

MISSOURI WESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY
AUGUST 28, 2005

Building the
New American Regional University

A Five Year Strategic Plan 2007-2012

Missouri Western State University

Missouri Western State University

Vision

Missouri Western State University will set the standard of excellence for the new American regional university focused on the development of students as learners, as persons, and as citizens through applied learning, and on the development of the region through applied research and service.

Mission

Missouri Western State University is a learning community focused on students as individuals and as members of society. Western offers students at all stages of life the opportunity to achieve excellence in the classroom and beyond, especially through applied learning, as they prepare to be leaders in their work and in their communities. As a leader itself, Western is committed to the educational, economic, cultural, and social development of the people and the region that it serves through applied research and professional and voluntary service.

Values

Service

We share the common purpose of serving students, one another, and the people and the region.

Quality

We are committed to the quality of our programs, our students, and our partnerships with the people of the region.

Enthusiasm

We are enthusiastic about learning and confident that we can make a difference in the lives of students through their learning.

Freedom

We promote the free exchange of ideas that makes education liberating and democracy unique.

Respect

We act as individuals and as a campus community with respect for diversity and for the best in human potential.

Courage

We seek the challenge and adventure of shaping the future with an increasingly global perspective.



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BUILDING THE NEW AMERICAN REGIONAL UNIVERSITY

Missouri Western State University



Strategic planning

enables colleges and universities to consider where they have been, where they are, and where they want to be. It enables them to recognize their strengths, their challenges, and their opportunities for development—and to chart their future. The Missouri Western State University plan is the result of a collaborative effort that involves student, faculty, and staff representatives from across the campus as well as leaders from the larger community.

In 2001, Western created a strategic plan that guided the University through 2007. Entitled **The Western Advantage**, the plan was developed and implemented with the direct and continuing involvement of hundreds in the university and many leaders from the larger community. Western can take great pride in having achieved most of what it set out then to accomplish. Everyone involved with implementing this plan has served the University and its future well.

With a renewed sense of mission, during the past several years, Western has begun to “set the standard for excellence” in the development of students as learners, persons, and citizens, through an overt emphasis on applied learning and community service. The University has also begun to “set the standard for excellence” in community leadership by universities, through partnerships with business, industry, government, and other regional organizations, enabling a growing agenda in applied research and professional and volunteer service to its region of Missouri.

Founded in 1915, Western grew as a junior college and college with a primary focus on applied educational and other needs of individual students and the larger community. Through the years, Western has developed into a college and is now emerging as a university with a statewide mission in applied learning for students and an increasing emphasis on applied research and service to its region of Missouri. Western has historically been and continues to be ahead of its time.

Regional University

In fact, Western is evolving rapidly as an excellent example of the new American regional university, characterized by applied learning and applied research and service. The new American regional university sees itself as interactive with rather than isolated from the world around it. It is an active “citizen” of its region, partnering with others for the greater good. It is focused educationally on connecting for its students the theory of the classroom with practice in the public and private sectors of the world well beyond the campus. Thus, it prepares students well to build careers as individuals and lives as citizens after they graduate, wherever they choose to work and live.

Building Western as a model of the new American regional university will require courage and imagination; courage and imagination similar to what has brought Western to where it is today more than ninety years since its founding in 1915. It is the same courage and imagination that has successfully built the foundation of what Western has become at each stage of development since its founding in the early twentieth century.

