

1 Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support Services
2
3 *SCOT Analysis: Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, and Threats*
4

5
6
7 INTERNAL ASSESSMENT — STRENGTHS
8

9 The Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support Services' strengths include:

- 10
11 ▪ Co-curricular programs and services that complement the academic curriculum and provide
12 students an opportunity to practice/apply what they have learned in the classroom.
- 13
14 ▪ A broad range of experiential opportunities – including student employment, paraprofessional
15 roles, student clubs/organizations, and internships – that enable students to develop and improve
16 upon skills in leadership, social responsibility, and civic engagement.
- 17
18 ▪ A highly experienced, dedicated, resilient, collaborative, creative, caring, responsive, and diverse
19 staff that stay abreast of current trends and issues and are committed to the provision of effective
20 student-centered programs and services.
- 21
22 ▪ A strong commitment to student involvement in university governance, policy- and decision-
23 making, including student participation in key division committees and initiatives.
- 24
25 ▪ Collaborative relationships – both on- and off-campus – that result in enhanced service to
26 students, shared education/problem solving, and a strength of response in crisis situations.
- 27
28 ▪ An ongoing commitment to diversity, as evidenced by the success of division programs in
29 recruiting, enrolling, and retaining diverse students and staff.
- 30
31 ▪ Shared leadership in campus-wide sustainability efforts, particularly in the areas of renewable
32 energy, recycling, sustainable food, and reducing the amount of paper used (by converting print
33 publications to online versions).
- 34
35 ▪ A long history of partnerships with Washington feeder community colleges and Northwest
36 Indian College, particularly around transfer/articulation and integrating Running Start and
37 transfer students into the fabric of Western's campus community and student life.
- 38
39 ▪ Excellence in the residential environment, including strengths in student orientation programs,
40 outreach and advising services, and an emphasis on health and wellness.
- 41
42 ▪ A balanced athletic program that ranked 10th nationally (among all Division II schools) in the
43 2008-09 Learfield Sports Directors' Cup standings.
- 44
45 ▪ Excellence in career and student employment services, as evidenced by the placement rates of
46 Western graduates in graduate/professional schools and careers.

- 47 ▪ Increased, cost-efficient, and on-demand service to prospective and current students through the
48 development of self-service web applications, including the “Countdown to Western” page,
49 Transfer Course Equivalency Guide, and “myRoommate” roommate selection program.
- 50
- 51 ▪ Robust partnerships with academic departments that enhance outreach and recruitment efforts
52 and provide strengthened academic and career advising for students.
- 53
- 54 ▪ Recently constructed and renovated facilities (e.g., the Viking Union, residence halls, the Atrium
55 at Arntzen, the Student Recreation Center) that are well-maintained, add to the overall campus
56 environment, and facilitate improved service delivery to students.
- 57
- 58 ▪ Significant levels of active student engagement in health/wellness-related activities, including
59 intramurals, sport clubs, intercollegiate athletics, the Outdoor Center, and programs such as the
60 Lifestyle Advisors, Western Men Against Violence, and the Ally Building Network.
- 61
- 62 ▪ The implementation of an early registration model that allows continuing students to register for
63 fall courses during the previous spring quarter, increasing students’ access to faculty and
64 academic advisors during the registration period. The model also enables the university to
65 address enrollment trends and adjust course offerings accordingly; provides the ability for faculty
66 to order course materials earlier to ensure availability for students; encourages student
67 commitment to continuing at Western prior to leaving in the spring; and provides additional time
68 for new and continuing students to review and finalize their course schedules.
- 69

