, and the architecture of academic assessment activities. Procedures have also changed. There is a new operating and capital budget development process, and numerous new methods of sharing and distributing resource-related decisions and information. Most importantly, a cultural shift has occurred, establishing new norms and standards for collegiality and transparency. These changes and improvements have resulted in an effective system of governance characterized by a structure of clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and resource decisions that are transparent and participatory. For instance, the University’s recent SCOT (strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats) analysis was distributed to all employees to review and respond. This particular SCOT analysis is a strategic-level examination of Western’s internal and external environments and can be found at: WWU SCOT. Institutional transparency and effectiveness is also evident in the following roles and responsibilities.

Board of Trustees

Western Washington University is governed by an eight-member Board of Trustees. Seven members are appointed by the governor, with the consent of the Senate, for terms of six years; one additional university student member is appointed annually by the governor for a one-year term. The Board appoints the President of the University and elects the
principal officers of the Board for two-year terms. Current officers are: Dennis Madsen, Chair; Ralph Munro, Vice Chair; and Betti Fujikado, Secretary.

**Faculty Senate**

Western’s Faculty Senate represents the faculty in matters concerning university academics, budget, planning, and policy. The Executive Council of the Senate prepares the agenda for Senate meetings, meets on a scheduled basis with the President of the University and/or Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, and performs such other duties as may be delegated to it by the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate consists of thirty voting Senators, with the University President and Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs as ex officio, non-voting members. (See Supporting Document 2.A.1 (a): Faculty Senate Committees.)

- **President’s Cabinet.** Participation in governance has also been increased by changes in committee structure and oversight. To promote transparency in budget and policy discussions, it is especially noteworthy that several new members were added to the President’s Cabinet. (See Supporting Document 2.A.1 (b): President’s Cabinet.)

- **University Planning and Resources Council (UPRC).** Another important change to the budget planning and resource allocation process occurred when the Faculty Senate’s University Planning Council was transformed into the University Planning and Resources Council (UPRC). The UPRC examines resource implications for major changes in academic programs and reviews the adequacy of those resources. UPRC does not attempt to direct budgetary processes other than to provide broad general priorities, but it is responsible for the formation and review of policy and procedures in all aspects of University Planning and allocation of resources—with special emphasis on matters of concern to faculty. The Council works to assure that it is well-informed about planning issues and the financial operations and financial status of the University. The UPRC regularly reviews the University’s Strategic Plan, recommends priorities to be used in preparing the University’s biennial operating and capital budget request, in allocating appropriated resources, and in considering budget reductions.

  The membership of the UPRC is comprised of faculty representatives elected from all the Colleges and the Library; the five Vice Presidents; and representatives of the Professional and Classified Staff. Faculty who are interested in serving on the UPRC alert their college’s governing council; appointments are then confirmed in the Faculty Senate during spring quarter.

  The evolution of the UPRC continues. Currently, the UPRC is investigating means of better connecting university-level strategic planning with college and department-level planning.

- **Budget Management Advisory Council (BMAC).** In 2009-10, the President charged the UPB Executive Director with forming an institutional-wide budget management and advisory committee, known as the Budget Management Advisory Council (BMAC). A collaborative body of over forty-five budget and finance professionals from across the university, the BMAC is a collaborative body consisting of budget professionals from key areas of the university who will advise the President, Provost, and Vice Presidents
on needs and opportunities to more effectively manage budget in support of the University’s mission. The Council reviews, evaluates and discusses information, processes and procedures related to the implementation and operation of the university’s budget. (See Supporting Document 2.A.1 (c): Budget Council.)

Associated Students

An organization designed and run by Western students, the Associated Students (AS) seeks to ensure a fulfilling college and academic experience for all university students through the many services, facilities and programs it offers. The AS also acts as the student voice in university administration. Governance consists of a student Board of Directors, Legislative Liaison, Business Office, Personnel Office, Communications Office, and general services. (See Board of Directors; Legislative Liaison; Business Office; Personnel Office; and Communications Office.) The AS President serves on the Board of Trustees, the Faculty Senate, and other committees. The AS Vice President for Academics serves on the Academic Coordinating Commission, the Committee on Undergraduate Education (CUE), and other committees.

2.A.2 = In a multi-unit governance system, the division of authority and responsibility between the system and the institution is clearly delineated. System policies, regulations, and procedures concerning the institution are clearly defined and equitably administered.

Western Washington University is not part of a multi-unit system. While there are extension programs in partnership with community and technical colleges, neither Western nor its extension programs are subsumed beneath the governing board of another institution. Western is an independent, public university with its own governing board—one of six such institutions in Washington State—operating in accordance with the Revised code of Washington 28B. (See RCW 28B.)

2.A.3 = The institution monitors its compliance with the Commission’s Standards for Accreditation, including the impact of collective bargaining agreements, legislative actions, and external mandates.

Compliance with Commission standards

It is the responsibility of Western’s Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) to remain up-to-date with Commission Standards and practices, and to monitor the University’s compliance with the standards. These are key responsibilities the ALO carries out through periodic review of Commission documents and announcements, and through participation in Commission activities. As part of this role, the ALO works closely with governance and advisory committees so that the wider campus can remain informed of accreditation process and participate in Western’s self-study efforts. To these ends, the ALO communicates regularly with and makes presentations to President’s Cabinet, the Council of Deans, the Board of Trustees, and faculty governance committees, including the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the University Planning and Resources Council (UPRC).

Faculty and staff regularly attend pertinent NWCCU events, such as the sessions designed to help institutions prepare self-studies. Notes are taken at these events and shared with
those unable to attend. Western faculty and staff also serve as evaluators for the Commission. As Western evaluators retire, President Shepard solicits nominations for new evaluators. Through evaluator training sessions and their own active participation in evaluation activities, Western personnel serve the Commission and remain current with Commission standards and procedures.

The Provost Office technical writer and analyst provides accreditation and assessment support to the ALO as well as to campus programs and departments. The analyst works particularly closely with the registrar and catalogue coordinator, monitoring planned curricular changes in order to identify changes and developments that require Commission approval. In these instances, the analyst works directly with the department to prepare the necessary documents for the Commission.

The Assessment and Accreditation Advisory Committee (AAAC) advises the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (VPUE) in his roles as Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) and Director of Academic Assessment. The AAAC includes Western’s active evaluators, representatives from each division, campus evaluators who serve other accrediting agencies, such as ABET, the college assessment directors, the Committee on Undergraduate Education (CUE), and Faculty Senate representatives.

The impact of collective bargaining agreements

Western faculty and staff are covered by three collective bargaining agreements. These include the “Collective Bargaining Agreement By and Between Western Washington University and Public School Employees,” the “Collective Bargaining Agreement By and Between Western Washington University and Washington Federation of State Employees,” and the “Collective Bargaining Agreement Between Western Washington University and United Faculty of Western Washington University.” The ALO has reviewed each agreement to ensure compliance with accreditation standards. In addition, Western’s Director of Human Resources, Faculty Senate President, and union presidents maintain copies of the Commission’s Standards for Accreditation.

Legislative actions and external mandates

Western employs a number of active measures and safeguards to ensure compliance with state, federal, and external mandates. For each legislative session, the government relations staff maintains a website of all proposed legislation and trains a representative from each division in its coordinated use. Legislation that may impact specific areas is flagged for quick identification. In instances where this impact goes unnoticed by a representative, government relations staff make direct contact. Thus each division is apprised of legislation as it is proposed. Within the Provost Office, both the VPUE and the Provost participate in these reviews. In addition, the Associate Vice President for University Relations, Western’s key legislative liaison, attends the Vice President meetings to keep senior leadership informed of proposed legislative mandates and changes. Government relations staff alert each division when legislation impacting the division becomes law.

Additional compliance standards are built into Western’s participation in state coordinating committees and councils, including the Washington State Council of Presidents, the Interinstitutional Committee of Academic Officers (ICAO), and the Joint Transfer Council. Legislation which directs Washington’s baccalaureate institutions to
enact a coordinated effort or study typically becomes the responsibility of such committees, which are charged to carry them out.

When directives and mandates from specific agencies are received, Western designates individuals as responsible for compliance and campus communication. Two examples: 1) the Director of Financial Aid actively monitors and communicates changes in state and federal aid; and 2) the Director of the Budget Office, and the Academic Budgeting Director (Provost Office) communicate directives from the Washington State Office of Financial Management.

**Governing Board**

2.A.4 = The institution has a functioning governing board consisting of at least five voting members, a majority of whom have no contractual, employment, or financial interest in the institution. If the institution is governed by a hierarchical structure of multiple boards, the roles, responsibilities, and authority of each board—as they relate to the institution—are clearly defined, widely communicated, and broadly understood.

Authority to govern Western is vested by state law in a Board of Trustees composed of eight members, each appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Washington State Senate. The Western’s Board of Trustees is defined by state statute, which mandates a board of eight members, one of whom must be a current student in good standing. (See RCW 28B.35.100.)

All Board members except the student serve terms of six years. Officers of the Board (chair, vice-chair, and secretary) are elected every other year. Board members receive no compensation other than per diem and travel expenses.

Western’s board members serve the public trust and conduct all business in accordance with Washington State’s Ethics in Public Service Act, which regulates conduct with respect to political activities, use of state resources, conflicts of interest and receipt of gifts. (See RCW 42.52.)

Board members annually affirm their adherence to Washington State standards concerning potential or real conflicts of interest, public disclosure, and disclosure of personal, familial, or business relationships that “reasonably could give rise to a perceived, potential, or real conflict of interest.” Board members pledge to maintain high ethical standards and to conduct the business of the state to advance the public interest. The authority of Western’s Board of Trustees is clearly defined in the Board’s “Rules of Operations.” (See BOT Rules of Operation.)

Western’s Board of Trustees meetings are typically open to the public and audiocast via a publicly-available web stream. Actions and resolutions of the Board are also communicated to the campus in “Western Today,” the University’s online news source. Information on Western’s Board of Trustees, its members, calendar, meeting agendas, and archives of all minutes, meeting materials, Rules of Operations, and resolutions, is also publicly available at the Board website. (See BOT Web Site.)
2.A.5 = The board acts only as a committee of the whole; no member or subcommittee of the board acts on behalf of the board except by formal delegation of authority by the governing board as a whole.

Western’s Board of Trustees acts only as a committee of the whole; no members or subcommittee of the board acts on behalf of the board except by formal delegation of authority by the governing board as a whole. Moreover, the Board takes final action only in regular or special meetings. Five members constitute a quorum. The Board has two standing committees:

**The Audit Committee**

The Audit Committee of the Board assists the Board in fulfilling its responsibility for oversight of the quality and integrity of the accounting, auditing, and reporting practices of the University, and such other duties as directed by the Board. The Audit Committee’s role includes a particular focus on the University’s processes to assure effective internal controls, to advise the University on business and financial risk as such is identified in any audit process, and compliance with significant applicable legal, ethical, and regulatory requirements.

**The Committee on Trustees**

The Committee on Trustees assists the Board in fulfilling its responsibility to periodically facilitate assessments of board effectiveness, to assist in orientation of new trustees, to support effective succession planning, and develop guidance on trustee engagement. In sum, this Committee is responsible for good governance, and shall review and recommend to the Board practices affecting the performance of the Board of Trustees and its members in service to Western Washington University and to the public trust.

The Audit Committee and the Committee on Trustees are advisory to the Board, which votes on their recommendations as a committee of the whole. Washington State permits the governing boards of its universities to delegate to the president, or his or her designee, “any of the powers vested in or imposed upon such governing board by law.” The Board has delegated such authority in specific instances. For instance, the Board delegates to the President the authority to appoint, in the name of the Board, all employees of the University, which include faculty, professional staff, classified staff, and others. (See RCW 28B.10.528.)

2.A.6 = The board establishes, reviews regularly, revises as necessary, and exercises broad oversight of institutional policies, including those regarding its own organization and operation.

Western’s Board of Trustees oversees the shared governance procedures. Matters of general policy relating to the institution’s mission, educational program, operation, and Strategic Plan are regularly reviewed, approved, established and revised. This authority includes institutional policies concerning the organization and operation of the Board of Trustees, as permitted by law. (See BOT Rules of Operation.)
2.A.7 = The board selects and evaluates regularly a chief executive officer who is accountable for the operation of the institution. It delegates authority and responsibility to the CEO to implement and administer board-approved policies related to the operation of the institution.

Western’s Board of Trustees selects and evaluates the University president. Evaluation of the president is regular, deliberate and of two kinds: 1) Annual evaluations of the president’s performance, relative to objectives established by the president and the Board, occur at the end of each year. 2) A larger, formal evaluation of the President’s performance is made after four years of employment as President, and every fourth year thereafter. Formal evaluations include a “360 degree component,” permitting confidential input to be sought and provided. Among other standards and criteria for evaluation, the Board considers the following:

- Leadership, internal and external to the institution;
- Administrative effectiveness;
- Effectiveness at developing financial and other support for the institution; Communication;
- Physical and mental health; and
- Accomplishments and progress toward annual objectives established by the President and the Board.

(See BOT Rules of Operation.)

2.A.8 = The board regularly evaluates its performance to ensure its duties and responsibilities are fulfilled in an effective and efficient manner.

The Board of Trustees annually assesses its performance and development at an annual work session. Through discussions held at the work session, there are opportunities to consider the major issues confronting the University, identify the board’s needs, and ensure board members are receiving the information that will provide them critical oversight of the institution. The Committee on Trustees assists the Board in fulfilling its responsibility to periodically facilitate assessments of board effectiveness.

**Leadership and Management**

2.A.9 = The institution has an effective system of leadership, staffed by qualified administrators, with appropriate levels of responsibility and accountability, who are charged with planning, organizing, and managing the institution and assessing its achievements and effectiveness.

Western’s system of leadership consists of five divisions, each headed by a Vice President:

1. Academic Affairs
2. University Advancement
3. Enrollment and Student Services
4. Business and Financial Affairs, and
5. University Relations and Community Development.
Vice Presidents meet weekly with the President in “VP Meetings” to ensure effective collaboration across university functions. Vice Presidents report to the President and are responsible for the planning, management, assessment and organization of all operations in their respective divisions, as demonstrated in Western’s organizational chart. (See WWW Organizational Chart at bottom of page.)

Reflective of the institution’s robust joint governance procedures, Western’s system of leadership was recently revised to include “bottom up” structures established to ensure the participation of faculty, staff and other stakeholders in strategic initiatives and planning activities. Two key vehicles for this participation are the University Planning and Resource Committee, and the President’s Cabinet. (See details of these bodies in 2.A.1.)

2.A.10 = The institution employs an appropriately qualified chief executive officer with full-time responsibility to the institution. The chief executive officer may serve as an ex officio member of the governing board, but may not serve as its chair.

Western’s President serves as the University’s chief executive officer. As stated in Section 8 of the Board of Trustees Rules of Operation, the President is the principal administrative officer of the University, responsible for the general supervision of all operations and programs and for fulfillment of the University’s strategic plan. In both internal and external affairs, the President serves as the primary representative and spokesperson for the institution to the public. In the internal operation of the University, the President exercises leadership and direction in the management of the University while maintaining effective working relationships with faculty, students, staff, administrators, new internal governance units, and unions representing faculty and staff. The University President is directly responsible to the Board and subject to its direction.

Bruce Shepard currently serves as president of Western Washington University. Before coming to Western, Shepard served as chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay from November 2001 through June 2008. From 1995-2001, Shepard served as provost at Eastern Oregon University, where he was also a professor of political science. Prior to joining EOU, Shepard spent 23 years at Oregon State University, earning tenure as a faculty member in the Department of Political Science before moving into university administration. His administrative positions at Oregon State included state government liaison specialist, special assistant to the provost, assistant vice president for undergraduate studies and director of undergraduate academic programs.

Shepard has served as a visiting scientist at the Population Study Center in Seattle; policy analyst for the USDA Forest Service; and visiting fellow in the School of Communication leadership and Liberal Studies at the Mitchell College of Advanced Education in Bathurst, Australia. Shepard’s academic background includes bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees in political science from the University of California, Riverside.
2.A.11 = The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators who provide effective leadership and management for the institution’s major support and operational functions and work collaboratively across institutional functions and units to foster fulfillment of the institution’s mission and accomplishment of its core theme objectives.

The strategic plan of Western Washington University directs university personnel to “Serve as a model for institutional effectiveness, innovation, diversity, and sustainability.” To these ends, Western maintains an efficient administrative structure that is comparatively lean, employing fewer administrators than do peer institutions. (See Supporting Document 2.A.11 (a): Faculty-Administrators Ratio.)

However, the effectiveness of Western’s administrative structure clearly demonstrates that the leadership system includes a sufficient number of qualified administrators who effectively provide leadership and management sufficient to fulfill the institution's mission and core theme objectives. The core of this administrative structure includes the University's Vice Presidents and Deans.

Vice Presidents

Western’s five Vice Presidents report to the President and are responsible for the leadership and management of their divisions, pursuant to the fulfillment of the University’s strategic plan and core theme objectives. (See WWU VP’s.)

The Vice Presidents meet weekly with the President in “VP Meetings” to collectively advise the President and to discuss operational and business initiatives. In addition, each Vice President serves on committees designed to ensure joint governance, transparency, and representative communication across all sectors of the institution: President’s Cabinet and the University Planning and Resource Committee.

Collectively, Western’s Vice Presidents bring national experience, in-depth familiarity with students, staff, faculty and community, and superb academic qualifications to their roles. (See Supporting Document 2.A.11 (b): Vice Presidents.)

Deans

Western’s colleges and library are led by deans, each of whom reports to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. At Western the Dean functions as a planner, leader and spokesperson for the college and is responsible for providing academic leadership and
administrative management for all academic programs within the college and for its extensive outreach efforts. Each dean works in collaboration with the university's other executive officers to implement the university's mission and is an active and visible leader both within the university and greater community.

The Dean is responsible for developing teamwork within the college and will seek to maintain, strengthen and enhance transparency, shared governance, positive relationships with contractual employees, and a collegial and constructive climate for all. Each dean is charged to maintain a strong commitment to the mission of the University and to work with his or her faculty to establish and carry out college and unit plans designed to achieve the University's mission and strategic goals.

The Dean provides leadership in managing the duties and responsibilities of faculty and staff within his/her college/unit including standards of performance evaluation, assignments, responsibilities to be performed, scheduling of those responsibilities, persons employed, promotion, transfer, non-appointment, non-renewal or reassignment including but not limited to the following:

- Participate in the recruitment and selection of faculty.
- Promote the spirit of and structures that support shared governance in the college.
- Promote faculty development and improvement of instruction.
- Recommend to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs concerning tenure and promotion, professional leaves, general and special merit, and faculty development and other grants for faculty.
- Conduct evaluations of department chairs, work with departments in the selection of new chairs, and work with chairs in the development of departmental plans.
- Coordinate the activities of the college with the administrative staff, the chairs and program directors, and the various college committees.
- Determine the number, composition and type of academic and non-academic staff.
- Discipline and terminate bargaining unit members in accordance with established process.

The Dean provides leadership in college evaluation and planning, including:

- Determine academic programs to be offered, how and when courses shall be scheduled and delivered to achieve strategic goals.
- Provide leadership with curriculum evaluation and assessment efforts.

The Dean represents the college and provide leadership in all activities, including:

- Development work, including friend and fund-raising, and community outreach.
- Grant and contract writing by the faculty and in seeking financial support for the college and University from both governmental and private sources.
- Represent the college to the senior administration and community.
- Increase the diversity in students, faculty and staff, and strengthen diversity opportunities for the college and University.
- Participate in all-University planning and policy formation. Develop, interpret, amend and enforce written policies and procedures governing the work force to advance the mission of the institution and in ways consistent with state laws, and collective bargaining and other agreements.
- Develop and maintain a collegial administrative relationship with other University college and administrative units of the University, including the UFWW.

Deans are evaluated every year by the provost. Every five years this evaluation includes information from a wider “360” audience and feedback from the faculty, other administrators, external stakeholders, and other sources the provost deems appropriate.

(\textbf{Note:} Western is currently undertaking searches for deans of the College of Science and Technology, and the College of Fine and Performing Arts.) (See Supporting Document 2.A.11 (c): Deans.)

\textbf{Policy and Procedures}

\textbf{2.A.12 = Academic policies—}including those related to teaching, service, scholarship, research, and artistic creation—are clearly communicated to students and faculty and to administrators and staff with responsibilities related to these areas.

\textbf{Communication with Students}

University academic policies are discussed with new and incoming undergraduate students as part of student orientation and advising programs. Leading up to fall quarter, most first-time, first-year students attend “Summerstart,” Western’s summer orientation program (89\%), while most new transfer students attend, “Transitions,” Western’s summer orientation program for transfers (83\%). Summerstart and Transitions provide multiple opportunities for students and parents to become acquainted with and ask questions about pertinent university policies. In addition, Summerstart and Transition attendees receive many useful physical handouts and materials. Off-quarter orientation and advising programs are also offered prior to winter, spring, and summer quarters. (See Supporting Document 2.A.12 (a): New Student Handouts.)

\textbf{Communication with New Families}

Parents and guardians who attend Summerstart and Transitions receive the following handouts and materials:
- Equal Opportunity Office (EOO): Western resources and reporting for sexual harassment, illegal discrimination, etc.
- EOO: Know Your Rights (EOO services & resources)
- Office of Student Life: office info and links to Student Rights & Responsibilities Code.
- Student Business Office: Tuition & Fee Schedule, plus info on adding authorized users, releasing financial info process, etc.
- New Student Services/Family Outreach (NSSFO): Guide to Campus Resources (campus map, plus extensive campus resource summary and contact info).
- NSSFO: Parent Connection (how to join, receive emergency notifications, etc.).
**Electronic Communication**

Electronic mailings from NSSFO and the Registrar duplicate and support these efforts to ensure comprehensive communication of key policies. This correspondence includes written instructions, references to resources, and referrals/links to offices to get students started with their Western Experience (e.g.: activating their Universal Account, submitting proof of immunization to fulfill the Measles documentation requirement, referencing the “Email as the official means of University correspondence” policy, instructions on how to access a variety of academic advising pre-planning tools online, how to access their Countdown to Western checklist to see what they’ve done/not done, etc.).

Students who cannot attend Summerstart or Transitions have the opportunity to receive orientation upon arrival on the campus. Graduate students receive key policies both electronically and during orientation sessions provided by the Graduate School and at orientation sessions delivered by individual departments. Students are repeatedly informed that the academic policies can be found in the University Academic Policies and Appendices of Western’s Online Catalog maintained on the Registrar’s Office website in a searchable format, and, for graduate students, on the Graduate School’s website. The regulations listed in the catalog are maintained by the Registrar’s Office and include all revisions, as approved through the Faculty Senate. (See WWU Catalog.)

Additional efforts are made to inform and incorporate awareness of academic regulations throughout a student’s academic life:

- Advisors and Resident Advisors discuss academic regulations with students during one-on-one conversations, phone calls, and email exchanges.
- Links to the online catalog are available on websites associated with academic resources and academic planning (i.e. Admissions, Academic Advising, New Student Services/Family Outreach, Transfer Resource Center)

**Communication with Faculty**

The letter of offer for faculty positions at Western provides the foundation of all official communication concerning teaching, service, scholarship, research, and artistic creation. The letter orients prospective faculty to the university mission and establishes the terms of support new faculty members receives in their first year to help establish their program of instruction and scholarship. In addition, the letter of offer:

- States that all probationary faculty are evaluated annually by the tenured faculty and Chair of the hiring department.
- References section 7.7 of the CBA, “Tenure and Promotion,” as the principle policy concerning tenure and promotion. (See Supporting Document 2.A.12 (b): Faculty CBA.)
- References the appropriate “College and Departmental Unit Evaluation Plan” as establishing the standards and expectations for scholarly and creative activity. (See Supporting Document 2.A.12 (b): Faculty CBA.)
• References the Code of Faculty Ethics within the Faculty Handbook as the principle document concerning the creation and preservation of healthy learning and work environments. (See Faculty Handbook.)

• States the salary that has been offered.

• States the allowable relocation support provided, per Washington State’s “Moving Expense Regulations and Guide,” which is enclosed with the letter.

• Upon being hired, new faculty attend the New Faculty Orientation in the Fall, a day-and-a-half orientation and, three weeks into fall term, “Resources in the Round,” a two-hour presentation on faculty development opportunities and resources. Over the course of both events faculty participate in the multiple and comprehensive workshops. (See Supporting Document 2.A.12 (c): New Faculty Workshops.)

Communication with Chairs

Academic policies and procedures are clearly communicated to Department Chairs through the following events, organizations and resources.

• The Chair Leadership Group holds quarterly trainings and presentations for all chairs, maintains a Chair Website of resources, and matches new Chairs with mentors. (See Chairs Toolkit.)

• The Faculty/Staff administrative calendar, which notes deadlines and due dates. (See Faculty/Staff Calendar.)

• The Provosts The Academic Affairs Policy website. (See Academic Affairs Policies.)

2.A.13 = Policies regarding access to and use of library and information resources—regardless of format, location, and delivery method—are documented, published, and enforced.

Policies and procedures related to access to and use of library and information resources are published and comprehensively available at the library’s website. (See Western Libraries.) These include, but are not limited to:

• borrowing materials from the Western Libraries,
• checking out laptops,
• booking rooms or videos,
• obtaining materials through interlibrary loan or Summit,
• providing access to supplemental course readings, assisting those with special needs, and
• providing services for community members.

Specific polices, information, and guidelines are also posted regarding copyright, plagiarism, computer use, and expectations of conduct.

Policies and procedures are also selectively printed on handouts that are distributed at tours, orientations, instruction sessions, workshops and service locations. Library staff regularly review policies and procedures in order to update and adapt them as necessary, consulting with others when it is appropriate. The Western Libraries take its responsibility of providing access to and use of library and information resources very seriously. This is
evidenced in one of the major goals from the Western Libraries recent (2012) Strategic Plan: “Create and maintain sustainable physical and virtual environments that enhance barrier-free access, a diversity of scholarship, and the pursuit of life-long learning by the citizens of Washington State.” (See Library Strategic Plan.)

