Western Illinois University Retention Initiative Plan

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Overview
University Retention Initiative Team

The University Retention Initiative Team, established in Fall 2020, is comprised of faculty and staff from across Western Illinois University. The Team was created to work with the Office of Retention Initiatives toward the following goals:

- Develop and explore university-wide retention initiatives
- Facilitate the generation, collection, and dissemination of best prac0.00000ent ra(f)-4(h TJred0.00000912 0 612 79

Equity and Implementation Considerations
The University Retention Initiative Team asks each individual or group responsible for implementing portions of this plan to actively consider populations at higher risk for attrition at Western Illinois University, including Black male students, Pell-eligible students, first-generation college students, disability status, and students requiring remediation or challenged by learning loss and content gaps. Implementation should also consider the experiences of our Quad Cities, transfer, and fully online students.

Plan Format
The Retention Plan is organized according to the following four dimensions: academic experience, affordability, campus experience, sense of belonging and community. For each dimension, goals and barriers have been identified, with action items for achieving goals and overcoming barriers.
Dimension
- *Goal (with associated Barriers)*
   - *Action Item:*
        Responsibility:
        Measure(s):
        Connection to WIU Strategic Plan:

University Retention Initiative Team

First Name	Last Name	
Audrey	Adamson	Quad Cities
Lori	Baker-Sperry	First Year Experience, Provost's Office
Angela	Bonifas	President's Area
Stacy	Dorsett	

Academic Experience (D1)

- **Goal: Support and improve retention focus at college and departmental levels.** (G1)

  Action Item 1: Develop college-level retention-focused teams to ensure review each semester of initiatives, student needs, and future plans to enhance student retention and success. Annually extract and review list (by college/school) of first-year students who are not retained. Provide analysis of data gained on this population via the Withdrawal form, incorporating details known about students from student data found throughout Student Services, Financial Aid, Institutional Research, and the Connections Mapping program.
  - Responsibility: Justin Schuch, Executive Director of Retention Initiatives; Angela Bonifas, Director, Institutional Research; Mark Mossman, Associate Provost; academic deans
  - Timeline: Each semester; implement Fall 2022
  - Measure: Reported outcomes from annual review meetings
  - Strategic Plan: Goal 2: Advance Educational Opportunity, Action Item 4: Increase Retention and Graduation Rates

  Action Item 2: Develop and implement college-level retention plans focused on student needs and short-, mid-, and long-term strategies to improve student retention and success. Implement college-level retention teams comprised of advisors, faculty, and administrative staff who have direct representation on and connection to the University Retention Initiative Team.
  - Responsibility: Academic deans
  - Timeline: Establishment of teams and timeline for development of college-level retention plans, Fall 2021: college-level plans completed by May 2022
  - Measure: Completed plans, tracking of college-level measures
  - Strategic Plan: Goal 2: Advance Educational Opportunity, Action Item 4: Increase Retention and Graduation Rates

- **Action Item 3**: Annually review and identify curriculum/program barriers to degree completion.
  Responsibility: Academic deans
  Timeline: Tied to college-level retention plans completed by May 2022
  Measure: Annual review of departmental retention rates beginning Fall 2022
  Strategic Plan: Goal 2: Advance Educational Opportunity, Action 5: Decrease Time-to-Degree Rates

- **Action Item 4**: Review and revise policies and procedures impacting student success in order to increase flexibility and, in turn, degree completion.
  Responsibility: Academic deans; Registrar; Council on Admissions, Graduation, and Academic Standards representative
  Timeline: Working group established, Fall 2021; policy revisions identified, March 2022
  Measure: Annual review of departmental retention rates (beginning Fall 2022)
  Strategic Plan: Goal 2: Advance Educational Opportunity, Action 5: Decrease Time-to-Degree Rates

- **Action Item 5**: Monitor retention and graduation rates of subpopulations for review by University Retention Initiative Team and college-level retention teams, creating actionable responses to barriers impacting student success. Subpopulations may include, but are not limited to, student athletes, first-generation students, honors college participants, international students, and those identified in the data broken down by race, sex, and other demographic factors.

- o Theme: Difficulties navigating general education requirements. (T4)
  - **Action Item 15**: Review allocation of resources to better support the delivery of general education courses.
    - Responsibility: Mark Mossman, Associate Provost; Dean Martinelli-Fernandez; Dean Clow; Chair of

- Timeline: Working group established Spring 2022, avenues for early feedback identified by April 2022, target implementation Fall 2022
- Measure: Identified measures, increased early warning grade submissions, attendance tracking, and opportunities for early assignments in courses
- Strategic Plan: Goal 2: Advance Educational Opportunity, Action Item 4: Increase Retention and Graduation Rates
- **Goal: Improve and support the o**

- Strategic Plan: Goal 1: Enrich Academic Excellence, Action Item 6: Deliver User-Centered Information Technology

Action Item 34: Develop departmental-level Western Online orientation to ensure all students within departments understand how Western Online is being utilized.

- Responsibility: Director, Office of Distance Education and Support; academic deans and chairs working group
- Timeline: Working group established Fall 2021; developed orientation for departments completed by Fall 2022
- Measure: Completed orientations for departments, tracking effective student use
- Strategic Plan: Goal 1: Enrich Academic Excellence, Action Item 6: Deliver User-Centered Information Technology

- **Goal: Strengthen and establish more hands-on experiences and professional development (e.g., course experiences, internships). (G6)**

Action Item 35: Create plan for implementing structured career readiness into student experience.

