



**BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS  
SCOT ASSESSMENT AT A GLANCE – NOVEMBER 2009**

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<p><b><i>Administrative &amp; Support Services</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional and Competent Staff</li> <li>Excellent Employee Relations</li> <li>Commitment to Continuous Improvement</li> <li>Positive Financial Indicators</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Campus Facilities</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Campus Location and Appearance</li> <li>Successful Capital Project Outcomes</li> <li>Positive Relationship with WTA</li> <li>Alternative Transportation program</li> <li>Commitment to Sustainability</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Campus Safety</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safe Campus</li> <li>Relations with Local Public Safety Agencies</li> <li>Comprehensive Background Check Policy</li> <li>Strong Fire Safety Prevention Program</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Administrative &amp; Support Services</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve use of Financial Reporting Tools</li> <li>Implement Best Practices in Internal Controls</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Campus Facilities</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for Capital Funding</li> <li>Assist in Waterfront Development Plan</li> <li>External Parking Review</li> <li>Seek Funding for Lincoln Creek</li> <li>Consider Insuring Building Risk</li> <li>Enhance Sustainability Practices</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Campus Safety</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in State Organizations</li> <li>Training Outreach to Students and Staff</li> <li>Mutual Training Agreements with BPD</li> <li>Enhance Emergency Communications</li> <li>Implement University-wide ERM</li> </ul>
CHALLENGES	THREATS
<p><b><i>Administrative &amp; Support Services</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning for Continuous Improvement</li> <li>Recruiting Diversified Work Force</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Campus Facilities</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning for Physical Development</li> <li>Implementing Strategic Capital Budget Process</li> <li>Deferred Facilities Maintenance</li> <li>Parking Facilities and Operational Issues</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Campus Safety</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding for Emergency Planning</li> <li>Building Access Control</li> <li>Public Safety Dispatch Resources</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Administrative &amp; Support Services</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Declining State Appropriations</li> <li>Negative Impacts on Workforce</li> <li>Unfunded Mandates</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Campus Facilities</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aging University Facilities</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Campus Safety</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Emergency Incidents</li> <li>Declining State Appropriations</li> <li>New Compliance Requirements</li> </ul>

# BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

## SCOT ASSESSMENT

*Business and Financial Affairs supports Western's mission to provide a high quality environment that complements the learning community on a sustainable and attractive campus intentionally designed to support student learning and environmental stewardship. We do this by delivering quality services, products and programs which meet or exceed customer expectations through goal setting, teamwork, transparency, professionalism and creative problem solving.*

### STRENGTHS TO BUILD ON

#### **General and Administrative Support Services**

##### ***Professional and Competent Staff***

- Competent, collaborative and caring leadership with a customer service orientation and willingness to adapt to innovative changes.
- Professional and proficient staff members who are trained in federal, state, local, and university compliance requirements.
- Cohesive strong team environment within BFA units.
- Stable, long-term employees dedicated to Western and to public service.

##### ***Excellent Employee Relations***

- Excellent relations with University employees and governance groups, which includes Public School Employees (PSE), Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE), United Faculty of WWU (UFWW), Faculty Senate, and Professional Staff Organization (PSO).

##### ***Commitment to Continuous Improvement***

- Continual development, evaluation and updated practices and policies addressing high risk areas or efficiencies.
- Use of Business Process Analysis to utilize efficient electronic business practices whenever possible:
  - Recent examples: New Employee Orientation, Direct Deposit, Electronic Personnel Action Form and Student Employees, On-Line Application, FM Positive Time Reporting, FM FAMIS.

##### ***Positive Financial Indicators***

- The University is financially stable with balanced operating results. Net assets have grown by \$82 million over the past three years to a total of \$386 million due largely to significant capital funding in recent years.
- Strong and stable bond rating of A2/A+ results in favorable interest rates on bonds issued to finance capital projects.

## **Campus Facilities**

### ***Beautiful Campus Location and Attractive Facilities***

- Beautiful campus location and appearance. Recognized facilities maintenance support by 2008 Accreditation Team.
- Long-standing reputation for delivering major capital construction and renovation projects on time, within budget, and without litigation which is unparalleled among the four-year institutions and recognized by Olympia.