2.A.14 = The institution develops, publishes widely, and follows an effective and clearly stated transfer-of-credit policy that maintains the integrity of its programs while facilitating efficient mobility of students between institutions in completing their educational programs.

Western’s transfer of credit policies are developed by the University’s Recruitment, Admissions and Support Committee (RASC) in accordance with statewide Inter-College Relations Committee (IRC) guidelines (IRC Guidelines) and are approved by the University’s faculty. Authority to administer these policies is shared by the Registrar, the Office of Admissions (Admissions) and, where applicability of major or minor is concerned, department chairs.

Transfer-of-credit policies are widely published and available via the University Catalog (Transfer Cred Admissions), the Admissions webpage, the Registrar’s webpage (Registrar), and the Transfer Resource Center website (Transfer Resources). Regarding concerns and/or changes that could impact a student’s transfer experience, Admissions and Advising staff maintain regular communication with counterparts at community colleges with high transfer rates to Western (e.g. Whatcom Community College).

**Students**

2.A.15 = Policies and procedures regarding students’ rights and responsibilities—including academic honesty, appeals, grievances, and accommodations for persons with disabilities—are clearly stated, readily available, and administered in a fair and consistent manner.

The Student Rights and Responsibilities Code (web = R&R Web; pdf = R&R Download) is available through the Dean of Students website, the University Catalog (Appendix C), and via a link to student conduct on the students’ MyWestern portal. (See MyWestern Portal.) Students are also made aware of the Student Rights and Responsibilities Code through outreach conducted during new student orientation. In addition, a link is provided in the Annual Security and Fire Safety report which is distributed to all Western employees and students each fall. In 2011, the Student Rights and Responsibilities Code was revised in light of best practices and changes in the field.

Western’s policies on reasonable accommodation, sexual harassment, equal opportunity, and nondiscrimination are included in Appendix A of the University catalog, the Academic Honesty Policy and Procedure is located in Appendix D, and the Academic Grievance and Appeal Policy is found in Appendix F. Because of their inclusion in the catalog, each of these policies is also codified in the Washington State Administrative Code (WAC).

2.A.16 = The institution adopts and adheres to admission and placement policies that guide the enrollment of students in courses and programs through an evaluation of prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to assure a reasonable probability of student success at a level
commensurate with the institution’s expectations. Its policy regarding continuation in and termination from its educational programs—including its appeals process and readmission policy—are clearly defined, widely published, and administered in a fair and timely manner.

Admission policies consider a range of factors. Chief among them is a student’s probability of academic success as evidenced by grades, test scores, course rigor, completion of prerequisite courses, and related experiences. (See Academic Standing.) Policies for extra-institutional learning such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Cambridge International Exam, as well as credit by exam guidelines, are available in the University Catalog and on the Admissions website. (See Extra Credit Catalog and Extra Credit Admissions.)

Western utilizes the statewide Math Placement Test (MPT) to place students into appropriate first math courses. Most students, including transfer students, who wish to register for a math course at Western must first take the MPT. Information and frequently asked questions about the MPT are available on the Admissions and Testing Center websites. (See MPT Admissions and MPT Testing.) Testing is available at multiple locations in or near Washington, Idaho, Hawaii and Alaska, and via Western’s Testing Center. It is also offered twice per summer orientation session for incoming freshmen and transfer students.

Western has clearly defined policies related to low scholarship, including academic warning, academic probation, continuing probation, removal from probation, and academic dismissal. Reinstatement procedures for students who have been academically dismissed are published in the University Catalog and on the websites for Admissions and the Academic Advising Center. (See Reinstatement Catalog; Reinstatement Admissions; and Reinstatement Advising.)

Responsibility for reinstatement rests with the faculty Scholastic Standing Committee. (See Scholastic Standing.) Policies related to the readmission of former students who left in good academic standing are published on the Admissions webpage. (See Former Students.)

2.A.17 = The institution maintains and publishes policies that clearly state its relationship to co-curricular activities and the roles and responsibilities of students and the institution for those activities, including student publications and other student media, if offered.

Western has a rich history of active engagement by students in a broad range of co-curricular activities. A significant level of student agency is a critical element in the success and quality of these activities. The level of agency varies with the role of the administrative or academic departments that assume responsibility for the activities in support of the University’s mission and objectives. Primary funding is through the Services and Activities Fee, which is legislatively approved, under the authority of the Board of Trustees. The Services and Activities Fee Committee, with a majority of student voting members, is chartered by the Board of Trustees to recommend the fee level, distribute funds among the programs, and evaluate program priorities. (See Fee Committee.) The Committee is currently updating funding guidelines for publication. Funding is distributed to the Associated Students, Campus Recreation, Departmentally Related Activities Committee,
and the Athletics Department, who have departmentally-based guidelines and procedures consistent with the appropriate uses of the fee and program needs that are available on departmental/program websites.

In 2010, the Associated Students was granted a new charter by the University President that outlines authorities and responsibilities as the student government. (See Supporting Document 2.A.17 (a): AS Charter.) The Associated Students operates within the Office of Student Activities, providing student representation, programs, services, activities, and a club system. (See AS Policies.) The AS By-laws, Strategic Plan, and Program Standards provide specific information on the operation of the organization to student employees, volunteers, and the Western community. (See AS By-laws; AS Plan; and AS Standards.) A unique aspect of the organization is the number of student employees that gain significant leadership experience while ensuring the delivery of quality services to the campus community. Policy and procedures for club recognition are also available online. (See Club Policy, and Club Procedure.)

The Student Publications Council (see Pub Council) is chartered by the President to provide management, guidance, and support for major campus publications, including the Western Front, Klipsun Magazine, and The Planet Magazine. (See Front; Klipsun; and Planet.) The Council’s charter clearly outlines the governance structure for university publications, including the roles of the Board of Trustees, the President, faculty or staff advisors, and student editors. (See Pub Charter.) The charter also establishes a Code of Freedom and Responsibility that protects freedom of student expression and establishes standards that students must adhere to. In addition to the major campus publications, the Associated Students publishes the AS Review and a variety of program and club program publications that are governed by charter, mission, and the AS Program Standards. (See AS Review.)

The Associated Students operates the campus radio station (KUGS) in accordance with university policy and specific Associated Students policies. (See KUGS University Policy, and KUGS AS Policy.) The KUGS policy is currently under departmental review to update operational standards. The KUGS General Manager, a professional staff position, and six student coordinators provide active training and oversight to over 100 volunteers to insure compliance with Federal Communications Commission’s rules and campus policies. The General Manager also is responsible for the operation of KVIK, a video production program of the Associated Students. (See KVIK.) Standards of operation are based upon FCC rules and departmental policies and all student producers are trained in these standards.

**Human Resources**

2.A.18 = The institution maintains and publishes its human resources policies and procedures and regularly reviews them to ensure they are consistent, fair, and equitably applied to its employees and students.

New employees are introduced to the University policy and procedures website, as well as the Human Resources policy webpage, during new employee orientation sessions. These websites are available through any computer, including computer terminals available for general use across campus. (See HR Policies.)
Policy development and maintenance is governed by the POL-U1000.10 Developing and Maintaining University Policies policy, which requires final approval by the President or Board of Trustees as appropriate. (See Supporting Document 2.A.18 (a): Policy Creation-Revision Process and Policy Development Page.)

All University Human Resources policies are part of a Division Policy Review and Communication Plan where updates and reminders are communicated to the campus as appropriate. In addition, Human Resources policies and procedures are subject to review every three years. Policy training also occurs outside of new employee orientation, including mandatory supervisor training. Western maintains compliance with both state and federal labor poster requirements.

Human Resources provides human resources-related guidance and education to all university employees. Human Resources staff are trained in the human resource functions of the office, as well as the policies and procedures that govern the institution.

2.A.19 = Employees are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities, and criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination.

All employees are apprised of the conditions of their employment, work assignments, and responsibilities via their job description at the time of hire. If changes occur, those descriptions are updated during annual evaluation processes. Criteria/procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination are provided during new employee orientation and onboarding (typically the first six months in a position). For new employees, the Offer of Employment letter addresses the specific conditions of employment for each employee classification, and references the applicable collective bargaining agreements or employee handbooks.

Human Resources holds regular supervisor/manager trainings on communicating with employees in the evaluation process. Trainings include those for:

- Communication and Successful Conflict Resolution
- Seamless Hires
- From Leave Request to Paycheck: Getting it Right
- Employee Engagement
- Upholding Ethics in the Workplace
- Leading is Caring: Managing FMLA/Accommodations
- Labor Relations 101
- Managing a Diverse Workforce

All University Human Resource policies are subject to review every three years and are part of a Division Policy Review and Communication Plan in which changes, updates, and reminders are communicated to the campus as appropriate.
2.A.20 = The institution ensures the security and appropriate confidentiality of human resources records.

Western’s Human Resources Department adheres to internal procedures to ensure the security and confidentiality of personnel files, payroll files, benefits files, and Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) files, ensuring compliance with HIPPA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) for all University employees. All records, including those of past employees, are kept in file cabinets in a secured and alarmed file room with access provided to Human Resources staff only. Human Resources will only release copies of the content of such files with written authorization from the employee. State-wide records and retention guidelines direct the archiving and disposal of these files. Other Human Resources files are maintained in professional staff offices that are secured each day.

All Human Resources staff are required to have criminal background checks as a condition of employment. Human Resources staff receive training to protect non-public financial information, such as social security numbers and bank account information.

Institutional Integrity

2.A.21 = The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently through its announcements, statements, and publications. It communicates its academic intentions, programs, and services to students and to the public and demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion. It regularly reviews its publications to assure integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.

Official announcements, statements, and publications are routed through the Office of Communications and Marketing, which is responsible for the integrity of messages regarding Western’s mission, branding, programs, and services. (See Communications and Marketing.) Faculty, staff and students are kept abreast of many university policies and procedures through the university’s daily online newsletter, Western Today. Western’s Marketing Committee, comprised of marketing and public relations professionals from across campus, regularly meets to coordinate marketing efforts, to ensure Western’s brand is being used correctly, and to promote teamwork, resource sharing, and the dissemination of new ideas in these areas. To keep abreast of and appropriately utilize emerging social media platforms, a committee of university social media practitioners regularly meets to determine best practices for communicating Western’s mission and other information. Editorial boards for the university magazines Window and Soundings (News for WWU Parents) help assure strong editorial quality. All major website updates are approved by designated university officials and reviewed by the university webmaster. (See Web Standards.)
2.A.22 = The institution advocates, subscribes to, and exemplifies high ethical standards in managing and operating the institution, including its dealings with the public, the Commission, and external organizations, and in the fair and equitable treatment of students, faculty, administrators, staff, and other constituencies. It ensures complaints and grievances are addressed in a fair and timely manner.

In advocating and demonstrating high ethical standards in its operations and management, Western sets the bar at the highest level. In doing so it has sought out the best thinking of its numerous stakeholders in determining the future direction of the University. In 2008, President Shepard conducted listening sessions throughout the campus at which every employee had the opportunity to share ideas and concerns. In 2009-10, he then conducted a *100 Conversations* exercise through which stakeholders from around the state and nation also voiced their ideas and concerns. Through these exercises Western positioned itself to live out a role that was clearly articulated by stakeholders: to serve as a publicly-purposed university.

On the heels of this new direction and to provide a more direct focus, a committee of Western faculty and staff then convened and rewrote what had been a thirty page mission statement and strategic plan and reduced it to a one-page document. (See Mission and Strategic Plan.) This new document was presented to and accepted by the Board of Trustees in 2011, and now guides Western in meeting the needs of the people of the State of Washington and doing so with the highest ethical stands possible.

Western also complies with all state legal statutes, specifically the Washington State Legislature’s Chapter 42.52 RCW, Ethnics in Public Service. (See Ethnic in Public Service.)

**Faculty**

Two examples of Western’s commitment to high ethical standards to faculty, supporting fair and equitable treatment, are the areas of 1) academic freedom and rights, and 2) equal opportunity. In support of academic freedom and rights, the University maintains a Board of Trustee policy (POL U2100.01), the Western Faculty Handbook policy (III. The Faculty, B. Academic Freedom @ Faculty Handbook), and University Catalog (Code of Ethics for Faculty of WWU, Appendix G, Sections 7 and 9 @ Catalog Appendix G).

In support of diversity, findings from two surveys—of faculty in 2012, and staff in 2012-13—provided important diversity-related recommendations, many which were implemented in 2012-13. Indeed, Western’s commitment to diversity is found in a wide series of documents. (See Support Doc 2.A.22: Diversity Policies.) As is the case with all policies and procedures, these documents are available in both print and on the Western website.

With faculty, as with all its constituencies, Western has collective success in living out the values expounded in all policies and procedures by virtue of its close working relationship with the United Faculty of Western Washington’s collective bargaining unit. (See Supporting Document 2.A.12 (b): Faculty CBA.)
Students

Students are encouraged and supported in addressing conflicts with each other in several ways. Residence Life staff provide guidance and support in helping students learn to live in community, including appropriate avenues to address conflict, through the Residence Education model. (See ResLife Education.) Professional and paraprofessional live-in staff assist students in learning about themselves, others, relationships, and community.

Students who have complaints or grievances regarding faculty or grades can avail themselves of the Academic Grievance policy, which is available through the Catalog. (See Academic Grievance.) The policy encourages students—both undergraduate and graduate—to resolve disagreements with faculty informally but provides a process and framework if informal resolution is unsuccessful. Staff in the Office of Student Life/Dean of Students can provide support and guidance for undergraduates; the Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate School can provide support and guidance for graduate students. (See Student Life/Dean of Students and Graduate School.)

Students can file complaints against other students through the “Student Rights and Responsibilities Code,” a set of policies that outlines the expectations of Western students, transparently publishes students’ personal and academic rights, and establishes an ethic of responsibility regarding a student’s guaranteed freedoms and protections. (See Student Rights).

That being noted, as a condition of enrollment at Western, students must assume responsibility for their own actions and maintain an environment conducive to the academic success, safety, and well-being of others. In addition, they are expected to be truthful, respect the rights of others, and abide by all university policies and procedures, as well as all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations. To this end, Western maintains a “Students Rights and Responsibilities” code.

All students are responsible for understanding and complying with the responsibilities and expectations set forth in this code, which is designed to be a learning process that promotes an understanding of students’ responsibilities as members of the university community. The objectives of the student conduct system, as set forth in this code, are twofold: to ensure that students act in a manner consistent with high standards of scholarship and behavior, and to maintain the safety and well-being of all members of the university community.

The University also ascribes to and publishes the “Transfer Rights and Responsibilities” code of Washington State, ensuring that transfer students understand the protections they warrant in class standing, course equivalencies, and transfer credit. (See Supporting Documentation 2.A.22 (a): Transfer Rights and Responsibilities.)

Staff/Administrators

As with its faculty, Western has collective success in living out the values expounded in all policies and procedures by virtue of its close working relationship with collective bargaining units representing classified staff (Washington Federation of State Employees), and the Washington Public State Employees), as well as with non-represented professional
staff. (See Supporting Documentation 2.A.22 (b): AFSCME CBA, 2.A.22 (c): PSE CBA, and Professional Staff Organization.)

As noted in 2.A.18, new employees are introduced to the University policy and procedures website, as well as the Human Resources policy webpage, during new employee orientation sessions. These websites are available through any computer, including computer terminals available for general use across campus. (See HR Policies.)

Included among the specific policies covered under Washington’s RCW 42.52 and available on the Human Resources web are those for:

- whistleblowers,
- financial disclosures,
- compensated outside professional activities,
- loss of university funds or property, and many more.

**Ensuring Equal Opportunity, Fair and Equitable Treatment**

Western is committed to implementing all federal and state statutes prohibiting discrimination for faculty, staff and students based on legally prohibited characteristics, including: race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy and parenting), age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, genetic information, and veteran status, and to creating a campus respectful of the identities of all its members. As an example, two recent changes made at Western to better support its transgender members included developing a process for students to indicate their preferred first name in student systems and in documents not requiring a legal first name and converting ten single-occupancy men’s and women’s restrooms on campus to gender-neutral and family restrooms.

Western fully implements equal opportunity and affirmative program requirements and has a designated Title IX and American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator. Faculty, staff, and students who feel they are subject to discrimination or harassment based on protected categories may file a discrimination complaint with the university’s Equal Opportunity Office (EOO). EOO investigations are conducted per the university’s discrimination complaint procedure (PRO-U-1600.02A) and are completed in a timely manner. In support of ensuring a healthy equal opportunity climate, the university undertook diversity climate surveys of students, faculty, and staff. Findings from these surveys (students in 2009-10; faculty in 2012, and staff in 2012-13) provided important equal opportunity and diversity-related recommendations, many which were implemented in 2012-13. Indeed, Western’s commitment to diversity is found in a wide series of documents. (See Supporting Document 2.A.22 (d): EOO Policies.) As is the case with all policies and procedures, these documents are available in both print and on the Western website.

2.A.23 = The institution adheres to a clearly defined policy that prohibits conflict of interest on the part of members of the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. Even when supported by or affiliated with social, political, corporate, or religious organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose and operates as an academic institution with
appropriate autonomy. If it requires its constituencies to conform to specific codes of conduct or seeks to instill specific beliefs or world views, it gives clear prior notice of such codes and/or policies in its publications.

Western demonstrates a commitment to integrity by its conduct codes and clearly defined policies that prohibit conflict of interest by the Board of Trustees, the president, administrators, faculty and staff.

Section 2.4 of the Western Board of Trustees Rules of Operation, provides conflict of interest standards that apply to all members of the Board of Trustees. Section 2.4 (b)(1) requires an annual affirmation for all members of the Board for disclosure of personal, familial, or business relationships. These affirmations are maintained by the Secretary to the Board of Trustees. Section 2.4 (b)(2) requires trustees to disclose to the Chair of the Board the existence of potential or real conflicts of interest as soon as possible. Section 2.4 (b)(3) requires that such disclosures are recorded in the minutes of the meeting where a vote by the Board of Trustees will occur. Section 2.4 (c) includes a detailed but non-exhaustive list of situations that constitute conflicts of interest. The Rules of Operation also address possible conflict of interest in event any relatives of the President are employed. (See BOT Rules of Operation.)

The Board’s Rules of Operation provide for a three-member Audit Committee to assist in fulfilling the Board’s responsibilities to the oversight and integrity of the accounting, auditing and reporting practices of the university. The Audit Committee Charter is appended to the Rules of Operation and guides the Director of Internal Audit and the committee.

University policies and procedures are in place to ensure ethical conduct and legal treatment of faculty, staff and students. Specific policies include, but are not limited to: Policy on Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination; Policy on Reporting Financial Conflict of Interest by PHS-Funded Investigators; Policy on Addressing Responsible Conduct of Research; Code of Responsibility for Security and Confidentiality of Records and Files; and Administering the State Whistleblower Act. These and other policies are posted on the university policy web site. (See University Policies.)

The Code of Faculty Ethics has long been in place to guide faculty. Amended in 2012 to provide clear and unequivocal guidance regarding conflict of interest, Sections 7 and 8 directly address issues of conflict: Section 7, Conflict of Interest Resulting from Family and/or Intimate Personal Relationships; and Section 8, Consensual Intimate Personal Relationships between Faculty and Students. (See Faculty Handbook.)

Western Washington University maintains institutional integrity by its clear expectation of ethical conduct by its Board of Trustees, administrative leadership, faculty and staff.

2.A.24 = The institution maintains clearly defined policies with respect to ownership, copyright, control, compensation, and revenue derived from the creation and production of intellectual property.

Western maintains clear and uniform policies and procedures for the regulation and administration of intellectual property rights generated by the activities of its faculty,
employees and others associated with the University. University policies concerning ownership, control, copyright, and revenue derived from the creation and production of intellectual property were previously published in the Faculty Handbook. However, with the establishment of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, these policies (POL—U4520.03) were revised, strengthened, and more published as Appendix 1 of the CBA. (See Supporting Document 2.A.12 (b): Faculty CBA.)

Appendix 1 of the CBA details the objectives of the policy, as well as its details, the rights of students, the University procedure for reporting inventions, the inventor’s share of royalties, criteria governing outside commercial sponsorship of research, works for hire. In addition, Western provides several levels of support to faculty to ensure the understanding of their intellectual property rights, the protections of copyright, their responsibilities for human subjects review, and the fair and ethical treatment of animals. All faculty are introduced to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP), and the resources and support it provides faculty, as part of the New Faculty Orientation, provided for newly-hired faculty each fall. Western has a full-time compliance officer to assure all federal, state, and local compliance requirements are met. The RSP compliance officer works with two faculty led committees which govern faculty and student research involving human subjects (See IRB: Human Subjects) and animal care (See IACUC: Animal Subjects). Western has a contractual agreement with COJK to assist faculty and the University with patents (see COJK web site), and a relationship with the Washington Research Foundation to promote the development of intellectual property. (See WA Research.)

2.A.25 = The institution accurately represents its current accreditation status and avoids speculation on future accreditation actions or status. It uses the terms “Accreditation” and “Candidacy” (and related terms) only when such status is conferred by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

Accuracy in the representation of accreditation status is a central tenant of Western’s commitment to transparency in the representation of its standing and performance. The regional accreditation status of Western Washington University, together with current and archived accreditation self-studies and reports, is prominently displayed on the University’s Accreditation web site. The Commission’s letters of “Reaffirmation of Continuous Accreditation” are published, as well as the full texts of the peer evaluation reports. The University does not speculate or otherwise predict or extrapolate concerning future accreditation actions or status. (See Western Accreditation.)

In addition to the transparent publication of all regional accreditation documents and reports, the following steps and safeguards ensure the accurate representation of the University’s accreditation status. At Western, the Accreditation Liaison Officer and Director of Academic Assessment:

- makes annual presentations on the University’s current and upcoming assessment and accreditation activities for President’s Cabinet, Deans Council, and the Deans and Chairs (DAC) committees of CHSS and CST;
meets annually with the Associate Deans and Directors of Assessment within each college to coordinate accreditation and assessment activities, and to ensure each college remains updated and in compliance with accreditation standards;

• apprises the Faculty Senate Executive Committee on the University’s current and upcoming assessment and accreditation activities;

• regularly convenes the Accreditation and Assessment Advisory Committee (AAAC) to seek the committee’s advice and participation regarding regional accreditation activities; and

• remains current with NWCCU procedures, policies and expectations by participating in the Commission’s ALO and evaluator trainings, and by volunteering as an evaluator.

The University Catalog also publishes the Commission’s regional accreditation of Western, and the specialized accreditation received by specific programs.

2.A.26 = If the institution enters into contractual agreements with external entities for products or services performed on its behalf, the scope of work for those products or services—with clearly defined roles and responsibilities—is stipulated in a written and approved agreement that contains provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution. In such cases, the institution ensures the scope of the agreement is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, adheres to institutional policies and procedures, and complies with the Commission’s Standards for Accreditation.

Contract Administration reviews the terms and conditions of every contract. (See Contract Administration.) To ensure the legality of the contract, the review and signature of the Assistant Attorney General are obtained. Moreover, in order to allocate risks equitably and, to the extent possible, not assume liability beyond that which is insured, all agreements for Risk Management review prior to execution are staged, a practice that helps minimize both tort and contractual liability expenses. When necessary, approval is obtained from the Board of Trustees. Reporting and filing requirements are met according to the following guidelines:

• State Administrative & Accounting Manual (SAAM).
• University Policies and Procedures (University Policies).
• RCW 39.04: Public Works.

Academic Freedom

2.A.27 = The institution publishes and adheres to policies, approved by its governing board, regarding academic freedom and responsibility that protect its constituencies from inappropriate internal and external influences, pressures, and harassment.

Western Washington University publishes and adheres to policies, established through its joint-governance procedures and approved by its Board of Trustees, concerning academic
freedom and protection from inappropriate internal and external influences, pressures and harassment.

In every aspect of the University’s operations, Western demonstrates strong principles of ethics, academic freedom, and integrity in the pursuit of knowledge. At the most foundational level, Western’s mission, vision, values and strategic goals—rooted in the values of service, access, diversity, community engagement, integrity, and innovation—serve as a concrete guide for the institution’s actions, and for the entire community to participate and to function with integrity. This emphasis upon academic freedom and integrity is manifest in the University’s core operating documents. For instance, the CBA declaratively states that “Faculty members are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results.” The CBA is also careful to balance the academic freedom of faculty with the rights and protections of students: “Faculty members are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to persistently intrude material into their teaching which has no relation to their subject” (CBA 2.2,2,3,4).

In addition, and as published in Appendix 4 of the Faculty Handbook, the University affirms the American Association of University Professors’ Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure. These principles are strongly defended by the Faculty Senate. (See Faculty Handbook: Appendix 4 and Principles on Academic Freedom.)

Western’s published policies include a variety of documents establishing safeguards to protect its constituencies from inappropriate influences, pressures and harassment. Additionally, Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) resources are provided in materials to support department chairs. (See Table 3 below.)

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<td>Code of Ethics for WWU faculty</td>
<td>Faculty Code of Ethics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional conduct &amp; conflict of interest</td>
<td>2.A.12 (b): Faculty CBA</td>
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<td>FERPA</td>
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<td>FERPA for department chairs</td>
<td>FERPA for Chairs</td>
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2.A.28 = Within the context of its mission, core themes, and values, the institution defines and actively promotes an environment that supports independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. It affirms the freedom of faculty, staff, administrators, and students to share their scholarship and reasoned conclusions with others. While the institution and individuals within the institution may hold to a particular personal, social, or religious philosophy, its constituencies are intellectually free to examine thought, reason, and perspectives of truth. Moreover, they allow others the freedom to do the same.
As an institution of higher education, Western maintains policies and protections which recognize that “academic freedom is essential to the mission of the university and that providing and environment of free and honest inquiry is essential to its functioning” (See Supporting Documentation 2.A.12 (b): Faculty CBA 2.1.) However, and as published in the CBA, faculty members “should be careful not to “...persistently intrude material into their teaching which has no relation to their subject. Faculty members are responsible for maintaining high professional standards of scholarship and instruction in their fields. Therefore, faculty members shall adhere to legal and ethical standards and procedures. The commitment to academic freedom does not imply that a faculty member’s teaching and scholarship are not subject to critical review and judgment as to their quality and significance.” (See Supporting Documentation 2.A.12 (b): Faculty CBA 2.3.)

