

Assurance Argument
Illinois Wesleyan University -
Bloomington, IL

Review date: 11-16-2026

Welcome Message for Review Team

Welcome to Illinois Wesleyan University.

It has been my honor to serve as president of this institution as we marked our 175th anniversary in 2025-26, and to be part of setting the course for the next 175 years.

We trust you will find that the students, faculty, staff and alumni of this University live by the guiding principle articulated by former IWU president, the late Minor Myers jr.: "Go forth into the world and do well, but more importantly, do good." Our students have adapted this into the phrase, "Do well, do good." As an institution, we're taking this on as our brand expression. We recognize how authentically it resonates with our community, and believe it speaks to future students about the promise of becoming more through an Illinois Wesleyan education.

As I enter my third year as president, I've aligned a new leadership team, and we have seen great progress in various initiatives:

- Completed construction of the Petrick Idea Center, which will be a hub for interdisciplinary collaboration, entrepreneurship, and innovation grounded in the liberal arts;
- With donor funding, we launched the Fisher Center for Interdisciplinary Quantum Science & Engineering, a first-of-its-kind initiative based on the conviction that quantum education should not be siloed within a single discipline or reserved for graduate-level studies, but open to undergraduate exploration at the intersection of physics, chemistry, computer science, mathematics, engineering, philosophy, and the broader humanities;
- Created the Center for Humanities, where we interrogate the relationship between humanistic study and artistic, ethical, and political issues in the contemporary world;
- Began developing a Center for Inquiry and Civil Discourse, where students will explore skills around curiosity, critical thinking, constructive dialogue, and connection, cultivating practices that are essential to discovery and innovation in all disciplines. Programming will foster abilities to navigate complex problems, interrogate one's own perspective, and take on the perspectives of others;
- Undertook a major upgrade in campus technology and data systems, including a move from Banner to Oracle ERP, which will improve access to University data while increasing the efficiency of operations and eliminating manual processes;
- Created a role of Assistant Dean for Student Success, focused on incorporating data-driven and trend-analysis strategies to support student retention, persistence, and degree completion;
- Stabilized enrollment, bringing in the largest incoming class in 15 years in 2025, and maintaining strategic targets in 2026;
- Produced a historic fundraising year, with gifts and pledges of \$34.8 million in FY26

setting a record for giving to institutions of higher education in McLean County, and more than tripling the yearly average raised for Illinois Wesleyan during the past decade;

- Prepared to launch our most ambitious capital campaign in University history, with carefully aligned objectives to create lasting impact for generations of students.

At Illinois Wesleyan, our distinct blend of professional training grounded in the liberal arts continues to evolve and prepare our graduates for successful, ethical, and meaningful lives. Together, we look forward to what's next.

1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A. Mission Alignment

The institution's educational programs, enrollment profile and scope of operations align with its publicly articulated mission.

Argument

Publicly Articulated

Illinois Wesleyan University's mission is encompassed in three areas: The Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and the University's strategic planning materials. The Mission Statement communicates the values the IWU community embraces. The Vision Statement elaborates on those core values to create an enhanced understanding of the University's purpose and expectations of and for its constituents. Strategic planning materials are multi-year initiatives that operate as the link between words and action. Mission-driven documents are prominently displayed on the University website, on academic and administrative department sub-pages and printed materials, as well as in the Faculty and Staff Handbooks.

Alignment with Educational Programs

Taken together, the mission documents reflect deep and enduring commitments to the pursuit of liberal inquiry and critical thinking, lifelong learning, social justice, diversity, global citizenship, and environmental sustainability. These commitments, as well as other mission-driven goals, are in alignment with the goals of the University's Shared Curriculum program, which provides the foundation of an IWU education. Students fulfill the goals of the Shared Curriculum by meeting the requirements within 14 broad categories that address problem-solving, oral and written communication, value systems, and formal reasoning, among others. In addition, these attributes are found throughout the University's academic units and are communicated through the course catalog, program-based mission statements and guidelines, and in the student learning goals within each respective academic unit's Strategic Assessment Plan (StrAP). Recent evidence concerning the alignment of mission-driven commitments and educational programs may be found in the University's current enrollment and revenue plan, which includes the establishment of the Petrick Idea Center (a center for interdisciplinary inquiry, collaboration, and creativity), the Fisher Center for Interdisciplinary Quantum Science & Engineering (an interdisciplinary curriculum hub for quantum programming at the undergraduate level), strategic curricular planning (e.g., new academic certificates and programs), and new athletic programs. All of these educational initiatives complement the University's mission and values, and evidence concerning the totality of IWU's planning commitments and educational programs may be observed in

Alignment with Enrollment Profile

The University's mission is in alignment with its enrollment profile. As noted in the mission documents, the University seeks to recruit and retain a highly talented and diverse student body that will engage in close interactions and collaborations with faculty and staff. These attributes are evident in the demographics of IWU students. For example, over the past 10 years, the domestic diversity of IWU's overall enrollment has significantly increased. Additionally, the average standardized test scores have maintained their high levels. Over this same period, despite reductions in student headcount, the student-faculty ratio has remained between 11 and 12:1. The University's retention and graduation rates remain high as well, reflecting a strong level of student engagement and satisfaction with the commitments made within the mission documents.

The University is a residential institution and prides itself on being a tightly-knit, supportive community. To retain a larger percentage of juniors and seniors on campus, which enhances the on-campus experience for all students, a three-year residency requirement is expected for most students, except under special circumstances. Approximately 80% of IWU students are housed on campus. The University expects this percentage to maintain or increase over time.

Alignment with the Scope of Operations (range of activities)

As noted earlier in this section, the University's enrollment and revenue plan outlines revenue and enrollment projections based on recent mission-driven strategic planning regarding academic and athletic enhancements. This planning document is the result of contributions from faculty, staff, the administration, and the Board of Trustees in efforts toward future budget development and enrollment management.

Similar to educational programs, the planning and implementation of student support services are strongly guided by the mission documents. As evident in the University's actions in recent years, great attention has been paid to student support services, especially concerning the overall quality of student life (i.e., physical places, acclimation, wellness, and programmatic opportunities). In December of 2022, the Office of Residential Life was moved to the Memorial Center. This office relocation provided greater visibility and accessibility to the students, thereby enhancing services. In the summers of 2023 and 2024, Munsell and Ferguson Residence Halls were renovated, which included new restrooms, updated bedrooms, and a complete makeover of the first floor. The management and day-to-day operations of the Illinois Wesleyan University Arnold Health Services were assumed by the Carle BroMenn Medical Center in Normal over the spring of 2023. This partnership with the University is to enhance preventive care and health education, including an increase in referrals to specialists in women's health, behavioral health, and orthopedics. Another recent enhancement to student services includes Rising Titan Summer Orientation, which is a one-day experience designed to facilitate fall registration for classes, engage in reflective conversations about the college experience, and meet Titan Orientation Leaders. Other campus improvements include the renovation of the Bertholf Dining Commons (summer 2025) and the refresh of the Nell Eckley Lounge in the Memorial Center (approved fall 2025).

Attention has also been directed towards student satisfaction and the campus climate to help ensure the IWU student experience is in alignment with its mission documents. Several assessments of students, faculty, and staff have taken place over the past few years. Examples are as follows:

- 2022, 2023 New Student Survey
- 2022, 2023 Returning Student Survey
- 2023, 2024 First-Year Student Satisfaction Survey
- 2023 Graduating Student Survey
- 2024 Sexual Assault Survey (Illinois Board of Higher Education)
- 2024 Diversity and Equity Survey
- 2025, 2026 First-Year Student Experience Survey

Results of these surveys were disseminated via several venues, including meetings and communications with the Retention Committee, Staff Council, faculty members, Cabinet, Student Senate, and the Board of Trustees. Conclusions and recommendations concerning the general campus environment, the campus programmatic environment, and the affirmation of institutional support were disseminated throughout the campus community and posted online. Summaries for many of these reports were also included in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness' Institutional Reports (i.e., email communications to faculty and staff), which are produced twice or more each year.

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1.B. Mission and Public Good

The institution's operation of the academic enterprise demonstrates its commitment to serving the public good.

Argument

The University's commitment to the public good is formalized in the Mission Statement and more directly asserted in two specific paragraphs within the Vision Statement:

The University will strive to graduate individuals who are intellectually curious, socially aware, environmentally informed, ethical, and engaged citizens, who make significant contributions to their local, national, and world communities.

The University will aspire to create an extended University community—including not only those on campus, but alumni, trustees, parents, donors, and friends in the local community and from around the world—that is welcoming to all and committed to Illinois Wesleyan's core beliefs, which emphasize the spirit of inquiry, intellectual integrity, breadth of knowledge and understanding, tolerance of dissent, respect for cultural diversity, and strength of character.

Evidence concerning the University's recent history regarding its commitment to the public good may be found throughout several University actions and activities, many of which are included as follows:

The Action Research Center (ARC) facilitates the alignment of University resources with community engagement opportunities. ARC creates partnerships where students, faculty, and staff collaborate with not-for-profits, for-profits, and educational institutions to address social justice issues in the communities we share. The ARC model of community impact uses asset-based community development strategies and project-based learning. ARC oversees a long-standing partnership with the West Bloomington Revitalization Project, where students have started programs such as the Tool Library and the Veggie Oasis, authored numerous grants (including being part of a team that received a \$1.4 million grant from the Illinois Department of Housing), and staffed the Bike Co-op through the Illinois Cooperative Work Study program. ARC also manages the Weir Fellowship in Action Research. The 2025 Weir Fellow student recipient created a partnership with the local school district to provide translation services to non-English-speaking families at registration, open houses, and parent-teacher conferences. Each spring, ARC offers a community-based research course, which is cross-listed in Sociology and Political Science, as well as a grant writing course in the fall. ARC is responsible for civic education outreach, including voter engagement efforts, and registered over 300 students to vote in the 2024 General Election. ARC staff have presented on community engagement innovation at national and local conferences.

The Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) of McLean County at Illinois Wesleyan University provides free consultative assistance and professional advice to small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs in McLean County and surrounding communities.

Services include: one-on-one management consultations, training workshops, market research, loan packaging help, assistance with financial projections, and information needed to make informed business decisions. Workshops and training are co-hosted throughout McLean County. Monthly sessions of “How to Start a Business in Illinois” are featured. Topics range from financing, marketing, personnel management, employee recognition, customer service, cybersecurity, and insurance.

Theatrical, musical, and artistic performances held on campus or supplemental venues (e.g., Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts, Holy Trinity, Wesley United Methodist Church, and streaming services) are attended by Bloomington-Normal residents and are reviewed in the local media. Exhibitions held by local and national artists, IWU faculty, and students are housed in the University's art galleries and regularly open to the public. The Lunch and Learn Series, co-sponsored by Illinois Wesleyan, McLean County Museum of History, Bloomington Public Library, and Collaborative Solutions Institute, regularly offers sessions featuring IWU faculty and staff sharing their interests and research with the local community. The University is pleased to welcome the public to hear the numerous speakers and performers from around the country and the world who visit the IWU campus. Many of these performances are offered free of charge.

