

State of the University Address
October 5, 2006
Dr. Jerilyn McIntyre, President

Thank you all for being here for this annual state of the university address.

Introductions: Board of Trustee Chair Ken Martin, Student Trustee Tony Aronica, Members of the President's Cabinet, Members of the ASCWU Board of Directors, Executive Interns, David Smith.

ASCWU officers include:

- *Jadon Berry, President*
- *Kathryn Ruth, Exec. VP*
- *Jeff Rosenberry, VP for Student Life and Facilities*
- *Derrick Peacock, VP for Equity and Community*
- *Tony Aronica, VP for Clubs and Organizations*
- *Steve DuPont, VP for Political Affairs*
- *Katie Underwood, VP for Academic Affairs*
- Interns include:
- *Patrick Lewis, President's Division*
- *Nuno Fernandes, BFA*
- *Dela Navarro, AA*
- *Amy Sitzler, UR*
- *Megan O'Malley, SAEM*

There are 58 new faculty at CWU this year—either new to the university, or new to the position they hold. I'd like to invite all of the new faculty who are here today to stand and be recognized. During the past year, 9 faculty retired and 15 left the university for other reasons.

There are 50 new members of the classified staff. Would our new classified staff please stand and be recognized? Nine classified staff retired and 35 left the university for other reasons.

There are 23 new exempt employees. Would these new employees please stand and be recognized? During the past year, two exempt staff retired and 25 left the university for other reasons.

We welcome our new colleagues, and send our best wishes to those who left the university during the 2005-2006 year.

At the same time, we have had other, sadder and harder losses to bear. This year, at our annual memorial ceremony, held the day after the Memorial Day Weekend, we honored and said goodbye to 41 students, faculty, staff and friends of the university who died during the preceding year. Since then, we have lost several other treasured members of the university family—some of whom were still employed or associated with the university at the time of their deaths. We remember them all with gratitude and affection.

Each year, on this occasion, we have acknowledged some of the singular successes of the university as a whole, and of individual faculty and staff. Some of you may remember the

PowerPoint that used to precede this address when it was delivered in McConnell Auditorium. We haven't used the PowerPoint format the past couple of years; we are still working on finding a way to have more complete information about campus accomplishments relayed to the president's office so we can promote and give even greater visibility to them each year. We hope to be able to publish that information in some format later this year. For now, let me just ask you to raise your hand if:

1. You or your unit and/or your students made a presentation at a major professional conference or meeting during the past year.
2. You had research, creative work or other material published last year, either as a journal article or as a book.
3. You or the unit in which you work received an award last year.

Congratulations to all of you!

Regarding other data that we usually report each year: we continue to have a solid record of achievement in the number of grant proposals submitted and funded. During this past year, a total of 114 grants were submitted to external funding sources by 65 different faculty and staff requesting a total of \$10,178,581. Of these 114, 60 were funded, 21 were not funded, and 33 were still pending at the end of the fiscal year. The total amount of grants funding for the 2005-2006 fiscal year was \$6,644,814. Congratulations.

We are entering the second year of our comprehensive fundraising campaign—which is still in the “silent” phase that I described to you last year. So far, we're on target with the yearly goals we have set for the campaign.

The statistics regarding our students continue to be impressive. The preliminary tenth-day freeze indicates that our enrollment of full-time equivalent students this fall is 9,718, with 8,434 at Ellensburg and 1,284 at the centers. We predict an annualized FTE of approximately 9,200 FTE. The percentage of minority students in the entering class is 19.9 %, and for the university overall, the figure is just a little under 18%. The measures of academic quality—high school GPAs and SAT scores—continue to be strong, although they dropped off slightly this year, down from the record levels of last fall. They're at about the same levels they were two years ago, but I know that Vice President Charlotte Tullos and her team are well aware of the importance of keeping all of those indicators headed in an upward direction.

Other developments are worth noting. Contract negotiations were successfully concluded with the United Faculty of Central and with the Washington Federation of State Employees, representing CWU Local 330, Bargaining Unit I, leading to the approval of both contracts by the University's Board of Trustees.

I also want to acknowledge and commend Wayne Quirk and the Graduate Council for their progress in soliciting input for the position paper being prepared on the role and mission of our graduate programs. The draft paper has been developed through focus groups with the graduate council, graduate coordinators and chairs, and it has now been circulated to the Provost's Council. We all look forward to the final report.