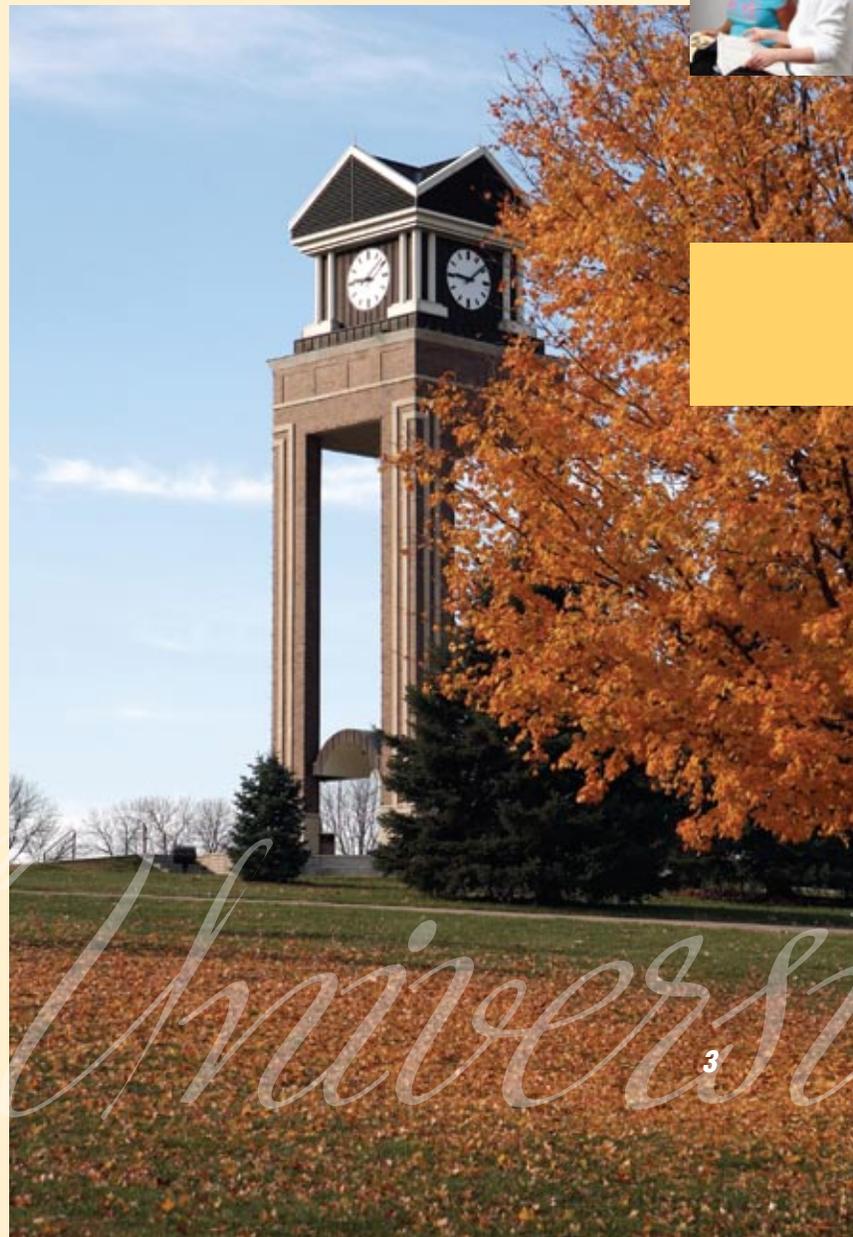
During more than ninety years, what is today Missouri Western State University has been built by people who understood, and continue to understand, what the founders of this country, like Jefferson and Franklin, understood, as they laid the foundation for our Nation—the foundation of what this Nation is today.

Jefferson and Franklin had the courage and imagination to conceive a Nation that would bring together, as no other nation had yet done, the individual good and the common good. Their work—our Nation—is still a work in progress.

Western, too, is still a work in progress, as the University emerges to serve ever better the individual good of students at the undergraduate, and now the graduate level, and the common good of its community, region, state, and Nation.

Just as Jefferson and Franklin conceived a Nation that would bring together individual good and common good as no other Nation had done, so the people at Western conceive a university that will serve the individual good of students and the common good of the larger community and region as few other universities in the Nation have done.

As a university, Western is well prepared to set the standard of excellence for the new American regional university grounded in the vision of Jefferson and Franklin. Western is determined, as it has been since 1915, to bring together the individual good and the common good in new ways.



