

## **SCOT Analysis for 2011-2013**

### **Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, and Threats**

Consistent with research and best practice in teaching and learning, Woodring College of Education faculty and staff engage in ongoing assessment of program quality and alignment of our programs with state, national, and global priorities and needs, professional standards, and accreditation requirements. Information from these periodic assessments is reported in the form of a SCOT Analysis summarizing our strengths and challenges as a College and the opportunities and threats we face now and in the future. The SCOT Analysis, situated within the context of the University and College missions, provides the framework for setting priorities, planning and delivering programs and services, creating and maintaining partnerships, and allocating resources.

#### **STRENGTHS**

*Woodring College of Education is recognized throughout Washington and beyond as a leader in the development and implementation of programs for the preparation of outstanding educators, from early childhood to adult, education leaders and student affairs administrators, human services professionals, and rehabilitation counselors (Western Washington University SCOT Analysis, 2008).*

The strong reputation of our programs derives from our commitment to **engaged excellence** defined by the tenets promulgated in our College mission statement:

- Model best practices in teaching and learning which, in turn, leads graduates to use best practices in the professions.
- Cultivate student competence through extensive field experiences with exemplary practicing professionals.
- Construct, transform, and convey knowledge by integrating knowledge, theory, and practice.
- Act with respect for individual differences.
- Develop collaborative partnerships that promote the learning and well-being of children, families, and the community.
- Evaluate processes and outcomes to assure continual program improvement.

Woodring College of Education provides robust academic programs of exceptional excellence unique to the region and the state including:

- One of the largest teacher education programs in the state for the preparation of early childhood, special education, elementary, middle school, and secondary school teachers.
- The only early childhood education program in the state that leads to state teaching certification.
- One of the two largest administrator certification programs in the state for the preparation of elementary and secondary school principals.
- The only undergraduate program in the state for the preparation of human services professionals.
- The only masters-level rehabilitation counseling program in the state.
- The only student affairs administration graduate program offered by a public higher education institution in the state of Washington.
- The only program in the state specifically targeting the preparation of continuing and college educators.
- The only program in the United States leading to an undergraduate minor in Diversity in Higher Education.

Woodring College of Education has for nearly 30 years provided access to higher education in the Puget Sound region and responded to state needs for trained workers through our outreach programs in Everett, Seattle, and Bremerton.

With our partners in P-12 schools, community and technical colleges, our local and regional communities, and across the University, we continue to lead the nation in responding to federal and state education priorities, including early learning, recruiting and preparing high quality educators, supporting highly qualified school leaders, making math and science education a priority, enhancing P-12 student achievement and higher education opportunities, and empowering parents to support student learning.

Woodring College of Education continues our robust partnerships with community and technical colleges including Bellingham Technical College, Whatcom Community College, Northwest Indian College, Skagit Valley College, Everett Community College, North Seattle Community College, Olympic College, and Peninsula College. Through these partnerships we collaborate to create pathways from community college to the university; deliver baccalaureate and masters programs on community college campuses; provide services to community colleges students to enhance their success and retention in higher education; provide direct services to community college students in basic skills development, GED preparation, and ESL; create faculty-student learning communities; and provide professional development for early learning professionals in the region.

The excellence of Woodring College of Education programs is recognized through state program approval and rigorous national accreditation including the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE).

Woodring College of Education is cited by the Professional Educator Standards Board and the Higher Education Coordinating Board as an exemplary model for making changes to implement new standards for educators and to adjust enrollments and program offerings in order to respond to critical needs of the state.

All Woodring College of Education undergraduate programs require a liberal arts foundation (WWU general education requirements), a disciplinary or inter-disciplinary major, and a professional core that prepares students for careers or graduate study.

Because Woodring College of Education undergraduate programs require course work delivered by multiple units across the University, the College develops and maintains extraordinarily supportive relationships and program articulations with literally all WWU arts and sciences departments.

Woodring College of Education delivers 43% of University graduate program student credit hours through a set of advanced programs for the preparation of teachers, school leaders, student affairs administrators, community and college educators, and rehabilitation counselors.

Demand for access to Woodring College of Education programs continues to be very strong. Enrollment targets are regularly achieved and admission to programs remains highly selective.