For over 10 years, Illinois Wesleyan faculty have sponsored an annual intellectual theme to synthesize learning around a central concept and create a vibrant intellectual environment on campus for students, faculty, and staff. The theme guides common readings for first-year students, lectures and symposia (e.g., Faculty Colloquia, Founder's Day speaker, MLK Teach-In speaker, and John Wesley Powell keynote), co-curricular activities, and clustered courses with student showcase events. The annual theme works best when faculty, staff, and students are inspired by how their current interests can be framed with the theme in mind. Many of these events are open to the public.

The use of the Shirk Athletic Center exemplifies one of the many ways in which the University encourages local community attendance and support. As a recreational facility for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the community at large, the Shirk Center also serves as a host facility for use by external groups such as the Illinois High School Association, the National Collegiate Athletic Association, the Special Olympics, group activities sponsored by McLean County and the Bloomington-Normal tourism board, and many other summer programs. One significant event held at the Shirk Center on an annual basis is the State Farm Holiday Classic high school basketball tournament. The University has 28 varsity teams for men and women, serving approximately 600 student-athletes. Thus, the Shirk Center is a key campus facility, making its accessibility to the surrounding community that much more impressive. As of 2025, there were approximately 800 Special User Passes to the Shirk Center, with 400 to 500 still active. Sixty-five different external groups utilized the facility for 120 actual dates. Seventy-five percent of the faculty, staff, and students make use of the facility regularly.

The School of Nursing and Health Sciences (SoNHS) offers examples where the relationships cultivated with the external community greatly enhance the learning offered within the professional programs. The SoNHS prides itself not only on the multiple clinical experiences in which our students engage but also on the diverse types of clinical experiences our program offers. Some examples include placements at local hospitals, large regional medical centers, elderly residential units, community health and home health agencies, juvenile detention centers, clinics, local and regional schools, and early childhood

centers. These experiences offered in multiple sites enable nursing students to compare various healthcare delivery systems and to study care in diverse populations. Some of the communities within the state where nursing clinical experiences are situated include Bloomington-Normal, Champaign, Clinton, East Peoria, Peoria, Hopedale, Mahomet, and Urbana. Additionally, more than 50% of nursing students complete an internship during their final semester. In response to the increased need for Spanish-speaking and culturally competent nurses in the United States, the SoNHS partners with the Hispanic Studies program to offer courses in medical Spanish and cultural competency that include one to two hours a week working at the local Community Health Clinic.

Students in the University's School of Educational Studies program engage in several clinical experiences external to IWU. Students often have a yearlong relationship with their cooperating teacher, working in public school settings for the semester before their student teaching with the same cooperating teacher. Student teachers are asked to take full responsibility for analyzing their strengths and challenges in direct cooperation with the cooperating teacher and the University supervisor. As a result, student teachers are fully supported and encouraged to develop their teaching competencies to the highest degree of proficiency possible for novice teachers. Cooperating teachers and public school officials know that students who progress through our program will receive an uncommon amount of attention and support from the University. IWU students are considered to be well-prepared and ready to assume classroom responsibilities when they pursue their clinical work. The large number of IWU graduates employed as teachers in our local school system is testimony to the strength of the program. In committing resources to a quality Teacher Education program, the University is reiterating to the wider world the importance of teaching as a core value within its mission.

The University's mission documents include service with external local, regional, national, and international constituencies. There is considerable evidence that supports the effectiveness of these engagements with each of these communities, as follows:

- **Weir Fellowship:** This fellowship involves initiatives that exemplify mission-driven attributes of creativity, character, and social awareness.
- **The IWU Peace Garden (PG):** Founded in 2012, the PG serves the curricular and culinary needs of IWU students, providing a tool of civic engagement with the surrounding community and beyond. Expanding its reach and impact on an annual basis, recent highlights from students engaged in PG activities include a Sustainability Education Program for local elementary students, the development of the Lloyd M. Berthof Apiary and IWU Beekeepers, and multiple community-based activities.
- **Language Resource Center (LRC):** The LRC supports the institution's mission by providing centralized, high-impact support for language learning, intercultural engagement, and global citizenship. As a hub for World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, the LRC coordinates tutoring, conversation practice, course-embedded support, intercultural programming, community outreach, and technology-enhanced learning to serve students across disciplines and proficiency levels. Through experiential programming and immersive tools, including virtual reality and virtual exchange, the LRC strengthens language proficiency, critical inquiry, and intercultural competence. Its work extends beyond the classroom through partnerships with local and international organizations, guest speakers, former language assistants, and community groups, connecting academic study to real-world contexts. Since 2020, the LRC has facilitated more than 8,000 tutoring sessions and hosted 43 campus-wide

and community-facing events, engaging over 1,500 participants. The LRC also provides high-impact, pre-professional experience and training for student tutors, focusing on transferable skills relevant across academic and career pathways. Tutors develop competencies in intercultural communication, leadership, collaboration, problem-solving, and digital literacy through structured support and hands-on experience. They work closely with faculty, support travel courses and immersive learning initiatives, and contribute to interdisciplinary programming linking language study with fields such as global studies, political science, wellness, music, and environmental and cultural studies. With a modest budget, the LRC leverages strategic partnerships, data-informed planning, and continuous innovation to deliver sustainable, mission-aligned support for teaching and learning.

- **IWU Language School for Kids (LSK):** Established in 2014, the LSK was made possible by an IWU Donnocker Program Innovation Grant. The School offers quality second language programs in French and Spanish that serve children from PreK to 5th grade from the Bloomington-Normal community and surrounding areas. The LSK supports IWU's mission by providing unique opportunities for students. It also creates on-campus teaching opportunities for IWU teacher pre-candidates and academic internships in the languages; promotes community engagement, and provides teaching experience to enhance competitiveness for post-graduate fellowships.
- **Technos International Prize:** A prize awarded to a senior IWU student who has excelled in both study and practice relating to international and global affairs as determined by the International Studies faculty at IWU.
- **Freeman Foundation Asia Internship at Technos International College:** Interns work with the English language teacher, and their duties can include assisting in the classroom, preparing for classes and exams, helping students with their homework, helping students practice their oral skills, and they may eventually teach a class. Interns spend early to mid-May to mid to late June in Japan, living in a nearby sharehouse.
- **STEAM Olympics:** For the past three years, IWU hosted a multi-day science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics event of hands-on learning for local students in first grade through high school.
- **Voting:** Finally, the use of the Hansen Student Center as a polling place for local elections is another example of how the University serves the community.

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1.C. Mission and Diversity of Society

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Argument

The University's commitment to recognizing its role in a multicultural society is evident in its mission documents. The Mission Statement articulates a commitment to diversity and social justice and acknowledges that "Our curriculum deepens the specialized knowledge of a discipline with a comprehensive world view." The Vision Statement provides a stronger stance concerning diversity.

The curriculum and cocurriculum will promote a strong sense of Illinois Wesleyan's place in the local and in an interconnected global community, and the University will demonstrate a meaningful commitment to social justice and environmental sustainability. The University is open to students, faculty, staff, and trustees from a wide range of experiences, viewpoints, cultures, and backgrounds. In this setting, all members of the University community—students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni, Trustees, and friends—will be valued contributors to campus life.

As noted in the 09.18.25 email messages to the IWU community, the University reallocated resources in response to the guidance on federal expectations facing higher education, specifically associated with diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Over the fall of 2025, the University established a new Office of Campus Culture. This office focuses on cultivating a sense of community through meaningful engagement, shared learning, and open dialogue. Programs explore cultural traditions and a variety of viewpoints. The Office of Campus Culture is aligned with Student Affairs, with the charge to transform programs that support retention and growth opportunities for every Illinois Wesleyan student. Important activities fall under four broad categories:

- Educational (e.g., cultural conversations, traditions, Dr. MLK Jr. Teach In)
- Building Bridges (e.g., Bridging the Gap/Deliberative Dialogue, pre-orientation)
- Belonging (e.g., peer mentors, cultural and spiritual support, incident reporting)
- Celebrating Campus Cultures (e.g., Unity Gala, cultural celebrations)

During the summer of 2026, a report was presented to the Board of Trustees regarding the observable trends and recommendations.

The information that follows this passage reflects a historical perspective on IWU before the noted structural changes. In some instances, the programs noted below continue to be supported by the Office of Campus Culture.

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The organizational structure charged with supporting and guiding the University in achieving our goals concerning diversity and inclusion is led by the University's first Vice President of Inclusive Excellence (VPIE), a Cabinet-level position established in the 2022-2023 academic year. The VPIE supervises the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI). The ODI is dedicated to the promotion of a campus community that appreciates, encourages, and celebrates diversity. The ODI advocates for students, creates spaces for cultural celebrations, promotes leadership development, and provides opportunities for education and reflection about multicultural, privilege, and gender issues. Emphasis is placed on the experiences and needs of underrepresented and marginalized students.

Over the summers of 2022, 2023, and 2025 (after a one-year hiatus), ODI sponsored the Summer Enrichment Program (SEP), which focused on three major areas involving the professional, academic, and personal growth of the participants. As a part of the program, students received formal professional training utilizing a variety of activities to address proper dining etiquette, appropriate dress attire in business settings, interview skills, and to hone public speaking abilities; learn from diversity workshops, complete an internship, and participate in volunteer activities that culminate in a final social service project. Once the students complete the program, they receive a merit scholarship to use for any academic purpose.

The VPIE also established the Diversity Advisory Council (DAC), which is responsible for supporting the University's commitment to diversity and social justice. Since its inception in February 2024, the Council has been gathering data to inform current initiatives and future strategic planning efforts. There are also DAC subcommittees working on a Chosen Name process for IWU and a Land Acknowledgement Statement, as well as a resource list for IWU and community resources for several different identity markers.

Before the establishment of the VPIE, IWU had a long-standing committee (since 2009), the University Council for Diversity (UCD). The UCD included staff, student, and faculty representatives and was inspired by the American Association of Colleges and Universities' (AAC&U) initiative, *Making Excellence Inclusive*, and adopted "inclusive excellence" as a supplemental mandate for its work. Both the Provost Office and the Human Resources Office have agreed to use such language in their recruiting materials. "Inclusive excellence," in its full text, is as follows:

The integration of diversity and educational quality efforts into the core of the academic mission and institutional functioning. Diversity and inclusion are conceptualized as a multi-layered process through which we achieve excellence in learning; research and teaching; student development; institutional functioning; local and global community engagement; workforce development; and more.

UCD outcomes still utilized today include the 2013 adoption of the Bias Incident Reporting Protocol, which is included in the faculty, exempt, and non-exempt staff handbooks, and is also made available to students. This University-wide policy to collect data elements concerning bias incidents allows for the identification of patterns and recommends programmatic responses to improve conditions that contribute to bias incidents. In 2024, the University established the Bias Educational Support Team (BEST), which receives bias incident reports and follows up with documentation and investigation, allowing the University to monitor and evaluate the campus climate on an ongoing basis.

Another significant UCD outcome was the establishment of Search Advocates (SA) for all personnel recruitment. Trained through the Oregon State University Search Advocate Program, IWU faculty and staff serve on personnel searches to ensure inclusivity and to introduce the possibility of unconscious bias. Working with an SA is a requirement, whether there is a search committee or not. The SA must participate in all aspects of the hiring process, but is not expected to have voting rights. The SAs are there to provide oversight to the search process to ensure that the University is using search opportunities to diversify our faculty and staff. In addition, a candidate statement addressing their preparation concerning the University's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion is required.