Regional University

The new strategic plan is specifically intended to solidify the University's profile as a true model of the new American regional university focused on applied learning for students and applied research and service that meets the needs of the region.

Over the last year, hundreds of University and many community leaders have been directly involved in identifying the opportunities, goals, and objectives for the new strategic plan. The new strategic plan, **Building the New American Regional University**, focuses upon seven opportunities:

Opportunity 1: Building Graduate Programs offers Western the opportunity to enhance the economic and personal goals of individuals and the economic and social development of the community and region.



Opportunity 2: Enhancing Academic Quality

offers Western the opportunity to provide excellent educational programs to a diverse student population, taking into consideration the academic and career goals of students, and the economic, social, and cultural needs of the region and beyond.

Opportunity 3: Sustaining Institutional Accreditation

Priorities offers Western the opportunity to continue to develop exemplary practices in applied learning, student engagement, and communicating quality.

Opportunity 4: Building Connections

offers Western the opportunity to focus on the educational, economic, cultural, and social development of the people and the region that the University serves.

Opportunity 5: Using Measurement and Assessment

offers Western the opportunity to provide evidence of the quality of student learning and the University's effectiveness in meeting its mission.

Opportunity 6: Valuing People

offers Western the opportunity to sustain a learning and working environment where students, employees, and others choose to invest considerable time, talent, and other resources.

Opportunity 7: Building and Managing Resources

offers Western the opportunity to use its resources efficiently and effectively to enhance student learning and student life, to connect the campus and larger community, and to support regional development.

With courage & imagination, Western is shaping what it will become tomorrow: a mature university interacting productively with the world around it; serving well the needs of its students, its community, its region; and shaping actively the future of democracy.

Opportunity Area 1: Building Graduate Programs

On August 28, 2005, Missouri Western State College became Missouri Western State University. The legislation that authorized the name change also authorized the offering of masters degree programs and gave Western a statewide mission in applied learning. The change to university status was strongly supported in the region and was a priority for students, alumni, faculty and staff, the Board of Governors, regional business and industry, the St. Joseph Area Chamber of Commerce, and local governments.

Building on an established reputation for high quality undergraduate programs, Western's graduate programs will emphasize applied learning for students and faculty involvement in applied research. The initial degree offerings, the Master of Applied Science and the Master of Applied Arts, are interdisciplinary professional masters degree programs designed to respond to changing workforce needs and to prepare graduates for present and future professional opportunities.

The emergence of Western as an institution of higher education offering graduate programs will have a strong influence on the region. Through the development of graduate programs, Western is better able to share intellectual resources and to respond to regional educational and economic needs. Individuals, organizations, and business and industry will benefit from the opportunities that advanced education presents. Western currently has an economic impact of about \$161 million per year on the region. With the expansion of graduate programs, the University's impact will be significantly greater.

Opportunity 1: Building Graduate Programs

offers Western the opportunity to enhance the economic and personal goals of individuals and the economic and social development of the community and region.

Goal 1.0: Develop and promote excellent graduate programs aligned with the University mission of applied learning, applied research, and professional service in the community and region.

Objective 1.1: Establish the Graduate Office.



Objective 1.2: Establish graduate programs that meet regional and economic needs for advanced education and fit within the mission of the University.

Objective 1.3: Assemble a graduate faculty with recognized excellence in teaching and research.

Objective 1.4: Pursue sufficient resources for applied graduate study, research, and professional service.

Objective 1.5: Recruit and graduate highly qualified graduate students.

Objective 1.6: Continuously improve the quality of graduate programs.

Goal 2.0: Develop a supportive academic environment for applied graduate study and research.

Objective 2.1: Acquire and maintain adequate facilities and equipment for applied graduate study and research.

Objective 2.2: Establish graduate student support systems.

Objective 2.3: Provide a support structure and system for graduate faculty and staff.