Woodring College of Education faculty and staff provide an exceptionally supportive learning environment which includes strengths in student recruitment and orientation programs, a freshman experience program, outreach and advising services, and an emphasis on the development of professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

The quality of our Woodring College of Education professional programs is reflected in the high placement rates of our graduates in positions across the state and region. Employment rates range from 76% for elementary education graduates to 86% for secondary education to 87% for human services graduates to 100% for graduates of our programs for the preparation of student affairs administrators, special educators, rehabilitation counselors,

and P-12 school administrators. As such, Woodring College of Education makes a significant contribution to workforce training and development in Washington and beyond.

We maintain and sponsor resource centers that complement the academic curriculum and support student and faculty learning and scholarship, including the Center for Education, Equity, and Diversity; Northwest Center for Holocaust, Genocide, and Ethnocide Education; Pacific Northwest Children's Literature Clearinghouse; Ershig Assistive Technology Resource Center; and Technology Demonstration Center. In addition to supporting student and faculty learning and scholarship, Woodring College of Education resource centers provide services used extensively by P-12 schools and the larger community.

Woodring College of Education demonstrates engaged excellence through our historical tradition of using innovative technology for learning, teaching, and professional practice.

Our faculty, staff, and students are valued across the state for the contributions they make to the larger community through their collaborative work and partnerships with P-12 schools, social service agencies, and community organizations. Woodring College of education sustains literally hundreds of partnerships in the Puget Sound Region with our students providing close to 400,000 hours of service each year.

We maintain a robust student outcomes assessment system including an electronic database for tracking student performance in all programs. The College uses assessment results for continuous program improvement.

Woodring College of Education faculty and students bring prestige and distinction to the University through their research and scholarly activities.

As cited in the 2008 Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities Evaluation Committee Report, Woodring College of Education diversity initiatives serve as models for other units in the University and for schools of education across the nation.

We have been extraordinarily successful in procuring new resources via alternate funding sources including Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) High Demand Grants, Legislative Decision Packages, a U.S Department of Education grant for the preparation of ELL teachers, an NSF Noyce Grant for supporting teachers entering the STEM fields, state-level grants, self-sustaining outreach programs, and private donor funding.

## **CHALLENGES**

As part of our ongoing strategic planning, we regularly assess the internal and external challenges we face as a higher education institution and as a professional school. These challenges provide a framework for College priorities and ongoing improvements in our programs, communication and governance structures, partnerships, and support services.

### ***Insuring productivity and effective resource management***

Woodring College of Education is unique in the University in that the nature of our programs (field-based and/or graduate) results in lower faculty/student ratios than is the norm for other colleges. As such, we face the challenge of defining productivity measures that accurately and fully capture faculty loads and demonstrate effective and efficient use of resources. We must continue to implement our resource management plan and demonstrate consistent accountability to the University, policymakers, and our constituents.

### ***Maintaining growth trajectory and managing enrollment***

Demand for access to Woodring College of Education programs exceeds enrollment capacity. Some of our programs maintain waiting lists and others are turning away more than half of the qualified applicants. We face the challenge of developing and employing legally-defensible and research-based criteria for qualifying applicants

for program admission. We also have the challenge of working with University Enrollment Planning to align WWU admissions with Woodring College of Education enrollment capacity. At the same time, we must continuously monitor state priorities and supply and demand data to make intentional adjustments in undergraduate and graduate offerings and enrollments to respond to state needs for qualified professionals.

***Telling our story and increasing our influence.***

Woodring College of Education faces the challenge of telling the story of our unique roles and responsibilities as a professional school in the University and of justifying the relevance of our partnership activities to the core mission of the institution. How do we share and contextualize our work within the larger context of the publicly-purposed university? How do we make the case that our work enhances the purpose and prestige of Western?

***Engaging the University community in defining the role of extended education***

Woodring College of Education has a distinguished history of delivering high quality extended education programs through which students gain the full “Western experience” away from the main campus. While our programs are very successful and valued across the region, WWU does not have a clear sense of the role and contributions of extended education to the university mission. Moreover, we deal every day with the challenge of working within the costly and administratively cumbersome Extended Education and Summer Programs model. To address these challenges, we must engage in a university-wide discussion regarding how self-sustaining outreach programs support the mission of the University and how outreach programs are most effectively administered and managed.