This same careful balance between one’s own freedoms and that of others is clearly set forth in the University’s publications for students. The Students Rights and Responsibilities Code, available in the catalog and elsewhere, notes that “While students have the right to freedom of expression, including the right to dissent or protest, this expression cannot interfere with the rights of others.” See Student Rights & Responsibilities.)

Western Washington University is committed to providing students, faculty and staff with an educational and work environment free of discrimination or harassment based on categories protected by federal law or Western policy.

The university extends the rights, responsibilities and protections of freedom and independent thought to students and staff in clearly published policies that are distributed to students in a variety of forms. (See Table 4 below.)

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<td>Student Rights and Responsibilities Code</td>
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<td>Student Rights and Responsibilities Code in bookmark form</td>
<td>2.A.28 (a): Student R&amp;R Bookmark</td>
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<td>Academic Integrity at Western</td>
<td>Academic Integrity</td>
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2.A.29 = Individuals with teaching responsibilities present scholarship fairly, accurately, and objectively. Derivative scholarship acknowledges the source of intellectual property, and personal views, beliefs, and opinions are identified as such.

As noted in the evidence provided in 2.A.28 above, the CBA declaratively states the responsibility of faculty to ensure that they refrain from inserting into their teaching material with no relation to their subject, and that academic freedom does not mean that “teaching and scholarship are not subject to critical review and judgment as to their quality and significance.” (See Supporting Documentation 2.A.12 (b): Faculty CBA 2.3.) Moreover, because students complete course evaluations for every course they take at Western, and
because all faculty submit syllabi for the courses they teach, the institution has multiple peer-review safeguards for ensuring that content and scholarship are presented fairly, accurately, and objectively in all courses taught at Western.

Similar peer-review safeguards ensure the integrity of academic scholarship published by faculty of Western. Faculty submit copies of all published scholarship in their review dossiers for probationary evaluations, promotion, tenure, and periodic post-tenure reviews. In this way all scholarship is subject to peer-review at the level of the department as well as the level of the publication. These multiple layers of peer-review ensure that the source of intellectual property, as well as an author's personal views, beliefs, and opinions are sufficiently identified.

Finally, Western has clear policies for the integrity of scholarship and clear processes for scholarly misconduct and/or other identified departures from accepted standards of integrity and honesty. Such policies include those identified in 2.A.27. The process for reporting misconduct are clearly stated and prominently published in the Policy and Procedural guidelines for Misconduct in Research and Scholarship on the RSP web page. (See RSP Misconduct Policies.)

**Finance**

2.A.30 = The institution has clearly defined policies, approved by its governing board, regarding oversight and management of financial resources—including financial planning, board approval and monitoring of operating and capital budgets, reserves, investments, fundraising, cash management, debt management, and transfers and borrowings between funds.

The Revised Code of Washington establishes vests all management of Western’s financial resources in its Board of Trustees, which is defined by state statute (See RCW 28B.35.100.) The Board of Trustees has developed and approved clearly defined policies, regarding oversight and management of financial resources, including financial planning, reserves, investments, cash management, transfers, debt management, and Board of Trustees approval and monitoring of operating and capital budgets. These policies may be found within the BOT Rules of Operation and the “Fiscal Services” sections of the University Policy and Procedures website. (See Fiscal Services Policies.) These policies ensure that all business and financial practices:

- connect to the university’s mission to individual conduct,
- establish specific requirements for members of the campus community,
- ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and
- promote operational efficiencies and reduce institutional risks.
Standard 2.B • Human Resources

2.B.1 = The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified personnel to maintain its support and operations functions. Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions accurately reflect duties, responsibilities, and authority of the position.

Western employs a sufficient number of qualified personnel to maintain its support and operations functions. Western’s recruitment practices are located on the Human Resources website: HR Website. Classified staff and faculty recruitment procedures are also outlined in the applicable collective bargaining agreements (CBAs): CBA Website.

Human Resources provides guidance in recruitment processes, ensuring that criteria, qualifications, and procedures are appropriate and posted correctly. In addition, the Equal Opportunity Office provides search committee briefings and reviews the search process for faculty, professional staff, and executive officer positions to ensure equal opportunity standards are followed. (See Recruitment Guide.) Position descriptions accurately reflect duties and responsibilities, and copies are maintained by HR; position-specific training needs are identified at the time of recruitment.

2.B.2 = Administrators and staff are evaluated regularly with regard to performance of work duties and responsibilities.

Faculty

Once hired as an assistant professor, and until achieving tenure and promotion to associate professor, tenure track faculty are evaluated every year, using criteria outlined in college and department evaluation plans. Once tenured and promoted, faculty are evaluated every five years. (This is called Post Tenure Review or PTR.) Again, this process uses criteria outlined in college and department evaluation plans. Non-tenure track faculty (called instructors) are evaluated every year until promoted to senior instructor, at which time they are evaluated every three years.

Administrators and Classified Staff

Administrators and classified staff are evaluated regularly with regard to performance of work duties and responsibilities. Performance Evaluation plans are completed initially during the probationary or trial service period and then annually thereafter—typically at the employee’s anniversary date. Performance goals and training and development plans are determined and reviewed during this process. Completed Performance Evaluation plans are maintained in each employee’s HR file. Supervisors are trained on protocol for completing performance evaluations. Procedures for classified staff evaluations follow the process set by the Washington state department of personnel.

In addition to their annual evaluations, administrators (including the Vice Presidents, Deans and the Provost, and Directors and Associate Vice Presidents within Enrollment and Student Services) receive "360 degree" evaluations on a rotational basis—typically every
3-5 years. The 360 degree evaluation of Deans, the Provost and others include venues for broad faculty participation and "open" opportunities wherein anyone may submit comments. The 360 degree evaluations of Professional Staff directors and other administrators employ the EPAS system and typically include comments from three to ten peers. The Faculty Senate participates in 360 degree evaluations of the Deans and Provosts, and also periodically conducts its own reviews of Deans. (See EPAS.)

**2.B.3** = The institution provides faculty, staff, administrators, and other employees with appropriate opportunities and support for professional growth and development to enhance their effectiveness in fulfilling their roles, duties, and responsibilities.

Western strives to ensure all employees are given the tools needed to succeed in their position and the opportunity to grow into the professional they desire to become. While department chairs may draw from various sources to support the professional development of faculty and employees in their units, Western recognizes the need for internal options for professional development and offers a wide variety of programs, classes, and other offerings. (See Supporting Document 2.B.3 (a): Development Programs.)

**2.B.4** = Consistent with its mission, core themes, programs, services, and characteristics, the institution employs appropriately qualified faculty sufficient in number to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and assure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs, wherever offered and however delivered.

In 2012, Western had 659 full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty, 90% holding terminal degrees. The student-to-faculty ratio was 21:1. Approximately 60% of all faculty are tenured or tenure-track. However, these figures may misrepresent the proportion of non-tenure track (NTT) faculty as almost all of Western’s tenured and tenure track faculty hold full-time positions and most NTT faculty do not. (See Table 5 below.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5: Full Time/Part Time Status, Fall 2012</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenured &amp; Tenure Track</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Tenure Track</td>
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<td>Full Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>Full Time</td>
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<td>Part Time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The recent recession, and striking reduction in state funding, did challenge the University to sustain an appropriate number of qualified faculty to achieve its educational objectives, oversee academic policies, and assure the integrity of all programs. Due to funding
reductions and a state-mandated hiring freeze, virtually no tenure-track hiring occurred over the academic years 2009-2010, and 2010-2011. Consequently, changes in the student to faculty ratio occurred. (See Table 6 below.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6: WWU Student FTE to Faculty FTE Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FTE: Fall, 2010</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13850.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In departments with retirements, faculty were particularly stretched to provide instruction in all areas of the curriculum. In response, the University intentionally initiated an effort to protect the quality of the core curriculum within the majors and the general education program. As noted in the Preface, this initiative included:

- Focused staff reductions in areas with the least impact upon instruction.
- Eliminating under-enrolled programs and streamlining course and program offerings.
- Implementing technological innovations to improve efficiencies and ensure the most efficient use of instructional resources.
- Creating a “waitlisting” system so that course access choke points can be identified in real-time.

In addition to these efforts, the university initiated a “Bottleneck Request Process” to ensure student access to courses.

**The Bottleneck Request Process**

Bottleneck funds serve to create additional seats in required major or GUR courses with excess demand where all other possible steps for increasing access have been exhausted.

Departments which request bottleneck dollars draft a memo describing:

- the funding requested (salary + benefits) and the total number of sections and seats to be added;
- the quarters for which the funding is requested;
- evidence that demand exceeds supply;
- a brief description of steps already taken to expand supply or eliminate the bottleneck; and
- a brief description of how the additional sections fit into the department’s planning efforts.

The bottleneck fund and procedure, combined with the real-time waitlist dashboards, enable chairs to identify and respond to course access bottlenecks as they emerge. In some instances, the university was able to identify, fund and create additional sections of courses within a single day.
In AY 2012-2013 more than $268,000.00 was allocated to the creation of additional
sections through this process. As noted in the following table, every college but Woodring,
which saw a reduction in its majors, created additional seats. (See Supporting Document
2.B.4 (a): Bottleneck Funding.)

Over this period, departments and colleges took other steps to ensure the integrity of
academic programs and curricula. For instance, rebasing occurred to direct additional
dollars toward areas with the sharpest growth in majors, such as STEM fields, so that
additional NTT faculty could be hired. Course overloads were approved in instances where
a faculty member needed to add an additional section to meet student need. These
overloads were approved in coordination with Western’s faculty union. All procedures
established in the CBA, specifying the additional compensation to be provided in such
instances, were followed.

Consequently, although overall full-time faculty headcount decreased slightly over the past
five years, the University—through initiatives coordinated through the colleges, Faculty
Senate, and faculty union—successfully sustained a total number of qualified faculty,
sufficient in number to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic
policies, and assure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs. This sufficiency
is demonstrated in key performance indicators noted in the preface to this report. Most
importantly:

- Western’s low average time-to-degree for students who enter the institution as
  freshman was sustained at 4.3 years. (See Fact Book: Years to Degree.)
- Student satisfaction with the quality of their instruction, their educational
  experience at Western, and other measures, remained extremely high, as
demonstrated in senior exit surveys. For instance, the percentage of seniors
  reporting that they were satisfied to very satisfied with their experience at Western
  remained over 85%.
- Student satisfaction with the quality of their educational experience at Western
  remained extremely high, as demonstrated in senior exit surveys. For instance, the
  percentage of surveyed seniors reporting that they were satisfied to very satisfied with
  the quality of instruction in their major actually rose over the period of greatest cutbacks,
rising from 82% in 2009 to 89% and 85% in 2011 and 2012, respectively. (See Exit
  Surveys.)
- Western’s 6-year graduation rates rose over the period of the recession, peaking in
  2012 at 72.8%.
- The “value added” by a Western degree, as measured by the Collegiate Learning
  Assessment, increased over this period. (See page 5, above.)

Yet while "sufficient," the number of full-time faculty employed over the recent recession
and state hiring freeze was not ideal. Hence the aggressive rate at which Western is now
hiring additional, tenure-track faculty. Following successful completion of this year’s 58
searches, the University expects to return to the levels of faculty staffing maintained prior
to the recession. Such levels are more appropriate for a university of Western’s rank and national standing.

Detailed information on Western’s faculty, including the percentage of faculty at each rank, the percentage of women and men, the diversity of the faculty, and other data, can be found in the online Fact Book under “Faculty.” (See Fact Book.)

2.B.5 = Faculty responsibilities and workloads are commensurate with the institution’s expectations for teaching, service, scholarship, research, and/or artistic creation.

Faculty responsibilities and workloads at Western are established by attention to both student needs and the goal of maintaining consistent departmental standards and expectations. As noted in the CBA (Section 9.1), the underlying principle for establishing teaching loads at Western is to meet the needs of students and program requirements effectively and efficiently, and to provide a supportive teaching/learning environment. Consequently, faculty responsibilities and workloads at Western are dominated by activities related to undergraduate instruction. Since teaching methods vary among disciplines, each department and college is best able to assess the efforts required in teaching in its discipline(s). Hence, workloads differ by department. The clear priority of student needs in these processes is in accordance with the University’s mission, vision, values, and core themes.

However—and as also noted in the CBA—“The parties agree to continue stable teaching load practices for faculty that maintain the historic departmental levels of teaching or librarianship constituting one FTE workload in each college” (9.2.1).

Western’s success in establishing workloads that effectively balance the changing needs of students with year-to-year consistency within departments was severely challenged by the state hiring freeze and recent recession. As noted in the Preface, everyone on campus worked harder to sustain Western’s core student services during this period. However, fundamental continuity in historical workloads has returned and workloads are once more commensurate with institutional expectations and benchmarked peer comparisons. This achievement reflects the strength of Western’s joint-governance procedures and is demonstrated by consistency in the SCH/Faculty FTE ratio over the period 2010-2012. In addition this is born out by evidence provided by the 2010-11 HERI Faculty Survey. (See Table 7 below and Supporting Documentation 2.B.5 (a): HERI Faculty Workload.)

| Table 7: Student Credit Hours (SCH) to Faculty FTE • Ratios by Year |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|
|                        | 2010   | 2011   | 2012   |
| Tenured                | 226.7  | 246.4  | 229.1  |
| Tenure Track           | 237.8  | 237.9  | 261.4  |
| Non-Tenure Track       | 394.2  | 375.4  | 398.5  |
| Total                  | 303.7  | 312.3  | 310.5  |
At noted in the table above, some adjustments were made to accommodate student needs over this recessionary period but the overall ratio of SCH to Faculty FTE varied by less than 4%. Moreover, given the rapid rate of recent faculty hiring, this ratio is expected to return to pre-2010 rates this year. More evidence of the institution’s success in establishing effective workloads is demonstrated in Western’s recognition by the Chronicle of Higher Education as a “Great College to Work For.” Western won this recognition as a result of a nation-wide survey of faculty, administrators, and support staff. Western was recognized by its faculty for its teaching environment and for clarity in the institution’s tenure requirements and process.

Tenure-track faculty members’ job responsibilities include a combination of teaching, advising, research or creative endeavors, and service to departments, colleges, the university, the professions, and the community. Additional responsibilities of tenured and tenure-track faculty include: advising students; attending classes as scheduled; participating in university committees; maintaining reasonable posted office hours; working collaboratively and productively with colleagues; participating in accreditation and program reviews. Distribution of workload among these job responsibilities may vary according to departmental and programmatic need. Non-tenure-track responsibilities are defined in the Letter of Offer and normally consist primarily of teaching.

Standards for the quantity and quality of teaching as well as standards for the quantity and quality of research and service are determined in departmental and college evaluation plans, noted in this document’s response to 2.B.6.

2.B.6 = All faculty are evaluated in a regular, systematic, substantive, and collegial manner at least once within every five-year period of service. The evaluation process specifies the timeline and criteria by which faculty are evaluated; utilizes multiple indices of effectiveness, each of which is directly related to the faculty member’s roles and responsibilities, including evidence of teaching effectiveness for faculty with teaching responsibilities; contains a provision to address concerns that may emerge between regularly scheduled evaluations; and provides for administrative access to all primary evaluation data. Where areas for improvement are identified, the institution works with the faculty member to develop and implement a plan to address identified areas of concern.

The Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) describes the processes and timelines by which tenured and tenure-track faculty, as well as non-tenure-track faculty, are evaluated at Western. (See Supporting Documentation 2.A.12 (b): Faculty CBA.)
The Evaluation of Tenure-Track and Tenured Faculty

As noted in the CBA, all probationary, tenure-track faculty are reviewed annually until tenure is granted or the faculty member is not reappointed (CBA 7.6.1) Tenured faculty are reviewed every five years, starting with their most recent promotion, unless more frequent reviews are required for accreditation. In cases of clear intention of retirement, faculty may choose not to be reviewed in the last year of service (7.8.1). Faculty compile an evaluation file or dossier with all relevant evidence since their previous review or promotion; dossiers contain all primary evaluation data, including teaching evaluations for every course taught in the review period, and are available for administrative review. Faculty are evaluated based on departmental standards for their rank, as documented in the department’s Evaluation Plan. While these standards address only teaching, service, and scholarship or creative activity, departmental standards include multiple indices of effectiveness and provide flexibility to allow for fluctuations in the relative emphasis of these activities across the career life cycle of the individual faculty member. Departmental evaluation plans and standards are reviewed by a college committee, the dean and the Provost for compliance with relevant college and university standards and procedures. All new faculty are given the department and college evaluation plan by the time they begin service at the university.

All tenured members of the department participate in the review of probationary faculty, evaluating the file and submitting a recommendation using the forms provided in the departmental or college standards. Other probationary members are invited but not required to participate (7.6.2.2.1). The CBA directs chairs to discuss with the candidate any activities that meet departmental standards in the areas of teaching, service, and scholarship/creative activity and demonstrate the candidate’s progress toward departmental standards for tenure (7.6.2.1.2).

The Evaluation of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

Non-tenure-track faculty are evaluated by the department chair in a manner established by the departmental evaluation plan and on the basis of expectations and duties defined in the Letter of Offer. The evaluation includes student evaluations of all courses taught (CBA 8.3.1). The department chair may consult with the tenured and tenure-track faculty of the department if deemed appropriate by the chair or the faculty member. The department chair shall summarize the results of his/her evaluation in a letter. The faculty member shall receive a copy of this letter and have the opportunity to respond before it is submitted to the dean. The dean will review the letter to verify compliance with departmental and college standards. A copy of the dean’s letter shall be provided to the faculty member, the department chair, and the Provost.

Under no circumstances shall a performance evaluation of a faculty member be undertaken without the faculty member’s knowledge.

Senior Instructors shall be evaluated once during the period of their appointment. Reappointment to Senior Instructor requires a satisfactory evaluation. All other non-tenure-track faculty are evaluated annually.

The university provides a variety of faculty development resources to assist faculty in the development of their teaching, research and service activities, should areas for
improvement be identified. These resources include mentors for new faculty within departments, the department chair, Research and Sponsored Programs, and the Center for Instructional Innovation and Assessment (CIIA), Western’s faculty development center. University procedures permit students or faculty to contact a faculty member’s chair, should concerns about a faculty member’s performance emerge between regularly scheduled evaluations. In such instances the chair meets with the faculty member to discuss the concerns and, where appropriate, to recommend resources or strategies for addressing it. (See Supporting Document 2.B.6 (a): College Evaluation Plans.)
Standard 2.C • Education Resources

2.C.1 = The institution provides programs, wherever offered and however delivered, with appropriate content and rigor that are consistent with its mission; culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes; and lead to collegiate-level degrees or certificates with designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.

All of Western’s programs, wherever and however delivered, are designed to integrate fully with its mission and core themes. Degrees or certifications are offered in recognized fields of study only, and use standard degree designators and CIP codes.

Student Learning Outcomes

Western’s programs culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes, and lead to collegiate-level degrees or certificates that are consistent with program content. Degree and certificate awards, along with their requirements for completion, are listed in the University’s catalog. (See University Catalog.)

Content, Rigor and the Curriculum Change Process

Documentation and assessment of the content and rigor of all programs is a fundamentally faculty-led process, and begins with the curriculum approval process, as outlined in the Handbook of the Academic Coordinating Commission (ACC), the curricular approval body of the Faculty Senate. (See Supporting Document 2.C.1 (a): Creating Curriculum.)

Western’s programs culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes, and lead to collegiate-level degrees or certificates that are consistent with program content. Degree and certificate awards, along with their requirements for completion, are listed in the University’s catalog. Departments and programs list their student learning outcomes on their web sites; moreover, all student learning outcomes are available in a “quick-search” format at the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) web site. (See SLO.)

Proposals and revisions concerning courses which meet the University’s General University Requirements (GURs) go through multiple curriculum committees review, including review by CUE and ACC, and must designate which of the GUR competencies is met and how the competency will be assessed.

Upon approval by the home department, the course or program materials are submitted to the appropriate college curriculum committee. Course revisions and programs proposed by “all-university” programs are submitted for review and approval to the Committee on University Programs (CUP), which performs the review more typically provided by the college curriculum committee. Graduate courses and programs undergo an additional layer of review as they must be approved by the Graduate Council, the committee responsible for review of graduate curricula and degree programs. Next the Academic Coordinating Counsel (ACC) reviews the course or program proposal. The ACC approval ensures
correlation and consistency across colleges and eliminates overlap or redundancy. Upon approval, ACC forwards its course and program approval recommendations to the Senate, which performs the last layer of peer-review before submission to the Registrar and Catalog Coordinator for Western’s Online Catalog. In this way, consistency with the university mission, and the appropriateness of a program’s content and rigor, undergoes four layers of peer-review. Further information on Western’s course and program approval process, and examples of each form, can be found at the website of the Registrar’s Office. (See Registrar: Catalog-Curriculum.)

**Online and Distance Learning**

At Western all credit-bearing degrees and courses are housed in an academic department and college. Consequently, online and distance courses and programs undergo the same proposal and review process as do face-to-face courses.

**Consistency with University and Department Mission**

Following approval of the new University Mission, Vision, Values and Strategic Goals in 2009, all departments reviewed and revised or affirmed their missions in light of the new University Mission and changes in their field. The subsequent year all departments reviewed their student learning outcomes, and their master assessment plans, to ensure consistency with the revised missions. The revised missions and student learning outcomes are provided on the SLO site. (See SLO.)

2.C.2 = The institution identifies and publishes expected course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Expected student learning outcomes for courses, wherever offered and however delivered, are provided in written form to enrolled students.

**Course and Degree Learning Outcomes**

As noted in 2.C.1, Western’s curriculum revision process requires both the identification of student learning outcomes and a description of how the outcomes will be assessed. In addition, Western’s new departmental web site template includes a “footer” clearly labeled “Assessment/SLOs” which links directly to the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) website. In this way the front page of each department’s web site links directly to clearly identified student learning outcomes for each program and major. (See SLO.) In addition, the SLO site provides each department’s master assessment plan and summaries of recent, annual assessment efforts. Western will migrate all departments to the new web site template by Fall, 2014, providing clear and consistent publication of student learning outcomes and assessment activities for each department.

Western’s policies and support materials direct all faculty to include course-level student learning outcomes in all syllabi. This policy, and advice for carrying it out, is communicated to faculty each fall. (See Praxis Fall 2013.)

The percentage of syllabi which include expected SLOs has been increasing steadily: currently, approximately 50% of all syllabi at Western include expected student learning outcomes. The goal of the Assessment and Accreditation Advisory Committee (AAAC) is to have SLOs in 90% of all syllabi by completion of the comprehensive self-study in 2017. The
AAAC has been directly working to achieve this goal via visits with the Chair Leadership Group and each college’s Deans and Chairs (DAC) committee.

**Program Learning Outcomes**

Approximately 50% of Western departments have student learning outcomes and assessment plans differentiated at the program level. The University goal is to have all departments differentiate SLOs and plans by program by Spring, 2016.

**2.C.3** Credit and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, are based on documented student achievement and awarded in a manner consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted learning outcomes, norms, or equivalencies in higher education.

All graduate and undergraduate academic credit, certificates and programs of study are awarded in a manner consistent with university policy. These policies are overseen by the Faculty Senate, and specifically by the Academic Coordinating Commission (ACC). (See Faculty Senate and ACC.)

New or revised curriculum, assigned credit, certificate, and program of study approval follows a process outlined in the ACC’s *A Guide for Creating Curriculum.* (See Supporting Document 2.C.1 (a): Creating Curriculum.) In general, the curriculum approval process includes separate review, evaluation, and approval stages beginning with academic departments and colleges. Proposals are then routed through content relevant subcommittees (e.g. international programs, general education, teacher certification and graduate school). Minutes from college meetings reflect the actions taken and are then forwarded to the ACC for approval. ACC approval ensures correlation between colleges and eliminates overlap or redundancy. Upon approval, ACC forwards its information to the Faculty Senate, which is the final approving agent prior to any curricular revisions made to the University Catalog.

Curriculum review includes the evaluation of learning outcomes, competency fulfillment, credit hours, prerequisite requirements and internal and external equivalencies. The University Catalog is the official institutional document that outlines approved curriculum details, requirements, policies and programs of study. (See University Catalog.)

**2.C.4** Degree programs, wherever offered and however delivered, demonstrate a coherent design with appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing of courses, and synthesis of learning. Admission and graduation requirements are clearly defined and widely published.

**Coherent Design**

Western’s degree programs demonstrate a coherent design with appropriate breadth, depth, and sequencing of both courses and broader learning. This coherence is achieved through the following processes and safeguards:

- All departments periodically review their missions, degree-learning outcomes and assessment plans in light of the University’s mission and changes in the department’s corresponding academic field. Because departmental assessment
practices emphasize direct measures of student learning, this cycle permits each department to evaluate the curricular coherence established between student learning and the department’s mission.

- As described in 2.C.1, above, the Faculty Senate’s curricular approval process includes multiple and recursive stages of peer-review at the level of the department, college, and university. This curricular proposal system requires that departments provide a rationale and strategic curricular sequence, plus student learning outcomes sufficient so that faculty in other departments and colleges can recognize and evaluate its coherence, breadth and depth.

- The Academic Coordinating Commission (ACC), which serves as the curricular review committee of the Faculty Senate, provides a handbook of detailed instructions and advice for departments to assist with the design of degrees and with technical details including cross-listed courses, the balance of lower and upper-division courses, and the coordination of curricular changes across colleges. (See Supporting Document 2.C.1 (a): Creating Curriculum.)