I want to acknowledge the Division of Academic Affairs for including among their goals in the Academic Strategic Plan the establishment of a Center for the Support of the Teacher-Scholar. A Task Force has been created whose charge this year is to help move that project to completion. This is something I have been urging for several years.

And I want to congratulate everyone involved in the One Book/One Campus project. David and I have been reading this year's book on our morning walks around campus. It's an excellent selection, well suited to provoking animated conversations and debate. I may never look at moss quite the same way again.

Last year at this State of the University address, we looked back over the challenges of the previous five years as we anticipated the revision of the strategic plan that had served us well for the five-year period from 2001-2006. We reviewed the original context in which that plan was created, and traced the budget cuts and retrenchment that were necessary as a result of the unexpected downturn in enrollment in the fall of 2000. And we talked about some of the rebuilding that had taken place during that time, as we resolved together to "reinvent ourselves" or "transform the university."

This year, with the new plan for 2006-2011 in place, I'd like to look ahead and discuss in a little more detail some of the planning issues, both short-term and long-term, that should occupy the university's attention for the next five years and beyond. But I'd like to begin first with an acknowledgement of the work of the Synthesizing Committee, whose surveys, forums and other conversations both on and off campus, pulled together the threads of thought that led to the 2006-2011 plan.

The new plan changed the emphasis and wording of the major goals somewhat. What has changed quite a bit are the subgoals, which lay out an agenda of clear planning objectives and point the university in very specific directions for the next five years.

Those of you who attended last year's state of the university address may recall that I urged the campus in our planning to draw on some of the longer-term trends and issues of both our local and national context that are likely to shape our focus and our fortunes for the foreseeable future. Among the trends likely to be of most importance, some are demographic: it is predicted that the number of entering students will continue to increase and then level off in 2008, while the transfer enrollments will continue to grow until they level off anywhere between 2014 and 2017. At the same time there will be growth in the senior citizen population and in our nation's overall diversity. We can certainly see continued growth in the number of freshmen enrolling at CWU this year, and in the continuing trends in the diversity of our student population.

Admittedly, there are some doubts about whether or not the Baby Boom Echo itself will persist as long as the above predictions would suggest. As you no doubt read in the newspapers last spring, applications were down at almost all of Washington's public baccalaureate institutions (including at Central), as well as at several of the independent colleges in the state. Enrollments this fall are down at many of our state's community and technical colleges and at some of the baccalaureate institutions. At this point, I'm not sure what might be expected for next year. However, national data suggest that the projections of growth in the number of applications and in enrollments for baccalaureate institutions will hold for at least a couple of more years. What happened in Washington this past year in other words appears to be an anomaly compared to what is happening elsewhere. However, the extremely large number of applications institutions in this state received in 2005 may also have been an anomaly, exaggerating the significance of the difference between the two years. Fortunately, for Central at least, applications this year did not predict enrollments. Our yield on the applications we received was high, which has led to the record enrollment numbers we are experiencing this fall.

Other trends—ones that continue to be reliable here as elsewhere--are in the fields, disciplines and degree levels that will in greatest demand over the next generation; in the policies and the level of state and federal fiscal support for public higher education; in the impact of technology on students' instructional and campus lives; and in competition from other providers of academic and professional training.

All of these trends and issues have also been noted in a recent spate of state and national reports on education and higher education. And those reports themselves add another force shaping the direction in higher education over the next few years, defining areas of desired programmatic focus, suggesting funding approaches, and outlining accountability expectations for higher education institutions both individually and collectively.

A couple of these reports have been very visible in the news lately: the work of Washington Learns, established by Governor Gregoire to study the structure and funding of the state's education system; and, on the federal level, the report of the Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education. Other relevant activities in the state include the work of the Prosperity Partnership. And, on a national level, there have been other reports issued by, among others, the National Academies, the College Board, and the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance.

What are some of the major themes in these various studies and reports? The need for coordination, integration and seamless transitions between various levels of education is clearly one theme, as are the expectations of accountability and the responsibility of institutions to be able to identify and demonstrate the outcomes of the learning experiences they offer to students. Washington Learns adds recommendations about the importance of making sure students are prepared to move on to the next level of instruction; the need to increase the number of students enrolled in math and science courses as well as the number of teachers trained to teach in those disciplines; the importance of increasing access (through financial support and other means) to a wide variety of student groups and needs; the importance of closing the achievement gap between groups of students; and the value of technology as a tool for education delivery as well as an area of study both in teacher preparation and in training for careers in computer science and technology fields.