Building Graduate Programs

Goal 1.0: *Develop and promote excellent graduate programs aligned with the University mission of applied learning, applied research, and professional service in the community and region.*

Goal 2.0: *Develop a supportive academic environment for applied graduate study and research.*



Opportunity Area

1

Opportunity Area 2: Enhancing Academic Quality

Western is developing as a national model for the new American regional university. First accredited in 1919 by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), Western has continuously maintained accreditation and has developed a culture focused on quality and continuous improvement.

With a clear mission in applied learning, applied research, and community service, the University prepares students to be leaders at work and in their communities. Graduates are highly competitive in the job market, immediately productive in the workplace, and successful in graduate and professional educational programs. As a result, Western plays a critical role in the development of the regional economy and workforce.

As a learning community, Western's intellectual environment encourages broad and rigorous inquiry, stimulates intellectual growth, and promotes personal maturity. In addition, Western has extensive partnerships with regional business, industry, government and educational, healthcare, and community organizations. With an applied learning focus, Western integrates classroom learning with real-life experiences through internships, practica, faculty and student research, service learning, and study away. All of this is enabled by Western's commitment to faculty excellence in teaching, scholarship, creative activity, and professional service, and to high-quality learning outcomes for students.

Opportunity 2: Enhancing Academic Quality offers Western the opportunity to provide excellent educational programs to a diverse student population, taking into consideration the academic and career goals of students, and the economic, social, and cultural needs of the region and beyond.

Goal 1.0: Become a national center of excellence in applied learning and a national model for the new American regional university.

Objective 1.1: Improve student learning through instructional innovations, scholarship, and applied learning.

Objective 1.2: Develop and maintain administrative and academic policies and procedures that sustain high quality academic programs.

Objective 1.3: Conduct nationally-recognized faculty and student applied research and creative activity.



Opportunity Area

2

Objective 1.4: Sustain an outward focus through programs and policies that promote partnerships with external stakeholders.

Goal 2.0: Provide a learning environment that encourages substantial academic achievement, connects knowledge and practice, and promotes regional service.

Objective 2.1: Develop and implement teaching and learning strategies that emphasize critical thinking skills, including questioning, interpreting, analyzing, synthesizing, and creative problem solving.

Objective 2.2: Enhance academic support programs, services, and mentoring for students.

Objective 2.3: Integrate social and cultural activities into the general studies offerings.

Objective 2.4: Prepare students for the workforce by promoting an understanding of diverse cultures and peoples and an expanded program of international studies.



Objective 2.5: Provide opportunities for participation in integrated applied learning experiences, including internships, practica, faculty and student research, service learning, and study away.

Objective 2.6: Create flexibility in and alternatives to semester scheduling.

Goal 3.0: Provide student services that are accessible and enhance the quality of students' lives academically, personally, socially, and culturally.

Objective 3.1: Establish a system to identify and provide services to enhance the success of all students.

Objective 3.2: Improve academic advising for undeclared majors and expand advising in the major.

Objective 3.3: Expand library holdings and electronic resources.

Goal 4.0: Support and recognize faculty excellence in teaching and learning; scholarship, applied research, and creative activity; and service to the region.

Objective 4.1: Strengthen support for faculty research and creative activities.

Objective 4.2: Promote faculty professional and volunteer service in the region beyond the campus.

Opportunity Area
2



Enhancing Academic Quality

Goal 1.0: *Become a national center of excellence in applied learning and a national model for the new American regional university.*

Goal 2.0: *Provide a learning environment that encourages substantial academic achievement, connects knowledge and practice, and promotes regional service.*

Goal 3.0: *Provide student services that are accessible and enhance the quality of students' lives academically, personally, socially, and culturally.*

Goal 4.0: *Support and recognize faculty excellence in teaching and learning; scholarship, applied research, and creative activity; and service to the region.*



Opportunity Area 3: Sustaining Institutional Accreditation Priorities

As an institution accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, Western has now successfully completed "Action Projects" in applied learning, student engagement, and communicating quality. These projects were developed from opportunities in Western's previous five-year strategic plan, and continue to be an important part of the University's vision and mission for the future.