- Faculty who serve on the ACC become curricular specialists who evaluate key features of degree coherence, including the appropriateness of 200, 300, and 400-level course designations, course prerequisites, the size of majors, and the suitability of the degree designated (BA, BS, BAE, etc.). ACC also includes staff specialists from the Registrar’s Office and the Catalog Coordinator who ensure that degree and program requirements meet university standards and are accurately represented in the University’s catalog and online resources.

- Professional and technical degree programs employ advisory boards of industry specialists who advise the department on the design, content and coherence of the degree program. (See Supporting Document 2.C.4 (a): Advisory Boards.)

**Synthesis of Learning**

At Western synthesis of learning is accomplished through capstone courses, senior seminars, and reflections upon internship and practicum experiences. Every major is structured to include at least one such experience. Synthesis of learning is evaluated through the Senior Exit Survey conducted by the Office of Survey Research. In section B.9 of that survey, “Major and Upper Division Experiences,” concerning the opportunities they had to synthesize their learning, graduating seniors are asked, “During your upper division studies, about how often have you: Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or class discussions?” The percentage of graduating students answering “Several times,” “Often” or “Very Often” has been consistently over 90% for the last four years. (See Supporting Document 2.C.4 (b): Exit Survey.)

**Admission and Graduation Requirements Clearly Defined and Published**

Admission and graduation requirements are clearly defined and published in consistent terms in a variety of venues. Admission requirements can be found in the University catalog. The catalog provides specific requirements for the following special populations:
Admission information is also available at the website of the Office of Admissions. (See Frosh Admissions Criteria.) University graduation requirements are clearly defined and published in the catalog. (See Western Graduation Requirements.) The catalog also provides clear degree planning guides for each program of study. Whereas this information was previously duplicated in guides provided by Academic Advising and each department, the University has migrated to the use of the catalog as the central and official degree guide source. Academic Advising and departments now link to the catalog’s “Programs of Study” page. In this way consistency in the definition of graduation requirements is assured. (See Catalog: Programs of Study.) Admission and graduation requirements for the Graduate School are clearly defined and published on the Graduate School website and in the catalog. (See Graduate School and Catalog: Graduate School.)

2.C.5 = Faculty, through well-defined structures and processes with clearly defined authority and responsibilities, exercise a major role in the design, approval, implementation, and revision of the curriculum, and have an active role in the selection of new faculty. Faculty with teaching responsibilities take collective responsibility for fostering and assessing student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes.

It is the policy of Western Washington University that there shall be meaningful participation by the faculty, through the Faculty Senate or other recognized faculty bodies, in matters relating to university academics, budget, planning and policy at all levels of internal university governance. This is consistent with the University’s policy of open participation in governance. (Faculty Handbook, II.B.1)

Indeed, Western has robust shared governance procedures with clearly defined lines of authority for faculty, the Faculty Senate and its committees.

Faculty Authority and Responsibility for Curriculum

At Western authority and responsibility for the design, approval, implementation and revision of the curriculum clearly rests with the faculty. Faculty oversee the design, proposal and approval of curriculum at the level of the department, college and University. Deans and Associate Deans may chair college curriculum committees but do not vote and cannot veto curriculum approved by their Curriculum Committees. And while the President and Provost are ex-officio members of the Senate, neither has voting privileges. Authority over curriculum clearly resides with the faculty.
Faculty Participation in the Selection of New Faculty

At Western new faculty positions are proposed by departments and approved by Deans and the Provost. Once approved, position descriptions are written by faculty and a search committee of faculty is formed. While candidates meet with college deans, departmental search committees conduct the interviews and evaluate and rank all candidates. Search committee recommendations are advisory to the department Chair, who is recognized at Western as a faculty member and not an administrator. The Chair recommends selection of the candidate to the Dean.

Faculty with Teaching Responsibilities Take Collective Responsibility for Fostering and Assessing Student Achievement of Clearly Identified Learning Outcomes.

Each department at Western designates among its faculty an Assessment Coordinator or Assessment Committee that oversees the department’s assessment activities. Assessment activities typically involve multiple faculty, derive from the department’s degree learning outcomes and master assessment plans, and are summarized and discussed in department meetings. Chairs report the results and use of the assessment activities in their annual reports to their Deans.

In matters of General University Requirements (GUR) assessment, the Academic Coordinating Commission (ACC) relies on the work of the Committee on Undergraduate Education (CUE). The CUE collects assessment data from teaching faculty as well as the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and the surveys of Western’s Office of Survey Research (OSR).

2.C.6 = Faculty with teaching responsibilities, in partnership with library and information resources personnel, ensure that the use of library and information resources is integrated into the learning process.

Library faculty serve as liaisons to individual colleges and departments, working collaboratively with their faculty to schedule library instruction sessions developed for specific courses. These sessions are often designed around specific assignment and course outcomes. In some cases, librarians have developed pass/fail one-credit courses that are linked to upper-level research-heavy courses while others have introductory research credit courses for specific majors.

The Western Libraries use LibGuides, a Springshare product, to develop Course Guides that support specific classes. Course Guides are developed by library faculty to incorporate library resources into the curriculum. Guides often include different forms of media, from simple web links to videos demonstrating a specific source or research concept. In some cases, such as “MKTG 381: Fundamentals of Marketing Research,” the Course Guide is a course assignment. (See LibGuides MKTG381.) The assignment, designed jointly by the business librarian and the course instructor, intends to introduce marketing students to basic research concepts and resources they will use for later courses.

In other cases, a Course Guide is designed to give an overview to both the library and disciplinary research. One example is “ECON 303: History of Economic Thought” (See ECON
A complete list of Western Libraries Course Guides can be found at: [Course Guides Index](#).

For the last three years, librarians have been assigned to at least one First-year Interest Group (FIG). FIGs are three-course clusters that include a small seminar linked to two other freshman-level, general education courses and usually do not include a research component. The library session is often an overview of resources available to students and is incorporated into the FIG seminar course.

Some librarians and staff are experimenting with “blended workshops” that incorporate both writing and research. So far these sessions have included the Director of the Writing Center, at least one Writing Center Assistant, and a librarian. The purpose of these workshops is to emphasize the connection between research and writing, focused on “getting started.” (See [Writing Center Services](#)).

To ensure that the use of library and information resources is integrated into the learning process, Western Libraries now houses the Learning Commons, which brings together resources and programs to advance teaching and learning, online and across the physical space of Western Libraries. (See [Learning Commons](#)).

Learning Commons partners, including the Director of Writing Instruction Support and an English graduate student, are collaborating with librarians to develop additional curricula to offer an expanded workshop series integrating Writing and Researching instructional support. These will be offered to Writing Proficiency (WP) Course faculty and students beginning in fall, 2013, on topics such as “Evaluating Sources” and “Incorporating Evidence.” These workshops will provide students with strategies for enhancing their writing and research skills at the same time that they help faculty gain strategies for teaching. Learning Commons partners are developing these workshops in response to a faculty survey (fall, 2012) showing that more than half of the respondents indicated a desire for Library workshops integrating writing and research instruction. The faculty teaching Writing Proficiency Courses are the most likely ones to benefit from these workshops since they are teaching research-based writing courses. (See Supporting Document [2.C.6 (a): Learning Commons Evaluation](#)).

2.C.7 = Credit for prior experiential learning, if granted, is: a) guided by approved policies and procedures; b) awarded only at the undergraduate level to enrolled students; c) limited to a maximum of 25% of the credits needed for a degree; d) awarded only for documented student achievement equivalent to expected learning achievement for courses within the institution’s regular curricular offerings; and e) granted only upon the recommendation of appropriately qualified teaching faculty. Credit granted for prior experiential learning is so identified on students’ transcripts and may not duplicate other credit awarded to the student in fulfillment of degree requirements. The institution makes no assurances regarding the number of credits to be awarded prior to the completion of the institution’s review process.

Western awards credit for prior learning on a case by case basis and in compliance with the recently revised Credit by Exam, Prior Learning and Advanced Placement policy. (See [Credit Policy](#)).
Students seeking prior learning credit must apply within six weeks of their first term of enrollment after admission. The Registrar’s Office coordinates and documents the petition review with the applicable academic department. Academic departments and affiliated faculty are considered experts and specialists in their respective disciplines and therefore the authority in evaluating prior learning experience, equivalency in credit, and relationship to degree. The Registrar’s Office awards prior learning credit as approved by academic departments.

Approved prior learning credit is identified on the official transcript and, in alignment with existing academic policy, cannot duplicate academic credit already completed. Awarded prior learning credit, or any combination of prior learning, credit by examination and/or advanced placement cannot exceed 45 credits, that is to say 25% or less of the 180 minimum number of credits required for degree.

2.C.8 = The final judgment in accepting transfer credit is the responsibility of the receiving institution. Transfer credit is accepted according to procedures which provide adequate safeguards to ensure high academic quality, relevance to the students’ programs, and integrity of the receiving institution’s degrees. In accepting transfer credit, the receiving institution ensures that the credit accepted is appropriate for its programs and comparable in nature, content, academic quality, and level to credit it offers. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements between the institutions.

Western has the authority to determine transferability of academic work from other institutions. The Admissions and Registrar’s offices evaluate the appropriateness of curriculum content in comparison to university course equivalencies and consult other recognized sources, as needed, including catalogs from individual institutions. Evaluations are conducted in accordance with Washington Council Intercollege Relations Commission (ICRC) guidelines and nationally recognized best practices and recommendations from the American Association of College Registrars and Admission Officers (AACRAO). (See ICRC and AACRAO.) Faculty expertise is sought for guidance and determination in those rare instances when all other sources fail to provide adequate information on specific course content.

Decisions related to transferability are converted and actively integrated in the Student Information System for automated prerequisite and equivalency checking for enrollment and degree assessment purposes. Transfer equivalency decisions are securely stored in an institutional database for historical purposes as well as for equitable and fair application across student records. (See Transfer of Credit.)

Western’s Admissions Office maintains a searchable web-based transfer equivalency guide that is available to the public and accounts for many Washington State public institutions of higher education. When applicable, interagency agreements are signed between institutions for direct transfer of coursework toward specific programs of study. Interagency agreements are signed by both institutions after appropriate review and administrative approval. (See Transfer Equivalency Guide.)
**Undergraduate Programs**

**2.C.9** = The General Education component of undergraduate programs (if offered) demonstrates an integrated course of study that helps students develop the breadth and depth of intellect to become more effective learners and to prepare them for a productive life of work, citizenship, and personal fulfillment. Baccalaureate degree programs and transfer associate degree programs include a recognizable core of general education that represents an integration of basic knowledge and methodology of the humanities and fine arts, mathematical and natural sciences, and social sciences. Applied undergraduate degree and certificate programs of thirty (30) semester credits or forty-five (45) quarter credits in length contain a recognizable core of related instruction or general education with identified outcomes in the areas of communication, computation, and human relations that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes.

Western is committed to providing students with a strong interdisciplinary foundation to prepare them for citizenry and employment in the 21st century. The following statement has been endorsed by Western's Committee on Undergraduate Education (CUE) and Academic Coordinating Commission (ACC), and summarizes the value of general education to a Western degree:

> "Western believes that liberal education enables people to lead fuller and more interesting lives, to perceive and to understand more of the world around and within themselves, and to participate more intelligently, sensitively, and deliberately in shaping that world. This belief reflects a long tradition in American higher education. In this tradition, the bachelor's degree includes specialized study, the major, together with study over a range of human inquiry, expression and accomplishment. Broadly, the liberal education component of a bachelor's degree deals with issues of truth and falsity, with expressions of what is possible for humans to do and be, with things that bear on choices that we make about what in life we consider important. This broader study helps people gain perspective on who they are and what they do in the world."

Western’s current general education program is delivered through the General University Requirements (GURs) and Writing Proficiency (WP) courses. The GURs require students to complete coursework spanning the disciplines, as outlined in Western’s Course Catalog (See Course Catalog). GUR requirements include two communication courses, at least one of which is a writing course (English 101), one to two quantitative and symbolic reasoning courses, three humanities courses, three social science courses, two courses in comparative, gender, and multicultural studies, and three courses in the natural sciences, at least two of which include laboratory components. Students are required to fulfill many of these categories through coursework in more than one department. In addition, students are required to complete three WP points at the 300-400 level, which are meant to develop discipline-specific writing skills. (See WP Courses.) Courses carrying WP points must devote a certain percentage of students’ grades to writing assignments, and must provide opportunities for students to revise their writing based on feedback.
Recent attempts have been made to strengthen the cross-disciplinary coherence of GURs through Freshmen Interest Groups (FIGs) and Strands, both aimed specifically at incoming freshmen. (See FIGs and Strands.) FIGs link two courses through a theme during each fall quarter. A seminar, taught separately from each of the courses, links the content of the two courses, as well as provides college success strategies to students. Strands link three GUR courses over a year (fall, winter, spring) under a common theme. The Strands Program is new and was piloted during the 2012-2013 academic year, and was met with mixed success with some strands facing high attrition and others favorable retention. The latter seemed to be succeeding because the strand theme was related to students’ major interests and some of the courses in those strands met both major and GUR requirements. In addition, faculty assessment of the Strand pilot indicated an absence of community among Strand students. In response, a small, FIG seminar was attached to the Fall course in each strand. Assessment of the Strand pilot and this innovation remains ongoing.

In addition to the Strand pilot, the Committee on Undergraduate Education (CUE) has also endorsed piloting LINKS in the 2013-14 academic year, pairing two courses at the 200-300 level with at least one being a GUR. Again, the goal is to provide more coherence across the general education curriculum, but in this model the focus is on sophomores. CUE has also instituted two initiatives to strengthen general education at Western; each initiative is informed by assessment of the GUR program.

In an ongoing effort to strengthen the quality of students’ writing proficiency, CUE has made a formal commitment to enhancing the ability of students to “analyze and communicate ideas effectively in oral, written, and visual forms” (Western’s general education Competency 1). One aspect of this initiative is the LINK courses, all of which include at least one course that focuses on Competency 1. Besides the LINKS pilot, support for the annual Writing Instruction Support (WIS) summer workshop for faculty (including new faculty) who teach writing has been strengthened. The VPUE has provided modest stipends for any participating faculty who choose to do follow-up projects assessing a selected teaching writing practice gained from the workshop. As a result, the emerging studies are becoming a valuable institutional resource for evidence-based writing pedagogies and are made available through the WIS website. Furthermore, a CUE sub-group has been established to identify additional ways to enhance Competency 1, and they are working on contacting the faculty of all GUR courses that have indicated a focus on Competency 1 to determine their instructional needs. This CUE sub-group is also working with another sub-group to refine and circulate the Competency 1 rubric (previously drafted by another CUE sub-group).

Eleven competencies are defined for Western’s general education program. (See Competencies.) These competencies define the knowledge and skills Western’s graduates are expected to have developed as a result of the program. Since 2011, the Committee on Undergraduate Education (CUE), which oversees the general education program at Western, began to require faculty to list the competencies addressed by courses when new GUR courses are proposed, or when existing GUR courses are revised. (See CUE.) CUE has been studying the alignment between the GUR categories and competencies, and may launch a revision of the GURs so that its structure is more closely aligned with the program’s goals.
As noted in the Preface, a faculty committee is currently exploring the “desirability and feasibility” of restructuring the University’s general education program.

2.C.10 = The institution demonstrates that the General Education components of its baccalaureate degree programs (if offered) and transfer associate degree programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that are stated in relation to the institution’s mission and learning outcomes for those programs.

In 2004, Western adopted the eleven competencies referred to above as learning outcomes for its general education program. (See Competencies.) As a result of a mandate to improve general education assessment from Western’s last accreditation, in 2012 CUE initiated a plan to assess those competencies. Since the GURs are delivered and maintained by departments, the plan is carried out, mostly, at that level. Aspects of the plan include that departments:

- write an assessment plan that describes the learning goals for each of their programs, as well as how those learning goals will be assessed; and
- select two GUR competencies addressed through their programs and outline how they plan to assess those competencies.

In addition, departments are strongly encouraged to assess competencies at the GUR course level.

Each year, CUE selects a competency to assess on a university-wide level. Departments that listed that competency on their assessment plan are then required to provide CUE with the student learning outcome data they generated from carrying out their assessment plan. CUE reviews these data and then provides recommendations to departments, along with professional development initiatives, targeted at making evidence-based improvements toward instruction in that competency. CUE developed twelve rubrics to aid in the evaluation of student work toward the eleven competencies (one competency has two rubrics), based upon those developed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) initiative, Liberal Education and America’s Promise. (See LEAP).

In fall, 2012, the competency chosen by CUE to assess university-wide was Competency 1: “Analyze and communicate ideas effectively in oral, written, and visual forms.” Competency 1 was chosen because NSSE survey data indicated that Western students wrote fewer papers, and had less instruction in writing than students at peer institutions. Moreover, CUE members sought improvement in Competency 1 based on their own classroom evaluations.

The Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education (VPUE) communicated with departments about this focus on Competency 1. Currently underway is the collection of data regarding the success of the GUR “links” program for improving student performance in written communication. CUE will review data in the spring, 2014, and at that time will also choose the focus of the next round of assessment.

2.C.11 = The related instruction components of applied degree and certificate programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that align with and support
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program goals or intended outcomes. Related instruction components may be embedded within program curricula or taught in blocks of specialized instruction, but each approach must have clearly identified content and be taught or monitored by teaching faculty who are appropriately qualified in those areas.

Western does not offer traditional, applied degrees, such as an Associate or Bachelors of applied science. Western does offer a few non-degree certificates. These non-degree certificates have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that align with and support program goals. Clearly identified content exists for these certificates, all of which are taught and monitored by appropriately qualified teaching faculty. The non-degree certificates are as follows:

- Archives and Records Management Certificate. (See Archives.)
- Certificate of Achievement TESOL. (See TESOL.)
- Internet Studies Center Certification. (See Internet Studies.)
- Vehicle Design Post-baccalaureate Certificate. (See Vehicle Design.)

(See Supporting Document 2.C.11(a): Certificate Information.)

Graduate Programs

2.C.12 = Graduate programs are consistent with the institution’s mission; are in keeping with the expectations of their respective disciplines and professions; and are described through nomenclature that is appropriate to the levels of graduate and professional degrees offered. They differ from undergraduate programs by requiring greater depth of study and increased demands on student intellectual or creative capacities; knowledge of the literature of the field; and ongoing student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression, and/or appropriate high-level professional practice

Western’s graduate programs are well aligned with the University’s mission, vision, and strategic goals. Not only do graduate programs contribute to each of the five strategic goals, graduate students and degree offerings play key roles in and make specific contributions to two:

1. Building upon Western’s strengths to address critical needs in the State of Washington.
2. Applying Western’s expertise and collaborative approach to scholarship, creativity, and research in ways that strengthen communities beyond the campus.

Consistent with Western’s mission as a regional comprehensive institution, eight types of graduate degrees are offered: Master of Arts, Master of Science, Master of Education, Master of Business Administration, Master of Music, Master of Professional Accounting, Master in Teaching, and Master of Fine Arts (new, fall, 2013). Four objectives continue to guide the diverse set of graduate programs at Western:

1. Prepare qualified professionals to be certified for professional associations (speech-language pathology, rehabilitation counseling, and archives and record management, for example).
2. Prepare students for teaching careers (K-12, community and technical colleges).

3. Provide postgraduate education and training in disciplines by emphasizing research methods and skills for completing an independent research project (Biology or Environmental Science, for example).

4. Provide advanced training for practicing professionals (business, for example).

Western offered its first entirely distance learning masters’ degree in Continuing and College Education starting the academic year 2012-13. In the last three years, five low-enrollment masters programs or options were either closed or placed in moratorium (meaning no new students are admitted). On the other hand, the Master in Professional Accounting (MPA) was revitalized this academic year.

Graduate students must demonstrate deep knowledge of the discipline, understand current disciplinary literature, formulate research questions, make scholarly inquiries, or complete creative works from their disciplinary knowledge, and, for professional programs, make significant contributions to their profession with depth distinguished from undergraduate work. This level of sophistication and disciplinary depth is required of all graduate students, and distinguishes graduate work from undergraduate level expectations. Several of Western’s graduate programs are also accredited (see 2.C.15) by various external bodies. These accreditations further demonstrate that the distinguishing outcomes for graduate level work are in place at Western. Through written or oral comprehensive exams, culminating projects, research reports, creative works, a thesis, professional or field experiences that demonstrate depth of understanding and/or soundness of research methods, Western’s graduate students demonstrate fundamental, but disciplinary-based competences.

The rigor, demands, and outcomes of graduate courses are carefully monitored by the faculty-led Graduate Council, which has jurisdiction over all graduate curricular and degree programs. (See Graduate Council.) New this academic year, and supported by the Graduate Dean and the Faculty Senate, was an intentional shift to more faculty involvement and leadership on the Council. This new model has resulted in positive change for both the Council and the Graduate School. The Graduate Council reports to the Academic Coordinating Commission (ACC) of the Faculty Senate. (See ACC.) New program proposals or major revisions receive extensive scrutiny regarding the rigor of the proposed program, the proposed courses, the prerequisites, the syllabi, the depth of knowledge expected of the students, the department’s support in faculty resources, and admissions criteria by the departments, colleges, Graduate Council, Deans, and ACC.

Graduate courses are distinguished from undergraduate courses in Western's information systems by 500 or 600 course prefixes. Some graduate courses are “stacked” with undergraduate courses, but differences from the undergraduate offering are outlined in new course proposal and online revision forms (new this academic year) that indicate distinguishing outcomes for the graduate students and are discussed at length at the Graduate Council. During a period of budget reductions, the number of stacked-courses increased. While course “stacking” is a continuing concern to the Graduate Council, the courses do have different levels of rigor and expectations for the graduate students. Additionally, the Graduate Council conducts program reviews every five years. Starting in
the academic year 2012-2013, reviewed programs will develop a strategic response/plan to address programmatic weaknesses cited in a review.

Additional policies further reinforce the distinction of graduate program outcomes. A graduate student may not include more than ten credits of 400-level (undergraduate, senior-level) courses in a graduate plan of study. Because of higher academic demands, undergraduate enrollment in graduate-level courses is limited to seniors who have a 3.0 or better GPA, is restricted to one course per quarter, and requires both department and graduate school approval. However, accelerated BS/MS programs in Computer Science, Mathematics, and Accounting are designed for high achieving students who have the ability to complete their BS and MS degrees in five years.

Western’s graduate programs generally require a minimum of 45 credits with thesis (Option I) and 48 credits without thesis (Option II). The thesis programs require 24 or more credits of approved 500 and 600-level courses other than the thesis (690); and no fewer than 5 credits and no more than 36 credits of thesis (690). For a non-thesis program, the requirement is 38 credits or more of approved 500 and 600-level courses.

2.C.13 = Graduate admission and retention policies ensure that student qualifications and expectations are compatible with the institution’s mission and the program’s requirements. Transfer of credit is evaluated according to clearly defined policies by faculty with a major commitment to graduate education or by a representative body of faculty responsible for the degree program at the receiving institution.

Graduate admission policies are clearly stated and published in the Graduate School section of the general University Catalog and include admission policies, regulations, and requirements. Specific requirements and prerequisites of each program are included in addition to the general admissions policies. (See Grad School Catalog.) The admission criteria for each graduate program are set, within the limits of the general admission criteria set by the Graduate Council, by the graduate faculty of each program. The Graduate School’s website provides links to specific requirements for each department (See Grad School Programs.)

Full admission to a graduate program at Western requires:

1. a four-year baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited U.S. college or university, or an equivalent baccalaureate degree from a foreign university and the degree must be appropriate to the master's study intended and verified by submission of official transcripts;
2. a 3.0 GPA in the last 90-quarter or 60-semester hours of study;
3. three current letters of reference from individuals able to make an appropriate assessment of the applicant’s academic or professional competence (some programs vary, MBA and MPAC require a resume, for example);
4. the Graduate Record Exam or other test scores (applicants with advanced degrees from regionally accredited institutions applying to certain programs do not need to submit scores);
5. demonstrated English language proficiency (applicants who have received the bachelor’s or advanced degree from an accredited institution where instruction is in English do not need to submit scores); and
6. favorable review and recommendation of applications by the graduate faculty in the program to which application is made.

The Graduate School reviews all application materials to determine that applicants meet minimum standards and that their materials are complete prior to being forwarded to discipline specific graduate program committees for admissions recommendations. The advisor and the admissions committee (comprised of graduate faculty) of each graduate program consider the applications and supporting materials and make admissions recommendations to the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean makes the official admission decisions and the Graduate School notifies the applicants of their admission decision. The Graduate Council also oversees general admission requirements as well as program specific admission requirements.

Each graduate student completes a plan of study with their faculty advisor, which includes a list of transfer credits that have been approved by a process called the Transfer Credit Request (TCR) Policy. (See TCR Policy.) Besides a limit of nine quarter credits, those credits must be:

- graded with a B, 3.0, or better;
- taken no more than three years prior to a student’s quarter of admission;
- acceptable to the granting institution for its master’s degree; and
- meet the requirements and conditions of approved courses offered by Western.

The request for transfer credit, including a copy of the course syllabus, is submitted by the graduate program advisor and student for approval by the Graduate School. At the recommendation of the graduate program advisor and the approval of the Graduate School, some course requirements may be waived, depending on a student’s previous academic experience. However, the total number of credits required for the degree must still be met.

No credit is allowed by challenge examination or performance.

2.C.14 = Graduate credit may be granted for internships, field experiences, and clinical practices that are an integral part of the graduate degree program. Credit toward graduate degrees may not be granted for experiential learning that occurred prior to matriculation into the graduate degree program. Unless the institution structures the graduate learning experience, monitors that learning, and assesses learning achievements, graduate credit is not granted for learning experiences external to the students’ formal graduate programs.