The Admissions Office has sponsored several programs to reach out to prospective students from diverse backgrounds. Since 2010, the office has held the ¡Tu Universidad! (Your University) program for prospective students and their parents. Sessions regarding the admission and financial aid process were offered both in English and Spanish. The Admissions Office has also conducted "Multicultural Weekends" for prospective students, and, over the past decade, has created new summer programs to educate prospective high school students and to engage them in considering the educational opportunities available at IWU.

Evidence concerning the University's support for LGBTQIA students includes the LGBTQIA Student Life webpage, which contains numerous resources, including a faculty and staff "out" list, an LGBTQ+101: Terminology page, and information concerning all-gender restrooms and support for transgender students. IWU also has a Rainbow Floor, which is a gender-inclusive living-learning community committed to counterspace, education, and activism around social justice for LGBTQIA and TGNC people. The Rainbow Floor, currently located in Dolan Hall, was formerly the entire first floor of Pfeiffer Hall.

The University annually offers SafeZone training to empower faculty, staff, and students to serve as resources for individuals who are interested in becoming more knowledgeable about sexual orientation and gender identity. SafeZone also provides LGBTQIA students and employees with easily identifiable, supportive spaces to feel comfortable and safe in a confidential environment.

Special events sponsored by ODI include the annual charitable Drag Show (hosted by the Pride Alliance) and the Lavender Graduation ceremony, which recognizes graduating students' contributions to IWU and the LGBTQIA community. In addition, the IWU Pride Alliance, a student-run organization dedicated to equality for all students regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, provides social and political support to help ensure the safety and equality for all in the community.

In keeping with the Illinois Wesleyan mission, the International Office, through its services and programs, seeks to develop students' ability to understand and analyze contemporary societies outside the U.S.; enable students to understand their own identity and culture and be sensitive to commonalities and differences among and within cultures; help students deepen and broaden their disciplinary knowledge through study abroad; and prepare students for responsible citizenship in a global community. In this role, the Office has three primary functions: (1) assisting international students and scholars, (2) advising and assisting IWU students who want to study abroad with a partner program, and (3) administering the University's semester-long and short-term study-abroad programs.

In order to recognize IWU colleagues who have made outstanding contributions that champion diversity, inclusion, and sustained commitment, the University instituted the Inclusive Excellence Leadership Award. Established in 2018, the award identifies faculty and staff who have made exceptional efforts in celebrating diversity and demonstrating a commitment to advancing inclusion to create a safe and supportive community. The award recipients were nominated and selected by students, faculty, and staff.

A number of mission-driven initiatives concerning diversity, engaged citizenship, social justice, and personal development extend beyond the classroom. Evidence includes the following:

- **STEP Peer Mentoring Program:** Sponsored by ODI, the Succeeding Through Empowerment and Proactiveness (STEP) Peer Mentoring program pairs incoming students from underrepresented backgrounds with an older student to provide them with support and guidance to enhance students' social and personal adjustment to Illinois Wesleyan University.
- **The Center for Human Rights and Social Justice:** The Center brings together numerous human rights programs and initiatives from across campus. The Center annually sponsors five student summer internships, four internationally prominent human rights speakers, two Undergraduate Research Workshops, two campus-wide human rights workshops, and the Peace Fellows program, where selected students pursue integrated coursework, internships, and independent studies that relate to social justice, peace, and conflict resolution themes.
- **Asian Pacific American Coalition (APAC):** The APAC holds events to celebrate and promote appreciation and awareness of Asian culture on campus, which serve as spaces to promote community and camaraderie between Asian students and the student population as a whole. In past years, events celebrating Asian heritage and culture included Friendsgiving, Red Envelope & Wishes, Lantern-Painting, and Origami Valentines. In 2023, the APAC won the Registered Student Organization of the Year award, followed by the Collaborative Program of the Year award in 2024.
- **Black Student Union (BSU):** The BSU holds meetings and an outing to ensure members have a sense of community on and off campus. The BSU ensures black and marginalized communities' voices are represented in decision-making through collaborations with other cultural RSOs. They also offer opportunities for people of different backgrounds to celebrate excellence and organize against injustice. In 2023 and 2025, BSU won the Social Justice Program of the Year award.
- **Women in Finance:** Members are provided a safe space to address their needs to become successful in the finance industry, facilitating confidence to go out in the real world and accomplish extraordinary things. Support and guidance are provided to achieve the Bloomberg Market Concepts certification, which is a unique and valuable career asset.
- **IWU Global Storytelling Project:** The Illinois Wesleyan University Global Storytelling Project is an audio collection with stories, poems, and proverbs in languages from around the world. It is a free resource, open to the public. Visitors to this site are free to listen to these recordings for their enjoyment and to use them for educational purposes. The Project is supported in part by a grant from the Illinois Prairie Community Foundation (IPCF) and The Byron S. Tucci Endowment Fund.

As noted in Criterion 1.A., the University engages in several campus-wide assessments to help ensure that all students, faculty, and staff from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas,

and perspectives are having the IWU experience that is consistent with its mission documents.

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Criterion 1 Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Argument

Illinois Wesleyan University's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations. The University developed its Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and strategic planning materials in a transparent campus-wide manner that communicates and elaborates the core values embraced by the University community. As a highly mission-driven institution, the asserted commitments permeate the planning, decision-making, and budgetary processes in direct and indirect manners, and are consistently expressed in electronic and print media, as well as in multiple public forums. These processes and activities reflect the University's obligations to its internal and external constituencies and demonstrate that its educational roles and responsibilities serve the public good.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A. Integrity

Actions taken by the institution's governing board, administration, faculty and staff demonstrate adherence to established policies and procedures.

Argument

The University upholds and protects its integrity. The moral and ethical principles embraced by the University are pervasive within its mission documents, which are reflected in the policies and processes for the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Adherence to the values within the University's mission documents occurs because of the close communication among the Board of Trustees (BOT) and University constituencies. Board of Trustees meetings regularly include representatives from the Student Senate, Staff Council, and elected members from the faculty, including the Chair of the Council on University Programs and Policy (CUPP), the primary representative governance body of the faculty. Other constituency representatives are invited to give presentations when their efforts are deserving of recognition, comment, or discussion. Reports from BOT meetings are produced by the faculty and circulated via email to faculty and staff. Additional evidence concerning Trustee business may be observed through the BOT meeting minutes.

Communication among administrative units is also vital to the University in maintaining the integrity of its operations. As noted in the organizational chart, vertical lines of authority generally lead to the Vice Presidential/Provost level, where leaders manage their units with a noticeable degree of autonomy.

The President holds weekly meetings with University leadership personnel, which may include different iterations of colleagues depending on the week (i.e., Direct Reports, Leadership Team, Cabinet, Super Cabinet). Members attending these meetings include the following:

- President
- Chief of Staff
- Provost and Dean of Faculty
- Vice President for Finance and Operations
- Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students
- Vice President for Advancement
- Vice President for Enrollment
- Vice President for External Partnerships & Strategic Initiatives
- Athletic Director

- Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness
- Associate Vice President for Human Resources and Title IX Coordinator
- Chief Marketing & Branding Officer
- Director of University Communications
- Chief Information Officer
- Associate Provost
- Chair, Council on University Programs and Policy
- College and School Deans

Most IWU leadership officers (e.g., provost, vice presidents) are responsible for submitting unit- and mission-driven accomplishments at the end of each month. As necessary, the President summarizes this information in reports provided to the Board of Trustees. The leadership meetings further serve as a space where leaders from the various units share information and offer advice on matters of collective importance to the institution. Communication among academic units occurs similarly. CUPP representatives are elected from their respective divisions, and the Council advises the Provost and the President on matters brought to its attention by the President, the Provost, any member of the Council, or any faculty member. Similar to CUPP, the University's staff members are represented by the Staff Council, which serves as an advisory body for the University administration and plays a key role in campus decision-making. Members, both exempt and non-exempt staff, are elected by their peers from all areas of campus to rotating three-year terms. The Council annually conducts elections to fill staff vacancies on selected University committees.

Many of the rights, responsibilities, and protections offered to members of the University community are enumerated within a series of handbooks, designed to address the needs of specific University groups. The Student Handbook, for example, includes regulations and policies affecting students and is available online to all students. Portions regarding academic components are repeated in the University Catalog. The policies and procedures that it documents address both the academic and social aspects of student life, including the following:

- policies involving harassment and intolerance
- sexual harassment and assault
- bias incident reporting
- students with dependents
- anti-hazing
- the course syllabus, attendance, and grading
- class meetings and final examinations
- course loads, grades and standards
- exceptions to academic requirements
- grade appeals
- student conduct and academic integrity
- cheating and plagiarism
- student records
- student access
- withdrawal from the University

As the Student Handbook makes clear, students are required to abide by University regulations on campus, in University-affiliated areas, and at all University functions. These regulations include information technology as well. Guidelines that govern the use of

technology address network and systems integrity, copyright and licensing, privacy, appropriate and ethical use, disciplinary actions, and liabilities.

The Faculty Handbook similarly contains policies and procedures regarding the conduct of the University faculty, including general faculty meetings, standing committees, and faculty personnel policies (faculty appointments, tenure and advancement, post-tenure review, complaints and grievances, and separation from the University). Faculty responsibilities, resources, and related policies are also outlined (including those involving teaching, academic advising, and related activities, leaves, professional travel, and grant opportunities). Other University statements that form a portion of the Faculty Handbook include the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) Statement on Professional Ethics, policy statements concerning information technology, alcohol and drug use, sexual harassment, and statements regarding the conduct of research. Finally, the faculty-elected Hearing Committee conducts informal proceedings and formal hearings concerning grievances brought against faculty members or members of the academic administration, reviews of the procedures related to due process of the Promotion and Tenure Committee, or dismissals for cause.

The Exempt and Non-exempt Staff Handbooks function in a similar manner as the Faculty Handbook, documenting employment policies, hours, wages, employee benefits, safety issues, a code of conduct, general information, and institutional policy statements. A whistleblower policy is in effect for all members of the University community. It is publicly accessible on the University resources webpage and is included in faculty, staff, and student handbooks. The policy allows for anonymous reporting by calling the Campus Conduct Hotline toll-free at 866-943-8757. The policy includes Board members as well as students, faculty, and staff, and covers areas as diverse as employment, athletics rule violations, financial improprieties, safety and security, and student concerns. The policy also clearly delineates to whom one should report an alleged violation, along with the language indicating a process for adjudicating complaints resulting from incident disclosure. As noted in Criterion 1.C., the Campus Culture Incident Report (formerly Bias Incident Reporting Protocol) is utilized to compile general information regarding the frequency of campus discrimination incidents and the speed of their resolution.

Of primary importance to a residential community is its ability to maintain security and safety. To this end, Campus Safety works closely and in harmony with the local police and non-police community service agencies and ensures that the University complies with The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, the federal law that requires colleges and universities across the country to disclose information about crime on and around their campuses. A link to campus crime statistics on and around campus is accessible from the Campus Safety webpage.

The University also engages in the Green Dot Bystander Intervention Program that trains students, faculty, and staff in bystander intervention to help prevent power-based personal violence. All University employees are required to undergo sexual assault prevention training on an annual basis per Illinois law. The University also recognizes the requirements of Title IX legislation, and its Title IX Coordinator, the Associate Vice President for Human Resources, is in charge of handling Title IX complaints. The Student Affairs Division has sponsored annual Campus Safety Walks, where students, faculty, and staff walk campus with an eye to any safety concerns (e.g., lighting, landscaping, sidewalk/trip hazards, etc.).