### ***Viable Transportation Options***

- Collaborative and positive working relationship with Whatcom Transit Authority which enhances student mobility and reduces demand for parking on campus.
- Strong Alternative Transportation program that is successful in promoting other means of transportation than the single occupancy vehicle.

### ***Commitment to Sustainability***

- Growing leader in green power usage as noted in EPA's listing of top green-energy purchasers in higher education.
- BFA supports the President's research initiative with rigorous management of dangerous wastes from university academics including computer and electronics recycling programs supporting sustainability.

## **Campus Safety**

### ***Safe Campus for our Students and Employees***

- A safe campus with the ability to rapidly communicate emergency information, including text messaging to over 80% of our students; a trained and active safety assessment team to mitigate potential threats to campus safety; a special, 24-hour phone number, 650-SAFE, to report behavioral concerns; a well-received "Active Shooter" training program; and access to automated external defibrillators (AEDs) near most buildings on campus for use in medical emergencies.
- Strong relationships and programs with city and county public safety and emergency response agencies and leadership positions within state law enforcement organizations and within higher education public safety/emergency services.
- Excellent facility to meet the needs of Public Safety for the immediate future.
- Active participation within the community through the Campus Community Coalition and an effective student outreach/partnership program (Public Safety Assistants) that augments our services to the Western community.
- Comprehensive background check policy improving the personal safety of the university's students, faculty and staff, and visitors and increasing the security of personal identity information, institutional finances and tangible assets.
- Strong service orientation supporting the President's research initiative, including recombinant DNA and nanoparticle research safety guidance.
- A strong fire safety prevention program following over \$10 million in on-campus fire losses (pre-2004).

## **CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS**

### **General and Administrative Support Services**

#### ***Planning for Continuous Improvement***

- Evaluate organizational structure to ensure efficiencies, wherever possible, are implemented.
- Develop initiatives to continue moving BFA and the University towards employee engagement and excellence.
- Achieve maximum customer satisfaction while meeting client needs.

#### ***Improving and Stabilizing the Workforce in Uncertain Times***

- Develop and implement aggressive employee outreach/retention program to improve diversity among faculty and staff.
- Cultivate an environment of shared goals and responsibility among units.
- Procure permanent funding to establish and coordinate Wellness Program for faculty and staff.
- Provide necessary information and increased support to personnel in uncertain budget environment.
- Enhance professional development programs to include skill-based and leadership training, and opportunities for professional growth.
- Develop benchmark data to aid administration in identifying strengths and weaknesses and create a framework for problem solving, managing change and encouraging continuous progress.

### **Campus Facilities**

#### ***Planning for physical development***

- Increase our physical development capacity concurrent with maintaining favorable bond rating.
- Implement an open, strategically driven, transparent process for the 2011-13 capital budget and ten-year capital planning process.
- Increased competition for available space for outdoor sporting activities, contemplation, and transportation impacted by hills and wooded areas surrounding campus.

#### ***Maintenance of Facilities***

- Maintain deteriorating, aging facilities in an ever challenging budget environment to support teaching mission and maintain learning environment.

#### ***Continue to Address Parking-Related Issues***

- The small number-of parking areas relative to the numbers of people on campus and distances between parking and main campus buildings are hindrances to visitor and guest comfort and community support for student-related programming.
- Lack of parking space for delivery and work vehicles leads to parking in areas intended for pedestrians.
- Enhance alternative transportation options to meet our sustainability goals while supporting the student, faculty, staff, and visitor need for parking on campus.

- Develop a viable long-term plan for equipment replacement and parking lot repair and maintenance.

### ***Improving Parking Management's Tools***

- Develop clearly defined policies and procedures in Parking Services.
- Develop a rate structure to meet Parking's operating expenses and funding obligations, such as support of Alternative Transportation, subsidizing bus passes, free evenings parking for bus pass holders, staffing the University's Visitor Center and paying the long-term debt for the purchase of Lincoln Creek Transit Center.
- Providing adequate training for front-line supervisors.
- Working with parking software vendor to refine use of new parking software to avoid loss of revenue and employee dissatisfaction.