Credit for prior experiential learning is not accepted towards fulfilling graduate degree requirements. On the other hand, there are internships, field experiences, and clinical practices that can be accepted towards fulfilling graduate degree requirements; these have been approved by the Graduate Council and then by the ACC through the same rigorous process as all other course proposals or program revisions. These experiences are supervised and evaluated by the graduate faculty of each program.
No more than 10 credits of directed independent study may be applied toward a degree, although some programs are more restrictive. A graduate student, registering for a 500 or 400 independent study course used for the degree, develops a contract (online form) with the instructor, which is then reviewed and approved by the graduate program advisor, department chair and the Graduate School. Independent study credit normally will not be given when the student is paid for engaging in the work described in the contract (e.g., internship, work-study projects, graduate assistantships).

2.C.15 = Graduate programs intended to prepare students for research, professional practice, scholarship, or artistic creation are characterized by a high level of expertise, originality, and critical analysis. Programs intended to prepare students for artistic creation are directed toward developing personal expressions of original concepts, interpretations, imagination, thoughts, or feelings. Graduate programs intended to prepare students for research or scholarship are directed toward advancing the frontiers of knowledge by constructing and/or revising theories and creating or applying knowledge. Graduate programs intended to prepare students for professional practice are directed toward developing high levels of knowledge and performance skills directly related to effective practice within the profession.

As stated in 2.C.12, Western's diverse set of graduate programs fall within four broad categories:

1. Preparing qualified professionals for certification.
2. Preparing students for teaching careers.
3. Furthering depth in disciplines by emphasizing independent research methods and projects.
4. Providing advanced training for practicing professionals.

Moreover, several of Western's graduate degree programs are accredited by external agencies.

- The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (see NCATE) accredits educator certification.
- The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (see AACSB) accredits the College of Business and Economics (both graduate and undergraduate levels).
- The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association's Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (see ASHA), and NCATE, accredits the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders.
- The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (see CACREP) accredits the mental health and school counseling programs.
- The Council on Rehabilitation Education (see CORE) accredits the Rehabilitation Counseling program.
- In addition, the University is a member of the Council of Graduate Schools (see CGS) in the United States and adheres to the general policies and criteria established by this national association.
In order to maintain high standards, a maximum of 10 credits of C grades (C+, C, C-) is allowed in courses listed on the approved plan of study. Courses in which a D+ or lower is earned are not applied towards completion of a graduate program. The accumulation of more than 10 credits of C+ or lower (including U) grades would result in a student being withdrawn from a master’s program. Additionally, a graduate student may be required by the department to repeat a course to document attainment of a certain level of competence or knowledge. Pass/No Pass grades are not applicable toward a graduate degree. To remain a candidate for the degree, a student must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA in courses listed on the plan of study. A student also must be making satisfactory progress in their graduate program.

Internal reviews, which are required of all graduate programs, include a review of the faculty who are responsible for the delivery of the program, as well as a review of the scholarly or professional opportunities and support for the graduate students. The guidelines for the program reviews follow the national CGS standards. The Graduate Council oversees the general guidelines for graduate faculty and is currently in the process of reviewing those guidelines. The graduate faculty are tenure track or tenured faculty members within a department, but occasionally other professionals do teach graduate courses and serve on theses committees. A graduate program advisor within a department or program oversees these and other professionals, who are approved in advance by the Graduate Dean and have the appropriate qualifications for their responsibilities.

Many graduate programs require a thesis to demonstrate particular disciplinary outcomes. These theses are defended in a public forum and to the theses committees in an additional session where the rigor of the theses and understanding of the student are explored in more depth. The Graduate Dean reads and approves each thesis.

**Continuing Education**

2.C.16 = Credit and non-credit continuing education programs and other special programs are compatible with the institution’s mission and goals.

All of Western’s credit and non-credit continuing education programs are compatible with the university’s mission to “serve the people of the state of Washington, the nation, and the world.” (See [Program List](#) and [Strategic Plan](#).) An array of undergraduate and graduate degree programs are offered at sites around Puget Sound and online, which expand access to Western’s academically rigorous and intellectually engaging programs. Non-credit programming promotes lifelong learning opportunities for students and community members of all ages.

Each of Western’s colleges offer credit-bearing programming through Extended Education; many offer non-credit programming as well. Academic departments, colleges, and faculty maintain oversight of their department or college’s offerings. The academic unit is charged with assessing the academic quality and rigor of their offerings and are responsible for ensuring that their programs are consistent with the University’s mission and goals.

Offerings delivered in collaboration with academic departments through Extended Education are strongly connected to Western’s mission statement. Select offerings include:
• Teacher Education Outreach Programs offered in conjunction with Woodring College of Education, which prepares learners for teacher certification and provides professional development opportunities through additional endorsement programs. (See Teacher Outreach.)

• Environment on the Peninsulas program offered through Huxley College, which expands high-quality environmental science and studies to various sites beyond the Bellingham campus. (See ES Peninsulas.)

• Masters in Business Administration (MBA) in Everett, offered through the College of Business and Economics, a weekend program designed for working professionals. (See MBA-Everett.)

Extended Education oversees the administration of Western’s non-credit educational outreach activities and connects the students, residents, communities, and businesses of the state to the assets and resources of the University. These programs directly contribute to Western’s goal of “applying Western’s expertise and collaborative approach to scholarship, creativity, and research in ways that strengthen communities beyond the campus.” (See Strategic Plan.)

See also:

Extended Education Mission and Vision Statement
Extended Education Section of the University Catalog

2.C.17 = The institution maintains direct and sole responsibility for the academic quality of all aspects of its continuing education and special learning programs and courses. Continuing education and/or special learning activities, programs, or courses offered for academic credit are approved by the appropriate institutional body, monitored through established procedures with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and assessed with regard to student achievement. Faculty representing the disciplines and fields of work are appropriately involved in the planning and evaluation of the institution’s continuing education and special learning activities.

Extended Education works closely with academic departments and colleges to assure academic quality. Western’s high standard for quality instruction and academic excellence is recognized and maintained in the Extended Education programs and courses.

*Extended Education is committed to the same high standards of quality for which Western is well known. Programs and courses are designed and/or revised with the assistance of university faculty, aided by industry and community experts and are reviewed and approved by WWU colleges, departments and academic committees.* (See Extended Education.)

To facilitate better planning, Extended Education and the Faculty Senate are working together to integrate Extended Education into Western’s shared governance structure. (See Supporting Documentation 2.C.17 (a): Extended Education White Paper and Faculty Senate Minutes: January 2014.)
Credit Programs

Credit programs and courses, both on and off campus, offered through Extended Education are under the primary governance of Western Washington University colleges, associated academic departments, and curriculum committees. New programs and courses, and revisions thereafter, are approved by the appropriate academic department, college and the university curricular bodies using established policies and procedures established by the Registrar’s Office (Registrar Catalog) and by the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the University and United Faculty of Western Washington University (See Supporting Documentation 2.A.12 (b): Faculty CBA Section 16.2). Currently, new degree programs are publically reported through the Washington State Council of Presidents. (See WA COP.)

Oversight for academic quality is the responsibility of the associated department and college and is, in part, assured through academic and college vetting and assignment of faculty, including a review of credentials, course evaluations (Course Evaluations), and through faculty performance evaluations in accordance with the academic Unit Evaluation Plan and the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the University and United Faculty of Western Washington University. (See Supporting Documentation 2.A.12 (b): Faculty CBA Sections 7 and 8.)

Non-credit Programs

Non-credit continuing education and special learning offerings are developed in conjunction with faculty members representing the applicable disciplines and/or industry professionals. When appropriate, advisory boards comprised of university faculty and industry leaders are formed to develop program curriculum. Programs and instructors are approved by the college department most closely associated with the field of study. Review and assessment of these programs are conducted regularly through participant evaluations.

The Language and Culture Programs are a specialized non-credit area of Extended Education. In addition to being the newest program, brought under Extended Education in June, 2012, this is also one of the larger programs within Extended Education. The Language and Culture Programs consist of 1) the Intensive English Program, and 2) the Contracted Language Programs, which currently include the Asia University America Program (AUAP). The faculty of the Asia University America Program develop and review the curriculum in conjunction with its partner institutions: Asia University, Central Washington University, and Eastern Washington University.

Using guidelines established by the American Association of Intensive English Programs (AAIEP), Western’s Intensive English Program completed a Program Self-Appraisal in 2011 (Intensive English Programs) and was evaluated by an outside consultant in 2012. The consultant, who is familiar with the standards of the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA) has been working with the program to demonstrate that the academic curriculum is driven by learning outcomes tied to outcomes-based assessment of student learning. The program’s goal is to apply for CEA accreditation within the next two years. Considerable resources and staff time are being invested towards this accreditation effort.
2.C.18 = The granting of credit or Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for continuing education courses and special learning activities is: a) guided by generally accepted norms; b) based on institutional mission and policy; c) consistent across the institution, wherever offered and however delivered; d) appropriate to the objectives of the course; and e) determined by student achievement of identified learning outcomes.

Western's granting of credit or Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for continuing education courses and special learning activities comes in one of three forms:

1. Clock hours (Clock Hours), used for continuing education and recertification for Washington State teachers, for which Extended Education is a state-approved in-service agency (Approved Providers).
2. CEUs, used for professionals to complete license and/or occupational requirements.
3. Credit option, used for a variety of professional and/or academic purposes, generally attached to a conference or special offering.

Western’s granting of these professional development opportunities supports Western’s Strategic Goals and Vision by providing professionals in Washington state with opportunities to meet certification and professional/industry requirements; by giving individuals an opportunity to pursue lifelong learning activities; and by engaging learners in active learning, critical thinking, and problem solving (Strategic Plan).

Clock Hours, CEUs, and Credit Option activities are approved by the appropriate college (or colleges). In accordance with college and university requirements, this process may include initial vetting of program and faculty, periodical review, curricular revisions, and assessment—per departmental discretion and/or policy. Credit option activities must also be approved in accordance with the University procedures for requesting a new credit-bearing offering (New Course Form). Extended Education follows a process for these specific offerings outlined in the “Extended Education’s Operation Guide for Clock Hours, CEUs, and Credit Option” (Credit Options).
2.C.19 = The institution maintains records which describe the number of courses and nature of learning provided through non-credit instruction.

Western’s administration of non-credit programs and courses offered through Extended Education are managed via an in-house system, based on program and event needs and requirements. Information specific to offerings, which may include planning logistics, enrollment details, participant information, payment details, and event information, can be retrieved through reports generated from the general non-credit administration system.

Extended Education uses the following process for maintaining records and archives:

1. Data is input via client form or manual entry.
2. Changes to the records are kept in either paper files or noted in electronic format.
3. A variety of reports are available for the event via the administration system.
4. Paper records are held and archived according to Extended Education’s archive schedule (Extended Ed Archives).

The possibility of integrating specific non-credit programs, such as the Language and Culture Programs (Intensive English Program and Asia University America University Program), with Western’s student information system, Banner, the central system for credit-bearing courses, is being explored.

Individual units within Extended Education are responsible for maintaining and storing information related to various non-credit programming including description of the event, learning outcomes, proposal/approval documentation, and faculty information.
Standard 2.D • Student Support Services

2.D.1 = Consistent with the nature of its educational programs and methods of delivery, the institution creates effective learning environments with appropriate programs and services to support student learning needs.

“Foster student success” is both a core theme for Western Washington University and a key component of the University’s strategic plan. Consequently, assessment practices are used to closely monitor both learning environments and the effectiveness of the support programs and services that have been established to support student learning needs. Informed by this assessment data, effective learning environments and support programs and services have been created which are continually monitored and improved to better support student learning needs.

Assessing Western’s Learning Environment

As noted in Standard 1, the quality of Western’s learning environment is assessed continuously via multiple indicators, addressing processes, utilization measures and outcomes. The process indicators include questions from the NSSE and the self-administered Western Educational Longitudinal Studies surveys (WELS). These instruments assess how academically supportive students find Western, and the frequency of opportunities they have to engage in what the AAC&U calls “high impact educational practices.” The outcome indicators include data concerning admission rates to graduate schools, satisfaction expressed by alumni, and employer surveys and feedback. The utilization indicators include the number of students served by specific programs. Outcomes include student retention and graduation rates, rates of acceptance in graduate programs, alumni satisfaction, and responses and feedback from employers.

For instance, when NSSE data indicated that Western first-year students reported less frequent student/faculty interaction, and lower levels of satisfaction with Western as a “supportive campus environment” than students at other high-performing masters-granting universities, Western responded with several data-informed improvements. First, successful first-year programs were expanded, and others were piloted. Expanded programs included FIGs, Honors, and Student Outreach Services. (Student Outreach Services provides advising and support services to non-traditional and historically-underserved students.) New programs that were piloted included Viking Launch, an fall early-start program, and the GUR strands. The data upon which these improvements were made was shared with the campus in an issue of Dialogue. (See Dialogue: 01-2011.)

In addition, ways to improve learning and studying environments in the library, and to better integrate the library’s existing student and faculty support programs and services were explored. This led to the ongoing development of the Library Learning Commons. (See Library Learning Commons.)
**Programs and Services Which Create Effective Learning Environments**

Western’s student learning support programs and services are both integrated and differentiated. The integration occurs insofar as the programs are structured as a sequence based upon the narrative of the Western student experience.

### Student Support Services

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### Pre-term Services

**Summerstart, Transitions, Fall Orientation, and Transfer Resource Center**

New Student Services/Family Outreach (NSSFO) fosters student learning and development by supporting new students and family members in their transition to Western’s academic, personal, and social environment. NSSFO provides resources for freshmen, transfer students, and family members. By keeping new students and their families informed and involved in the Western Experience, NSSFO programs help to create an effective learning environment through quarterly orientation programs, twice-annual family weekend events and ongoing communication. (See Orientation Programs, Family Weekend Event, New Student Services/Family Outreach and Supporting Document 2.D.1 (a): NSSFO Evaluation.)

In addition, the NSSFO maintains and supports the Transfer Resource Center, an online resource for students looking to transfer or who have recently transferred. It includes a wide variety of important links and contacts. (See TRC.)
**Enrichment & Early Orientation**

**Viking Launch**

Western’s fall early start program, Viking Launch creates an immediately effective learning environment for first-year students. Via extended orientation experiences and a small, immersive field or lab-based seminar, first-year students are provided a strong, focused start up to Western college life. Students arrive on campus seven days early for an interactive seminar designed to “launch” them into a successful academic career. Typically, Viking Launch students demonstrate higher rates of retention and higher fall grades than non-participants. (See Viking Launch and Supporting Document 2.D.1 (b): Viking Launch Evaluation.)

**WOOT!**

Western’s Outdoor Orientation Trips (WOOT) provide an opportunity for extended orientation and outdoor experiences that establish an effective peer and academic foundation for first-year students. WOOT participants arrive on campus seven days early and spend a week in the wilderness getting to know each other, gaining outdoor skills, and reflecting on the upcoming academic year. (See Supporting Document 2.D.1 (c) WOOT! Evaluation.)

**Academic & Extracurricular Integration**

**Western Reads**

Western Reads, Western’s first-year reading program, contributes to the institution’s learning environment by acculturating new students to Western as a community in which academic discussion of texts and current topics occurs both in and outside of the classroom. All new students and transfers are provided a copy of the Western Reads book and invited to engage in discussions and events concerning the book throughout the year. Because it is used in many first-year academic programs (including FIGs and English 101), the book helps students integrate the content they learn in their courses and see the relation of coursework to contemporary issues of significance. Typically, half of all first-year students report that they read all or part of the book; of those who do, 70-80% report discussing it outside of class with friends or family. (See Western Reads, and Supporting Document 2.D.1 (d) Western Reads Evaluation.)

**First-year Academic Programs**

**FIGs**

Western’s First-Year Interest Groups (FIGs) are clusters of three fall courses integrated by a common question or theme and connected by a small freshman seminar. Students take the courses in a cohort of 25 students, creating a learning community designed to create an effective learning environment by increasing student/faculty interaction, facilitating academic peer connections, and heightening student engagement via high-impact educational practices. In addition, FIGs supports student learning needs by providing tutorials and instruction in study and test-taking skills, academic writing, and by
introducing students to resources such as the Writing Center and Tutoring Center. About ten percent of first-time, first-year students participate in FIGs. (Participation in first-year academic programs overall is about one-third of first-time, first-year students.) FIGs participants typically have lower high school GPAs than non-participants but earn higher fall quarter grades, achieve equal or better rates of retention, and express greater satisfaction with their first year at Western. (See FIGs, and FIGs Evaluation.)

**General University Requirement (GUR) Strands**

“GUR Strands” consist of GUR courses that can be linked in successive quarters so that freshmen take them as a cohort, building skills and knowledge throughout the year. The purpose of the Strands is two-fold. First, Strands improve the learning environment for new students by providing a recommended schedule of several classes which enhance and deepen student achievement of the GUR competencies within Western’s liberal arts core curriculum. Second, Strands improve the freshmen experience through the coordination of curricula and the creation of a year-long cohort “learning community.” The GUR strands are currently being piloted and are under review. (See Strands.)

**Distinguished and Future Scholars Programs**

The College of Business and Economics (CBE), the Woodring College of Education (WCE), and Western’s Leadership programs provide incoming freshmen with enriched learning environments by providing new students opportunities to participate in cohort programs providing specialized curricular and co-curricular opportunities, enhanced opportunities to interact with faculty, and a year-long sequence of special events. (See CBE Distinguished Scholars Program, Woodring Future Scholars Program, and Western’s Leadership Advantage and Morse Institute for Leadership.)

**Academic Support**

**The Writing Center/Writing Instruction Support**

Located in the Learning Commons (see 2.C.6), the Writing Center supports student learning needs through resources, programs and tutoring services designed to help students succeed in their current courses and gain and improve academic skills to help them learn throughout their academic career. The Writing Center also supports students at Western’s extension sites—and off campus students in general—through virtual and online one-on-one writing conferences. Web and paper resources and strategies for “getting unstuck,” drafting, editing, revising and polishing are also provided. Recent improvements to the Writing Center’s services include its integration with the library Learning Commons and the addition of specialized services for second-language students and graduate students. (See Writing Center, and Supporting Document 2.D.1 (e): Writing Center Evaluation.)

In addition to the services for students, the Writing Instruction Support (WIS) program supports student learning needs by providing direct assistance to faculty who are teaching writing courses or who incorporate writing into their courses. More specifically, WIS provides information about writing course requirements and the best practices for teaching and assessing writing, sponsors instructional activities for faculty, and offers
resources on teaching writing in print, multi-media and online. (See Supporting Document 2.D.1 (f): WIS Evaluation.)

**Math Center**

The Math Center supports student learning needs by providing tutoring in mathematical subjects including calculus, linear algebra, statistics, and differential equations. The Math Center is staffed by the Math Fellows, an exceptional group of undergraduate students chosen by the department because of their performance in mathematics and their desire to help others succeed. The Math Fellows are trained to teach good problem-solving techniques and guide the learner through the process of building mathematical understanding. (See Math Fellows, Math Center, and Supporting Document 2.D.1 (g): Math Center Evaluation.)

**The Tutoring Center**

The Tutoring Center supports student learning needs by offering drop-in tutoring, tutor-led study groups, and individual study skills tutoring to all Western students, free of charge. Tutoring Center staff also provide academic skills presentations and a wide variety of materials and resources, including calculators, textbooks, solution manuals, worksheets, useful links and online study skill and test-taking resources. (See Tutoring Center, and Supporting Document 2.D.1 (h): Tutoring Center Evaluation.)

**Academic Care Team**

The Academic Care Team (ACT) team was created in the fall of 2011 to identify and coordinate support for students failing academically. This team, which includes staff members of eight student-support departments, is both cross-functional and cross-divisional. In its first year, the team focused on meeting the needs of students identified to be at high risk for academic failure, and on identifying and responding to patterns of student support needs. ACT also coordinates solutions for particular offices. Concrete achievements of the ACT include recommending a new definition for "satisfactory academic progress" at the request of the registrar, and reviewing the administrative reinstatement process at the request of Academic Advising.

**Job Placement & Internships**

**Career Services Center**

The Career Services Center (CSC) supports student learning needs by helping to connect students with job and internship opportunities, and by providing counseling for career planning and success. A recent successful CSC innovation was the Viking Career Link. This no-cost, online job and internship posting database is maintained for both employers and students, alums, faculty and staff. Employers can post their career-related opportunities to the website, set their qualification criteria, and collect application materials online. Students, alumni, faculty, and staff can search the postings at any time, set up automatic email alerts based on personal interests, opt-in to résumé books, and research companies and job descriptions. The integrated system includes an interactive calendar of workshops and employer visits, a listing of upcoming special events, employer
registration forms for career and internship fairs and an on-campus recruiting module that allows employers to select applicants and coordinate interviews at Western. The system also allows for targeted announcements to employers based on industry or types of jobs offered and to students based on major or year in school and CSC has been rolling out a “widget” that allows academic departments to filter job announcements for their majors via a dynamic, rolling window of opportunities that link directly. (See Viking CareerLink, Career Services Center, and Supporting Document 2.D.1(i): Career Center Evaluation.)

2.D.2 = The institution makes adequate provision for the safety and security of its students and their property at all locations where it offers programs and services. Crime statistics, campus security policies, and other disclosures required under federal and state regulations are made available in accordance with those regulations.

The safety and well-being of all members of the campus community is of great concern to Western. Many departments and employees are dedicated to making the campus a safe place to live and work. A safe environment depends on the cooperation and involvement of all students, staff, and faculty in looking out for themselves and for one another. To support that, the University provides services for and assistance in maintaining a safe environment.

Comprehensive Safety Plan

Western’s Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan establishes guidelines, procedures, and organizational structure for response during times of emergency. The basic emergency procedures are designed to protect lives and property through effective use of university and community resources. This plan outlines specific roles and responsibilities during emergencies and describes coordination with outside entities. Western’s Environmental Health and Safety department is responsible for publishing, distributing, and issuing changes as necessary.

Police

The Western Washington University Police Department employs fifteen officers, all of whom are commissioned by the state of Washington. The department has primary responsibility for law enforcement on campus. They work closely with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, and have mutual-aid agreements in place with the Bellingham Police Department, Whatcom County Sheriff’s Office, and Washington State Patrol. The department operates an on-campus dispatch center with dispatchers available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, year round. Police also offer crime prevention programs, a SAFE Campus hotline, and a free personal safety escort service. Police services are offered by local jurisdictions at Western’s off-site locations.

Western Police contribute to the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) and are in compliance with the Clery Act requirements regarding reporting. Additionally, Western is compliant with Washington requirements to allow use of shared data and partnering with local and state-wide agencies.

Emergency Management and Communications

Emergency management is coordinated by Western’s Environmental Health and Safety department and relies on use of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the
Incident Command System (ICS). The Emergency Management Committee is responsible to help guide emergency management decisions. It meets regularly to review the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan; review efforts to strengthen departmental and individual preparedness within the community; review after-action reports for major incidents and exercises as well as assistance in corrective actions; and make recommendations regarding institutional needs for strengthening emergency preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery.

Western utilizes several channels of emergency communication, including an outdoor siren and Western Alerts (email, cell phone/text-based notifications and social media). These channels are tested regularly and reviewed by the Emergency Management Committee. An Emergency Notification Planning Group has been formed and a consultant hired to review and recommend a systematic strategy and approach to improve Western’s emergency notification systems.

Fire

Fire safety is addressed by Environmental Health and Safety and residence hall staff. Information about fire safety for on-campus residences is distributed in the Residential Community Handbook and additional information about fire safety is published in the Campus Annual Security and Fire Safety Report. Fire drills are conducted regularly on campus with a log of recent drills posted to the Environmental Health and Safety website. (See Supporting Document 2.D.2 (a): Safety-Security Links.)

2.D.3 = Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution recruits and admits students with the potential to benefit from its educational offerings. It orients students to ensure they understand the requirements related to their programs of study and receive timely, useful, and accurate information and advising about relevant academic requirements, including graduation and transfer policies.

Western is a premier, publicly purposed institution with a strong reputation for excellence and a mission centered on serving the state, the nation and the world by bringing together individuals of diverse backgrounds and perspectives. Admissions staff use a number of outreach efforts to attract a diverse student body to Western. (See Admissions.) Efforts include both in-state and out-of-state visits to high schools; participation in college fairs, college transfer fairs and other yield events; campus tour offerings; student calls to prospective and admitted students; and Discovery and Transfer Days hosted at Western. (See Discovery and Transfer Days.) With the advances in technology, Western offers multiple options to tour and explore the university via virtual outreach tools—YouVisit, Explore Western—tools that have been essential in broadening Western’s reach nationally and globally to recruit students. (See YouVisit and Explore Western.) In addition, Western has partnered with community colleges in the Northwest Higher Education Coalition and the Seattle Community College District to develop a clear pathway to Western via conditional admissions agreements. (See NHEC.) Qualified international students who indicate an interest in Western are guaranteed admission upon completion of their transfer degree and a strong GPA. Western will continue to explore other partnership agreements of this nature. Additionally, based on review of peer admissions policies, Western has begun
accepting the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) as an alternative to the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for international students and no longer requires international students who earn “B” or higher grades in two English courses to submit additional proof of English language proficiency—provided they are completing an associate’s degree from a Washington state community college.

Western recruits targeted populations of students who have the potential to benefit and contribute to campus including high achieving students, students from first generation and multicultural backgrounds, and student leaders. Admission criteria takes into consideration comprehensive indicators of potential, including grades, grade trends and test scores, as well as leadership, personal circumstances, and demonstrated ability to persevere in the face of adversity.

The New Student Services/Family Outreach office is dedicated to the transitional needs of new students and their family members. (See NSSO.) They offer an array of programs and services designed to support new students and their family members in their transition to Western’s academic, personal and social environment. This support is ongoing through a students Western career. All family members receive a quarterly newsletter, The Soundings, which provides updates on campus news and highlights campus services. In addition, about 18% of families opt to participate in the Parent Connection, which provides additional updates about campus events, a monthly newsletter and the opportunity to volunteer during orientation and family weekend programs. Other forms of communication include a family Facebook site and the option to receive the Emergency Text Messages overseen by University Communications. Families are also invited to Fall Family Open House, a weekend of events, receptions and informational workshops during fall quarter, and Back2Bellingham, hosted in conjunction with the Alumni Office, in spring quarter. (See Soundings.)