The Director of the Physical Plant, in his capacity as Co-Chair of the University Safety Committee, consults with campus departments to ensure that federal guidelines for safety are met in the workplace, including correct labeling and the disposal of chemicals, and appropriate laboratory safety regulations are being followed. In addition, each employee of the University receives training upon hire concerning the maintenance of a safe and healthy working environment. Other initiatives include the Hazard Communication Program (i.e., hazardous material inventory, Material Safety Data Sheets, proper labeling) and personal protective measures regarding blood-borne pathogens. All members of the physical plant are mandated to attend safety training sessions relevant to their work environment, which were provided by an outside consultant.

Additional areas require federal compliance as well. For example, the University Librarian serves as Copyright Compliance Officer, and library faculty and staff members help the institution by assuring copyright compliance for materials used in classes as well as for the promotion of faculty research. In addition, faculty and administrators serve on the Institutional Review Board, while the activities of the University animal facility are monitored by staff veterinarians from the community who work with the chair of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. Ongoing compliance with the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILC 5/4) is accomplished via the Human Resources, Financial Aid, and Physical Plant offices through orientation sessions for new employees and vendors. The policy and acknowledgement forms are posted on the University website and are repeated in the Faculty and Staff Handbooks. Additionally, employees are notified via an email containing a link to online mandatory training when it is time to renew (once every three years). The Division of Student Affairs adheres to the American College Personnel Association's (ACPA) Ethical Principles and Standards and to the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) Statement of Shared Ethical Principles. As noted later in Criterion 3, the Division of Student Affairs conducts regular, ongoing reviews using CAS criteria. Most recently, in the spring of 2025, all of the University's faculty and staff engaged in Title VI training. IWU partnered with KnowBe4, a web-based training module that provided intelligence concerning the reporting of incidents related to race, ethnicity, and national origin.

Finally, the University takes its obligations under the Family Education Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA) seriously. During First-year Orientation and other public events at the beginning of each academic year, students, parents, and faculty are apprised of the rights of students concerning the protection of students' confidentiality regarding the sharing of records and information. When parents contact faculty or administrators with concerns involving their students, they are immediately informed as to the importance of maintaining confidentiality between the student and the University official, which in many cases restricts what can or cannot be shared with the parent. Evidence concerning the dissemination of information concerning the FERPA is included in the Student and Faculty Handbooks, as well as the Student Affairs Webpage and IWU Parent Portal. In addition, the University's compliance with the Federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) is noted on the Health Services website for students, and on the Human Resources website for faculty and staff. The use of an annual independent audit performed by CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, whose reports are reviewed by the Board of Trustees, is an additional example of institutional reliance upon independent external expertise to ensure the integrity of its internal policies and procedures.

Sources

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- PRES_OIE_board_minutes
- PRES_OIE_board_reports
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- PRES_OIE_org_chart

2.B. Transparency

The institution presents itself accurately and completely to students and the public with respect to its educational programs and any claims it makes related to the educational experience.

Argument

Illinois Wesleyan University utilizes several electronic and print media communications to publicly present the institution's programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, and accreditation relationships. The IWU Catalog documents the academic standards, policies, costs, program requirements, and course descriptions of the University. The Catalog is reviewed and edited annually under the supervision of the Associate Provost in conjunction with the Registrar and the Dean of Curricular and Faculty Development. Actions and minutes from the Curriculum Council and regular meetings of the faculty are reviewed for curriculum and policy changes throughout the academic year. After the final faculty meeting in April, the updated Catalog sections are distributed to the appropriate departments for review. The Catalog is published every year on or around August 1st. It is distributed in hard copy to University departments and is published on the University's website.

MyIWU Portal and App

The free MyIWU Portal and App grants students access to grades, courses, email, an app-based planner, campus events, dining options, laundry availability, a student directory, and a University map that generates directions to buildings on campus based on the user's current location. The application can be downloaded for free by searching "Illinois Wesleyan" within the App Store, for iPhones and iPads, and within the Google Play Store, for Android devices. The MyIWU Portal may be accessed via IWU email address and password.

Web Communications

The Illinois Wesleyan website is the primary public medium for external audiences to gain access and information about the University and is also widely used by internal audiences. The Office of University Marketing Communications (OUMC) is responsible for the website's overall design and content creation for the home page, level 2 pages, and other key informational pages. The OUMC directs and guides the development of department-level website content, working closely with Academic Affairs, academic departments, the Office of Admissions, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, and administrative offices to ensure the accuracy of information. The OUMC provides training, guidelines, assistance, and publishing approval to the more than 100 individual web managers who manage content on academic and administrative department webpages. Communications employs a Web Developer who programs the public-facing website and maintains interdependent campus web-based systems. In addition, The Ames Library, through Digital Commons, makes available selections of outstanding student work, faculty research, and University records, including recent works that only exist electronically as well as digital surrogates scanned from the

University's archival collection. The Ames Library also provides access to faculty research via the IWU Scholarship webpage. A link to statements of accreditation and non-discrimination is found on the footer of every webpage and on the Office of Institutional Effectiveness website (see Statements of Accreditation and Non-discrimination).

Social Media Communications

The Social Media Manager (SMM) directs the University's flagship Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, X, and other social media sites. The Office of University Marketing Communications (OUMC) has authored guidelines for independently managed social media sites to help ensure consistency and accuracy of information. The OUMC and other departments (Admissions, Alumni, Advancement) post information and announcements of interest and value concerning campus events and the accomplishments of faculty, students, and alumni. The SMM continually monitors these sites and responds appropriately to questions or complaints.

Email Communications

The Office of University Marketing Communications also publishes several versions of Campus Weekly, electronic newsletters, which are emailed to students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni, and community supporters on Monday mornings during the school year and bi-weekly during the summer months. These emails promote the scholarship and achievements of our students, faculty, and alumni and inform the community about noteworthy events taking place during the week, as well as other valuable information.

Publications and Promotional Materials

The Office of Admissions, working collaboratively with the Office of University Marketing Communications, Academic Affairs, academic departments, and others, creates publications and promotional materials that are designed to accurately reflect the rigor of the academic programs, present accurate cost and financial aid information, and accurately portray the culture, mission, and values of the institution. Selected admissions brochures contain statements of accreditation and non-discrimination, along with other important information located on the back cover of these publications.

Alumni Magazine

For over 30 years, Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine has been the flagship publication of IWU and was distributed three times a year to approximately 25,000 alumni, friends, parents, faculty, staff, and students. Currently, the Magazine is undergoing a revamp and will relaunch in Fall 2026. The University also produces an online version of the magazine that provides highlights of each issue, a complete digital version, and links to past issues (<https://www.iwu.edu/magazine/>). To communicate effectively with alumni and other constituents, IWU strives to create strong, lasting impressions through stories and images of the University's achievements, aspirations, and values. These stories inspire our readers to become effective ambassadors of IWU and to feel more strongly invested in its continued success.

Student Handbook

The Student Handbook is intended to inform the University community about policies and

procedures concerning students. It consolidates information from many sources on topics ranging from academic processes to University services. It seeks to assist in the orientation of new students and to provide all students with an up-to-date reference on significant matters relating to IWU life.

Parent Outreach

The University uses a variety of methods to communicate with its students' parents. In addition to the University Catalog and Student Handbook, the Parent Portal service is available for interested families. Every parent of an IWU student has access to the Parent Portal, which contains news and events of interest to parents. However, access to certain student information is restricted by FERPA unless the student grants access. Orientation Services hosts Experience IWU: Family Orientation. Held in person or virtually via Zoom, Parent-Family Orientation consists of six sessions over six weeks and covers topics like Communicating with the University, the Academic Experience, College Life, Involvement Opportunities, and the Hart Career Center. The Parent Board, a group of Illinois Wesleyan parents who aim to assist students and strengthen the parent-university relationship, is another avenue of communication. Each summer, returning student letters that highlight the events of the summer and communicate policy changes are mailed to the students' home addresses each July.

Institutional Effectiveness

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) is an important University resource for a wide array of data elements for both internal and external purposes. Subjects include the following:

- Admissions
- University and Student Learning Assessment
- University Demographics
- Retention and Graduation Rates
- Majors of Graduates
- Degrees Awarded
- Continuing Education and Full-Time Employment Rates
- Revenues and Expenditures
- Endowment Market Value
- University Fees
- Financial Aid
- Class Size

The OIE also provides two webpages concerning the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Accreditation Statement (also in the University Catalog) and the HLC Reaffirmation of Accreditation process. Individualized accreditation information concerning education and nursing is available in the Catalog and on discipline-specific webpages.

Tuition, Fees, Room and Board Costs

Costs concerning the University's tuition, fees, room, and board are reported on the Consumer Disclosures webpage, the University Catalog, and the financial aid webpage. The Net Price Calculator is also available (via the Consumer Disclosures and Financial Aid), which is designed to provide an early indication of how much and what types of financial aid

students might qualify for if they attended IWU full-time. In addition, the University's costs are available in several marketing materials and in the University's Common Data Set via the Office of Institutional Effectiveness webpage.

Sources

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2.C. Board Governance

In discharging its fiduciary duties, the institution's governing board is free from undue external influence and empowered to act in the best interests of the institution, including the students it serves.

Argument

As outlined in the By-Laws of the Board of Trustees (BOT) of Illinois Wesleyan University, the affairs of the University shall be managed by the BOT, which includes the adoption of policies and the provision of resources for carrying out a program of higher education based on the liberal arts. The President of the University and the President's staff shall implement the policies and programs.

There are approximately 40 active members of the Board, which includes *ex officio* members, each with voting power, and elected members. Efforts are made to select Trustees from various diversity-related aspects, including geographical location, age, professional experience, gender, and race/ethnicity. Trustees serve a three-year term and receive no compensation for their services, but are reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred.

The Board of Trustees generally holds three regular meetings each year, with the option of specially called meetings as needed. Several committee meetings and a Student Senate report are held at each regular meeting. A periodic Board orientation is scheduled as necessary. The Executive Committee of the BOT meets four to six times each year.

The decision-making processes of the BOT are organized through eight standing committees, each with specifically defined functions, membership, and organization. Additionally, several subcommittees have been formed to address specific issues, including diversity initiatives, building and grounds, investment, farm investment, and social responsibility investment oversight. The discussions of all committee meetings are recorded in the Board minutes. Administrative officers, as assigned by the President, provide insights from campus constituencies to standing committees that consist of the following:

- **Executive Committee:** Exercises the authority of the Board in the interim between meetings of the Board to the extent permitted by law, the By-Laws, and by the Board itself.
- **Audit and Compliance:** Meet with an independent certified public accounting firm before and after the completion of an annual audit of the financial statements of the University for discussion of the scope and results of the audit and to report to the Board.
- **Academic Affairs:** Reviews all faculty advancements in rank and tenure, requests for leaves of absence, honorary degree selection, proposals concerning new degree offerings, and anything specific to the organization or dissolution of any department, division, or school.
- **Advancement:** Develop and recommend plans and policies, both short- and

long-range, designed to represent the University to its constituencies and elicit from them the maximum support.