Secretary Spellings' Commission on the Future of Higher Education echoed the theme of accountability, arguing for standardized tests to measure student learning outcomes and recommending greater transparency and accountability in assessment and accreditation processes and expectations. The report also decried the rising costs of college. (As an aside, the cost of instruction at CWU has remained flat in real dollars for the past decade and a half).

The commission also stressed the importance of expanding access, and suggested the need to revise financial aid processes and funding and to increase need-based aid. In perhaps the report's most controversial proposal, the commission expressed support for a common database—a so-called "unit record" system--whose purpose would be to generate more information about student performance and learning outcomes. Such a system, Spellings argues, would enable individual students and institutions to track the academic progress of students transferring from one institution to another, and would provide more accurate and accessible data on such measures as institutions' retention and graduation rates and student performance on measures of learning outcomes. In such a student record system, a prototype of which Spellings wants to establish as quickly as possible, students would be given identification numbers (replacing the use of social security numbers for this purpose).

Identification numbers for students would make it possible to track their academic performance wherever they enrolled.

In an interview published in the Chronicle of Higher Education last week, Spellings expressed her sense of urgency in implementing the Commission's recommendations.

"The academy is underestimating the American public—the anxiety and the urgency about this. We have sold the dream of college. Kids believe they should go. They believe they must have it. They believe this is the key to their futures. And more and more, it's unattainable, with respect to affordability and preparedness.

"If it's in fact the case that the world is flat and that we're going to be the world's innovator, and the world's leader, and that we're not going to compete with the world on price, then we'd better be the world's leader on innovation. And how are we going to do that? Education. There is an urgency here. If we don't address this, I'm afraid the world will pass us by. Are American institutions of higher education going to rise to the occasion and be lean fighting machines for American consumers or not? Because someone is."

Not surprisingly, the Spellings Commission report has prompted a wide variety of responses. One came in a letter issued by six major college and university professional associations which referenced not just the Spelling Commission report, but also several other reports from government-related agencies. The letter, with the title "Addressing the Challenges Facing American Undergraduate Education," was signed by presidents of the American Association of Community Colleges, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the Association of American Universities, the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges. It outlined actions those organizations were asking their members institutions to take.

These included: (1) expanding college access to low-income and minority students; (2) keeping college affordable; (3) improving learning by utilizing new knowledge and instructional techniques; (4) preparing secondary students for higher education (included in this action was a goal of increasing the number of science and mathematics teachers); (5) increasing accountability for educational outcomes; (6) internationalizing the student experience; and (7) increasing opportunities for lifelong learning and work-force training.

The agenda and many of the recommendations in all of these reports sound remarkably similar.

They also overlap in many respects issues raised in the list of questions we posed for ourselves on this occasion last year, when we considered programmatic directions and infrastructure enhancements to guide our planning for the near and long-term future. The first six of those questions were (1) who are our students likely to be; (2) what coursework will be most in demand, both by society and by our students; (3) how will we balance student interest in new areas with instruction in fields that have dominated our curriculum in the past; (4) what will be the role of technology in instruction and how will it transform student learning experiences, data gathering and library collections; (5) what should be the direction and the role of our undergraduate and graduate missions in the future; and (6) how large should our Ellensburg campus and our university centers be.

The seventh of the questions that we raised--what kinds of entrepreneurial or resource-enhancing activities should we pursue to provide the additional revenue our expanded mission

may require in the future—recognizes the need for additional or alternative sources of funding for higher education if the recommendations for accountability and change outlined in the various reports are actually followed. Let me say a bit about what we are doing on some of the longer-term and short-term funding issues. First, a comprehensive campaign is currently well underway. Second, we have retained a consultant firm in Washington D.C. to help us garner federal support for selected programs and priorities. Third, we are moving ahead—albeit slowly—on steps we need to take to get a business/research park (now known as the Central Washington Innovation Park) up and running, we are exploring a variety of ways to enhance our funding base. And, of course, at the same time, we are once again putting together materials and holding meetings with key legislators and legislative and governor's office staff to advance our capital and operating budget requests to the governor and the state legislature as part of this year's biennial budget process.