70

71 INTERNAL ASSESSMENT — CHALLENGES

72

73 Challenges faced by the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support Services include:

74

- 75 ▪ Ongoing shifts in the state and region – including a decline in K-12 enrollment and graduation
76 rates, increased recruitment efforts and enhanced financial aid/scholarship offers from
77 competitor institutions, and growing competition for a declining pool of financially viable
78 non-resident applicants – have the potential to impact recruitment, retention, and Western’s
79 ability to meet enrollment goals.
- 80
- 81 ▪ Insufficient free aid and scholarship dollars exist to adequately meet the needs of Western’s
82 growing population of low-income and first-generation students.
- 83
- 84 ▪ Western’s lack of an integrated branding/marketing effort that maximizes spoken, written and
85 online efforts to attract and engage external audiences – as well as enhance our institutional
86 reputation – is proving to be a challenge, as competition for a declining and changing applicant
87 pool continues to increase.
- 88
- 89 ▪ A growing number of students are arriving at Western with chronic medical and/or mental health
90 conditions, requiring staff the Counseling Center, the Student Health Center, the Dean of
91 Students Office / Student Life, and Disability Resources for Students to spend an increasing

92 amount of time responding to student needs, ensuring continuity of care, and addressing the
 93 concerns of faculty, parents, students, and others regarding “distressed and distressing students.”
 94

- 95 ▪ Space and structural issues present an ongoing challenge, particularly in Old Main – where
 96 demand has outpaced available space – and Carver Gym, where the renewal of mechanical and
 97 electrical systems, seismic upgrades, and improved disabled access is needed. Additional field
 98 space, flexible programming spaces, and large gathering spaces on campus are also needed.
- 99 ▪ A number of division departments – including Financial Aid, Counseling, Admissions and
 100 Enrollment Planning, Advising, Disability Resources for Students, and the Dean of Students
 101 Office – are “understaffed” relative to peer and national comparisons; as a result, staff are
 102 stretched thin and at risk of burnout.
- 103
- 104 ▪ Western’s lack of infrastructure in Institutional Research has made it difficult for division
 105 departments to access the data they need to make informed decisions (in areas such as enrollment
 106 planning, course availability, etc.) and effectively evaluate their programs.
- 107
- 108 ▪ Providing services and support for non-matriculated international students presents an ongoing
 109 challenge, particularly for University Residences, the Counseling Center, the Student Health
 110 Center, and the Dean of Students Office / Student Life.
- 111
- 112 ▪ Utility, construction, salary, maintenance, overhead costs, and the costs associated with
 113 maintaining the infrastructure of increasingly complex building systems are growing at a greater
 114 rate than revenue, presenting an ongoing challenge for division auxiliaries.
- 115
- 116 ▪ Technology poses an ongoing challenge, particularly our ability to purchase/maintain current
 117 technologies, provide market-savvy and easy-to-navigate websites, and remain responsive to
 118 students’ changing expectations at a time when both staffing and resources are stretched thin.
- 119
- 120 ▪ A growing number of staff in the division are nearing retirement; as they leave Western, they
 121 will be taking with them a wealth of experience and wisdom that will be difficult to replace.
- 122
- 123 ▪ Working within the budget, while providing the same degree of excellence in service that
 124 students, faculty, and staff have come to expect, presents an ongoing challenge.
- 125
- 126 ▪ Western’s lack of accessible, close-in parking for visitors presents a challenge for division
 127 departments – particularly Admissions, the A.S. Bookstore, and Intercollegiate Athletics – and
 128 creates a perception of inaccessibility for members of the local community.
- 129

130 EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT — OPPORTUNITIES

131
 132 Opportunities for the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support Services include:

- 133 ▪ Examining opportunities to streamline policies, rework processes, and increase connections
 134 between/among departments in an effort to better serve students.
 135
 136