***Supporting graduate education***

While graduate education is central to the mission of Woodring College of Education, the same commitment to graduate programs is not evident at the University level. As such, we face the challenge of insuring adequate resources for the support of graduate education including graduate assistantships.

***Maintaining and nurturing collaborative partnerships with schools and agencies***

To deliver quality programs for the preparation of educators and human services professionals, we must maintain strong relationships with P-12 schools and other education institutions and the community. To develop as professionals, our candidates must have authentic experiences including service learning opportunities, practica, and internships, and we depend on our school and community partners to provide the contexts in which our students gain those experiences. At the same time, our students constitute a tremendously talented workforce that enhances the learning and well-being of students and families in P-12 schools and communities. Maintaining and nurturing these collaborative partnerships requires significant staff and faculty effort and attention to insuring the learning of our students and the achievement of goals and objectives mutually-beneficial to the University, P-12 schools and other education institutions, and agencies and organizations in the community.

***Becoming more diverse and enhancing opportunities for students to understand and participate in different cultures and diverse societies***

While we have experienced notable success with our diversity initiatives, we must continue to address the challenge of increasing the diversity and multicultural competence of students, faculty, and staff through the ongoing implementation strategies for recruiting and retaining diverse individuals. We must also continue to require, provide, and expand opportunities for students to experience and engage in diverse communities – locally, nationally, and internationally.

***Diversifying funding sources***

As state-supported resources continue to diminish, we must increase our efforts to procure additional monies through grants, special legislative allocations, and private donor funding. With our successful track record in this area, we look forward to continuing our efforts to procure enhanced funding from external grants and contracts, participation in federal initiatives, private philanthropic support through the WWU Foundation, and possible expansion of self-sustaining outreach programs in our region.

### ***Working through a major building renovation***

While we look forward to the much-needed renovation of Miller Hall, the plan to keep all faculty and staff within the building during the two years of construction creates tremendous challenges regarding adequate work space, technology support, lines of communication, and air and noise pollution. Some units in the College have been displaced and will be moved three times during the renovation creating tremendous challenges in terms of access to office and teaching space. Students are also experiencing disruption in support services such as advising, admission, internship applications, and certification as those offices are relocated several times during construction. Furthermore, we must take extra steps to retain our sense of community and commitment to service.

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

Building on our strong tradition of meeting state, national, and global needs and priorities, Woodring College of Education continues to seek opportunities to sustain and expand our work.

### ***Pipeline and Academic Success Programs***

Consistent with the national and state priorities for enhancing P-12 student achievement and higher education opportunities, we look forward to maintaining and expanding our current pipeline and pathways programs. Our programs not only create pathways for students from P-12 schools to the university and professions, but also provide tutoring and mentoring in the academic skills needed for college success. We intend to build on our success in procuring corporate and private foundation monies over the last few years to grow our capacity to sustain and enhance our current and new pipeline and academic success programs.

### ***State support for outreach programs***

Through the state-supported Higher Education Center of North Puget Sound at Everett Community College, we are delivering academic outreach programs in education, human services, and rehabilitation counseling to an under-served region of the state. We look forward to the opportunity of participating in other consortiums that will provide state support for our outreach programs in Seattle and Bremerton.

### ***New federal grants***

As part of the Obama education reform initiative, we are competing for federal monies to enhance our programs for the preparation of educators. We expect to build on our past success of procuring large U.S. Department of Education grants through which we will continue to address the national priority for putting highly qualified teachers into every American classroom and highly qualified leaders into every school.

### ***High demand enrollments***

Over the last five years, Woodring College of Education has experienced extraordinary success in procuring new resources through legislative decision packages and HECB high demand grants to respond to critical shortage teaching areas in the state – math and science education, early childhood education, special education, and ELL/Bilingual Education. We will continue to take advantage of opportunities to meet the needs of the state through targeted enrollments in high need programs.

### ***Alternative delivery models***

The Higher Education Coordinating Board Strategic Plan cites access to higher education via e-learning and other distance delivery models as a priority for the state of Washington. We look forward to the opportunity to build on our current hybrid model that combines web-based instruction with face-to-face instruction as a successful approach for increasing access to our programs for students not able to come to the main campus.

