

**Student Success Listening Sessions
Central Washington University
February 7 and 8, 2022
3 sessions with about 180 faculty, staff, and students present**

I. What opportunities and challenges exist for us as we bring this vision to life?

Opportunities

- Be able to provide holistic conversation about all stages of this cycle
- Determination of information, how do we deliver information, and the method of delivery
- Committed staff
- Excellent education programs
- Central geological location
- Strategic collaboration (events and funding)
 - Planning for last minute attendees/circumstances
- Accessibility for timing and cost
- Start Tacking where grads go/what they do after Central.
- Increase funding/infrastructure in strong programs to increase/solidify reputation
- Recruitment:
 - Bringing in more high school students from the west side of color.
 - Drawing in people to Central for unique opportunities (international students and non-traditional student)
 - Focus on existing and historic strengths rather than trying to be another college
 - Improve job opportunities and working conditions/environment (CWU dining services)
 - Be more transparent to individuals, when enrolling
 - Don't use a one size fits all approach, tailor to the individual's needs.
- Promotion of Programs
- Multitude of study options (programs that we offer that others don't)
- Adjust our structure to overcome the recent enrollment trends and increase retention as a result
- Outreach to younger generations (e.g., middle school)
- Overall CWU Awareness at HS level
- HS Field trips/ visit CWU during AY or summer
- Becoming the choice college in the state for the underserved population
- Empowering students and their connection to the university
- College to career connection for students
- Orientation leader relationship
- Mentorship from upperclassman
- Outreach from affinity groups/clubs/organizations
- Less emphasis on structure and more on clear communication/collaboration
- Need better advocacy for staff and students
- Keep in mind administrative bloat and how you are paying on the ground/ front line staff
- Return to Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

- What would be considered under S.A.
- Middle school students
- CWU application deadline is later than other schools which provides opportunity for seniors to still apply
- Connection with communities to be more visible (eg, events in areas we want to be present like Community Based Organizations, intentional bridges; need to scholarship some of these events)
- In-person living and class
- Hybrid flexibility
- First year experience—life skills
- Students to understand the support they have
- Supporting a student as a whole person
- We have qualified staff and faculty that want to work together
- In person office hours need to come back
- Collaboration on admissions and retention
- Elevate student focus
- Gain understanding and respect for student affairs culture
- Shared vision (with same lingo)
- Consistent pathway for the entire student experience from pre-student to alumni, with indicators of support
- Credibility by sharing information and being on the same page
- Itemizing classroom tools and resources
- Take it back to basics and do them very well
- Evolve and adapt as our students' needs evolve/adapt
- Student-first culture where we collectively focus on students
- Create culture of feedback; welcoming input and seeking it out
- Amazing/growing campus—leverage for recruitment/retention
- Commuter students—Yakima students/transfers, specified resources
- Non-traditional students—distinct/specific marketing strategies, student parents, online students
- Central has the only theatre BFA program in the state
- Central has the best Arts Department in the state
- The arts departments have been naturally self-problem-solving during pandemic challenges
- Music and theatre bring in money for the university
- More trust and autonomy for departments to manage their money and programs
- Bridge building between community colleges and CWU and local community organizations
- Smaller faculty:student ratio, dedicated faculty
- More hands on experiences, internships
- One stop shop
- More collaboration across faculty and staff and various departments
- Potential to reach more diverse students and online and non-traditional
- SB5227
- HSI
- Graduate Programs
- No space to grow (physical) for Health office
- Hard to collaborate when we are so spread out on campus
- Increasing complexity of student mental and physical health