Continuing to increase awareness of the University's mission and communicating the quality of the experiences of the University's students will enhance Western's reputation as a national center of excellence in applied learning. As a center of learning excellence, Western can attract and retain well-qualified students who become engaged and successful in the University while they prepare for their work and their lives after graduation.

Through applied learning experiences inside and outside the classroom, students achieve substantial intellectual and personal growth; a capacity for leadership and teamwork; an understanding of human and cultural diversity; an appreciation of just and respectful social relationships; and a sense of individual, social, and civic responsibility.

Opportunity 3: Sustaining Institutional Accreditation Priorities offers Western the opportunity to continue to develop exemplary practices in applied learning, student engagement, and communicating quality.

Goal 1.0: Market Western as a prototype of the new American regional university, characterized by applied learning and applied research and service.

Objective 1.1: Increase awareness of Western's status as a university that is building graduate programs and is emphasizing a statewide mission in applied learning and applied research to external and internal audiences.

Opportunity Area

3

Objective 1.2: Increase the ability of employees to recognize Western's brand.

Objective 1.3: Increase the ability of targeted audiences in the region to recognize Western's brand.

Objective 1.4: Increase placements in regional media outlets each year, with a special focus on strategic feature-length coverage.

Objective 1.5: Increase the awareness of student outcomes, faculty and staff achievements, and University programs both on campus and beyond campus.

Goal 2.0: Strengthen the University-wide initiative to attract, engage, and graduate a diverse student body.

Objective 2.1: Assess and improve programs and services to support recruitment and retention of targeted groups of students.

Objective 2.2: Increase the enrollment, retention, and graduation outcomes of targeted groups of students.

Objective 2.3: Evaluate and improve the first-year experience of students to help achieve recruitment and retention goals.

Sustaining Institutional Accreditation Priorities

Goal 1.0: Market Western as a prototype for the new American regional university, characterized by applied learning and applied research and service.

Goal 2.0: Strengthen the University-wide initiative to attract, engage, and graduate a diverse student body.

Goal 3.0: Provide all graduates with an experience in applied learning.

Goal 3.0: Provide all graduates with an experience in applied learning.

Objective 3.1: Increase the number of students who participate in an applied learning experience prior to graduation.

Objective 3.2: Assess and continuously improve the effectiveness and quality of applied learning experiences.



Opportunity Area
3

Opportunity Area 4: **Building Connections**

By mission and by design, Western's role in the education of citizens and as a member of the community is significant. Western is committed to building the University as an engaged learning community that lives its mission and contributes significantly to the educational, economic, cultural, and social development of the people and region that the University serves.

Western's fundamental purpose is to prepare students to build careers as individuals and lives as citizens after graduation. Through partnerships and other connections with business, industry, government, the schools, and non-profit organizations, Western brings together the private good of students and the public good of the region, thus achieving the basic purposes of public education intended since the founding of the Nation.

Western has a strong history of being actively involved in the social development of students and the larger community. Through engagement with the community, students, faculty, and staff have an opportunity to learn about and to become involved in matters important to the larger community and region. Students in particular learn what it means to be a member of a diverse community and how to apply what they have learned in service to others in their community.

Opportunity 4: Building Connections

offers Western the opportunity to focus on the educational, economic, cultural, and social development of the people and the region that the University serves.

Goal 1.0: Engage Western actively in the educational development of the region.

Objective 1.1: Become regional employers' source for outstanding employees.

Objective 1.2: Increase applied learning, applied research, and service opportunities by partnering with business, industry, education, healthcare, and community leaders.

Objective 1.3: Increase student participation in co-curricular experiences that foster academic, career, and personal development.

Objective 1.4: Increase student participation in experiences that develop life, social, and leadership skills.