- **Business and Finance:** Reviews the annual budget, financial reports, investment policies, and the condition of the physical plant. The Committee also arranges for an annual audit of the financial statements by a certified public accounting firm.
- **Campus Life:** Assesses the campus atmosphere, the extracurricular program, and intercollegiate athletics from the students' perspective as well as others directly concerned.
- **Enrollment and Marketing:** Provide oversight of the University's policies and procedures for student recruitment, admissions, and enrollment management (including financial aid), and for the University's marketing, communications, and public relations functions.
- **Trusteeship:** Make nominations concerning Board vacancies, corporate officers, Board Committee Chairs, Emeritus and Honorary Trustees, and other nominations as ordered by the BOT.

An essential component of service to the University is the preservation of independence from undue influence from various external parties. On an annual basis, the members of the Board, University officers, and selected faculty and staff are required to read and sign the Conflict of Interest Statement. These forms are reviewed by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. As noted in the Statement, those who have important fiduciary responsibilities and serve in a public-interest role should:

...conduct all affairs of the institution in a manner consistent with the highest ethical standards. Decisions of Board members, Officers, and selected faculty and staff of the University should be made solely on the basis of a desire to promote the best interests of the institution and the public good. Care should be taken to avoid conflict of interest – and the appearance of conflict of interest – between decisions and actions that benefit the institution and those benefiting involved individuals. This same concept extends to all persons employed by the institution, regardless of position.

As stated in Article VI in the By-Laws of the Board of Trustees, the President is the chief executive officer of the University. The President is responsible to the Board for the implementation of the policies it adopts and, subject to the authority granted by the Executive Committee, may create and fill any administrative or academic office deemed necessary to the effective functioning of the University. The President is the official medium of communication between staff and the Board, students and the Board, and, subject to authority granted by the Board, enters into salary contracts, institutional memberships, and other matters on its behalf.

Sources

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2.D. Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression

The institution supports academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of knowledge as integral to high-quality teaching, learning and research.

Argument

The Illinois Wesleyan University mission documents contain clear language that provides evidence concerning the University's commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. Representative statements from the Mission and Vision Statements affirming this commitment include:

The Illinois Wesleyan experience affords the greatest possibilities for realizing individual potential while preparing students for democratic citizenship and life in a global society.

As the University pursues this ideal for all of our students, we help students to follow a wide range of career and life paths...

A tightly knit, supportive university community...both challenges and supports students in their personal and intellectual development.

Students will be encouraged to develop their capacities, cultivate their individual talents, and pursue multiple interests, in a manner that fosters self-confidence coupled with humility.

Article II in the Faculty Constitution provides a strong position concerning academic freedom:

The faculty of Illinois Wesleyan University shall be afforded academic freedom and due process. Academic freedom is the freedom to teach, both in and outside the classroom, to research and to publish the results of those investigations, to address any matter of institutional policy or action, whether or not as a member of an agency of institutional governance. Professors should also have the freedom to speak to any matter of social, political, economic, or other interest to the larger community, subject to the academic standard of conduct applicable to each. The faculty endorses the principles set forth in the Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure appearing as Annex I to this Constitution, and as endorsed by the American Association of University Professors and the Association of American Colleges. It is noted that the Board of Trustees of Illinois Wesleyan University has adopted certain procedures from this statement (see Annex II By-laws of the Board of Trustees, Sec. 2.01C). Other procedures adopted from time to time to implement this constitution shall afford prompt resolution of the matter(s) involved.

Additional evidence concerning the University's commitment to freedom of expression is found in the faculty's adoption of the AAUP's Statement on Academic Freedom in Artistic Expression and the inclusion of the 1940 Statement of Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure in the Faculty Constitution.

In the spirit of fostering an environment that upholds the principles of freedom of expression,

academic freedom, and open dialogue, the University also has guidelines regarding University postings, peaceful rallies, and external speakers.

Sources

- PRES_OIE_academic_freedom
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- PRES_OIE_vision-statement

2.E. Knowledge Acquisition, Discovery and Application

The institution adheres to policies and procedures that ensure responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge.

Argument

The University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) is charged with protecting the safety, welfare, rights, and privacy of all participants in human subjects research that proceeds under the guidance of faculty, staff, and students. The purpose of the IRB is to ensure that all human subject research conforms to Federal regulations. Our Policy and Procedures derive from the ethical principles issued by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research in 1979.

The process for writing, reviewing, and commenting on the IRB application has been standardized. Online electronic forms are available on the IRB webpage, and detailed instructions are given in a step-by-step process to assist researchers before they send their final applications to the IRB. Since everything is handled electronically, applications can be reviewed, commented on, and sent to applicants promptly (10-14 days). The entire process is transparent, except for the identities of reviewers. If student research is involved, the IRB requires a faculty sponsor to review the research and instruct the student in completing the application before sending in a joint application. This ensures that the student learns the reason for the process and that the instructor is cognizant of the anticipated research. The IRB works with faculty regarding individual students who are taking senior seminars, honors, and independent studies, as well as classes engaged in a single class project (as is true of research methods courses). Recent IRB statistics offer a snapshot of the scope of the activities of the IRB over the past few years.

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), as delineated in the Faculty Handbook Chapter V1-174, oversees the applicable laws and makes sure that the protocol spelled out by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the United States Public Health Service (PHS) guidelines, as well as other relevant agencies, is followed. The Committee is responsible for overseeing and regulating the use of all live vertebrate animals at the University.

The Ames Library adopted its Information Literacy Mission Statement in 2006 and has a full-time Information Literacy Librarian to coordinate library instruction efforts. Library instruction and one-on-one research sessions are the primary means of teaching students to acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly. Over the past couple of years (FY23-FY24), for example, the Ames librarians taught an average of 91 in-class instructional sessions. Similarly, the Scholarly Communications program works with faculty and students on author rights and ethical conduct in publications. Recent evidence concerning The Ames Library and its information literacy initiatives includes the ITHAKA S+R study concerning Artificial Intelligence (AI) Literacy. Representing multiple disciplines and units, students and faculty were interviewed about using AI tools effectively and responsibly, as well as understanding their limitations, questioning their outputs, and considering the ethical, social,

and economic implications of AI in academic contexts. A summary of the findings is available in a [May 2026 report](#), while additional information will be forthcoming in Fall 2026.

The Ames Library also serves as the [copyright information center](#) for the campus and actively works with teaching faculty and the Provost's Office to educate about academic honesty in writing and research. The *Student Handbook* contains the [IWU Statement on Plagiarism](#). At the same time, The Ames Library faculty members regularly provide instruction on the ethical use of information to both faculty and students, including the use of online tools that assist students in accurately [citing scholarly references](#). Tutors at the IWU Writing Center also offer assistance with reviewing student writing and can help students avoid plagiarism incidents.

The Higher Education Opportunity Act enumerates specific requirements that all Higher Education institutions receiving federal funding are expected to enforce with respect to copyright law. Those requirements include:

- An annual disclosure to students describing copyright law and campus policies related to violating copyright law.
- A plan to “effectively combat the unauthorized distribution of copyrighted materials” by users of its network, including “the use of one or more technology-based deterrents.”
- A plan to “offer alternatives to illegal downloading.”

The University complies with the first mandate by describing and publicizing copyright law and policies related to its violation on both the Library and Information Technology websites. In addition, in concert with the Dean of Students Office, information is regularly shared about copyright and rights and permissions issues. The second mandate was secured by installing a firewall appliance called Palo Alto, which limits and blocks peer-to-peer file sharing. This has effectively stopped illegal downloading. The University complies with the third requirement by [posting several links](#) to free media via the Library copyright site, and with offerings through the Division of Student Affairs for movie viewing opportunities through Swank (a major non-theatrical movie and online CE/CME education distributor, and public performance licensing agent). In addition, the Library subscribes to a growing number of streaming media services that allow licensed access to content. (6)

Issues or questions regarding academic integrity are forwarded to the Associate Provost's Office. The University's policies concerning student conduct and academic integrity are available in the Student Handbook. Faculty who wish to file an incident of academic dishonesty should complete a form and forward it to the Associate Provost. Appeals are heard by the Academic Appeals Board, which is convened by the IWU Registrar. The Board follows specific procedures for those hearings. The number of cases handled by the office for academic years 2022-2023 through 2025-2026 is as follows:

- 2022-2023 = 12
- 2023-2024 = 40
- 2024-2025 = 32
- 2025-2026 = 7

Sources

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Criterion 2 - Summary

In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Argument

Illinois Wesleyan University operates with integrity, which is founded on the moral and ethical principles within its mission documents and reflected in the policies and processes for the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. The deliberation process of the University's governing board considers all constituencies in its decision-making within the context of promoting the best interests of the institution and the public good. The Board delegates the management and academic functions of the University to the administration and faculty, and successfully protects itself, as well as its leaders, from undue influence via the Conflict of Interest Statement. The University's strong commitment to freedom of expression, the pursuit of knowledge and truth, and the responsible application of knowledge is evident in the policies and practices described for all of IWU's constituencies.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning for Student Success

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

3.A. Educational Programs

The institution maintains learning goals and outcomes that reflect a level of rigor commensurate with college-level work, including by program level and the content of each of its educational programs.

Argument

As noted in the IWU Catalog, course numbers differentiate the University's courses and their required performance levels. One hundred-level courses are introductory studies in general areas of knowledge or work in basic skills. Two hundred-level courses include intensive studies in general areas of knowledge, basic studies in specialized fields of knowledge, or work in intermediate skills. Courses at the 300-level address advanced studies in general areas of knowledge, intensive studies in specialized fields of knowledge, or work in advanced skills. Finally, 400-level courses concern advanced studies principally for students who are majoring in the programs or departments. Levels 200 through 400 generally require previous studies in the areas or academic abilities normally acquired during several semesters of college work, respectively, of the courses.

Developing and maintaining courses and programs that ensure high levels of student performance involves several elements. As noted in the By-Laws of the Board of Trustees, members of the faculty are responsible for the review and maintenance of the curriculum. Much of this work is accomplished through the oversight of the Curriculum Council (CC), a faculty-elected committee by academic division, which recommends the approval of new and revised courses and curricula to the general faculty. Other elements include third-party accreditation standards that enhance and ensure high levels of student performance in areas such as chemistry, educational studies, and nursing. Additional evidence that IWU students' performance is appropriate to their degrees includes pass rates on standardized tests (e.g., education, nursing, accounting), placements in graduate and professional schools (e.g., allied health, arts & sciences, law), and high levels of employment following graduation.

Academic Rigor

Prerequisites: If a course requires prerequisites, they must be identified in the Request for Curriculum Council Action form, which is then considered through the Curriculum Council's proposal review and approval process. Prerequisites are listed in the course descriptions in

the IWU Catalog and are also enforced by departments and in online registration processes. The Curriculum Council must approve any changes in course prerequisites. Minutes of the Curriculum Council meetings are available on campus or via IWU login.