- COVID
- Continue to be self-funded vs. institution support
- Campus awareness of us as a whole or services we provide
- Technology upgrade to increase services to access students
- Categorizing students based on need to direct outreach for retention
- More support for first generation/low income students (Trio)
- Partnership with high school counselors
- Expanding our ability to do in-person high school visits
- Alumni posters on campus
- Teachers recommend CWU
- In-person classes
- Vaccine/Mask mandates
- Safety is important
- Neutral atmosphere
- Growth of online schooling
- Varying student interests
- Streamline graduation requirements
- Work on recruiting and retaining transfer students
- Bridge programs between CWU and Community Colleges
- Support and Retain faculty and staff
- Change
- Keep the good; eliminate the bad
- Open communication—community citizenship
- Location/environment
- Active engagement with students
- Students involved in recruitment
- Develop CWU brand—Use Eburg and Kittitas county as assets
- Build on strengths—theater, music, education, STEM
- Promote what CWU has to offer beyond campus life—what classes/majors offered?
- CWU has the only BFA theatre program in the region for public schools
- Opportunity to make things more interconnected between depts and administration
- Prioritize activities that draw most attention
- Affordable
- Unique public BFA niche of humanities
- Artistic events draw enrollment
- No GPA in first year
- Student mentorship program
- Collaboration
- Coordination and consistency across departments
- Service level agreements
- Define what students can expect once they get here—what is our promise to students
- Pathways to return
- Cross-training of staff so all can answer questions

- Only BFA theatre in state; loss of Hertz Hall, not replaced; a place to call home without any baggage
- Student peer mentors – faculty and advisors needed
- Communication
- Structure does not equal operational practices
- Redefine what we do
- Disconnect for students: what we do, what they think we do
- Jobs, internships promised; shows, dance and voice lessons, advisor, program with money, business skills

Challenges

- Support structures
- More mental health counseling needed
- Faculty cuts gradually hurts program (for example, Theatre down 50%)
- Stability needed at department chair level and support staff
- Recruitment—be realistic and follow through
- Need support, especially in arts
- Silos entrenched
- Difficulty with timely communication
- Some departments have job to say “yes” while others need to hold limits
- Communication
- Adequate staffing so we can keep information and resources up to date
- Outreach and early advising
- Students coming out of pandemic have not had background for success
- Disciplines are uneven in representation in high school
- Creating resources/support for that first year
- Preparation for survival on campus
- COVID—fewer people come to college
- Resistance to change/upholding status quo
- Fair labor compensation/worker’s rights
- Money
- Insular communities
- Staff support
- Ellensburg community
- Monetary issues: how can we advocate to incoming students with admissions costs, majors information, focusing on each student
- Communication/website
- Accessing services
- Representatives for recruitment
- Siloed groups/sharing information
- Non-existent business processes (or totally failed)
- Uncertainty revolving around COVID

- Online can lead to less revenue
- Reduced high school graduates
- Increased opportunity costs
- Decrease in funding
- Varying needs throughout departments
- Budget/resources
- Wrong structure
- Getting in front of the right audience
- Marketing/personal connection
- The ability to stay the course
- Competing interest vs. the long-term plan
- Communication:
 - Need to communicate across unit/areas
 - How we get information from students
 - How we communicate with students
 - How well are we doing with our relation- building with students compared to other institutions.
- Ways to connect to appropriate staff and resources
 - Know advising structure for staff, faculty, and students.
- Technology/ Case management as portal for students record, communications tracking hand-offs.
- Retention--Decreasing staff and offering with in programs
- Level of transparency with communication
- University website and thorough information
- Decrease in higher education as a whole – understanding value of higher education
- Finding our Identity
- Assessments (what is working, and what is not):
 - Student data tracking
 - Access to certain information
 - Lack of uniform processes
- Incentive to get engaged students
 - Or are we missing the mark for how students want to engage? Quantity vs Quality
- Process delays: students waiting to apply for FAFSA
- Budget cuts impact on certain departments and academic life
- Disenfranchisement/ disillusion on peoples trust and commitment
- CWU's reputation in arts (music, theatre, education)
 - Sacrificing arts to try to compete with STEM schools
 - Broken promises to students that are frustrated with the experience
 - Decrease in reputation
- Finances for living expenses greater than the tuition cost
 - Not many opportunities for non-campus jobs in town and bad experience in on-campus jobs
- Focus on Data Systems for tracking students before, during, and after Central.