Objective 1.5: Assist in the improvement of P-20 education in the region.

Objective 1.6: Advance partnerships with community and professional groups as a way of developing and expanding programs for life-long learning.

Objective 1.7: Create a process to facilitate and use the ongoing research, instruction, and service of retired faculty both on-campus and as University representatives in the community.

Objective 1.8: Increase the number of academic departments that use advisory boards drawn from beyond the University.

Goal 2.0: Engage Western fully in the economic development of the region.

Objective 2.1: Expand Western's role in regional planning and development.

Objective 2.2: Establish a center for workforce and economic development that addresses the needs of the region and Missouri's P-20 focus.



Opportunity Area
4



Goal 3.0: Engage Western extensively in the cultural development of the region.

Objective 3.1: Increase partnerships between Western and regional “performance arts” groups.

Objective 3.2: Provide opportunities to enhance the appreciation of cultural experiences and the role of the arts for citizens of the region.

Objective 3.3: Increase community awareness of and involvement in cultural performances and exhibitions on campus.

Objective 3.4: Work with regional cultural groups to create jobs, internships, and volunteer opportunities.

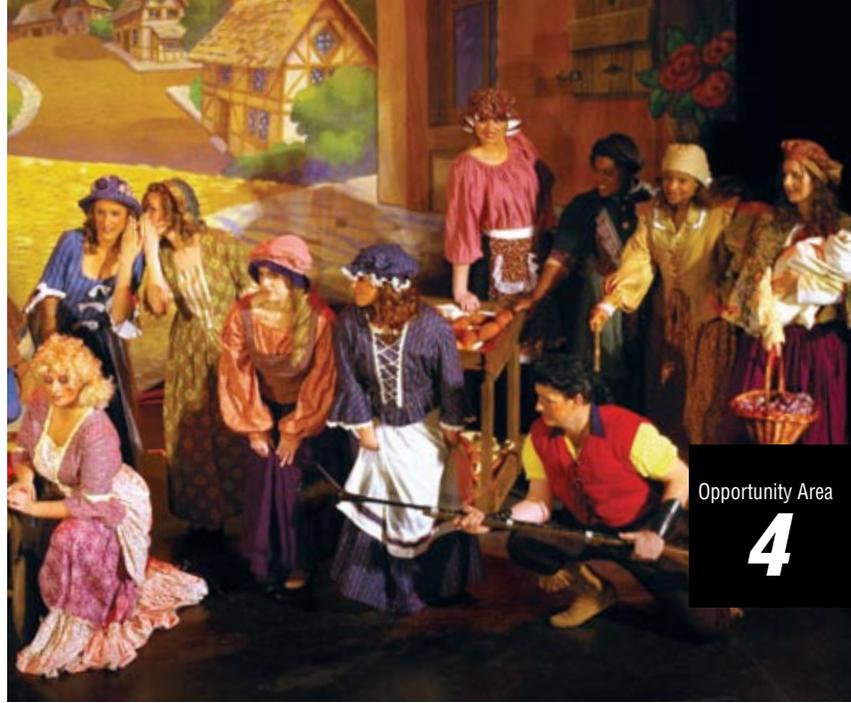
Objective 3.5: Document and promote cultural performances and exhibitions.

Goal 4.0: Engage Western directly in addressing the social development of the region.

Objective 4.1: Provide leadership in addressing social challenges in the region.

Objective 4.2: Increase the number of activities provided on campus that involve the region.

Objective 4.3: Expand activities in the region that contribute to positive social attitudes, values, and behaviors.



Opportunity Area
4

Goal 5.0: Enhance community connections through parent groups, alumni activities, and athletic events.

Objective 5.1: Enhance and increase parent engagement with the University.

Objective 5.2: Enhance and increase alumni engagement with the University.

Objective 5.3: Evaluate and enhance the efforts of the Athletics Program to serve as a partner integral to the campus and the community.