Rigor of Courses and Expectations for Student Learning: As indicated in the IWU Catalog, the University's courses and their respective levels of performance are organized via a numbering system that delineates the expectations of students. The rigor of courses is ensured through the faculty governance system, specifically by the Curriculum Council, which provides oversight on all matters concerning the curriculum. New or significantly revised course proposals must include a written rationale concerning the following:

- How does this course fit in with your overall program? That is, what role does it play in your academic unit's curriculum? How does it align (if at all) with your academic unit's student learning goals? And how does it reflect faculty/student interest?
- Who will teach the course? How will this course affect departmental course offerings and staffing?
- Are you deleting a course to make space for this one? (If the course cannot be offered at least once every two years, please explain the circumstances under which it will be offered.)
- Why are you offering the course at this level?
- If the proposed course unit is more or less than 1, please explain. (Is this request in line with the University policy on course units?)
- Explain how the library, computer, media or other resources are or are not adequate? (If resources are not adequate, please indicate how they will be acquired.)
- For Shared Curriculum/General Education courses, please read the category/flag description and goals carefully and explain in the proposal how the course meets the criteria for the appropriate category and/or flag. For 300- and 400-level courses, address how the course meets the additional requirements stated in the Criteria column for some categories.

Finally, credit at IWU is awarded based on the criteria of subject mastery or competence. As noted in the 2025-2026 IWU Catalog, the University has established detailed descriptions of student performance levels associated with each grade designation and quality points, which determine a student's cumulative grade average.

Credit and Transfer Student Procedures

As described in the 2025-2026 IWU Catalog, several conditions must be satisfied to receive college credit earned before high school graduation. These areas include Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and the Cambridge International Examinations.

To facilitate transfer, the University recently joined the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI; www.itransfer.org) as a receiving institution. As a result, students who have completed the General Education Core Curriculum (GECC) at any IAI participating institution will have made significant progress towards fulfilling the Shared Curriculum graduation requirements at Illinois Wesleyan. The formation of articulation agreements between IWU and several Illinois community colleges is an ongoing process.

All transfer students (including those transferring in with the IAI GECC package) must have

a 2.00 cumulative grade average for all college work (exclusive of military science) and for all work completed at Illinois Wesleyan to qualify for an undergraduate degree. Courses with grades below a C will not be accepted for transfer. Transfer students who have completed the IAI will still be required to satisfy other graduation requirements (including the other aspects of the Shared Curriculum: Encountering Diversity and Physical Education). Transfer students who have completed a statewide articulated associate degree, or who have been granted 30 semester hours of transfer credit without completing the GECC, will have the option to complete the GECC curriculum while enrolled at IWU. The Registrar, in consultation with the faculty and the Dean of Curricular and Faculty Development, shall evaluate all requests for transfer and Advanced Placement credit for Shared Curriculum courses and flags.

Transfer of credits from foreign institutions not affiliated with IWU must be accompanied by an official English language translation of the official transcript and the official course descriptions from the institution's catalog. All requests are evaluated by a transcript evaluation service, which is paid for by the student seeking transfer of credit. Credits from affiliated institutions will be accepted based on current institutional procedures without the evaluation service.

Common forms of experiential learning at IWU include academic certificates, off-campus study, internships, and credits in independent study or special topics research projects. The Associate Provost, the Curriculum Council, the student's academic advisor, and one or more faculty members who serve as directors and evaluators of the student's work approve these specialized programs for credit. Project proposals must be detailed and well-organized to be considered. For example, internships for credit require students to follow the official internship guidelines adopted by the faculty, which include a minimum of 160 on-site hours for one full-course unit of credit. Additional academic work is also required. Tracking is provided by using the Internship Learning Contract, which is completed by the student, on-site supervisor, and faculty supervisor before a student is registered for the course. Examples of experiential learning projects are available via the enclosed report .

Another evaluative process for the academic units is external reviews. After a postponement during the COVID-19 pandemic, external reviews were reestablished over the 2023-2024 academic year. A revised external review schedule was updated in the spring of 2026. The reviews center around several questions, including the following:

- How is the department's or program's mission related to IWU's mission and vision?
- Is the department following national trends and best practices for the content and rigor of the major(s), minor(s), or certificate(s)? Are curricular demands accessible to both majors and non-majors, as appropriate?
- Has the department/program identified student learning goals for the major and/or minor that are clear and measurable? How does the department/program assess progress on these goals?
- What are the short- and long-term priorities of the department or program? What are the needs and demands of the program in the context of existing resources?

IWU offers Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Bachelor of Science (B.S.), Bachelor of Science in Nursing (B.S.N.), Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.), Bachelor of Music (B.M.), and the Bachelor of Music Education (B.M.E.) degrees. The requirements for each degree are described in the 2025-2026 IWU Catalog, as well as the course unit system and equivalencies to other

systems for awarding collegiate credit. Besides traditional major and minor programs, the University is working on awarding microcredentials in the form of academic certificate programs. These programs are three- to four-course clusters that students may take to enhance necessary skills and knowledge that will benefit them in post-graduation activities (e.g., graduate school and career). The University has established certificates in Data Science, Intercultural Competence, Reading Intervention and Dance. A “bilingual teaching” certificate is currently under development by the School of Educational Studies. Academic certificates go through the same curricular review and approval process as new major and minor programs.

All IWU courses have their own student learning goals that are consistent with the Shared Curriculum and/or the respective academic units’ learning goals as articulated in their Strategic Assessment Plans (StrAP). The University’s Assessment Committee (AC) continually reviews student-learning goals within the academic unit for accessibility, appropriateness, clarity, and usefulness. In addition, the AC is charged with assessing student-learning goals within the Shared Curriculum (general education). The process is a faculty-driven model where volunteers are solicited to assess Shared Curriculum categories. Faculty-developed measures and/or rubrics are utilized to assess specific goals within the category, and a report is produced that includes data and key findings. These reports are sent to the AC to produce an aggregate report on each category, which is then shared with the Curriculum Council (CC). Evidence concerning assessment within the Shared Curriculum for both the CC and AC models includes these sample reports. The University’s student learning goals are publicly available in the IWU Catalog and on the webpages of most academic units. More details concerning the assessment work of the AC and CC are available in Criterion 3.E.

In January of 2025, the Assessment Committee (AC) scheduled an Assessment Workshop for faculty members to reimagine the student learning outcomes within the Shared Curriculum. Significant issues from the AC’s perspective included the following:

- The eight student learning outcomes (SLOs) in the Shared Curriculum and the student learning outcomes in each of the Shared Curriculum categories/flags are difficult to assess as they are written due to the lack of measurable student outcomes.
- The eight SLOs and the categories/flags in the Shared Curriculum are not aligned.
- The current assessment process has been disconnected from the regular curricular development process.
- The original 2013 assessment model has been disrupted by the General Education review (2017), Program Evaluation Task Force (PETF) process (a comprehensive academic program review) (2018-2019), COVID-19 (2020-2021), various institutional financial strains, the fact that half of the faculty is new, and others.
- The AC is disconnected from Academic Affairs.

Two additional faculty workshops were held in March and April of 2025 for assessment liaisons, deans, chairs, and directors for updated information concerning expectations for assessment within the academic units. Further details concerning the AC’s identified issues, short- and long-term suggested fixes, and the workshop outcomes are available in the AC’s memo to the Council for University Programs and Policies (CUPP) and the Faculty Meeting of April 23, 2025.

The quality of the University’s programs and learning goals is consistent across all academic

units. All courses follow the same assessment processes noted above to ensure consistency with the Shared Curriculum and/or individual units' learning goals. IWU is a residential institution with one campus, where the vast majority of courses are taught. IWU also offers a catalog of faculty-led short-term study abroad programs during May. In May 2025, for example, students traveled with IWU faculty to Central Europe, Ecuador, Japan, and South Africa in courses that fulfilled General Education Core Curriculum as well as Second Language and Global Diversity requirements. In addition, IWU sponsors study abroad programs. For example, the IWU Barcelona Program allows IWU students to study with an IWU faculty member and local faculty while living with host families in Barcelona. Students take one course with the IWU Barcelona Program Director, an IWU faculty member, and select their other three classes from those offered by Barcelona faculty at the Barcelona Study Abroad Experience, the University's program partner. Over the past few years, these courses utilized a Zoom Room to allow IWU nursing majors to take their required nursing courses in Barcelona. This technology allowed the Barcelona-based students abroad to be actively engaged in the classroom on IWU's campus, while allowing IWU students to live vicariously through their classmates' cultural immersion via synchronous learning.

The University also offers 3-2 cooperative programs in forestry and environmental management, occupational therapy, and pre-engineering. In general, the programs require students to spend their first three years at IWU, completing each program's respective requirements and courses. After students are admitted to a cooperating institution and have completed one to two years of the program (depending on the program), students are awarded their IWU degree. There are a variety of degree programs and cooperating institutions in the forestry and environmental management and pre-engineering programs.

Courses offered through online modes of instruction are as rigorous as their in-person counterparts. As online learning becomes more prevalent, it is more important than ever to encourage best practices for all instructional modalities. The Thorpe Center for Curricular and Faculty Development, together with the Council for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETAL), has designed an approval process for IWU faculty who want to offer courses online. This is a two-tier process where both the faculty member and their courses have to be evaluated and approved for online teaching once the new course is approved by the Curriculum Council. The Thorpe Center also provides targeted faculty development opportunities to explore and strengthen online pedagogy practices. These include the IWU Online Cohort Course for all faculty and adjunct faculty wanting to teach online courses. During the 2025-2026 academic year, the University conducted a pilot program for online learning at IWU. Faculty and student surveys, together with direct assessment of student learning in the pilot courses, conclude that online learning is a desirable addition to the curriculum. Based on data collected during the pilot program, the CETAL will present a set of recommendations and guidelines for online teaching and learning to the faculty in Fall 2026. As new courses or programs are developed in the future that are specifically designed for distance or correspondence education, the University's Thorpe Center will work with the faculty and/or the academic unit to develop meaningful tools to assess student learning in an online environment.

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3.B. Exercise of Intellectual Inquiry

The institution's educational programs engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in practicing modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

Argument

The University's core requirements within the Shared Curriculum, which include the General Education Program, Encountering Diversity, and Physical Education, are consistent with those in our mission documents and provide the foundation for the University's educational programs. The terms "intellectual independence, critical thinking, imagination, social awareness, active learning, problem-solving, collaborative inquiry, and community involvement" characterize the program's goals. Cumulatively, they represent a strong University commitment to ensure that all of its students acquire the skills and become conversant with the values that promote a life of learning and intellectual inquiry.

The Shared Curriculum goals, in their current form, are listed below:

- To develop students' capacities for critical thinking, intellectual independence, and imagination by creating opportunities for active learning
- To develop students' knowledge and understanding of the fundamental processes and relationships of nature and culture and their evolution over time
- To enable students to use formal methods of reasoning in problem-solving
- To heighten students' understanding of the diversity of cultures in our own society and the world
- To develop students' capacities for expressing and communicating ideas in writing and orally, in English and in another language, and for using writing as a means of discovery and understanding
- To foster in students the ability to make and assess judgments of value in such areas as ethics, aesthetics, and public policy by encouraging them to frame questions of value, to explore alternative value systems, and to become informed, active citizens in public life
- To develop in students kinesthetic awareness, personal fitness, and lifelong habits of healthy living
- To bring the world to campus and students to the world through varied combinations of co-curricular programming, travel, and service to the community

The ethos of the Shared Curriculum is based upon the affirmation that, as different areas of inquiry are both distinctive and related to one another, students should have the opportunity to learn how different perspectives provide unique opportunities for viewing the world around us while also appreciating how these perspectives can be mutually reinforcing and complementary. As a result, the program's framework is based on courses that fulfill the learning goals of knowledge categories and courses that serve as flags, including content specific to a set of skills or values with which all students should become conversant. Typical students begin their Shared Curriculum program by completing a Gateway Colloquium. This

first-year seminar allows students to develop their critical thinking skills through focused attention to the writing process.