- Ensure Student Success to staff to increase awareness for students.
- Financial barriers (housing, food, tuition, etc.)
- Make website easier to navigate
- Lack of resources
- Retention of staff and faculty
- Need accurate data
- Financial aid/ Finances
- Online learning
- College readiness
- High school population is smaller
- Senior classes 1-2 years behind, loss of spark
- Application fee (barrier to students) – could survey or dig deeper into financial aid applicants; could have a fee waiver process
- COVID
- “I don’t need support”
- IS support to provide accurate information to student—financially
- Working with People Soft
- Consistent staffing
- So many steps to get into a class
- Streamline process
- There is a major gap between academics and student success
- COVID
- Current enrollment
- Silo-ism
- Advising
- Inconsistent communication (what’s happening on campus)
- Too many cooks in the kitchen with too many recipes at one time
- Branding and messaging don’t align with how great and celebrating what we are
- Community standards—shared vision/culture—focus more on equity
- Terrain has changed—needs new map
- Lack of professional development training adapting to student needs
- Waiting for legislative decisions to take action
- Red tape on decision-making and serving students
- Silo effect –hard to communicate and collaborate
- Lots of barriers for students to enroll—lack of people/resources in those related departments
- No distinct leadership in this division—no direction
- Traditional 8-5 pm mindset and office hours
- Rebranding the university would cost money, time, and energy
- Lack of funding (for everything)
- University centers lack of clarity and mission, capacity—lack of understanding of other departments
- Advising—not enough resources
- Micromanagement and bureaucracy—processes that add so much administrative oversight
- Over-reliance on on-campus student for funding
- Lack of faculty of color

- Challenges with inclusivity and sense of belonging
- Lack of equitable policies, equitable pedagogy, and teaching styles
- Lack of faculty and staff people of color
- Shrinking faculty
- Be more present at orientations, outreach, social media—challenge with staffing shortage
- Integrated care within health and wellness
- Mobile clinic care
- Lack of cooperation with faculty
- Inability for early outreach to first generation students
- Lacking Spanish language resources/website
- Exposure of youth due to COVID/campus visits/camps

Opportunities and Challenges

- Connect students and staff through co-curricular activities
- Connect faculty and students through curricular activities
- Connect faculty and staff through programs
- Make this an integrated and connected experience
- Staff have student development understanding, organizational process expertise that needs to be fully used
- Faculty have disciplinary expertise
- Need opportunities to communicate experience to staff and administration
- Need to increase knowledge of each other and decrease barriers
- Purposeful collaborative programming (eg, publishing)
- Orientation vs onboarding
- Student-centered, co-curricular—extend academic into student affairs
- Leaders are models
- All divisions up to date on knowledge--Website! Websearch, up to date regularly, funding to communication
- Financial Aid--Assistance, finance planning, finance wellness resources, understaffing and equitable pay, resources and retain—staff must feel valued; communication on what is going on
- Clear pathway of the majors
- Graduate programs—clear path of degree; GA and TA need more; extended program cannot use faculty and staff tuition waiver; staff would stay if could get masters; promote GA outside of Department of Degree

II. What organizational structure (at the division level) would best support this vision?

- We believe that separating Student Affairs from Academic Affairs would be positive. However, the commitment of these leaders to collaborate is critical.
- Provost area too big; need separate voice for students; eg someone who can talk about students' experiences; need to be relational; no one on ELT that represents students except Provost
- Enrollment, Financial Aid, Student Services together in a Division of Student Affairs
- Student Affairs division separated, working collaboratively with Academic Affairs; philosophically student-driven as opposed to being financially driven