Building Connections

Goal 1.0: Engage Western actively in the educational development of the region.

Goal 2.0: Engage Western fully in the economic development of the region.

Goal 3.0: Engage Western extensively in the cultural development of the region.

Goal 4.0: Engage Western directly in addressing the social development of the region.

Goal 5.0: Enhance community connections through parent groups, alumni activities, and athletic events .

Opportunity Area 5: Using Measurement and Assessment

Western was the first public four-year institution in Missouri to be accepted into the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) of the Higher Learning Commission, the University's main accrediting agency. AQIP institutions continually review the data and information they collect; the measures they use to evaluate key processes; the storage, analysis, and distribution of data; and, most importantly, the use of data and information for continuing improvement. How the University collects, analyzes, and uses information drives performance improvement and helps the University to build the future that it envisions for itself.

Measurement and assessment therefore play a critical role in helping the University to continue to mature. Western is committed to continuous improvement and to the collection, maintenance, and reporting of the institutional assessment data that will shape this improvement.

Western is developing the infrastructure necessary to support institutional research and assessment. A comprehensive assessment plan, with attendant policies and procedures, is fundamental to both the continuing improvement of the University and an excellent future for the University.

Opportunity 5: Using Measurement and Assessment offers Western the opportunity to provide evidence of the quality of student learning and the University's effectiveness in meeting its mission.

Goal 1.0: Develop the framework to support institutional research and assessment.

Objective 1.1: Create an Institutional Research Office.

Objective 1.2: Establish data-use policies and procedures.

Objective 1.3: Manage the collection, interpretation, and reporting of institutional data.

Objective 1.4: Improve the usability of institutional data.

Goal 2.0: Create and implement a comprehensive University assessment plan focused on student learning and mission effectiveness.

Objective 2.1: Develop a University-wide assessment system focused on unit, program, and institutional improvement.

Objective 2.2: Show evidence of data-informed decision-making and assessment effectiveness.

Using Measurement and Assessment

Goal 1.0: Develop the framework to support institutional research and assessment.

Goal 2.0: Create and implement a comprehensive University assessment plan focused on student learning and mission effectiveness.



Opportunity Area 6: Valuing People



Faculty, staff, students, and community members play an integral role in providing leadership in the region. The investment of time, talent, and other resources by people both on campus and beyond campus helps the University to achieve excellence in the classroom and throughout the region.

To meet the challenges of a rapidly changing work place, Western must recruit, support, and retain a diverse group of high quality employees and students; provide appropriate and meaningful training and professional development experiences; engage the campus community in dialogue about issues of importance; and promote the safety, health, and well-being of students, employees, and citizens of the region.

In building its future, therefore, Western must continue to value its people. The University must draw upon the strengths, talents, ideas, passion, and energy of every employee, student, and partner. Through daily work, interactions with one another, and development of policy and procedures, Western must continue to demonstrate the values of service, quality, enthusiasm, freedom, respect, and courage.

Opportunity 6: Valuing People offers Western the opportunity to sustain a learning and working environment where students, employees, and others choose to invest considerable time, talent, and other resources.

Goal 1.0: Recruit, hire, support, and retain a diverse group of employees with the specific credentials, skills, and values required of excellent faculty, staff, administrators, and student employees.

Objective 1.1: Improve the processes the University uses to recruit employees.

Objective 1.2: Improve the processes the University uses to hire new employees.

Objective 1.3: Improve the processes the University uses to support and retain employees.

Goal 2.0: Provide a safe and healthy environment at all campus locations for students, employees, and guests.

Objective 2.1: Develop, implement, and assess the results of a comprehensive plan to address the health and special needs of students, employees, and guests.

Objective 2.2: Develop, implement, and assess the results of a comprehensive plan to address the safety and special needs of students, employees, and guests.

Goal 3.0: Promote a respectful and positive work environment where individuals and groups are engaged and recognized for their contributions and respect for diversity.