In addition to Gateway Colloquium, the Shared Curriculum course categories include the following: Analysis of Values, the Arts, Contemporary Social Institutions, Cultural and Historical Change, Formal Reasoning, Intellectual Traditions, Literature, the Natural Sciences (most students must complete a physical science and a life science course; one must contain a laboratory experience, the other will be issues-focused), Second Language, and Physical Education. Required flagged courses include those that have a focus on domestic or global diversity and those that are writing-intensive. Students must complete four flagged courses (two diversity courses corresponding to each area of focus, and two writing-intensive courses, at least one of which should be completed before the end of one's sophomore year). By the time they graduate, students will have completed at least three writing-intensive courses: the Gateway Colloquium and two writing courses, one of which must be in their major field of study. Evidence concerning the assessment of student learning in the Shared Curriculum was noted in Criterion 3.A.

IWU greatly values scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge and offers faculty and students numerous opportunities to engage in activities that further the constructive exchange of ideas. As mentioned briefly in Criterion 2.E., The Ames Library faculty has developed an information literacy program focused on the appropriate use of scholarship, including the building of critical thinking skills and the analysis of content within the scholarly environment. To that end, the information-literate student can:

- Access the needed information effectively and efficiently
- Evaluate information and its sources critically
- Incorporate selected information into one's knowledge base
- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and access and use information ethically and legally

In addition, the library faculty has developed a set of learning outcomes for information literacy for first- and second-year students. A learning outcomes document was created in conjunction with the Writing Program and is being developed in collaboration with several teaching faculty across the disciplines to develop approaches and assignments for achieving the goals of information literacy across campus. All of the attributes associated with the information literacy program are consistent with those within the mission documents.

One of the showcases for formal student scholarly achievement under faculty advisement is the John Wesley Powell Student Research Conference, which began in 1990. In April of each year, students present papers, posters, compositions, and works of art at a gathering of faculty, students, parents, and alumni. Conference participation is open to students from all disciplines. As noted below, participation has been significant since the last self-study. Conference programs from every year are made available in the Digital Commons.

John Wesley Powell Student Research Conference

	Students	Posters	Oral Presentations	Art/Music
2022	76	50	17	3

2023	99	25	51	4
2024	122	67	25	2
2025	127	72	33	0

A distinctive feature highlighting IWU's student-faculty collaboration involves a few on-campus student-published journals. Students manage, edit, and publish four professional journals sponsored by particular academic units, including the Undergraduate Economic Review (economics), Humanitas (Humanities), Tributaries (English), and Res Publica (political science). Through directly participating in the peer review process, students obtain a direct understanding of how scholarship is produced, including the importance of writing for a professional audience, as well as the necessity of revising one's work to meet acceptable standards of discourse within one's discipline. This participation also provides the opportunity to discuss copyright and intellectual property issues with students. The student journals are submitted to the campus Digital Commons in electronic form, which has significantly enhanced their readership through increased access.

The Eckley Summer Scholars and Artists Endowment is another instance where students and faculty work closely together. This endowment supports summer research and creative activities for several students each year, enabling them to stay on campus over the summer to work under the direction of faculty mentors. The program is designed to support the development of a student's scholarly or artistic project in hopes of deepening research and creative competencies. Faculty members have the opportunity to work with talented students by providing professional mentorship on topics of mutual scholarly or artistic interest. Other student-based research funds include the following: The Criley Endowment Fund, established in 2008, which provides summer scholarships for student research in the field of biology, the Mark A. Israel '91 Endowed Summer Research Fund in Economics, established in 2013, and the Environmental Sustainability Summer Experience, which provides experiential learning projects in research, art, study abroad, or an internship. All of these endowed initiatives have a significant impact on the quality of student research opportunities and experiences.

Faculty engagement in scholarship and/or artistic production and performance is a key expectation for achieving tenure and promotion. A compilation of the approved abstracts for sabbatical and pre-tenured faculty leave topics over the past several years demonstrates the fact that faculty engagement in scholarly activity is widespread and significant.

One significant program over the past several years concerning intellectual inquiry has been the annual intellectual themes at IWU, a faculty-driven initiative with the goal of synthesizing learning around a central concept and creating a vibrant intellectual environment on campus for students, faculty, and staff. The theme guides common readings for first-year courses, a summer reading program for new students, as well as several theme-based courses and events (e.g., films, lectures, workshops, symposia) that are offered to students in support of mission- and vision-driven attributes. Examples of recent themes include the Power of Place, which provides an opportunity for students to think critically about various conceptualizations of place. The 2026-2028 IWU intellectual theme will build academic activity and learning communities around the concept of "Emergence."

Established in 2013-2014, the University offers learning opportunities, reflection, and advocacy on behalf of human rights through its Center for Human Rights and Social Justice (CHRSJ). The CHRSJ supports campus initiatives related to human rights and social justice, which play a prominent role in the mission documents and curriculum of the University. These initiatives include the Peace Fellows Program, the Scholars at Risk Advocacy Seminar, and the Human Rights Undergraduate Research Workshop. In addition, the CHRSJ sponsors prominent guest speakers and summer internships, and provides information about the graduate programs and prospective Non-Governmental Organization opportunities in the human rights field. Other examples of students utilizing the CHRSJ may be found [here](#).

The Hart Career Center is especially effective in placing students in internships relevant to their interests and aspirations. As stated by the Center, “Internships offer opportunities to make your education 'real' by providing practical work experience in your major field of study or career interest area.” More specifically, internships allow students to:

- Explore possibilities of future careers
- Gain valuable skills and career-related experience
- Apply classroom knowledge to real-world situations
- Establish professional contacts and begin networking
- Possibly earn money, academic credit, or a future job offer

Internships	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
Total	402	419	443	454
Academic (for credit)	26%	25%	29%	26%

Detailed information concerning the class distribution, participation by semester, and internship compensation is available via the [Internship Trend Data Report and the annual Internship Summary Reports](#).

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3.C. Sufficiency of Faculty and Staff

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

Argument

Illinois Wesleyan has the faculty and staff required for its delivery of high-quality programs and services. As observed in the faculty section of the Fact Book (e.g., demographics, rank, FTE), IWU balances its full-time instructional faculty (tenure-track and teaching-track) with a sufficient number of visiting and adjunct instructors to successfully deliver the University's curriculum and maintain a student-to-faculty ratio of 12 to 1 with an FTE of 137 (Fall 2025). Also noted in the Fact Book, the University's staff FTE was 296 (Fall 2025), which equated to a student-to-staff ratio of 5.7 to 1.

Regarding the responsibilities and expectations of IWU faculty, Article I in the Faculty Handbook states the following:

The level of academic excellence, which characterizes an institution of higher education, is directly related to the quality of its faculty and the degree to which the faculty takes seriously its role in maintaining the high quality of education in the University.

IWU faculty participation is vitally important in a number of areas, including personnel matters, academic freedom, the curriculum, student recruitment, advising, academic achievement, and fiscal planning. These areas are listed in detail in Article 1.

The qualifications for full-time, tenure-track faculty at IWU are as follows:

Candidates must furnish proof that all degree requirements have been completed before the deadline date for presenting files for tenure. To be eligible for tenure, faculty members in the College of Liberal Arts or School of Nursing must have the earned doctorate in the appropriate discipline except in rare circumstances where substantial evidence of equivalent professional ability and experience is clearly demonstrable. For the purpose of tenure and promotion, the master's degree can be considered the terminal degree in the Department of Accounting and Financial Services. Faculty members in the professional schools of Art and Design, Theatre Arts, and Music and library faculty must have completed the appropriate terminal degree and/or whatever special preparation is normally specified as necessary by the profession.

The evaluation process for hiring prospective tenure-line faculty members includes input from the Provost and Dean of the Faculty, the members of the search committee, the chair of the department, faculty within the department, and a faculty member external to the department. Other members of the University community, including department chairs, school directors, students, and program officers, meet prospective candidates during campus interviews, and written evaluations are solicited from all of those on the candidate's itinerary. When the department has decided on its preferred candidate, a recommendation is sent to the Provost and Dean of the Faculty, who has the final approval.

Although the hiring department, in consultation with the Provost's Office, determines a candidate's specific itinerary for the on-site interview, job candidates are generally expected to deliver a formal presentation, speaking about their scholarship and/or their teaching. Several departments require their candidates both to deliver a formal talk and to teach a regularly scheduled class. On-site interviews are thus rigorous and last for at least a full day to a day and a half. A significant component of one's job application is expected to include documentation of a candidate's teaching effectiveness, including course evaluations from a previous or current institution. However, this may not be the case for some assistant professors, depending on the amount of teaching experience.

Non-tenure-track appointments include coaching, visiting, extended temporary, courtesy, adjunct positions, and teaching track appointments. These positions may differ in duration and are described in detail in the faculty appointment section of the Faculty Handbook. The expectations for faculty qualifications are similar to those for tenure-track appointments. In limited circumstances in professional and pre-professional programs, bachelor's-trained instructors are appointed based on their professional experience outside the classroom. In these instances, the Associate Provost and department chair/dean evaluate their professional experience in the context of their instructional role. A letter confirming credentials review is placed in their personnel file. Records concerning active IWU faculty are updated annually and are kept in the Office of the President.

A new instructor is formally and repeatedly apprised of the University's expectations for developing the criteria for earning tenure. As noted in the Faculty Handbook language (Article I and Tenure and Promotion Guidelines), faculty members are evaluated based on competence and experience in classroom teaching and responsibilities associated with classroom teaching, completion of professional training, scholarly/artistic ability and achievement, and constructive contribution to the University. Guidelines for the promotion of teaching-track faculty are also included in this section of the Handbook.

New faculty members (tenure-line, teaching-track, and visitors) also participate in two intensive orientation sessions in August and January to help them understand expectations for teaching, service, and research at IWU. During the August orientation session, scheduled during the week prior to classes starting, new faculty are introduced to campus leaders who welcome them to the campus community and offer an overview of the general profile of the University's student body. New faculty also learn what offices and processes IWU uses to support student success and health. Finally, experienced teachers and information technology (IT) staff offer advice about University expectations for student achievement as well as classroom and technology use, including FERPA regulations, syllabi, the Shared Curriculum, and LMS (Canvas). During the January orientation, new faculty learn techniques to balance their teaching, research, and service requirements. Other topics are covered as requested by new faculty, both during the January orientation and ad hoc orientation sessions offered throughout the year by campus committees. Past topics have included internal and external grant seeking, Title IX, promotion and tenure requirements, advising, and shared governance.

All new faculty, including adjunct faculty, are invited to a drop-in orientation session at the beginning of each semester, where they can ask questions and find help for LMS use or other IT issues. Orientation resources are disseminated on the Provost's webpage.

All probationary appointments are made for one year and are formulated in writing, setting

forth the conditions of the appointment. New faculty members submit self-evaluations with appropriate files to the Promotion and Tenure Committee (PAT). The Provost's Office is responsible for notifying each faculty member of the terms and conditions of renewal.

There is also a Major Pre-Tenure Review process, which is designed to give probationary faculty direct written feedback from the PAT Committee about their progress toward tenure. This review is distinguished from other probationary evaluations in that the faculty member produces a full case file, which emphasizes accomplishments to date in the context of goals and strategies for continuing development toward tenure.