I'm pleased to see that questions we raised last year found their way either directly or indirectly into at least a few of the goals and subgoals in the new strategic plan. I'm also pleased that the strategic plan is generally responsive to the regional and national discussions about the structure and direction of higher education.

The strength of the strategic plan is, understandably, in the programmatic planning objectives it identifies. It also highlights some areas in which CWU has already made notable progress over the past several years. For example, the first subgoal under goal one asks that we make even greater progress in integrating existing undergraduate initiatives to bring greater coherence to the undergraduate experience. This is a focus of the academic strategic plan that has been developed by the provost and the division of academic affairs. The sixth subgoal highlights the importance of clarifying the role, function and desirable size of graduate education at CWU. This issue, as I mentioned earlier, has been broached in the draft position paper developed by the Graduate Council and Wayne Quirk. And the third subgoal under goal two (develop new academic programs that respond to the needs of the local communities and ensure timely and consistent delivery) points to an approach that has certainly been a successful hallmark of selected program development and funding at our university centers for the past few years. We have taken important steps in all of these areas, but surely that progress can and should continue.

These subgoals address, in various ways, the larger question of whether or not we are preparing students as well as we should for the workplace and for the world of the twenty-first century. They suggest ways in which we should think about what coursework will be most in demand and how we can balance student interest in new areas with instruction in fields (including the liberal arts) that have always been an important part of our curriculum. And both goals one and two implicitly raise the question of how large the Ellensburg campus and the university centers can become and still maintain the quality of instruction and personal attention that make Central distinctive.

Some of the areas in which the state is asking us to invest additional resources and effort already fit naturally within our traditional role and mission. Washington Learns, for example, asks higher education to focus on teacher education programs in math and science, as well as preparation for students in math and science programs more generally; and it asks us to expand access to computer science and technology-related degrees as well as update the technology requirements for teacher preparation. This, by the way, also came up in the HEC Board meeting last week.

The Spheres of Distinction initiative at CWU also provides a way for us to nurture broad areas of disciplinary emphasis and campus life in which CWU can or does stand out in preparing our students for the world in which they will spend their lives and careers.

The Spheres, of course, are also singled out in the new strategic plan in the first subgoal under goal five: Identify, promote and financially support academic and support programs of regional and national prominence, including spheres of distinction. We've already announced the proposals that were funded in this, the first year, when internal funds were set aside to support this strategic initiative. The intention is to continue to set aside funds for several more years as this becomes a way for us to develop a strategic emphasis on excellence and on the programs and approaches that make CWU distinctive among its peers both regionally and nationally. There are clearly many outstanding programs and activities deserving of this kind of support. The request for proposals for next year's funding will go out by the end of fall quarter with a due date in the middle of winter quarter.

We should also think about other ways in which we can build on some of our strengths or potential strengths. Let me suggest a couple of examples of how that might happen.

With the completion of the new Student Union/Recreation Center we could and probably should think about how we can coordinate some of our existing health science programs with the resources of the new Rec Center into a broad-based campus wellness emphasis. Such an emphasis could provide career training in high demand fields at the same time that it would provide the broader campus population with a foundation for life-long fitness.

A second example: I would argue that there is a particular salience for us in the imperative articulated in the second subgoal under goal one: "integrate international experiences and global education in curricular and co-curricular initiatives."

The letter I mentioned earlier from the presidents of the six major education associations, summarizes much of what might be intended here: "As globalization continues to make the world a smaller place, we need to make certain that students gain the skills and knowledge to excel in whatever careers they pursue. This includes giving more attention to international issues in the curriculum, increasing proficiency in foreign languages, and expanding the number of students who acquire international experiences."

I mentioned at Fall Faculty Day a couple of weeks ago that I had just returned from a recent trip to China and to Anhui University with a redoubled sense of the need for CWU to develop even further its international studies programs and emphases. We have a real opportunity to develop a valuable educational niche in international studies, building on strengths we already have, and expanding those strengths beyond the faculty and student exchanges that we now do quite well. I urge the campus to consider how we can build international perspectives more broadly into the curriculum of departments and programs across campus. I'd like us to find ways to encourage faculty who have participated in an international exchange arrangement to apply what they have learned or done in those exchanges more specifically in the courses they offer and the scholarship or creative work they do. I'd like us to explore ways in which we can enable a wider variety of students to have an extended overseas international experience either through academic exchanges or summer projects. I support the efforts already underway to create an international studies minor, and I would urge us to consider how that might eventually grow into an international studies major, creating an avenue to provide a broad-based competence in international issues across a wide spectrum of student interests and backgrounds

As a final comment on selected goals in the new strategic plan, let me note that goal six--build inclusive and diverse campus communities that promote intellectual inquiry and encourage civility, mutual respect, and cooperation—is fundamental not just to embracing diversity, equity, social justice and cultural responsiveness across the university, as identified in the strategic plan, but it is also essential to fostering the kind of access to both ideas and people that has been an important area of progress on this campus in recent years. This kind of access is also a theme of many of the recent reports on higher education.