New students entering in the fall quarter are invited and encouraged to attend two-day summer orientation sessions—Summerstart for freshmen and Transitions for transfer students—along with their family members. (See Summerstart; and Transitions.) In 2012, a specialized Summerstart session was added for freshmen entering Western with 45 or more college credits earned while in high school. For students unable to attend the summer sessions, a fall orientation is offered just prior to the start of classes. (See Fall Orientation.) Orientation sessions are also made available to new students entering in the winter, spring or summer quarters.

All student orientation sessions are designed to address the following key learning outcomes:

1. Increased knowledge of campus resources,
2. Increased knowledge of student account, billing, and financial matters,
3. Understanding of the attributes necessary to be a successful student and engaged in one’s own learning,
4. Increased knowledge of Western’s academic expectations for students, and
5. Demonstrated knowledge of the registration process and building a balanced class schedule.
Summer orientation also includes a track for family members that address general tips, tours of various campus locations, information on financing a college education, varying interest sessions, and an information fair showcasing the various support services and resources available to the student.

Surveys are conducted following each orientation session with students and their family members and that feedback is used to inform changes to the program. One example would include the aforementioned addition of a Summerstart session for high credit freshmen starting in summer, 2012. Other examples include re-designing sessions into smaller parts to increase peer-to-peer interaction early on in the program, and the addition of a session for family members that includes more specific information on how they can connect to Western and to family events and involvement opportunities.

Academic policies and graduation requirements are published in the catalog and are available on the website. (See Academic Policies; and Grad Requirements Web.) This information is reviewed annually and updated as needed as part of the Course Catalog review process each spring. (See Grad Requirements Catalog.) In addition, the Admissions website has a section dedicated to transfer students, including transfer of credit policies. (See Transfers Admissions; and Transfer Credit Policies.) Moreover, the Admissions staff maintains strong relationships with member schools in the Northwest Higher Education Coalition and meets regularly to address transfer and articulation matters to ensure an efficient and easy transition for the student.

Students have ongoing access to their Transfer Equivalency Report (TER) and their degree evaluation at any time via Web4U (Western's online, secure information system), and this information is routinely used in advising sessions and during course registration. The TER details previous coursework that transferred to Western. The report indicates how transfer coursework was accepted at Western, including GUR, prerequisite, major, minor, and elective credits. The online Degree Evaluation is an advising tool used to evaluate coursework fulfilling major, minor and degree requirements. (See Online Degree Evaluation.) It shows how Western courses, transfer courses, and courses in progress apply toward a student’s graduation requirements.

2.D.4 = In the event of program elimination or significant change in requirements, the institution makes appropriate arrangements to ensure that students enrolled in the program have an opportunity to complete their program in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.

Western ensures that students enrolled in programs eliminated or placed in moratorium have an opportunity to complete their programs in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption. Responsibility for ensuring this opportunity rests with department chairs. However, in practice, faculty, advisors, chairs and the Registrar act in coordination to ensure that students in programs have ample opportunities to be “taught out” of the program. For instance, in the case of the more than 30 programs eliminated or placed in moratorium in AY 2010-11, the Registrar’s Office noted no completion impediments that were not successfully resolved.
In addition to ensuring that Western students have ample opportunity to complete eliminated programs, Western participates in a state-wide agreement to give the state’s community and technical colleges a two-year notice for all curricular changes that may involve transfer students.

2.D.5 = The institution publishes in a catalog, or provides in a manner reasonably available to students and other stakeholders, current and accurate information.

Western provides accurate and current information to students and the public primarily through the catalog. Staff regularly review publications and the website to ensure integrity in all publications via a robust curriculum review process. (See Supporting Document 2.D.5 (a): Catalog Information.)

2.D.6 = Publications describing educational programs include accurate information on: 1) national and/or state legal eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered; and 2) descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession.

Western publishes clear, accurate, and assessable information concerning national and/or state eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into occupations or professions for which training and educational preparation are offered. In addition, Western’s publications and resources describe unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession. Western ensures that licensure and occupational preparation information is accessible to all students by providing this information in its most detailed form in two central sources: the university catalog (see WWU Catalog) and the Career Services Center (see Career Services.).

These sites include information on licenses and credentials students earn while enrolled at Western—such as teaching certificates—and information on licenses and credentials they may prepare for at Western but earn in a future graduate or professional program—such as a medical degree.

As part of its larger effort to ensure the accuracy and accessibility of information, Western has intentionally moved toward use of the University Catalog as the central source of all curricular information. For instance, whereas Academic and Career Services once published degree planning guides, the guides are now excerpted directly from the catalog. Similarly, academic departments have moved toward linking directly to the catalog and away from the previous strategy of posting degree requirements separately on their websites. In this way, the University has improved the accuracy and consistency of its degree-related materials. However, Western supplements the licensure and career preparation information provided in the University Catalog and the Career Services Center with information pertinent to students in specific colleges or majors. The following table provides examples of departmental advice for careers associated with licensure exams or other eligibility requirements, such as the CPA exam. (See Table 8 below.)
Table 8: License, Credential, Career Information

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<tr>
<th>License, Credential, or Career</th>
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<td>Mental Health Counseling Career Requirements</td>
<td>See <a href="#">Mental Health Counseling</a></td>
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<td>See <a href="#">School Counseling</a></td>
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<td>See <a href="#">CPA</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Health Career Requirements</td>
<td>See <a href="#">Community Health</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.D.7 = The institution adopts and adheres to policies and procedures regarding the secure retention of student records, including provision for reliable and retrievable backup of those records, regardless of their form. The institution publishes and follows established policies for confidentiality and release of student records.

Records protection is a high priority at Western. Student records are maintained electronically through the student information system, Banner. All center student system data is replicated immediately in a machine room on campus and in a machine room two miles from campus. In addition, the Banner Student database is replicated at a machine room at Portland State University in Portland, OR and re-synchronized nightly. Backups of the production database and files are made and filed weekly at a location off campus along with database transaction logs. These logs are rotated on a three week cycle. Image files are duplicated nightly and stored off campus and at PSU. Paper records are maintained by the University in a fireproof vault. Archiving and the destruction of records are in accordance with record retention schedules.

The University’s Student Records Policy ([POL-U7100.01; WAC 516-26](#)) was written to establish the rules and procedures for appropriate implementation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). The policy includes information regarding access to educational records and limitations on access, rights to copy education records, information on how a student may challenge the content or release of records, conditions for the release of personally identifiable information, education records or directory information, the destruction of records, and notification of rights. (See [Student Records](#)) The policy is published on the University’s policy website, in the University catalog and on the Washington State Legislature website. (See [University Policies](#))

Information about FERPA is contained in the University Catalog and on the Registrar’s website. (See [FERPA Catalog](#) and [FERPA Web](#).) While FERPA allows the university to release certain “directory information”—which may include the student’s name, local
address and phone number, whether the student is enrolled, dates of attendance, degrees earned, and most recent previous institutions attended—Western has taken a more restrictive approach, releasing to third parties only whether the student is currently enrolled, dates of attendance, and degrees awarded. For students who have requested a confidential block through the Registrar’s Office, no information is disclosed, not even whether the student is enrolled. Those students are flagged in Western’s system so that their information block is easily recognized.


2.D.8 = The institution provides an effective and accountable program of financial aid consistent with its mission, student needs, and institutional resources. Information regarding the categories of financial assistance (such as scholarships, grants, and loans) is published and made available to prospective and enrolled students.

Western is highly committed to providing a quality education at an affordable price and has been nationally recognized for efforts in this area. The Federal College Scorecard released in February, 2013, by the Obama administration ranked Western’s costs as below average. (See Scoreboard.) In that same month, Kiplinger’s Personal Finance Magazine ranked Western 74th in the nation as a best value in public colleges based on cost and financial aid, student debt, competitiveness, graduation rates, and academic support. (Improved from 81st in 2012.)

Consistent with the University’s mission and its strategic goal to expand student access to rigorous and engaging baccalaureate and graduate education, Western’s Office of Financial Aid provides comprehensive services to eligible applicants through grants, scholarships, work study awards, loans, or some combination of these student aid programs. (See Financial Aid.) Eligibility for financial aid is determined by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Western-specific financial assistance is widely published and made available to prospective and current students in the University Catalog and on various Western webpages within Admissions, Financial Aid, and the Student Business office. (See Admit Aid; Financial Aid; Student Business Aid.) Accepted and currently registered students can view their financial aid information at any time via Western’s Web4U portal upon activating their universal account. Information about categories of federal student assistance is published by the U.S. Department of Education and information about state student assistance is published by the Washington State Achievement Council. (See US Department of Ed; and WSAC.)

Western’s net price calculator assists prospective students and their families in assessing the true cost of higher education by calculating the difference between the “sticker” price and the estimated net price that first-time, full-time students might pay to attend. (See Price Calculator.) Western also makes every effort to inform prospective and current students and their families of the tax credits available to reduce the federal income tax burden for students or those paying the costs of a student’s higher education. (See Tax
Tax credit information is a topic covered in financial aid presentations during SummerStart, Transitions, high school advising nights, in parent/family workshops, and as part of the College Goal Sunday (FAFSA help) workshop. Tax credit information is available on Western’s website and a link to the information is provided with every billing statement. In addition, the Student Business Office website includes information about tuition waivers offered at Western. (See Waivers.)

During 2011-2012, Western provided $127.4 million in federal, state, institutional, and private financial aid to 9,681 students. These awards, in percentage of total aid, included loans (59%), grants (25%), scholarships (8%), and student employment (7%). In addition, 1,644 students earned an estimated $4.6 million in wages in the Bellingham community through part-time employment obtained through the Federal Job Location and Development program.

The Financial Aid office has seen a marked increase (42%) in the number of Pell grant eligible students from 2008-09 to 2010-11 and anticipates that student financial need will continue to remain high in the coming years. Such growth places high demands on staff resources and requires efficiency to keep up with the volume of requests. To assist in this matter, the office has moved to a paperless awarding system, the first in the state to do so. The transition to a paperless process has increased the efficiency and effectiveness of services and awarding to students and has resulted in annual savings exceeding $50,000 in printing and postage expenses. In recognition of changing student demographics, Western also hired a counselor fluent in Spanish for a joint position as an Admissions and Financial Aid counselor.

Students receiving financial assistance are informed of any repayment obligations. The institution regularly monitors its student loan programs and the institution’s loan default rate.

Western’s Office of Financial Aid ensures that students awarded the Federal loans via the Perkins Loan, Direct Subsidized Loan, or the Direct Unsubsidized Loan programs are informed of their repayment obligations through mandatory loan entrance counseling before receiving a first loan disbursement. (See WWU Financial Aid; and US Federal Student Aid.)

Upon graduation or withdrawal, student loan borrowers must complete loan exit counseling. Loan Servicing in the Student Business Office monitors completion of Direct Loan and Perkins Loan exit interviews and responds to inquiries regarding loan repayment deferment, forbearance, discharge and/or cancellation. (See Exit Counseling; and Loan Management.)

Financial Aid’s website includes a page dedicated to loan management resources that includes links to entrance loan counseling, loan repayment and budget calculators, and a budget planning worksheet to assist students in making financial decisions about debt accrual. Resource information about federal student loans and debt management is also available on Western’s website.

New student loan borrowers are mailed a “What to Know Before You Borrow” brochure that informs them of resources available to manage their student debt, with information about interest rates, origination fees and the standard repayment option. New borrowers
are also referred to the U.S. Department of Education website for additional information about federal loan programs and repayment options.

Western students have lower average borrowing rates and a strong record of loan repayment when compared to national and state figures. According to data from the National Project on Student Debt, the proportion of 2012 graduating seniors at Western with debt was 56% and their average debt level through student loan programs was $20,473. By contrast, national figures cited seven in ten college seniors with student loan debt at an average of $29,400, while state figures cited 56% of college seniors with student loan debt at an average of $23,293. (See Project Student Dept.) Furthermore, the U.S. Department of Education reports that among the Washington State four-year public universities, Western had a three-year federal cohort default rate of 4.6% in 2010. This is compared to the state average of 12.2% and the national average of 14.7%.

2.D.10 = The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates a systematic and effective program of academic advisement to support student development and success. Personnel responsible for advising students are knowledgeable of the curriculum, program requirements, and graduation requirements and are adequately prepared to successfully fulfill their responsibilities. Advising requirements and responsibilities are defined, published, and made available to students.

**Academic Advising Center and Student Outreach Services**

Academic advising at Western is a shared responsibility involving the Academic Advising Center (AAC), Student Outreach Services (SOS), advising staff, and faculty in the various college departments working closely with students to establish and complete their academic goals, explore the intellectual side of their lives, choose among educational options, and develop plans to support their academic and life objectives. (See Academic Advising and Outreach Services. See also Supporting Documents 2.D.10 (a): Academic Advising Center Evaluation, and 2.D.10 (b): Student Outreach Services Evaluation.)

**AAC** staff primarily provides advising for first-year students, undeclared students and students experiencing academic difficulty, though staff will meet with any student requesting an appointment. ACC is part of an integrated unit that includes the Career Services Center and the Tutoring Center. (See First-year Advising.)

**SOS** staff work specifically with traditionally under-represented and/or underserved students (e.g. first generation, low-income, non-traditional, students of color). SOS is part of an integrated unit that includes the Ethnic Student Center and the LEADS Program (Leaders Engage in Action, Discernment, & Skills-building). Under the leadership of Western’s Associate Dean of Students/SOS Director, this unit works together to address the challenges faced by these students and to invite participation in a broad array of programs and services that promote persistence, retention and graduation.

All AAC and SOS advisors have earned a masters- or doctoral-level degree and are trained and supervised by senior level advisors in coaching and advising students. AAC staff is assisted in their work by student staff who receive extensive training through a required quarter-long, credit-bearing class prior to serving in an advising role.
Colleges, too, provide academic advising for all students interested in their programs, be those students in declared majors, minors, or merely prospective students in a particular area. The vast majority of academic advising at the college level is done by faculty members, but some departments do have staff members specifically hired to serve as an advisor or who provide a certain level of operational advice to students as they prepare for registration and/or other processes related to the administration of degrees.

All entering students are offered academic advising and course registration assistance during student orientation programs. This ensures that new students are introduced to key advising tools and resources, plus instructed about key academic policies, General University Requirements, and graduation requirements. Once enrolled, students are expected to be pro-active in seeking advising assistance and have access to scheduled advising appointments and drop-in advising.

With the exception of students who have completed 105 credits and are still undeclared, advising is not mandatory. High-credit, undeclared students are required to submit Major Declaration Plans which are reviewed by AAC advisors. Students with poorly-defined or unrealistic academic plans are placed on a registration hold, which can only be released by meeting with an advisor. Students in low academic standing received targeted outreach that encourages them to take advantage of advising resources.

Advising staff are knowledgeable of the curriculum and program requirements and are prepared to fulfill their responsibilities. Faculty and staff advisors assisting with orientation advising receive training prior to the start of summer orientation each year and an advising meeting coordinated by the Academic Advising Center is held quarterly to update and inform advisors of any changes or new initiatives. In addition, ongoing education and training opportunities are made available via webinars, national conferences, and on-site professional development.

Advising requirements and responsibilities are defined, published, and availed to students through a variety of means including, but not limited to, the Academic Advising Center website, the University Catalog, Viking Advisor, and the student resources section of the MyWestern portal. In addition, some credit-bearing classes are offered to prepare students in goal setting, degree planning, major selection, and time management/study skills. Advising staff also offer presentations during summer orientation. These presentations are readily available to anyone at the faculty/staff advising resources webpage. (See Advising Resources for Faculty and Staff.)

While Western has a decentralized model to advising, with departments and programs having differing approaches, the goals are the same: to assist students in making appropriate academic decisions. Advisors across the institution have a shared commitment to supporting students with the following:

- setting academic goals and plans;
- understanding Western’s academic policies, graduation and GUR requirements;
- exploring disciplinary options and possible career paths;
- choosing a major consistent with their interests, abilities and personal goals;
- selecting and scheduling courses to make effective time-to-degree progress;
• addressing challenges that are interfering with their academic progress; and  
• identifying campus resources necessary to support their success.

Many degree programs in Western’s College of Fine and Performing Arts also include an applied element, such as performances (Dance, Music, Theatre) or portfolios of original work (Art, Design). Advisors assist students in navigating both the coursework and applied work required in these majors.

**Western’s Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS)**

Academic advising is regularly assessed as part of Western’s Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS), developed and administered by the Office of Survey Research. The WELS includes baseline studies with incoming freshmen and transfers who are then surveyed again at the end of their second year, upon graduation, and as alumni. Data responses are provided at both the college and departmental level so that areas in need of improvement can be quickly identified. Additionally, AAC and SOS regularly conduct office assessments, using results to modify programs and service delivery. (See WELS and WELS Design.)

**Student Success Collaborative**

To further improve its ability to deliver the finest advising services possible, Western joined a three-year pilot initiative using the Student Success Collaborative (SSC), a predictive analytics tool and advising platform created by the Education Advisory Board (EAB) in Washington, D.C. This occurred in January, 2013, after substantial review involving more than 100 faculty and staff. (See Student Success Collaborative.)

Using more than a decade of historical academic data from Western, the SSC combines technology, research, and predictive analytics to reveal the correlates, pathways and course sequences shown to be characteristic of successful students at Western. This data and information is expected to:

1. help departments and colleges adjust their curriculum to improve graduation rates,  
2. help administrators identify where resources will make the most impact, and  
3. assist advisors in more rapidly identifying those students who have deviated from a recommended pathway or course sequence.

Via an alert system, advisors can be more proactive in supporting students and getting them back on track before more serious consequences, such as course failure, occur.

Implementation is scheduled to begin in fall, 2013, with five early adoption workgroups: the College of Business & Economics, Huxley College of the Environment, the College of Fine & Performing Arts, the Academic Advising Center, and Student Outreach Services.

Western is on the forefront of this national initiative, one of only twenty-two universities in the official first pilot phase and the first institution in Washington State to join. Furthermore, Western’s thoughtful and thorough approach to implementation has been recognized by EAB staff and a Western representative has been asked to serve on a new Product Advisory Council and help shape the future direction, language, and features of the platform. Only thirteen members were selected from across the country to serve on this council.
2.D.11 = Co-curricular activities are consistent with the institution’s mission, core themes, programs, and services and are governed appropriately.

Western’s co-curricular offerings are a critical part of the University’s commitment to Active Minds Changing Lives, a commitment to engaged excellence that received national recognition in the form of the 2013 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction award. This recognition is for higher education institutions across the country that reflect the values of exemplary community service and achieve meaningful outcomes in their communities. Moreover, Western received the Community Engagement classification by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching for its efforts to operate community-outreach programs, deepen students’ civic and academic learning and to enhance overall community well-being. (See Advancement of Teaching.)

Western’s co-curricular activities align with institutional goal to foster and promote life-long learning and success and the mission of the Division of Enrollment and Student Services to engage and challenge students in their pursuit of academic and personal excellence through outreach, support services, and co-curricular learning opportunities.

Viking Union/Student Activities maintains a diverse offering of co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for the campus community. The department, which consists of eight professional and classified staff plus eighty student employees, provides financial administration, program planning and production, operational support, and management for all aspects of the Associated Students. It supports more than 235 clubs and organizations. Each fall, the Associated Students (AS) host an information fair to showcase the different organizations, clubs, teams, and activities available to students and highlight the range of interests supported through student engagement.

Viking Union/Student Activities, a part of the Dean of Students unit, has five major goals and objectives:

- Provide a framework for participatory extracurricular and co-curricular experiences through which students may initiate and develop organizational activities; supplement classroom learning; and acquire, test, and refine skills for the future.
- Provide a variety of services and activities designed to meet demonstrated campus needs, enrich the University environment, encourage the exploration of diverse ideas and opinions, and broaden the individual’s areas of knowledge and interest.
- Provide facilities, services, and conveniences to meet the University community's basic needs, as well as, special requirements for particular programs.
- Provide services, activities, programs, and facilities for the greater community when appropriate and cooperate with community agencies in program planning and development.
- Provide adequate opportunities for development of skills, as well as exposure to new areas of interest and expertise, within the Viking Union/Student Activities staff.

(See Supporting Document 2.D.11 (a): Associated Students Co-curricular Activities.)

In addition to these, students have opportunities to be involved in such things as community outreach programs, intramural and club sports, leadership and sustainability
efforts, residence hall and community councils, the Residence Hall Association, and the National Residence Hall Honorary, a group which recognizes the top 1% of residents living on campus who have contributed outstanding service to University Residences.

Associated Students and many of these other groups have their own governance structures and can provide discipline in instances where a policy or procedure has been violated. Staff assists in an advisory capacity as needed when such instances occur.

2.D.12 = If the institution operates auxiliary services (such as student housing, food service, and bookstore), they support the institution’s mission, contribute to the intellectual climate of the campus community, and enhance the quality of the learning environment. Students, faculty, staff, and administrators have opportunities for input regarding these services.

Western operates five auxiliary service operations:

- Associated Students (AS) Bookstore,
- Campus Recreation Services,
- Student Health Center/Prevention and Wellness Services,
- University Residences (includes Dining Services), and
- Viking Union Facilities/Student Activities.

All of these departments report within the division of Enrollment and Student Services and support the institutional mission and Enrollment and Student Services’ mission “to engage and challenge students in their pursuit of academic and personal excellence through outreach, support services, and co-curricular learning opportunities.” Members of the campus community have opportunities for input regarding all of these services through various advisory councils and/or annual assessments of service provision.

AS Bookstore

The AS Bookstore serves Western students as the designated provider of course materials, maintaining the official course materials list on International Standard Books Number (ISBN) and estimated cost. (See Course Materials.) This list is published online when students are registering for classes. Working with instructors, the AS Bookstore provides value by pricing textbooks below the industry standard, stocking a large number of used textbooks, administrating a textbook rental option, and publishing a price comparison tool.

Furthermore, the AS Bookstore supports students by providing necessary art and scientific supplies as well as school and office supplies. Convenience items, such as snacks and health products are available. Enhancing the sense of campus community, the AS Bookstore provides general books, gifts, and Western emblematic clothing. The AS Bookstore actively supports campus programs and events through partnerships and promotional opportunities with campus departments, student groups, and clubs and the department works closely with the AS Board on special projects. (See AS Bookstore.)

The AS Bookstore Manager and AS Board work together to 1) maintain a Bookstore Advisory Group—a group that provides feedback and offers suggestions on strategic directions, policies, services and operations—and 2) co-develop a distribution plan for how revenue will be used to improve bookstore operations and services to students and to fund
projects that establish and improve interaction between AS programs, clubs and the AS Bookstore. (See Operating the Associated Students Bookstore POL-U8000.01.) The AS Bookstore employs 25-30 students annually, providing them with a practical working experience and an opportunity to strengthen their leadership skills.

**Campus Recreation Services**

Campus Recreation Services strives to empower the Western community to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle and develop leadership abilities by providing the highest quality of recreational and co-curricular programs and services in an environmentally sustainable facility. (See Campus Recreation.)

The Wade King Student Recreation Center (Wade King) is one of the nation’s first recreation centers designed to meet LEEDs certification and was opened in 2003. (See LEED.) It was also the first Western facility to be LEED Certified. Wade King is a state-of-the-art open recreation fitness and wellness facility that has been created and shaped by the vision and support of Western students. Through a referendum process, students voted to assess themselves a fee to construct and operate a facility that would provide quality recreational space on campus. All Western students enrolled for six or more credits pay a quarterly fee to use the facility. Faculty, staff, alumni, and non-Western students may pay a member fee to utilize the facility.

The facility features 100,000 square feet of indoor recreational and athletic space. It includes three basketball/volleyball courts, a six-lane swimming pool, two cardio exercise areas, two group fitness rooms, a 1/10 mile three-lane indoor track, climbing and bouldering walls, a weight room, and a multi-activity court. (See Supporting Document 2.D.12 (a): Recreation Programs.)

The Campus Recreation Advisory Committee (CRAC) was established in 2004 and is comprised of six student members and three faculty/staff members. (See CRAC.) CRAC provides an opportunity for student, faculty and staff involvement in the future direction of Campus Recreation. Among its responsibilities, the committee serves in an advisory capacity to provide operational and programmatic input, promotes activities and special events, and solicits input from various constituencies on how programs and services could be improved. Per RCW 28B.15.041, the mandatory Student Recreation Fee is pledged for the payment of bonds and therefore is classified as a “Service and Activities fee.” As a result, CRAC also serves as an Services & Activities Fee Committee with regard to budget review and consideration of fee increases; additionally, it has the responsibility of proposing to the Board of Trustees and the University Administration the program priorities and budget levels for the mandatory Student Recreation Fee and the portion of program budgets that are funded by this fee. (See S&A Fee Committee.)

The Sports Club Council serves as the representative body of the Sport Club program. Representatives are nominated and approved by the Assistant Director of Club Sport. The Council exists to facilitate the successful operation and development of the Sport Club Program and rules on matters of budget, club standing, amendments to the constitution, and related sport club program issues. The Council is also responsible for recommendations in judicial sanctions as a result of club violations. (See Supporting Document 2.D.12 (b) Sports Club Council Handbook.)
Students have opportunities to develop their leadership skills through involvement with the Campus Recreation Advisory Committee, the Sports Club Council, intramural and sport club offerings, and through employment opportunities. Campus Recreation Services employs approximately 250 students per year and offers advanced levels of student employment in areas such as Personal Trainers, Building and Intramural Supervisors, Youth Camp Counselors, and Fitness or Swim Instructors.

**Student Health Center and Prevention and Wellness Services**

All Western students enrolled for six or more credits pay a quarterly health services fee. These fees are used to support operations in Prevention and Wellness Services and the Student Health Center.