## **Campus Safety**

### ***Enhancing Emergency Planning and Services***

- Find sufficient resources for the campus to be fully prepared in serious emergency situations, such as for active shooter, pandemic flu, earthquake events. Additionally, because state buildings are uninsured, significant events cascade as Western taps operational and capital funds for emergency response.
- Formation of a confined space rescue team to provide emergency rescue services supporting on-going campus maintenance and repair.
- Increasing faculty and staff participation to register their cell phone numbers to receive emergency Western Alerts via text message.
- Find sufficient resources to provide relief to public safety dispatchers who are "over-tasked" with duties related to emergency response (PIER, Voice Annunciation and other tasks) that are unreasonable for a one-person dispatch operation.

### ***Providing Building Access Control to Campus Academic Facilities***

- Increase personal and building security by expanding use of access control. Develop an established University policy and implement meaningful key control.

### ***Funding for Public Safety Equipment***

- Replace or update all Public Safety, Environmental Health and Safety, and Facilities Maintenance radios that are not narrow-band compatible to comply with mandate by the Federal Communications Commission requiring all radios to be narrow-band by 2013.

## **OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS**

### **General and Administrative Support Services**

#### ***Opportunities for Partnership and Collaboration***

- Enhance the understanding across campus of BFA services' importance to Western's academic mission and student learning.
- Seek support from Administration to promote enterprise risk management concepts and begin incorporating Western's Integrated Stewardship of Resources (WISR) processes and procedures further into normal BFA management and across the university as opportunities occur.
- Expand use of Human Resources Department as a strategic business partner in achieving departmental, divisional and institutional mission and objectives through management of University's human capital.
- Increase collaboration among departments to further employee wellness initiatives, disability/medical leave and return-to-work programs.
- Establish closer working relations with AS Students on HR activities.

#### ***Better Utilize Financial and Reporting Capabilities***

- Strengthen financial reporting and IT capabilities and resources within BFA unit.
- Partner with DOP Training Program to improve financial systems training, both within Financial Services and in outreach to campus; improve financial reporting tools and training to campus constituents; and move campus business and financial offices toward best business practice and internal controls.

### **Campus Facilities**

#### ***Seek Capital Funding and Participate in Planning for Waterfront Development***

- Build upon Western's extremely successful outcome in the 09-11 Capital Project Proposal evaluation/scoring system and subsequent Governor's budget recommendations through continued strong efforts during the legislative process.
- Contribute expertise and knowledge in physical planning for campus and waterfront development.

#### ***Collaborate with External Parties to Address Parking Issues***

- Revise current Parking WACs (currently underway) to establish a clear, concise framework for policies and procedures.
- Establish a comprehensive review by a Parking and Transportation Advisory Group could help with more clearly defining Parking's policies and procedures. This group could also assist with a public awareness initiative to explain Parking's needs to the campus and community.
- Continue to seek state or federal funding for completion of Lincoln Creek Transportation Center surface improvements.

#### ***Consider Insuring Risk and Seek Public Assistance for Declared Disasters***

- Recognize that Western's state-funded buildings and contents (except for electronic data processing equipment) are uninsured. The university addresses unforeseen damages to structures and contents during an emergency response and recovery through reallocation of operating and capital budgets.
- Aggressively seek public assistance funding that may be available for declared disasters.

### ***Enhance Sustainability Practices***

- Strengthen Sustainability program throughout Western by vigorous outreach centered on the Sustainability Committee and viable sustainability programs.
- Propose adoption of a Climate Action Plan through a bottom up, transparent, University process.
- Generate purchased utilities savings through strategic use of short and/or medium term fixed-price contracts for natural gas.
- Propose implementation of a program to achieve 10% energy savings by 2010 by a university-wide, department-focused effort to reduce utility use across campus through sustainability education, utility monitoring, and monetary incentives.

### **Campus Safety**

#### ***Opportunities for Partnership and Collaboration on Safety Issues***

- Leadership and participation in state organizations that may afford a stronger voice and increased cooperation (joint efforts) in addressing common challenges.
- Training outreach to students and staff with our “Active Shooter” training is educating our public to be aware of potential threats and increasing our opportunities to prevent violence on campus.
- Mutual training staffing agreements with the Bellingham Police Department.
- Build increased resiliency through departmental and building emergency preparedness.
- Continue partnerships with local emergency planning officials to exercise emergency plans regularly and build readiness and resiliency.
- Support the President’s research initiative by assisting researchers with laser safety information, coordination and training support services.
- Expand enforcement of the new bicycle and skateboard policies and Washington Administrative Codes

#### ***Enhance Utilization of Technology and Best Practices to Improve Safety***

- Improve emergency response/notification through the capital project for voice annunciation.
- Expand the emergency communications systems beyond the groundwork laid with initial purchase and use of the Public Information Emergency Response (PIER) system through installation of an emergency voice broadcasting system for campus buildings and exterior areas.