The strategic plan, and the process that produced it, have set admirable and helpful goals and directions for our short-term future. But planning doesn't stop with the strategic plan. Another effort this year will be to pull together the various unit plans that have been developed under the umbrella of the university's overall strategic plan, into an integrated plan for the entire institution. I am heartened by the thoughtful deliberation and the directions identified in the various unit plans that have been produced in all divisions of the university, and by the way they not only have addressed the questions we have raised for our own consideration, but have also anticipated many of the issues that have surfaced in the various recent reports on higher education. Our next step will be to align the planning of individual units and divisions into a succinct statement of the integrated plan for the university. A planning forum is scheduled for October 18 where discussion of a framework for integrated planning will begin.

Summing Up.

As I conclude my remarks, I'd like to return briefly to some observations about how the reports from external agencies and organizations may influence our planning agenda for the short and longer-term future.

We may not, and probably do not, agree with all of the recommendations in all of these reports, but we must realize that they are part of the public policy landscape to which we must be prepared to respond.

Peter McGrath, formerly president of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, and now Senior Presidential Advisor to The College Board, has offered this assessment of the Spellings Commission report:

“Whether the Commission’s recommendations lead—and I think this unlikely—to prescriptive legislation at either the federal or state level, it will have an impact on American higher education. It will stimulate not only debate and arguments, but adaptations in key areas.”

The same, I would argue, is likely to be true of the report from Washington Learns, when its final version is released later this fall.

It remains to be seen whether or not the Spelling Commission report will affect the ongoing discussions and controversy surrounding reauthorization of the Higher Education Act—which has not been renewed since 1998—or how Washington Learns will affect decisions in this year's legislative session. Nonetheless, both opportunities and challenges are created by these reports.

McGrath argues that we should treat them as opportunities. In his words, “In addition to our necessary attention and preoccupation with funding appropriations at the federal and state levels for higher education and the complex political forces of this election season, we must—and can—promote a national dialogue and awareness of the critical teaching—and therefore learning—needs and opportunities before our nation.”

I agree with him. There's no reason for higher education to resist engaging in debate or dialogue about how our institutions might improve or become more responsive to society and its needs. Indeed, this may actually give us a chance to demonstrate all that we already do, both in the area of performance and in the area of accountability. The debate might even allow us to make the case more forcefully than we have that higher education is, after all, a public benefit and not just a private one. I would say, however, that we ought to move to the foreground the descriptions of accountability and assessment that are more apparent in our unit plans than they are in the university strategic plan.

On the other hand, there's no reason to assume that any improvements that are actually needed will come only from outside sources or recommendations. As Derek Bok concluded in his 1986 book, *Higher Learning*, "There is no ideal system now, nor will there be one in the future that can force every institution to work as conscientiously as it should to improve its educational programs. The impetus must come from within." (200)

I think the impetus for change and improvement on this campus has come from within for several years already. We've called this "setting our own agenda," and we've concentrated on being active rather than passive in the way we address both the challenges and opportunities we've confronted. The likelihood that this will continue is suggested by the thoughtful framework for change set forth in our new strategic plan. A thoughtful framework for change should also undergird the integrated plan that will be developed later this year.

We've made great progress on goals we set in the last plan. Indeed, we've already made progress on some that are identified in the new plan. But, as always, there's still more to be done. I invite your participation in the process as it continues to unfold.

Thank you for your attention. And thank you for all that you do for CWU and the many ways every one of you contributes to the excellence and the distinctiveness of this university.

As I conclude, I'll remind everyone that the Performing Arts and Presidential Speaker Series is already underway, with Gladys Cardiff's wonderful appearance on campus earlier this week. I hope to see many of you at other events in the series – the next of which is the Seattle Symphony performance on October 19--and at other campus activities throughout the year.

And now I invite your questions.