- 137 ▪ Facilitating an inclusive community by reaching out to diverse student populations – including
138 veterans, low-income and first-generation students, ethnically diverse students, international
139 students, students with disabilities, and others who have been historically underserved by higher
140 education – and building on outreach and retention services to ensure their academic success.
141
- 142 ▪ Partnering with Academic Affairs to strengthen new student recruitment efforts, enhance the
143 first-year and undergraduate student experience, and engage students in efforts that help to
144 facilitate their learning and development.
145
- 146 ▪ Expanding grant-writing, sponsorship, and fundraising efforts; identifying alternative sources of
147 revenue to support division programs and activities, and enhance student scholarships.
148
- 149 ▪ Increasing partnership and collaboration with the Associated Students, and working together to
150 identify areas of potential overlap and/or shared interest.
151
- 152 ▪ Making the shift from a usage- and satisfaction-based assessment model to an outcomes-based
153 model focused on student learning, and partnering with Academic Affairs to explore options for
154 demonstrating accountability, including the Voluntary System of Accountability, the National
155 Student Clearinghouse, and the National Survey of Student Engagement.
156
- 157 ▪ Reinvesting in intercollegiate athletics, in partnership with the Viking Athletics Strategic
158 Advisory Committee, to address gender equity issues and strengthen existing programs.
159
- 160 ▪ Working collaboratively with Academic Affairs, the Associated Students, and University
161 Residences to maximize Western’s long history of excellence by enhancing the student
162 experience through a comprehensive portfolio of leadership development opportunities.
163
- 164 ▪ Enhancing relationships with current and former student leaders – including A.S. Board
165 members, Resident Assistants, Orientation Student Advisors, Student Admissions
166 Representatives, Lifestyle Advisors, student athletes, etc. – and partnering with the WWU
167 Foundation, Alumni Association, and parents around fundraising/development efforts.
168
- 169 ▪ Exploring technology-based means – e.g., Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, blogging, etc. – to reach
170 out to, communicate with, and engage prospective and current students.
171
- 172 ▪ Working with the university to explore options for on-site student services and the feasibility of
173 a collaboratively-developed events center, as part of the waterfront development project.
174
- 175 ▪ Exploring options related to the national accreditation of division programs, particularly the
176 Student Health Center.
177
- 178 ▪ Working with Business and Financial Affairs to explore options for using the Western Card as an
179 on-campus credit card, enabling students to “charge” books at the A.S. Bookstore and have the
180 charges post to their student account.
181

182
183
184
185
186
187
188
189
190
191

- Partnering with WWU faculty and staff to offer a range of internal professional development opportunities; utilizing our talents on campus, instead of reaching beyond Western, to meet staff members’ professional development needs.
- Increasing opportunities for division staff to cross-program, cross-train, and work more collaboratively within one another and with other divisions/departments across campus.
- Working with prospective and current students and their families to help them better understand and navigate the financial aid process, including available scholarship and funding opportunities.

DRAFT

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT — THREATS

Threats faced by the Division of Student of Student Affairs and Academic Support Services include:

- Declining financial support for students has required an increasing number of students to work and/or take on additional debt in order to finance their education and stay in school.
- The need to generate revenue to make up for state and federal funding shortfalls – through grant writing, external fundraising, and other sources – detracts from the provision of core programs and services for students.
- Mandated increases in the minimum wage have impacted division departments, stretching budgets thin and limiting the number of on-campus jobs available to students.
- As greater numbers of students and their families are losing jobs, demand for service – from financial aid re-packaging to on-campus health care – continues to increase.
- Division departments are facing increasing demands, expectations, and scrutiny from a variety of internal and external groups, including students, parents, legislators, and others.
- New unfunded mandates and accountability requirements – at both the state and the federal level – have impacted a number of division departments and increased overall workload.
- State-mandated salary increases for nurses, technology employees, and others have had a significant fiscal impact on a number of division departments.
- The A.S. Bookstore faces a rapidly changing environment, including increased competition from online book sellers, growth in the availability of electronic course materials, and a number of new state and federal mandates/regulations which they must implement.
- The recession has had a direct impact on the availability of internship and employment opportunities for students; job postings on the Student Employment website and employer participation in Western’s Career Fairs are both down significantly compared to prior years
- Technology — and students’ use of it — is rapidly changing; the cost of adopting new advances is expensive, and requires a level of technological support that is not currently available.