- Responsibility: Audrey Adamson, Director of Center for Career

Affordability (D2)

- **Goal: Increase financial support for continuing students after recruitment. (G7)**

  Action Item 40: Review use of one-time awards through recruitment processes. Limit use of recruitment one-time awards to assist student finance planning after first semester/year. Review financial aid opportunities offered at university level for strong academic performance after first semester/year.

  - Responsibility: Bobbi Smith, Director of Financial Aid; Doug Freed, Director of Undergraduate Admissions; Vice President for Enrollment Management; Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
  - Timeline: Fall 2021
  - Measure: Increased number of financial aid opportunities post-first year, retention rate of recipients to non-recipients
  - Strategic Plan: Goal 2: Advance Educational Opportunity, Action Item 3: Advance Affordability

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- Strategic Plan: Strategic Plan: Goal 1: Enrich Academic Excellence, Action Item 2: Focus on the Individual Learner

Action Item 55: Develop university-wide student-centered service policy focused on student response and support. Explore avenues for adoption and implementation.

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- Measure: Developed campaign(s), tracking student use of resources
- Strategic Plan: Strategic Plan: Goal 2: Advance Educational Opportunity, Action Item 4: Increase Retention and Graduation Rates

- **Goal: Connect academic support offerings for consistency, visibility, and improved access. (G15)**

  Action Item 66: Institute and require digital tracking measures for student use of all academic support services throughout campus and implement common reporting of use of academic support services for assessment use and early intervention programming.
  - Responsibility: Justin Schuch, Executive Director of Retention Initiatives; Michelle Janisz, Director of Transition and Academic Skills Center; Amy Patrick Mossman, Director of the University Writing Center; working group
  - Timeline: Implement reporting, Fall 2022
  - Measure: Increase reporting of use, student follow up through intervention programming
  - Strategic Plan: Goal 1: Enrich Academic Excellence, Action Item 6: Deliver User-Centered Information Technology

  Action Item 67: Move all tutors through a common training and reflective experience that emphasizes cultural competence and professionalism.
  - Responsibility: Michelle Janisz, Director of Transition and Academic Skills Center; Amy Patrick Mossman, Director of the University Writing Center; Kishor Kapale, Chair of Physics
  - Timeline: Fall 2023
  - Measure: Completed training, student survey on use, developed learning outcomes for students
  - Strategic Plan: Goal 1: Enrich Academic Excellence, Action Item 2: Focus on Individual Learner

  Action Item 68: Conduct meaningful review of Living Learning Community (LLC) options, set-ups, and engagement, including development of a structure to support faculty investment in LLC.
  - Responsibility: Jessica Butcher, Director of Student Life; Mark Mossman, Associate Provost; John Biernbaum, Associate Vice President
  - Timeline: Spring 2022 with final recommendations by April 2022
  - Measure: Additional living learning community offerings, tracking student participation and faculty engagement
  - Strategic Plan: Goal 1: Enrich Academic Excellence, Action Item 2: Focus on Individual Learner

- **Goal: Increase family resources. (G16)**
  - Theme: Need for resources and support for students with children. (T13)

    Action Item 69: Develop web presence for centralized resources on campus and in communities focused on students with children/family.
    - Responsibility: Justin Schuch, Executive Director of Retention Initiatives; Stephanie Kinkaid, Director of Equal Opportunity and Access; Samantha Klingler, Director of Student Development and Success; Web Services
    - Timeline: Develop Fall 2023; launch Spring 2024
    - Measure: Completed website, track usage/clicks
    - Strategic Plan: Strategic Plan: Goal 2: Advance Educational Opportunity, Action Item 4: Increase Retention and Graduation Rates

    Action Item 70: Develop education for awareness on rights of students with children or expecting children.
    - Responsibility: Stephanie Kinkaid, Director of Equal Opportunity and Access
    - Timeline: Spring 2022
    - Measure: Completed campaign(s)

- Strategic Plan: Strategic Plan: Goal 2: Advance Educational Opportunity, Action Item 4: Increase Retention and Graduation Rates
  o Theme: Lack of resources for first-generation families. (T14)
      Action Item 71: Re-establish a single point of contact for parents and family of WIU students seeking assistance on behalf of their students. Develop first-generation family-focused resources, including website, guide, and overviews.
      - Responsibility: Justin Schuch, Executive Director of Retention Initiatives; Samantha Klingler, Director of Student Development and Success; working group
      - Timeline: Fall 2021
      - Measure: Website developed, direct outreach to identified students
      - Strategic Plan: Goal 2: Advance Educational Opportunity, Action Item 4: Increase Retention and Graduation Rates

Sense of Belonging and Community (D4)

- **Goal: Identify and improve common spaces for students, including social space, study space, library access. (G17)**

    Action Item 72: Identify commuter space for students residing off campus and market appropriately.
    - Responsibility: Ashley Katz, Director of University Union; working group
    - Timeline: Fall 2021
    - Measure: Marketing materials increase, tracking space use, student feedback
    - Strategic Plan: Goal 3: Support Personal Growth, Action Item 2: Enhance Student and Community Engagement

    Action Item 73: Review space allocated to students on Quad Cities Campus and market appropriately.
    - Responsibility: Kristi Mindrup, Assistant Vice President
    - Timeline: Fall 2022
    - Measure: Marketing materials increase, tracking space use, student feedback

- Responsibility: Justin Schuch, Executive Director of Retention Initiatives; Mark Mossman, Associate Provost; Lori Baker-Sperry, FYE Faculty Associate; Michelle Janisz, Director of Transition and Academic Skills Center
- Timeline: Summer 2021; p