Objective 3.1: Establish clear expectations of all employees in terms of ethical standards, campus participation, professionalism, and values.

Objective 3.2: Develop a culture that promotes dialogue, commitment, and productivity, and that treats people fairly, with dignity, and with integrity.

Opportunity Area
6



Valuing People

Goal 1.0: Recruit, hire, support, and retain a diverse group of employees with the specific credentials, skills, and values required of excellent faculty, staff, administrators, and student employees.

Goal 2.0: Provide a safe and healthy environment at all campus locations for students, employees, and guests.

Goal 3.0: Promote a respectful and positive work environment where individuals and groups are engaged and recognized for their contributions and respect for diversity.



Opportunity Area 7: Building and Managing Resources

Opportunity Area

7

Building Western as a model of the new American regional university will require the University to manage, grow, and leverage its human, physical, and financial resources to enhance student learning and student life; to connect the campus and larger community; and to support regional development.

An emphasis on applied learning distinguishes Western from most other regional public colleges and universities. In fact, the legislation that gave Western “university” status gave it a statewide mission in applied learning. Today, more than 80 percent of Western students participate in at least one significant applied experience, such as an internship, faculty-student research, or clinical activity, prior to graduation.

A natural corollary of Western’s commitment to applied learning is a related commitment to applied research and service. Western has placed an overt

emphasis on community partnerships and community service. During the past years, Western has developed new partnerships with business, industry, government, and the schools, many of these focused on economic development and workforce development. The University has increased substantially its service activity in the greater community. Applied research is a rapidly developing element in Western’s commitment to its region.

Western has managed its resources intentionally to strengthen its commitment to applied learning and to community service. Equally important, Western’s renewed sense of its mission will lead the University to increase support for applied research that serves the needs of the community, region, and State.

Opportunity 7: Building and Managing Resources

offers Western the opportunity to use its resources efficiently and effectively to enhance student learning and student life, to connect the campus and larger community, and to support regional development.

Goal 1.0: Leverage resources to meet students’ needs and the long-term strategic development of the University.

Objective 1.1: Improve the teaching, learning and living environment, and the functionality of existing facilities and equipment.

Objective 1.2: Provide for efficient and effective operation of new and emerging facilities and programs.

Objective 1.3: Support the University's mission and strengthen linkages within the region through strategic land use.

Goal 2.0: Support institutional strategic initiatives through the expanded use of technology.

Objective 2.1: Provide resources, training, and services to support existing and emerging technologies in instructional and business operations.

Objective 2.2: Improve the efficiency of all business functions through alignment with existing software processes and through future hardware and software upgrades.

Goal 3.0: Capitalize on new funding opportunities for the University's strategic directions.

Objective 3.1: Promote a collaborative culture that encourages private financial support.

Objective 3.2: Increase applications for federal, state, and private grant support.

Objective 3.3: Work with the Coordinating Board for Higher Education (CBHE), the Missouri Department of Higher Education, and others to develop an equitable funding formula for public higher education in Missouri.

Objective 3.4: Develop public and private partnerships that support the University's strategic initiatives while at the same time generating revenue or reducing expenses.



Opportunity Area

7

Building and Managing Resources

Goal 1.0: Leverage resources to meet students' needs and the long-term strategic development of the University.

Goal 2.0: Support institutional strategic initiatives through the expanded use of technology.

Goal 3.0: Capitalize on new funding opportunities for the University's strategic directions.

Steering Committee

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Bailey, Natalie

President, Student Government Association

Baker, Jason*

Associate Professor, Biology

Blessing, Brenda

President, Faculty Senate

Professor, Health, Physical Education and Recreation

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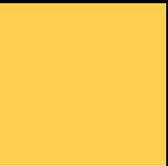
Dean, Student Development

Chair, Graduate Council

*indicates Implementation Co-chair



Regional University



Missouri Western State University

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Western is an equal opportunity institution.