#### ***Further Development of University’s Emergency Planning and Risk-Management***

- Develop elements of the University’s Emergency Management Plan that incorporate best practices of technological, behavioral, and timely responses to all manner of campus emergencies and crises.
- Unfold Enterprise Risk Management–Western’s Integrated Stewardship of Resources (ERM-WISR) into normal BFA business processes to support Western’s Initiative for innovation and risk-taking while enhancing student safety and essential funding.
- Expand safety awareness and compliance for the campus community to lower work-related injury and illness rates to keep students and employees safe and healthy.

## **THREATS TO MONITOR**

### **General and Administrative Support Services**

#### ***Fulfilling BFA Mission with Increasing Demands and Reduced Funding***

- Projected state budget deficit for 2011-13 Biennium indicates further declines in state revenues and potential further reduction of funding to higher education, which will result in more cuts to general and administrative BFA services.
- Unfunded mandates by legislators such as State mandated apprenticeship program beginning in 2010, Governmental Accounting Standards Board reporting requirements, .
- Inflationary increase in major expenditure categories such as faculty/staff salaries, supplies and utilities.
- Inflexible state hiring, procurement and travel restrictions in response to decline in State revenues introduce additional bureaucracy to business operations.

#### ***Maintaining a diverse and motivated workforce***

- An aging workforce that could result in an increase in disability management program, absenteeism, and an increase in retirements.
- Increase in difficulty in recruitment and retention, due to:
  - Dependence on legislature for staff and faculty pay.
  - Dependence on pay grids for classified position salary ranges.
  - Lack of diversity in local community and strong competition for qualified minorities.
  - Potential increase in fraudulent applicant information due to high unemployment rate raising need for strict scrutiny of candidates.
  - Potential loss of valued employees to more stable employers/states.
- Workplace dissatisfaction related to ongoing reductions in funding could result in higher absenteeism, disgruntled employees and increased levels of conflict.

#### ***Increased Exposure to Litigation and Penalties***

- Increased exposure to litigation and penalties as a result of increasing federal and state compliance requirements (FMLA, FLSA, EEOC) coupled with reduced staff.

### **Campus Facilities**

#### ***Insufficient Resources to Maintain Facilities to Optimal Function and Appearance***

- University facilities are aging and, in some cases, deteriorating to less-than-desired functioning. Facilities Management's ability to maintain full building function is hampered by lack of resources.
- As the university links resource allocations to the strategic plan, recognition that basic, essential services are identified only minimally in the plan is essential or the infrastructure of university facilities will be underfunded, resulting in the University's inability to support its basic teaching, research and public service missions.

## **Campus Safety**

### ***Increased Need for Emergency Planning and New Compliance Requirements***

- The shootings at Virginia Tech and subsequent incidents across the country changed the timeline for response to immediate incidents and the urgency for communication with stakeholders at the universities. These changes continue to require significant personnel, equipment and infrastructure investments and are additional unfunded mandates.
- Budget cuts are threatening already thin operating budget at a time when funding increases are needed for additional positions in Public Safety.
- As city resources also decline, community expectations increase for Western to accept more responsibility for “near campus” issues, especially those involving Western students.
- On-going and ever-increasing mandates from both the federal and state governments regarding the provision and reporting of campus public safety and emergency preparedness, which require compliance within existing resources.
- State legislature is considering passing significant financial responsibility, now funded through the Criminal Justice Training Commission, for state required training to the local agencies.
- Our dispatch center is the University’s 24-hour operations center and needs central funding (state funding, or administrative fee funding) to increase its staff and to pay for the staff currently funded by Parking. The monitoring of alarms requires a “back-up,” which we currently do not have and contracting for would be cost prohibitive.