The Student Health Center has a number of preventative measures and protocols in place to ensure the general health of the campus community and to minimize the spread of disease, particularly those of a communicable nature that can quickly impact University operations. Measures include requiring documentation of measles immunity from all students and employees; offering immunizations and tests for a variety of health issues or travel related needs (e.g. influenza, tuberculosis, tetanus, typhoid fever, yellow fever); informing the campus community of potential health risks and measures to safeguard one's own health; identifying potential quarantine locations should an incident occur; and, collaborating with the County Health department in the screening, monitoring and treatment of reportable communicable diseases.

Student Health Center staff offer a comprehensive set of services that includes preventative health care and evaluation, diagnosis, monitoring and treatment for most acute and chronic medical illnesses, injuries (e.g. burns, lacerations, sprains, broken bones, sports and non-sports orthopedic injuries), sexually transmitted infections, and mental health and attention deficit disorders. Additional clinical services include minor surgeries (excisions, skin and lump biopsies, incisions); women’s health services and contraception; and laboratory services, including on site pregnancy testing, strep and mononucleosis testing, hemoglobin (red cell) testing, HIV testing, as well as full lab services for cultures, and complete blood testing as needed. An after-hours on call nurse is available at no charge by phone, with access to an on call Western physician. (See Student Health Center.)

Prevention and Wellness Services (See PWS.) offers a range of programs and services to teach students to become actively involved in their own wellness; to recognize the impact health has on their personal and academic success, as well as on the community; and to co-create a safe, socially-just campus for all identities. Services include alcohol and drug consultation and assessment (See ADCAS), consultation and sexual assault support (See CASAS), peer health education, sexual health consultations, and the Wellness Outreach Center—a resource center for health information, stress reduction—located in Viking Union. (See Wellness Outreach.) Educational materials are distributed in printed and online formats and PWS maintains the Western Wellness website, which consists of nine health and wellness modules, and the Western website Off-Campus Living, which includes information to consider about a move off-campus. (See Off-Campus Living.)

PWS employs approximately ten students a year to assist with general office functions and to work within the Wellness Outreach Center. In addition, PWS has 80 or more student
volunteers serving as Peer Health Educators (PHEs). PHEs partner with campus health professionals to gain hands-on experience in leadership, group facilitation, public speaking, peer-to-peer information sharing, outreach, and health specialty areas. PHEs regularly conduct workshops addressing topics such as alcohol and other drug risk reduction, body empowerment, women’s health, men’s violence prevention, sexual health and sexually transmitted infections, and women’s empowerment and violence education. (See Peer Health Educators.)

University Residences

University Residences directly supports Western’s mission by engaging students in diverse and inclusive, healthy, safe and sustainable communities fostering academic success and personal growth. (See Housing.) University Residences ensures campus housing is available for every new first-year and transfer student. Average annual occupancy rates consistently meet or exceed budgeted targets.

Residents learn how to live and work with others through the intentionally designed and assessed Residence Education Model (REM). Professional staff provides direct support to residents struggling academically, psychologically or behaviorally. Faculty, students and staff collaboratively lead living-learning communities (i.e., Fairhaven, Honors, Gender Inclusive, and International). From data gathered in the 2012-13 academic year, 90% of students in residence halls indicated they had participated in a series of individual conversations with staff promoting reflection. Nearly all (99%) agreed or strongly agreed that their Resident Advisor (student staff) treated them with respect. Residents also self-reported that their largest learning gains were in awareness of the diversity in their community.

Input gathered from students, faculty, and staff from a variety of sources (residence hall governance, surveys and daily interactions) reveals that 96% of all residents are satisfied or very satisfied with their campus housing experience, 96% would recommend living on campus to new students, and 99% feel safe living on campus.

Dining Services are provided through a contract with Aramark. (See Dining.) The contract is supervised by the Director of University Residences and the regional manager meets two or more times a year with the Director of University Residences and the Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services. Campus Dining Services provides high-quality, sustainable, convenient and healthy dining options for the campus community in three residential dining and fifteen retail locations, plus a full catering service for on- or off-campus events. Western is a community strongly committed to sustainability and waste reduction. Dining Services supports this commitment through a published newsletter highlighting their sustainable practices and featuring information on local food available in the dining halls, local-only recipes, and spotlights on local business that use fresh, local and organic ingredients. (See Sustainability Newsletter.)

University Dining Services staff meet monthly with the Campus Dining Advisory Committee to solicit student, faculty and staff input into the dining operation. (See Dining Advisory.) A “secret shopper” component, involving students, faculty and staff, is utilized, as well as Food Safety and Quality Assurance audits to assure operations are continuously meeting quality and service standards. Western Dining Services employs over 600 student
employees and 40 student managers, providing job and leadership opportunities, internships as well as career placement.

**Viking Union Facilities**

Viking Union Facilities is a collection of unique facilities and environments, services, and campus programs that enrich the Western community and support the university's operations.

In an average year, the Viking Union facility provides event support for approximately 9,000 campus programs and meetings; moreover, Lakewood serves more than 7,000 watercraft participants. The Publicity Center produces more than 400 graphic design jobs annually and prepares a student-orientated news and entertainment tabloid on a weekly basis. Recycling efforts divert approximately 72% of Western’s waste to recycling. The Child Development Center serves an average of 55 children per year and also supports students interested in careers in early childhood education by providing a place for service learning projects, classroom observations, practicum experiences and educational outreach activities.

Viking Union Facilities’ programs and services depend on the employment of 160 student employees in both support and paraprofessional roles. This structure allows staff to create meaningful opportunities for students to develop and enhance their professional skills and create experiences which complement their academic learning. (See Supporting Document 2.D.12 (c): Viking Union Facilities.)

**2.D.13** = Intercollegiate athletic and other co-curricular programs (if offered) and related financial operations are consistent with the institution’s mission and conducted with appropriate institutional oversight. Admission requirements and procedures, academic standards, degree requirements, and financial aid awards for students participating in co-curricular programs are consistent with those for other students.

Western’s intercollegiate athletic program, club sports and intramurals program support the University’s institutional mission to develop the potential of learners and the well-being of communities and to foster and promote life-long learning and success in an ever-changing world.

Western views the opportunity to participate in intercollegiate athletics and other recreational and sports offerings as an integral component of education. Most importantly, Western is committed to excellence in athletics in a manner consistent with the aims of the University and the operating principles of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Through its Admissions process, Western ensures that all varsity athletes meet the same minimum admission requirements as other students, whether entering as freshmen or transfer students. (Note that there are no admission requirements or financial aid associated with participation in Western’s club sports or intramural program.)

**Varsity Athletics**

Western offers fifteen athletic sports to students: men's and women's basketball, men's and women's cross country, men's and women's golf, men's and women's soccer, men's and women's outdoor track and field, men's and women's indoor track and field, women's
softball, women’s rowing, and women’s volleyball. (See Athletics.) The Director of Athletics oversees the intercollegiate athletic program and reports to the Senior Vice President & Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services. Western employs a full-time Compliance Officer/Academic Advisor who works with the Director of Athletics and the Faculty Athletics Representative to:

1. ensure compliance with all Western Washington University, conference and NCAA rules and regulations governing intercollegiate athletics;
2. monitor eligibility of student-athletes; and
3. communicate with the NCAA and conference about rules interpretations and compliance matters.

The duties of the Compliance Coordinator address the following areas: administration and reporting; rules education; eligibility, recruitment, and admissions; and, investigation. (See Compliance Officer; and Compliance Plan.)

The Assistant Director for Client Services in Financial Aid serves as the athletics liaison and meets with the Athletics Compliance Coordinator on a regular basis to ensure that athletic scholarships and tuition waivers are appropriately incorporated within financial aid offers; athletic scholarships and tuition waivers are awarded in accordance with NCAA regulations, federal and state aid regulations and institutional awarding policies; athletics award notifications and renewal notices are provided to students in accordance with NCAA-established timelines; and data is reported to the NCAA in a timely manner using the Compliance Assistant web application.

**Club Sports and Intramurals**

In addition to intercollegiate athletics, Western’s Wade King Student Recreation Center provides high quality recreational and co-curricular programs and services in an environmentally-sustainable facility. (See Recreation.) As participation in club sports and intramurals has grown, staffing has expanded to accommodate student interest in these areas. What was once a full-time Intramural Coordinator/Sport Clubs Advisor position is now two full-time positions: an Intramural Sports Coordinator and an Assistant Director of Club Sports and Assessment who advises the sports clubs and supervises the Intramural Sports Coordinator. (See Sports Clubs; and Intramurals.)

The mission of the Sport Club Program at Western is to promote individual leadership through group participation. Campus Recreation Services is committed to providing resources to campus community members as they strive to attain their goals both academically and through their sport club involvement. Western currently offers twenty-one sport clubs, including baseball, men’s crew, climbing, cycling, equestrian, fencing, ice hockey, judo, men’s lacrosse, women’s lacrosse, men’s rugby, women’s rugby, sailing, swimming, tennis, men’s ultimate, women’s ultimate, women’s volleyball, women’s water polo, water skiing, and wrestling. Sports clubs are distinguished as student-initiated and student-run programs that allow many opportunities for leadership and decision making. Sports clubs are allotted a small budget from Western but raise funds primarily by team dues, fundraising efforts and donations. Each club sport has a set of eligibility requirements and verification procedures for national competition and members are responsible for knowing and understanding the contents of the Sports Club Handbook. (See Supporting
Document 2.D.12 (b) Sports Club Council Handbook.) This handbook includes information on membership and eligibility, sportsmanship and conduct standards, club accounts (state/foundation), finance and risk management, sponsorship, travel and transportation, volunteer service requirements, equipment, and required forms. Ninety percent of club membership must consist of full-time Western students and operations of the club must be by student membership.

Campus Recreation Services provides Intramural Sports as an opportunity for current students, faculty and staff as well as current students from university affiliates such as Whatcom Community College and Bellingham Technical College to compete in a variety of organized competitive sports on the campus of Western Washington University. These programs exist to provide participants with opportunities in:

- personal development in a variety of programs of leisure activity,
- social interaction and the development of lasting relationships,
- leadership skills in directing group participation,
- voluntary participation, regardless of ability level, in a safe community, and
- establishing positive attitudes toward recreational activity.

Program offerings vary by quarter. Participants are required to review and comply with the rules and eligibility requirements of their intramural sport and to read the Intramural Handbook. Participants in both sport clubs and intramurals are required to sign an Acknowledgement of Risk and Hold Harmless Agreement prior to participation. The agreement is available on Campus Recreation’s homepage and a sample copy of the form is available in the respective handbooks. (See Intramural Handbook; and Intramural Agreement.)

2.D.14 = The institution maintains an effective identity verification process for students enrolled in distance education courses and programs to establish that the student enrolled in the distance education course or program is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and credentialed. The institution ensures the identity verification process for distance education students protects student privacy and that students are informed, in writing at the time of enrollment, of current and projected charges associated with the identity verification process.

Western students are assigned a unique student number and a universal login; students are responsible for creating a confidential password, which is used to log-in to Western's central authentication service (CAS) to access Western’s learning management system (Canvas), e-mail, student account information, and registration records.

Upon activation of their universal accounts, students must agree to follow the “Ethical Conduct” for Western Washington University Network and Computing Resources policies (Ethical Conduct Agreement), which summarizes student roles and responsibilities related to ethical computing, including general computing, e-mail, network security, and other electronic resources.

Students must also abide by the University’s Academic Honesty Policy (Honesty), and all other academic integrity policies outlined by the University and/or within their program of
study. Instructors may reference the Academic Honesty Policy in their course syllabi. The following sample is a recommendation provided by the Center for Instructional Innovation and Assessment (CIIA):

"Academic dishonesty is not tolerated at Western Washington University. Someone commits an act of academic dishonesty when he or she participates in representing something as the work of a student that is not in fact the work of that student. A Western student who is caught committing such an act at Western typically fails the course in which it occurred, and repeated such acts can lead to dismissal from the University. (See also: Syllabus Tips)"

At this time, there are no additional institutional verification requirements for students enrolled in online course work above and beyond those required for students enrolled in face-to-face offerings. Instructors may choose to implement additional security measures such as face-to-face exam proctoring at an approved testing facility, required face-to-face discussion sessions, online synchronous video sessions, and recorded student presentations to assist in ensuring students' identification. (See Exam Request.) These additional requirements are clarified and outlined in the course syllabus and provided to students by the instructor.
Standard 2.E • Library and Information Resources

2.E.1 = Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution holds or provides access to library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth, and breadth to support the institution’s mission, core themes, programs, and services, wherever offered and however delivered.

The Western Libraries has aligned its Strategic Plan to that of Western Washington University. (See Library Strategic Plan.) The purpose of this is to ensure that the library’s strategic goals directly feed into the university’s mission. Yet in light of the combination of a series of budget reductions plus annual inflation rates of 6-8% for academic resources, providing access to library and information resources has proved challenging. To meet these challenges, the Western Libraries have employed various strategies.

1. Most of the library’s resource budget is spent on subscriptions to academic resources. A long-standing acquisitions allocation plan that divided the resource budget into nearly fifty separate funds had become dysfunctional, thus was eliminated in 2010-11. The amount of the budget being spent on journal packages and the evolvement of multidisciplinary programs made individual discipline funds artificial. By concentrating all subscriptions in one large fund, the Western Libraries was able to effectively utilize cost-per-use data to make appropriate decisions on which subscriptions should be renewed. The library worked with the Faculty Senate Library Committee to obtain faculty feedback prior to decisions being enacted.

2. The Western Libraries extends its local collections and services through membership in the Orbis Cascade Alliance, a consortium of thirty-seven public and private academic libraries in Washington, Oregon and Idaho. (See Orbis Alliance.) A key value of this membership is that it allows the Western academic community access to the collections of other Orbis member libraries. By viewing member collections in aggregate as “one collection,” Orbis members can strategically and collaboratively focus on ways in which to create user-centered collections that maximize use and minimize cost and space. Additionally, member libraries use collaborative strategies to negotiate database subscriptions and acquisitions of e-books. The Orbis Alliance is nationally recognized for its innovative cost-saving acquisitions strategies, thus allowing the Western Libraries to leverage its resource budget into providing access to far more research and information resources than it ever could on its own.

3. In 2011-12 the Western Libraries introduced demand-driven acquisitions [DDA] for one-time purchases. The success of this program can be marked by the fact that in the last year prior to the introduction of DDA, 2010-11, 56% of new purchases were unused in the first year. For the first year of DDA, only 11% of new purchases went unused. This clearly focuses a restrained budget for one-time purchases to those items most needed.

Other means in which the Western Libraries has increased access to library and information resources include interlibrary loan and document delivery services, and a
concentration towards electronic resources in general. In the current online world of Table of Contents services and citation-based discovery tools, access needs emphasize the article level rather than the title level. Where it is not economically advantageous to subscribe to a particular journal title, access to individual articles can be provided through resource sharing mechanisms and document delivery services. In 2012-13, the Western Libraries signed up with RapidILL, which greatly reduces delivery time of journal articles from a few days to a few hours. (See RapidILL.) In other cases, direct purchase of articles from publishers is the best economic option.

Electronic options also increase access for Western faculty and students. Nearly all of the library journal subscriptions are now electronic, which means not only do simultaneous users have access, but also that resources are available 24/7. Academic e-books are gaining in popularity, and the same benefits accrue from them.

2.E.2 = Planning for library and information resources is guided by data that include feedback from affected users and appropriate library and information resources faculty, staff, and administrators.

One of the primary strategic goals of the Western Libraries is: “Provide support to the Western community using data-driven decision making to focus on user needs and services.” The Western Libraries made a commitment to this by naming an Assessment Coordinator in 2009. Since then, a regular series of surveys have been implemented. Among these are the LibQUAL+ survey and the accompanying LibQUAL+ Summit in 2010, the Facility Use Survey in May, 2011, and the Faculty Resource Use Survey and the accompanying Student Resource Use Survey in 2012. (See Library Surveys.)

Results from these surveys have been analyzed and discussed widely with library faculty and staff, the Senate Library Committee, and other constituencies. The results have directly guided decisions about library space utilization, the makeup and focus of library services, and the expenditure of the library resource budget.

As part of the recent strategic planning process, the Western Libraries reviewed Redefining the Academic Library: Managing the Migration to Digital Information Services, a report published by The Advisory Board Company in Washington, D.C., 2011. With the full support of the Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, and the participation of the Senate Library Committee, the library hosted a series of speakers on topics included in that report. (See Library Speakers.)

2.E.3 = Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution provides appropriate instruction and support for students, faculty, staff, administrators, and others (as appropriate) to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness in obtaining, evaluating, and using library and information resources that support its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered.

Instruction sessions taught by library faculty are developed to teach research skills and to develop critical thinking skills. Sessions are often directed towards upper-level classes and are designed by subject liaison librarians in collaboration with teaching faculty as a way to teach students the research skills necessary for specific disciplines. The number of
Instruction sessions has increased from 139 (reaching 3,537 students) in 2009-10 to 170 (reaching 5,548 students) in 2011-12.

The Western Libraries also teach credit courses, which expanded from 5 offerings (112 students) in 2009-10 to 16 offerings (233 students) in 2011-12. In 2011-12, the LIBR 201 course (Intro to Research Strategies) became part of the General University Requirement (GUR) course offerings. It is currently offered as one 4-credit section per quarter and is being taught in both face-to-face and online formats.

Experimentation with different formats and delivery methods for LIBR 201 is under way. At least one librarian is linking LIBR 201 with another GUR as part of the Committee for Undergraduate Education’s (CUE) Linked Pilot program for 2013-14. Library faculty are also investigating how to incorporate other Learning Commons partners, such as the Tutoring Center and the Writing Center, into the course.

The library is also expanding other credit course offerings, including a LIBR 197 course geared towards at-risk students and several sections of LIBR 320, including two future sections that will focus on Heritage Resources and sustainability respectively. Library faculty continue to offer 1-credit courses that are linked with larger, more research focus classes in East Asian Studies and Communicative Disorders.

Several steps are in progress towards the Western Libraries’ strategic goal to: “Develop a comprehensive, scalable and sustainable plan for the delivery of curricular and co-curricular instruction for all WWU students.” The Western Libraries currently have a work group assigned to develop teaching and learning initiatives. As part of that process, the current Library Instruction Learning Outcomes will be revised based on the Association of College and Research Libraries’ (ACRL) Information Literacy Competency Standards. (See Literacy Standards.) The intention is to develop standards that will either align with or incorporate outcomes from other Learning Commons partners, such as the Writing Center, as well as with the university-wide general education learning outcomes. The outcomes would align instructional goals with those of the University.

An Instructional Design Resident was hired to refine the online Library Instruction Tutorial and to develop other online learning tools to help expand library instruction to transfer and lower-level undergraduate students.

Library faculty working together with Writing Center staff are piloting “blended instruction sessions” geared towards getting started with a researched writing assignment and how developing topics and beginning research can be used together to help students better understand the chosen research topic. As noted in 2.C.6, several Learning Commons partners are collaborating with other library faculty to expand this pilot instruction session into a workshop series by developing curricula for additional sessions on topics such as “Evaluating Sources” and “Incorporating Evidence” with the target audience being students taking WP Courses and the faculty teaching them.
2.E.4 = The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the quality, adequacy, utilization, and security of library and information resources and services, including those provided through cooperative arrangements, wherever offered and however delivered.

Evaluation of the quality, adequacy, utilization, and security of library and information resources and services takes place through various pathways. Surveys and assessment play an important role in providing evaluative data. (See 2.E.2 above.) The Senate Library Committee meets regularly with library management and is charged: “The SLC advises and makes recommendations to the Dean of Libraries and serves as liaison between the faculty and the Dean of Libraries. This advice concerns policies and procedures relating to the library’s development and maintenance of collections, services, facilities and budget so that faculty, students, and staff can effectively and efficiently use the library.”

In order to most effectively utilize existing funds, the materials resource budget is scrutinized systematically through the analysis of use statistics and purchasing trends. Library faculty subject liaisons work with disciplinary faculty to ensure access to resources that address curricular and research needs. The university conducted an internal audit of library purchasing practices in 2010-11 with favorable results.

In conjunction with University Police, the library provides security for its physical resources through book detection systems, intrusion alarms, and motion sensors. Security of electronic resources and adherence to licensing contracts are handled through IT best practices and in a partnership between both library and university IT.

The Western Libraries is an active participant in the Orbis Cascade Alliance and its strategic agenda. An example of this is the Demand Driven Acquisitions Project which makes a collection of over 15,000 recently published e-books available to Western’s community. Another example is the Shared Integrated Library System project (SILS) that will eventually lead to increased efficiencies of library operations, plus improved discovery tools and expanded access for library users. Staff from the Western Libraries have been instrumental in providing leadership for the whole Alliance during the initial implementation phases of the SILS.
Standard 2.F • Financial Resources

2.F.1 = The institution demonstrates financial stability with sufficient cash flow and reserves to support its programs and services. Financial planning reflects available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and appropriate risk management to ensure short-term solvency and anticipate long-term obligations, including payment of future liabilities.

In accordance with the Board of Trustees Rules of Operation, the Board authorizes and empowers Western’s President, as the principal administrative officer, to lead and manage the internal operations of the University, while reserving the authority for final approval of all operating and capital budget plans. The President, with full authority from the Board, delegates the primary responsibility to ensure that all fiscal operations comply with local, state, and federal law to the Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs. (See BOT Web Site w/Rules of Operation.)

Annual operational funding is reliant primarily on student tuition and fees revenue (67%) and state appropriations (33%). Western’s investment policy establishes parameters for maintaining liquid funds and longer-term investment funds. Liquid funds are held at Wells Fargo and in the Washington State LGIP (Local Government Investment Pool). Western maintains an average of four months operating expense in these readily accessible liquid accounts. Western’s annual net asset growth has averaged over five percent in the past four years.

Western has a robust policy development process, including periodic reviews and updates of existing policies. Policies address the internal control requirements in purchasing, accounting, and treasury functions, including approvals, authorizations, segregation of duties, reconciliation and security of assets. Western’s internal auditor, reporting directly to the Board of Trustees and the President, assists in monitoring compliance with these fiscal policies.

2.F.2 = Resource planning and development include realistic budgeting, enrollment management, and responsible projections of grants, donations, and other non-tuition revenue sources.

The Board of Trustees approves the operating, services and activities, and the capital budgets for Western. Additionally, the Board establishes academic year tuition fees, summer session fees, continuing education degree program fees, services and activities fees, housing and dining fees, and all mandatory fees (fees students enrolled for six or more credit hours are required to pay). The Board delegates its authority to the President to approve all other fees. Prior to a budget or fee recommendation being presented to the Board for approval, Western follows a process put into place in 2009 by the President, described in more detail in section 2.F.3.

As Western evaluates the biennial and annual budget proposals as described in the next section, critical analyses are completed assessing new student enrollments, student
retention rates, transfer student enrollments, graduation rates, student financial aid needs, faculty and staff retirements, any increased operating expense projections (utilities, salaries, benefits, etc.), and academic program modifications that may be necessary due to developing trends. Finally, market conditions for each student category are assessed in conjunction with tuition setting authority provided by the legislature.

2.F.3 = The institution clearly defines and follows its policies, guidelines, and processes for financial planning and budget development that include appropriate opportunities for participation by its constituencies.

The primary goal of Western’s planning policy is to provide involvement for every level within the University in developing bottom-up budgets, linked to strategic priorities defined by campus constituents. Western's processes are closely aligned with the state appropriations cycle, and constitute ongoing activity for both the capital and operating budgets. The legislature meets annually in the state of Washington; however, biennial or two-year appropriations are enacted in odd-numbered years. In the interim years, supplemental appropriations may be enacted by the legislature, adjusting biennial budget appropriations. Preparation for the submission of the biennial budget request to the Governor and to the legislature begins well in advance of the legislative session—at least one full year in advance. Under the direction of the President, Western’s Vice Presidents work with their organizational units to analyze budget needs and proposals for University program enhancements. Comprehensive requests for new state funding to address these needs and enhancements are presented to the Board and, upon approval, are submitted to the Office of Financial Management in September of even-numbered years.

As the legislative session progresses, these proposals are refined and additional operational proposals are presented in open attendance or audio-broadcast formats, including meetings with the University Planning and Resources Council (a standing committee of the Faculty Senate), and with the members of the Budget Panel (comprised of planning unit leaders, and others representing various faculty or staff groups on campus). Various mechanisms are provided to the campus community to provide feedback and ask questions.

At the conclusion of the legislative session, Western’s planning unit leaders, which include the Vice Presidents and the President, confer and endorse a budget recommendation to the Board of Trustees. The recommendation is:

- inclusive of new program enhancements and operational needs,
- funded either by new state appropriations, redirected existing funds, or increased tuition,
- based on the analyses described in section 2.F.2, and
- supported by the feedback obtained from the campus.

2.F.4 = The institution ensures timely and accurate financial information through its use of an appropriate accounting system that follows generally accepted accounting principles and through its reliance on an effective system of internal controls.
General Financial Systems Response

Accounting functions and information are managed and compiled through Banner Finance, which is part of Western’s Banner ERP system. The Finance module maintains the University’s chart of accounts, posts financial transactions, and provides financial reporting. It is the “system of record” for financial data for both Western Washington University and the Western Foundation. Banner Finance is used to create the following types of transactions:

- Procurement: Requisitions, purchase orders, change orders.
- Accounts Payable: Invoices, checks, direct deposits.
- Stores Inventory: Issues, returns.
- Accounting: Accounting journal vouchers, general encumbrances.
- Budget: Budget journal vouchers, Web4U Budget development transfers.

In addition to creating transactions, Finance processes data feeds from other Banner modules (HR, AR, Alumni), and from other systems (FAMIS, COMIT, SEQUOIA). Rollup data from the Student and Financial Aid side also feed into Finance through the AR module. This data can be accessed through the numerous reports and query screens in Banner Finance that reflect budget, operating, balance sheet, and encumbrance activity. Reporting in Finance is available at both a summary and detail level, and additional reporting is available through Web4U Finance and the Millennium FAST Finance data warehouse.