- Division with closer relationship between enrollment management and student success
- Separate student Affairs; bridging the gaps from students to administration; accessibility to the administration
- Inverted pyramid, with, at the top: students, then staff/faculty/administration/cabinet/president/BOT at bottom
- We have the features to draw enrollment, we need to drive the focus to those things; collaboration between departments; fewer insular working areas
- Mentorship program; facilities for non-academic challenges for our students (pandemic-related anxiety); use lower level knowledge for ideas about how to recruit, retain, etc; increased representation at the cabinet level for Academics—eg, VP Research (proportional representation)
- All advising under the same division; no matter what structure, better collaboration; separate housing from academics
- One focused on recruitment and retention; support students and staff; understanding our why; flattening with less middle man/levels to go through; communication
- Student affairs and enrollment management together; current structure in marketing and Public Affairs is fractured; connect graduating students to jobs; who to call for what (campus operator); student success at VP level
- Trust from higher ups (accessing budget and funding); need processes streamlined and better orchestrated; thinking of student club example—delegate authority: be clear who to go to for which things (can feel like there are gaps in priorities)
- Organizational communication; connection between departments; streamlining a better system; independent entity or interconnections
- Having one division focused on student cycle; breaking silos of separate departments (see Student Affairs model of 2010) – barrier could be the slowing of collaboration and barriers to customer service
- Staff doesn't know structure; what is a division
- Division of Student Affairs; blend Student Affairs and Enrollment Management; Division of Enrollment Management; Student Affairs and Financial Affairs; Advising?
- One head chief of student services able to make changes; VP access to the President (remove barriers; articulate purpose and goal to clearly drive vision, every turn has a different goal); help transitions for student admissions to other student services; focus on best practices and evolving trends (consistent expectations for assessment)
- Student Success (orientation, financial aid, advising, student living) – mix of student affairs and business and finance; distinct leadership and public figure; office of communication within student affairs (united voice); transparency with our growth measurements (consistent over time)
- Better student-faculty communication; support the departments that fit the university's brand (CWU is known as an arts college); have student leadership in all departments advocate for the needs of their respective departments; communicate. Advocate. Support
- Integration of academic and student affairs—but how? Need to think through staffing; faculty need to be connected to students; co-curricular work in the departments (faculty director appointed to each center; work with director of center to lead programs). DEC to include a Faculty Director and a Director, which then connect with academics and faculty, events and programs, co-curricular, cohort of students; El Centro to include a Faculty Director and a Director, with similar connections

- VP Student Affairs; University of Wisconsin – separate Student Affairs and DEI divisions; more advising staff; learning-living communities connect to UNIV 101; broader organization of the institutional organization; mental health with more counselors and more opportunities to meet students where they are; one stop shop for all options—the express navigator
- A division that includes all student-facing services would best serve students, staff, and retention efforts

III. What characteristics would we want to see for leadership of this vision?

- Empathetic and decisive; present in the space; transparent; take risk; student centered (those that are here); facilitated communication; support of staff; learner
- Consistency, clarity, stability, academics support
- Communication; active listener; engagement at all levels; accessible; compassion; action
- Communication; confident decision maker; consistency; involvement and collaboration; ownership of decisions and actions; how does Dean of Undergraduate Studies affect this?
- Communication for respect, collaboration, and transparency between all levels; clear expectations for communication through all levels, for both lower and higher levels; a leader, not a boss; community engagement with campus presence; consent and boundaries work on all levels to improve environment
- Depth in expertise in the challenges that our students face; undo siloing
- Collaborator
- Communication, trusting reports to do job; representation—students see themselves in leaders/staff/faculty
- Laser focused on student experience
- Healthy campus culture without the undercurrent of fear—people need to be able to speak out; support staff wellness and retention
- Better communication between students and faculty: more accessible; presence, serious connections
- Service and student-focused leadership for the Student Affairs division; innovative, dynamic, experienced, compassionate, empathetic, personable, charismatic; “What made CWU unique?”
- Leadership needs to be collaborative and listen; student-centered; proactive
- Accessible, focused and invested, hands-on and collaborative, flexibility in communication, code-switching
- Communication, collaboration, DEIB, Student-centeredness, transparency, strategic
- Transparency; grass-roots knowledge of personnel and processes; open communication (project management); data driven decision making; create an environment of trust
- Support (both socially and monetarily) pre-existing strengths; specialized education opportunities supported; humility-acknowledging what we are and aren’t; trusting the voices from in departments, acknowledge their needs; open and clear communication; adequate funding for existing successful programs/services; not expecting more with less; honor institutional knowledge rather than try to reinvent what already works
- Communication skills; collaborative; clear goals with big vision; follow through
- As student population changes we respond to change to serve; willingness to change and be flexible—try things at ground level; follows through on ideas; people person (not data focused); balance; trust people to do their work; harness the pandemic change at a pace that is sustainable and exciting (vs. exhausting change); employee wellness focus/importance/value

- Strong listener; student advocate; seasoned student affairs professional; transparency; authenticity; relationship builder; heart!; soft skills; analytical; strategic; empathetic
- Experience in student success and business and finance side; prioritize morale (more than traditional team building)
- Communication: active listening to students; inter-departmental collaboration
- Trusting, gives autonomy; want to establish close connections with us; relational, someone who will come and connect and talk with you; shared governance; open door policy; transparency; consensus-builder; respect for people on the ground working directly with students
- Transparency, communication, ability to see the big picture, inspires others, strength based relationships