### ***Expanding program offerings***

With the recommendations in the recently released Graduate White Paper, Woodring has the opportunity to consider the development of a “professional doctorate” for P-12 school district leaders. With support from the

Vice Provost for Research and Sponsored Programs, we have written an NSF grant to fund a collaborative “professional science” masters program with SMATE for the preparation of community college science faculty. In addition, we hope to remove our MEd in Special Education program from admission hiatus in order to address the state’s critical need for qualified special education teachers. We are also experiencing high demand for our programs in ELL/bilingual education, another critical need in Washington. Finally, with our mathematics and science education programs near capacity, we hope to procure the resources to expand enrollments and meet the state’s need for teachers in the STEM fields.

***Participating at Western Crossroads (Waterfront Expansion)***

The emergence of a vision for the university’s presence at the Waterfront as a Western Crossroads where the university converges with the surrounding environment and community creates opportunities for Woodring College of Education. We are well-positioned to locate our community-based centers and selected academic programs at the Waterfront.

***Educating for Sustainability***

Building on the University’s work in the area of sustainability, Woodring College of Education faculty have procured grants and initiated curriculum projects designed to educate teachers and P-12 students about sustainability principles. We look forward to the expansion of this work, including public and private foundation grants and a statewide sustainability education conference this summer. Our educating for sustainability initiative includes a long-term plan for creation of an Educating for Sustainability Center as part of the WWU Waterfront development.

***Human services program national accreditation***

With the transition of our human services program to state support two years ago, the program is positioned to engage in the accreditation process sponsored by the Council for Standards for Human Service Education. Having already achieved distinction in the region and state as an exemplary human services program, accreditation will expand the fine reputation of the program to national and international levels.

**THREATS**

Global, national, and state economies are resulting in *serious revenue shortfalls* leading to significant disinvestment in higher education as federal and state policymakers deal with deficit budgets. This seriously eroding economic foundation presents significant threats to present and future initiatives and the way we do our work and serve our constituents.

***Implementation of state and federal mandates without requisite funding***

Our programs for the preparation of teachers and school leaders face the particular challenge of continuously responding to federal and state mandates that demand implementation but include no funding. Rather than diminishing during bad economic times, these mandates will increase with the reauthorization of the federal Higher Education Act, changes in the *No Child Left Behind Act*, new state competencies and assessment requirements for teachers and principals, and revised state program approval and national accreditation standards. All of these mandates require work-intensive activities including curriculum re-design, implementation of assessment and tracking systems, and data collection, analysis, and reporting.

***Lack of funding to support high demand/high need programs***

With the disinvestment in higher education in Washington and concomitant budget cuts, our ability to respond to the state’s need for highly qualified special education, early childhood, ELL/bilingual education, and science and mathematics teachers is compromised. In the last round of budget cuts, we lost an early childhood education faculty position, and we were forced to put our graduate program in special education on admission hiatus. In addition, we had to place enrollment caps on our ELL/bilingual education programs. Finally, without additional

resources, we are unable to expand enrollments in our programs for the preparation of mathematics and science teachers.

***Insufficient resources to maintain and nurture partnerships***

To develop as professionals, our candidates must have authentic experiences including service learning opportunities, practica, and internships, and we depend on our school and community partners to provide the contexts in which our students gain those experiences. Through these partnerships, we contribute valuable resources to support the learning of well-being of children, families and communities and carry forward Western's mission as a publicly purposed University. We and our partners are struggling to find the resources to support the exemplary programs and partnerships needed to maintain the relationships that are the "lifeblood" of an effective and vibrant college of education. Our operating budgets are insufficient to sustain this work.

***Competitive environment***

As we work to provide expanded access to our programs, competing efforts to increase higher education choices are rapidly emerging. These efforts include a UW branch campus in Everett, the move of community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees, increased extension activities by public and private institutions across the nation, and the proliferation of for-profit "fast-track" online programs. This increasingly competitive environment poses threats to the fiscal stability of our self-sustaining outreach programs currently operating in North Seattle and Bremerton. As such, we must be vigilant in preserving the Western niche for engaged excellence while at the same time remaining competitive with other higher education institutions.

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