Western policies, internal controls, staffing, and established procedures ensure timely and accurate financial information to all college staff with budget responsibility. All University accounting guidelines include redundancies and built-in checks and balances; thus, this system helps the University detect potential fraud and material mistakes. Collectively, Western has implemented effective policies and internal controls to ensure the timeliness and accuracy of financial information. The Financial Services and Business Services departments fall under the Assistant Vice President’s Office for the Business and Financial Affairs Division at Western.

Financial Systems Department Response

The Financial Systems Department (FSD) falls under Western’s Assistant Vice President’s Office in the Business and Financial Affairs Division. (See B&FA Organizational Chart) The FSD's approach is analytical and project-driven, working side-by-side with Western’s business owners partners to deliver best in class business processes. To date, the group has completed over a dozen efficiency projects. The department focuses in three key areas and integrated with each other in a seamless manner:

- **Process analysis and project management**, which works with business owners partners across campus in performing business process analysis and utilizing existing or new technologies to eliminate redundancies, streamline and automate business processes, and to deliver the most effective and efficient results.
- **Functional systems support**, including end-users training, trouble shooting, bug fixing and roll out of custom applications and reports. The team currently is supporting Banner Finance, Banner Student & General Accounts Receivable,
Millennium FAST Finance data warehouse, CASHNet eMarket and Payment Portal, Microsoft Office suite applications, as well as FedEx and UPS mail applications. 

- **Equipment & network support**, where collaboration with ATUS ensures that all hardware—PCs, printers, projectors and other small equipment—within the AVP departments are in good shape and in compliance wherever required. This area also works closely with the project management team and provides equipment set up for them for meetings, testing, and training purposes.

**2.F.5 = Capital budgets reflect the institution’s mission and core theme objectives and relate to its plans for physical facilities and acquisition of equipment.** Long-range capital plans support the institution’s mission and goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership, equipment, furnishing, and operation of new or renovated facilities. Debt for capital outlay purposes is periodically reviewed, carefully controlled, and justified, so as not to create an unreasonable drain on resources available for educational purposes.

Long- and short-range capital planning is guided by Western’s master plan and the strategic goals and mission of the University as refined through each division’s six-year strategic plan. (See Six-Year Plans.)

In accordance with the State budget timeline, each biennium Western submits a ten-year capital construction and renovation plan, and a capital request. The Office of Facilities Development and Capital Budget (Facilities/Capital Budget) manages the State biennial capital budget planning process, with the primary goal of ensuring that the projects are clearly defined and meet the goals of the University as they proceed through the planning and submission process. Western’s capital planning and development process is re-evaluated at the beginning of every budget cycle by the Capital Plan Development Working Group. (See Supporting Document 2.F.5 (a): Capital Plan Charter.) Planning Unit Leaders (deans and higher level administrators) are then asked to review existing projects, and submit new Major (>5M) and Intermediate (>2M) projects for consideration in the biennial capital request plan, and for the ten-year capital plan, with an emphasis on how the projects fit into the University’s strategic plan and mission. Requests for Minor Works projects (<2M) are also collected during this time, and evaluated and prioritized by the Planning Unit Leaders. (See Supporting Document 2.F.5 (b): Planning Unit Leaders.)

(Note: for Minor Works projects, careful consideration is given to the Facilities preservation backlog list, safety and ADA requirements, and programmatic changes that require physical changes in current facilities.)

Criteria for analyzing/evaluating capital projects is developed by the Capital Plan Development Working Group and Vice Presidents with input from Western’s University Planning and Resources Council (UPRC), a standing committee of the Faculty Senate and stakeholders. Capital projects are then developed and presented to UPRC and the campus community for discussion and input. Western’s Vice Presidents then meet to consider the input, analyze the projects and rankings to develop both a draft ten-year plan and a biennial capital budget that fits with the University’s strategic plan and mission. The draft ten-year plan is then presented to UPRC and the campus community for additional comment. This information is then given to the president and presented to the Board of
Trustees for their approval. (See BOT.) This process ensures understanding, transparency, and inclusion throughout the campus.

The development of the capital budget takes into account state and institutional priorities, the total cost of ownership, equipment and furnishing needs, and the cost of operating new or renovated facilities.

Western’s primary source of funding for capital projects is the state; however, alternative funding sources are occasionally used for projects such as the Student Recreation Center, the Multipurpose Field, Softball field, etc. Alternate funding sources include student fees, donations, fund raising, and Certificates of Participation, plus others. Western has a special opportunity to expand its landlocked campus to the Bellingham Waterfront, which could potentially make a significant economic impact. Western is currently engaged in plans to become a valued part of the Waterfront development. Additional alternative financing strategies are being carefully studied in conjunction with this opportunity.

Debt for capital outlay purposes is reviewed and carefully controlled at the University level. The current University’s debt comes mainly from its auxiliaries. Each of these self-sustaining auxiliaries are considered their own business entity, and are audited annually by the state auditor's office. Examples include Housing & Dining System, Campus Recreation Services, and others.

2.F.6 = The institution defines the financial relationship between its general operations and its auxiliary enterprises, including any use of general operations funds to support auxiliary enterprises or the use of funds from auxiliary services to support general operations.

Western’s auxiliary enterprises are self-supporting entities primarily providing services to individuals in the institutional community, rather than to departments of the University. The activities of these auxiliary enterprises contribute and directly relate to the goals and mission of the institution. All operating costs are paid from income earned; no state appropriated funds are allocated to cover the operating costs of these auxiliaries. Additionally, Western assesses an administrative fee on these auxiliaries to cover the cost of shared facilities or services provided by state funded offices. Examples of these auxiliary enterprises include University Residences, Dining Services, Bookstore, and the Wade King Recreation Center.

Special Note: In the past, Extended Education has been viewed as an auxiliary enterprise and included in this section. In accordance with the National Association of College and University Business Officers’ (NACUBO’s) Financial Accounting and Reporting Manual for Higher Education (FARM), Extended Education is now included and addressed as subcategories of General Academic Instruction.
2.F.7 = For each year of operation, the institution undergoes an external financial audit, in a reasonable timeframe, by professionally qualified personnel in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Results from the audit, including findings and management letter recommendations, are considered in a timely, appropriate, and comprehensive manner by the administration and the governing board.

Western undergoes a financial statement audit every fiscal year by qualified personnel from the State Auditor’s Office. The state auditors evaluate the internal controls and perform audit procedures on the financial activities of the university. They then report to the Board of Trustees through the Audit Committee their opinion as to whether the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the university. No major findings have resulted in recent years. (See BOT Rules of Operation, Section 5.6 [a].)

In addition, the State Auditor’s office performs annual compliance audits for federal grants and use of public resources in accordance with state laws and regulations. Western has had no significant findings in these areas in recent years.

2.F.8 = All institutional fundraising activities are conducted in a professional and ethical manner and comply with governmental requirements. If the institution has a relationship with a fundraising organization that bears its name and whose major purpose is to raise funds to support its mission, the institution has a written agreement that clearly defines its relationship with that organization.

The Western Washington University Foundation (“Foundation”) is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization whose purpose is to generate private support for the benefit of Western Washington University. (See Western Foundation.) The Foundation strengthens educational opportunities by providing student scholarships, supporting faculty and staff development, and assisting with key university programs, initiatives and select facilities. Assistance from the Foundation helps the University achieve its mission by means that are not possible with state funds alone. The Foundation was originally formed in 1966. The formal agreement between Western and the Foundation was most-recently revised in 2010. (See Supporting Document 2.F.8 (a): Foundation Agreement.)

The Foundation is governed by a board of directors, which includes five officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Immediate Past President. The Foundation Governing Board oversees the operation, fundraising activities, and events of the Foundation through its quarterly board meetings and its five standing committees: the Executive committee, the Finance and Audit committee, the Western @ Home committee, the Western in Puget Sound committee, and the Nominating committee. The Governing Board meets four times per year, and committee meetings are generally scheduled two-four weeks in advance of the governing board meetings.

Endowed assets of the Foundation recently surpassed $50 million, having doubled in the past ten years. The Foundation has an annual audit performed by an external audit firm to ensure compliance with all pertinent accounting rules and regulations, and to confirm that the organization is adhering to all internal policies set forth by the Foundation board, the
University, and state and federal laws, rules and regulations. The Foundation publishes its audited financial statements annually. (See Supporting Document 2.F.8 (b): Foundation Audit.)

The Foundation is currently in the silent phase of a five-year fundraising campaign called “Western Stands for Washington.” The purpose of this campaign is to raise funds for scholarships, improve curriculum, advance leadership in science, improve P-12 education, and to expand service learning opportunities. The five-year campaign started on July 1, 2012 with an initial working goal of $50 million. Less than two years into the campaign, fund raising has exceeded $26 million.
Standard 2.G • Physical Infrastructure

2.G.1 = Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution creates and maintains physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure, and sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure healthful learning and working environments that support the institution’s mission, programs, and services.

To provide a healthy, safe, and supportive environment for students, faculty and employees, Western is committed to effective planning and development of the physical campus. These efforts are managed by the Office of Facilities Development and Capital Budget (FDCB) whose mission is: “To bring Western’s strategic plan to physical reality through sustainable planning, budgeting, and development.” (See FDCB.) The FDCB manages and works with various campus constituents in developing major and minor capital projects. Project planning takes into account the programmatic needs of the campus, accessibility, safety, maintenance, and sustainability for new and renovation projects.

Western’s campus is situated on 215 acres and includes slightly over 3.3 million square feet of buildings, including 55 academic and support buildings (roughly 2/3 of campus building square footage), 36 residential housing and food services facilities, and 10 auxiliary facilities.

Examples of recent projects include the renovation of Miller Hall, a 133,000 gsf academic building completed in 2011. This project received Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification. Classroom and Lab Upgrades projects have been completed every biennium for some time. The current focus is now on upgrading departmental teaching spaces and labs to match the level of classroom mediation present in the general university classrooms. Planned projects include:

- the Carver Academic Renovation project, a 162,000 renovation and addition that is ready for construction funding; and
- the Gateway Complex, a 98,000 new facility providing space for: 1) the College of Fine and Performing Arts, 2) Admissions and New Student Services/Family Outreach, 3) Center for Canadian/American Studies, and 4) general university classrooms.

The maintenance of Western’s facilities, grounds, and infrastructure is managed by Facilities Management. (See FM.) While the recent budgetary climate presented maintenance challenges and reductions, the slightly improving economy coupled with University recognition of facilities needs has resulted in key increases to the Facilities Management operating budget. These increases, which include an Energy Manager and Preventative Maintenance Manager, will enhance the quality and effectiveness of FM’s academic support. Maintenance mechanics are assigned to each major academic building, providing a dedicated and dependable resource to maintain those spaces and correct emergent discrepancies. The use of computerized facilities management systems like
FacMan and FAMIS greatly assist Facilities Management staff in their efforts to meet the facilities needs of the campus. (See FAMIS.) FacMan gives the institution the ability to identify deferred maintenance by building and can drill down to specific building systems. It also provides invaluable assistance in prioritizing deferred maintenance projects based on criteria such as health, safety, accessibility, cost, and time sensitivity.

The current deferred maintenance backlog is $122M, down from nearly $130M in 2010 due to state investment in two major building renovation and renewal projects. Although the backlog continues to grow due to inflation and an aging inventory, there is reason for optimism as the state continues to invest in backlog reduction, with another major renovation project planned for the 2015-17 biennium, which will take roughly $30M off the University’s backlog.

2.G.2 = The institution adopts, publishes, reviews regularly, and adheres to policies and procedures regarding the safe use, storage, and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials.

Western is committed to the safe storage, use and disposal of all hazardous or toxic materials, as University departments work with chemical, biological and radiological materials. The University directs consistent effort towards compliance with Federal and State regulations related to the management of these materials, from a safety and health as well as an environmental management perspective. Western's Health, Safety and Environmental Protection Policy, adopted in 1995, applies directly to this topic. (See Health & Safety Policy.)

Policies and procedures are found across campus in Departmental Safety Information Book materials available on the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) website. (See Safety Information and EHS Website.) Departments keep applicable sections in paper copy in each department office and generally on department shared servers. Templates are provided for departments, including:

- hazardous materials-related emergency information (Section 2),
- policy and responsibility regarding safety (Section 3),
- hazard communication information (Section 6),
- chemical hygiene plans for laboratory use of chemicals (Section 7),
- chemical fume hoods (Section 8),
- chemical inventories and (material) safety data sheets (Section 9), and
- hazardous waste information (Section 10).

In addition, personal protective equipment (PPE, Section 5) is made available to students, faculty and staff as they use hazardous or toxic materials, including appropriate respiratory protection (Section 13). PPE hazard assessment certification templates are incorporated. Western’s accident prevention plan (Section 4) includes an accident reporting process and the Central Health and Safety Committee that reviews all types of accidents, safety and health incidents and near misses. The University has begun moving chemical inventories and access to (material) safety data sheets on line by initiating use of the Chemical Inventory Management and Electronic Reporting Application (CHIMERA) system hosted at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
Recombinant DNA-regulated activities are reviewed by Western’s Institutional Biosafety Committee in compliance with Federal requirements. The committee reviews each faculty member’s procedures, training and lab protocols. Radioactive materials, both sealed and unsealed sources, are used under Western’s license with the Washington State Department of Health, Office of Radiation Protection, and Western’s Radiation Safety Manual, which contains procedures for ordering, receiving, handling, storing and disposing of materials. (See Supporting Documentation 2.G.2 (a): Radiation Safety Manual.)

The EHS office provides training in chemical use, hazards, waste disposal, personal protective equipment, chemical security, and storm-water protection online and/or in person. (See Safety Training.) Some departments, such as Chemistry, provide their own personnel training, including in exceptional hazards, such as cryogenic materials. EHS also provides asbestos, lead and mold remediation-related training for Facilities Management trades personnel. Western has certified asbestos building inspection and abatement personnel.

An Emergency Response Guide is available online; in addition, paper copies are available to each employee and posted in classrooms. (See Emergency Guide.) The guide includes response information for hazardous or toxic materials spills and/or release(s). Departments generally provide response for small spills and releases, while EHS staff members provide emergency response for larger chemical, biological and/or radiological releases, including appropriate notifications and calling external response partners. Western’s Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan has the basic plan on the web, while other sections are available to the University’s response team. (See Supporting Document 2.G.2 (b): Comprehensive Emergency Plan.) The Annex on Hazardous Materials response, including its oil spill prevention plan is attached. (See Supporting Document 2.G.2 (c): Hazardous Materials Response.)

Disposal of chemicals, waste ballasts, batteries and fluorescent lamps is via several agency-wide, Washington State waste-related contracts. Currently, Western uses the no-cost Apple Computer service to dispose of unwanted, data-wiped computer equipment and parts; should this service end, a state electronics recycling contract is available. Biological wastes are autoclaved on site or given to a biological waste management service. Radiological waste disposal is infrequent, but is only to approved waste sites.

Reporting to state agencies includes an on-line annual generator report to the Department of Ecology for the main campus and other physical locations using chemicals. An annual report on large quantities of chemicals is submitted to the Department of Ecology, Bellingham Fire Department and the Whatcom County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). The Bellingham Fire Department provides operating permits for facilities that have larger amounts of flammable liquids or gases and oxidizers present in accordance with the adopted International Fire Code.
2.G.3 = The institution develops, implements, and reviews regularly a master plan for its physical development that is consistent with its mission, core themes, and long-range educational and financial plans.

Western’s Institutional Master Plan (IMP) approved by the Board of Trustees in October, 2001, and adopted as an amendment to the Western Washington University Neighborhood Plan by the Bellingham City Council in September, 2001, will guide development of the University’s main campus until it reaches a capacity of 4,000,000 overall gross square feet of building space. The University is currently just over 3,000,000 gross square feet. (See IMP.)

The IMP begins at the heart of the institution and its mission with development of the academic core. Established as Western’s highest intensity use, this area is a conceptual 10-minute walk zone situated deep within the campus. It is strongly pedestrian focused with the feeling of a “protected sanctuary” from off-campus influences. While the IMP increases the overall built density, the academic core absorbs much of that planned growth by in-fill and modernization to accommodate all of the University’s main campus academic needs. It does this while retaining the key desirable characteristics that define Western as it is today. Those characteristics include: the continuity of pedestrian flow, the strong connections of the built and natural environment, the sense of a “community of learners,” the visual portals to the mountains, water, and adjacent neighborhoods, and the breakdown of scale.

2.G.4 = Equipment is sufficient in quantity and quality and managed appropriately to support institutional functions and fulfillment of the institution’s mission, accomplishment of core theme objectives, and achievement of goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services.

Funding for the replacement of most instructional and information technology equipment is built into the annual operating budget. At present, however, the budget crisis has temporarily eliminated the majority of these expenditures other than those from the Student Technology Fee described below. Requests for other equipment are made to the Provost and/or Vice Presidents and justified by their relevance to institutional strategic plans and goals.

A Student Technology Fee provides funding for the replacement of laboratory computers, a modest amount to expand wireless networking, support of the Student Technology Center (STC, an advanced technology & training center) and proposals from faculty and staff for technology initiatives. A recent vote by the students increased this fee by forty percent to provide significant advancement in wireless networking; increased student data storage and the creation of ‘virtual lab desktops’, increased STC funding, and funds for the Microsoft Student Advantage program.

Purchases of equipment are governed by strict state regulation. All equipment is recorded and labeled with a state identification tag and an annual inventory of equipment is required.

Western continues to invest in technology in the classroom by including teaching stations, document cameras for instructional purposes, and projection equipment through classroom renovation funding. Technology projects in process include investments in a
voice-over internet protocol telephone system, electronic door access, wireless internet connectivity, an upgrade of internet connectivity, a smart card ID system, and a cloud-based systems such as Canvas and Office365 to allow for broader access to these critical systems.
Standard 2.G • Technological Infrastructure

2.G.5 = Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution has appropriate and adequate technology systems and infrastructure to support its management and operational functions, academic programs, and support services, wherever offered and however delivered.

Western provides its constituents with a stable and comprehensive set of technology systems but, as with all technology, change is a constant and Western’s Information Technology Services (ITS) division is faced with the challenge of providing stability in core infrastructure and enhancing the infrastructure to meet future demand and revised business processes. ITS consists of four departments:

1. Administrative Computing Services (ADMCS) serving the business needs of the institution;
2. Academic Technology and User Services (ATUS) supporting the teaching and learning process with technology and providing end user support;
3. Communication and Technology Services (CTS) supporting the key communication needs (telecomm and networking) and ‘back end’ technical needs (server and data center management); and the
4. Information Security Office (newly formed) to help ensure data protection and compliance with various state and federal regulations.

ITS operates a strong data network with fiber runs between buildings and most horizontal cabling being cat5 with some cat6 being deployed primarily to support rollout of 802.11ac wireless devices. Western’s wireless network covers the majority of campus but not all. In 2012, the student body renewed and increased the Student Technology Fee with dedicated amounts devoted to expanding the wireless network. This fee provides approximately $170,000 each year for wireless expansion and renewal. Requests for capital funding to achieve better coverage in faculty/administrative areas are being considered by the campus community.

Western’s telephony infrastructure is being improved with voice over internet protocol (VOIP) in a pilot phase. Microsoft’s Lync system has been implemented and tied in with the legacy switch to offer a seamless transition once the pilot concludes. Lync will allow all employees to access their voice mail online (and see it in their email inbox), perform audio and video conferencing (including remotely), and utilize instant messaging for quick communication. By converging voice and data networks, savings will eventually be realized as the legacy switch is retired and infrastructure maintenance is reduced. This effort will be enhanced as the move to a cloud based email and collaboration system progresses. Western will move to Microsoft’s Office 365 product early in 2014. Contracts have been signed for consulting and implementation assistance beginning in December 2013. Student email has already been implemented on Office 365.
Management and Operational Functions

ITS views itself as both innovator, in bringing new technology to the campus, and collaborator, in supporting the technological needs of other administrative and academic units. In collaboration with the division of Business and Financial Affairs (BFA), ITS supports the implementation of various projects within BFA’s Banner Initiatives. The CIO co-chairs the steering committee with the Assistant VP for BFA. This initiative has significantly improved various business processes on campus and ITS plays an important part in implementing and integrating the various projects. Examples of recent successes include: the implementation of Banner’s Travel and Expense Module; the use of eMarket to provide more consistent credit card processing across campus; improving the loans and collection process through implementation of Banner’s Collection and Loans Management module. Significant projects are in various stages of implementation including: Parking Online Payment system (in process); implementation of a new Facilities Management System (in business process analysis and recommendation phase); an eProcurement system (in project initiation); and human resource position control and budget process (on future schedule). These projects will stress the capacity of ADMCS and proposals are being developed jointly with BFA to support the addition of resources to this area.

Academic Programs

Through its ATUS department, ITS endeavors to provide strong support to the faculty and students of the institution. Twenty general-use computer labs/classrooms with over five hundred computers are operated. In addition, over one-hundred-and-fifty departmental lab computers are supported. Computers are refreshed every four years through the Student Technology Fee. ATUS also supports the Student Technology Center (STC) where students have access to advanced computing; large format printing; audio and video editing rooms; collaboration spaces; and, most importantly, providing over seven thousand contact hours of help and tutoring from their peers who are advanced in the offered technologies. The STC also provides over two hundred workshops on various programs and technology that are open both to students and faculty. Co-located with the library, the STC supports the library as a learning center and enhances their Learning Commons project.

ATUS also provides technology support for one hundred and thirty-eight general use classrooms. This support includes multimedia projectors, screens, sound systems, and document cameras. Also supported are various classrooms with ‘smart boards’; pod casting and audio recording; and the ‘clicker’ system (automated audience response) with over three thousand clickers. Classroom services also provides consultation on classroom mediation and supports the design and maintenance of campus television delivery, broadcast systems including a recording studio and interactive video classrooms.

Support Services

ATUS also manages an Equipment Loan Desk that provides portable technology for faculty and students. The desk loans out digital still cameras, video cameras, digital audio recorders, lighting equipment, laptops (PC & Mac), LCD projectors, and much, much more. Over five thousand checkouts occurring during a year and each one includes training, troubleshooting, maintenance and restocking. The service is free to students when required for a class.
ITS provides comprehensive services to assist the campus community in acquiring and using software for academic purposes. Software specialists assist with licensing and distribution for individual and group needs. Some software is available at no cost, including Microsoft Office. Many software products are available at greatly reduced educational pricing. Managed contracts save at least $700,000 annually over list price costs.

2.G.6 = The institution provides appropriate instruction and support for faculty, staff, students, and administrators in the effective use of technology and technology systems related to its programs, services, and institutional operations.

Western recently joined together the ATUS Learning Systems unit with the Center for Innovative Instruction and Assessment (formerly under the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education); the Student Technology Center; and Video Services into a new unit in ATUS titled Teaching, Learning & Technology. This collaboration has resulted in significant synergy to support the teaching and learning process. The unit was instrumental in supporting the successful conversion to Canvas as Western’s learning management system. They have joined together with Extended Education personnel to provide support for blended and online courses. Their success was confirmed by their winning the 2013 award for Innovation in Educational Technology given by the Northwest Academic Computing Association for their summer workshop: An Experiential Faculty Development Program on Blended Learning. (See Blended Learning.)

Western’s instructional designers do about 200 one-on-one consultations with faculty on instructional technology topics each year, addressing the instructional use of Canvas, clickers, Elluminate, and other web-based tools.

Video Services personnel produce digital video and supports video teleconferencing, video duplication, standard video recording, and video editing facilities. Forty-nine unique clients/departments requested services during the past year. Fifty-six percent of the work orders for Video Services are from academic offices; thirty-six percent from administrative offices (1/3 of those for commencements); six percent public; and 2% student requests.

The Help Desk provides comprehensive client assistance to faculty, staff and students via the web, telephone, and in person. During the past three years, two help desks (administrative & academic) were consolidated into one with a professional staff of four and over two hundred twenty hours weekly of student help. They troubleshoot problems over the phone, respond to requests for information, research technical questions, or refer a problem to a specific ATUS Desktop Services specialist or departmental support person for hands-on work as needed. Their website features “How-To” documents and answers to “Frequently Asked Questions” about computer and network services on campus. Over eighteen thousand trouble tickets are resolved annually.

2.G.7 = Technological infrastructure planning provides opportunities for input from its technology support staff and constituencies who rely on technology for institutional operations, programs, and services.

Western strives to incorporate a “bottom up” planning process. To that end technology support staff are encouraged to bring new idea to their supervisors or directly to the CIO.
These ideas are then evaluated at the Director level and their feasibility is discussed. If feasible they are placed on the list of projects to be considered. Many of those projects are then considered by the Faculty Senate’s Academic Technology Committee. On the Administrative side, the Vice Presidents have recently authorized the formation of an Administrative Computing Steering Committee where those projects will be vetted and prioritized.

The CIO meets monthly with the computer support staff to share information and listen to suggestions. This meeting is attended by central and decentralized support staff. Through this venue important planning information is shared and staff are encouraged to comment and constructively criticize plans and processes. A recent example of a project arising from staff input is to implement Dell’s KACE computer management product to better control the various upgrades that must be done and to provide a better end user experience through a common image.

2.G.8 = The institution develops, implements, and reviews regularly a technology update and replacement plan to ensure its technological infrastructure is adequate to support its operations, programs, and services.

Given the recent economic downturn, this area has significantly suffered. Budget reductions were taken that removed most annual funding for updates and replacement of technology. However, Western has been successful in receiving capital funding for a recent network upgrade and has made use of one-time funding to support needed updates and replacements. The Provost supports a yearly allocation to the Colleges for faculty/staff workstations. Colleges have used these funds to purchase or upgrade computers for faculty and staff.

The Student Technology Fee plays a major part in renewal and replacement for student technology. Through this student directed fund, allocations were made to improve the wireless infrastructure (~$170,000 per year); implement virtual desktop technology (~$90,000 per year); support for Microsoft’s Student advantage program (~$255,000 per year); and support a four year replacement cycle in computer labs (~$600,000 per year). This funding will be available through 2018. During that academic year students will again plan and then vote on renewing the technology fee.
Year Three Self-Evaluation Report

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