Another approach to increase teaching effectiveness is the policy requiring standard student evaluations (SmartEvals) of each faculty member's courses. The completed evaluations are held in the Office of the Registrar until grades for the course have been finalized. This process provides students with assurance that their grades will not be affected by their responses. Annually, after reviewing the evaluations, each faculty member should prepare a summary and file the completed evaluations with his or her supervisor. The evaluations must be kept on file in the Department or School office for three years and must be made available upon request of the PAT Committee.

Evaluations for non-tenure track faculty take place on an annual basis via peer teaching observations and student course evaluations. Deans, School Directors, and Department Chairs are responsible for providing evaluations to the Provost concerning the teaching effectiveness of the faculty member, including a recommendation concerning the faculty member's continuation at the University.

Tenured faculty members are evaluated for advancement in rank. Concerning full-time tenure-line instructional faculty, continued progress commensurate with years of service at the University is expected in teaching, scholarly/artistic achievement, and service. In addition, strengths and contributions specific to a faculty member's disposition are also taken into account.

Faculty members who have earned the terminal degree are awarded the rank of Assistant Professor. To achieve the Associate Professor rank, a faculty member must meet the standards of effective teaching, scholarly/artistic achievement, and University service set out for tenure and promotion. Excellence in teaching and significant contributions to the institution and the profession are expected, as is self-directed development. It should be noted that faculty members might achieve tenure without being promoted to the Associate Professor rank. Finally, promotion to Professor requires a level of professional distinction as recognized by colleagues within the University and in the broader professional community. As teachers, they must demonstrate the ability to work with students at all levels, challenging individuals of different abilities and motivations to develop their intellectual and/or artistic strengths. Proven leadership within the institution and serving as a role model for other faculty and students are expected at this level.

Library faculty, athletic coaches, and athletic trainers have somewhat similar criteria to those of instructional faculty, with attributes more properly aligned with their respective professions and statuses. Detailed descriptions of these criteria are also available in the Faculty Handbook.

In 2008, The Ames Library and the Office of the Provost began to host the Faculty

Scholarship Showcase, which has become an annual event. Its purpose is to publicly recognize faculty scholarship efforts, and it has enabled faculty to see what their colleagues are doing while providing an opportunity to keep a better track of the scholarly productivity of members of the IWU community. The figures enclosed below were taken from the records of those receptions, which provide numerical indicators of faculty activity. However, since it involves a considerable amount of self-reporting, the table gives a snapshot rather than a comprehensive view of the range of scholarly activity during the period surveyed.

Faculty Scholarly and Artistic Productivity

Fall	2022	2023	2024	2025
Journal Articles, Book Chapters, & Reviews	29	46	33	20
Books	4	4	5	5
Conference Presentations	2	9	3	7
Creative and Artistic Work	2	10	2	6

In recent years, several faculty and students have received local, national, and international recognition for their efforts. Evidence concerning excellence in teaching, scholarship, curricular innovation, composition, and national service has been in ample supply over the past number of years.

Evidence regarding processes and resources in support of faculty development is abundant. As noted in the Faculty Development Handbook, the University offers Standard Professional Travel and Expense Opportunities for full-time faculty. Specific allocations include \$850 for development activities requiring travel, \$1,000 for formal participation at a domestic conference, performance or exhibition, or attendance at a conference where she/he has a leadership role, and \$1,450 for above-stated participation at an international conference, performance or exhibition. Visiting faculty are eligible for \$600 to attend a professional meeting, with a \$200 supplement for those who formally participate.

IWU has maintained several internal grant programs that seek to assist faculty in their efforts to improve teaching and further scholarly activity. Artistic and Scholarly Development (ASD) grants are designed to support “professionally significant artistic and scholarly activity.” Grant awards total \$3,500 for an individual and \$5,500 for a joint proposal from two or more faculty members. In addition to offering assistance for travel related to one’s project, the hiring of student workers, or the purchase of needed materials, individuals can receive stipends of up to \$2,000 for their work.

Faculty can also apply for Curriculum Development (CD) grants and Instructional Development (ID) grants. A stipend or budgetary allocation of \$2,000 is available to individual faculty who wish to significantly revise an existing course or create a new one; monies are allocated according to the number of faculty involved and the number of courses revised or created when joint proposals are submitted by two or three faculty. In addition, individual faculty can apply for a \$500 Instructional Development grant program, whereby the enhancement of one’s pedagogy is promoted.

As noted in the 2025-2026 Faculty Development Handbook, a total of \$56,190 was awarded

by the University in 2024-2025 for faculty development grants. The following grant funds were awarded for faculty support:

- \$31,808 to support 6 faculty Artistic/Scholarly Development (ASD) one- and two-year grants;
- \$2,708 to support 3 faculty Continuous Professional Development (CPD) grants;
- \$16,724 to support 9 Curriculum Development (CD) grants;
- \$1,950 to support 4 Instructional Development (ID) grants; and
- \$3,000 to support 2 Grant-Incentive Program (GIP) grants

Further evidence concerning faculty development can be found in the University's faculty leave programs. The Pre-Tenure Leave Program is designed to provide a concentrated opportunity for professional development for faculty in the period before tenure consideration. Tenure-line faculty at the rank of assistant professor in their second, third, or fourth years are eligible to apply for a pre-tenure leave where they receive a semester leave at full pay and benefits. The Faculty Development Committee (FDC) reviews the applications, and the Provost and Board of Trustees approve the leaves.

Faculty members who complete six academic years of full-time service are eligible to apply for a competitive (as of 2025-2026) sabbatical leave and each seventh year thereafter. Under the terms of this program, faculty receive a semester leave at full pay with benefits or a complete academic year-long leave at half pay. These periodic leaves allow faculty members to engage in professional activities that would not otherwise be available, including such activities as advanced study, research, writing, painting, and composing, but not excluding other intellectual activities. The FDC works with faculty who apply to the program to ensure that their projects will contribute to their professional growth and development. Additional evidence concerning the University's junior and regular sabbatical leave programs may be found in these examples of past awards.

Established in 2018, the Gardner-McNew Faculty Scholars Program awards the most outstanding leave and pre-tenure proposals from one tenured and one pre-tenured faculty member, as selected each academic year by the Faculty Development Committee. Recipients will receive an award certificate and \$3,000 to be used as a stipend or to defray costs of supplies, research, travel, and data collection. As noted by a former Provost and Dean of the Faculty, this program "...incentivizes faculty to engage deeply in the scholarly and creative work that sustains cutting-edge classroom learning, undergraduate research experiences, and connections to next steps in the workforce or graduate study for our students."

Further development opportunities include the numerous workshops held for faculty regardless of rank or time served at the institution. The Council for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETAL), in cooperation with the Thorpe Center, regularly offers faculty workshops concerning writing instruction, electronic portfolios, teaching and reading poetry, working with science students, teaching circles, technology, and diversity in the classroom.

IWU faculty members are expected to be committed and engaged instructors who provide support for student learning both inside and outside of the classroom. By communicating their interests in close interactions with students through their active participation in departmental and campus-wide programming, the faculty members foster such interactions, which are made possible by the small sizes of IWU's courses. Data elements from the 2024

Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) Alumni Survey provided evidence concerning the quality of the University's student-faculty interactions in and outside of class. Results were consistent with alumni from the University's comparison group.

Student-Faculty Interactions -

2024 HEDS Alumni Survey Combined Values of “Strongly Agree” and “Agree.”

Faculty interest in teaching and students...	5-Year	10-Year
Genuinely interested in students.	97%	95%
Interested in helping students grow in more than just academic areas.	84%	84%
Good at providing prompt and useful feedback.	92%	90%
Willing to spend time outside of class to discuss issues of interest and importance to students.	93%	82%

Faculty interactions...

My nonclassroom interactions with faculty had a positive influence on my personal growth, values, and attitudes.	95%	83%
My nonclassroom interactions with faculty had a positive influence on my intellectual growth and interest in ideas.	86%	79%
My nonclassroom interactions with faculty had a positive influence on my career goals and aspirations.	81%	77%
I developed a close, personal relationship with at least one faculty member.	81%	75%
I was satisfied with the opportunities to meet and interact informally with faculty members.	88%	82%

One other significant aspect of the University regarding quality faculty to ensure effective, high-quality academic programs is the large number of endowed professorships and chairs. This honor is reserved for members of the IWU faculty who have distinguished themselves through exemplary teaching and active engagement of students, outstanding scholarship and/or artistic achievement, and service at the very highest levels of the University. The guiding principle in awarding an endowed professorship or chair is that the individual represents our highest aspirations for faculty members on this campus. The 20 University-endowed professorships and chairs are as follows:

- Biology, established in 2025
- The Isaac Funk Professorship, established in 1866
- The Adlai H. Rust Chair of Insurance/Finance, established in 1971
- The R. Forrest Colwell Chair of English, established in 1972
- The McFee Professorship of Religion, established in 1984
- The Dr. Robert S. Eckley Professorship of Economics, established in 1986
- The Edward R. Telling Professorship of Business Administration, established in 1987
- The Dr. Kenji Tanaka Professorship of Japanese Studies, established in 1991
- The Earl H. and Marian A. Beling Professorship of Natural Sciences, established in

1998

- The Deloris Helsley Ascher Professorship of Nursing, established in 2007
- The Byron S. Tucci Professorship, established in 2010
- Robert W. Harrington Professorship (1/2), established in 2010
- Robert W. Harrington Professorship (1/2), established in 2010
- Wendell and Loretta Hess Professorship of Chemistry, established in 2012
- Betty Ritchie-Birrer '47 and Ivan Birrer Endowed Professorship, established in 2013
- B. Charles and Joyce Eichhorn Ames Professorship, established in 2014
- Sally A. Firestone Professorship in Peace and Social Justice, established in 2014
- Ben '69 and Susan Rhodes in Peace and Social Justice, established in 2014
- Davis U. Merwin Endowed Professorship in History, established in 2015
- Semour and Diana Galina Endowed Professorship

Illinois Wesleyan has a sufficient number of staff members for high-quality programs and student services. Although the University has a history of having a leaner personnel structure than its peer institutions, through careful planning and budgeting, position requests are made, reviewed, and allocated as they align with institutional priorities. Recent growth in staffing has been in areas of strategic priority, including enrollment management, advancement (e.g., capital campaign), athletics (e.g., new sports), and information technology. However, it should be noted that there have been several concerns regarding attrition among staff in traditional areas, leading to increased responsibilities for the staff who remain. These increased responsibilities, coupled with changes to benefit programs, have left some staff demoralized and, at times, created tension that has an overall impact on staff recruitment and retention. Despite these challenges, IWU remains consistently effective and successful thanks to its dedicated staff members.

Staff members providing student support services in tutoring, financial aid, advising, counseling, career services, health services, and co-curricular duties are guided by the professional standards outlined within several regional and national student-centered organizations, including, but not limited to:

- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)
- National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)
- Illinois Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (ILASFAA)
- National Academic Advising Association (NACADA)
- Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)
- American College Personnel Association (ACPA)
- American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)
- Illinois Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (IACRAO)
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
- American Counseling Association (ACA)
- American Psychological Association (APA)
- American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP)
- American Association of Diabetic Educators (AADE)
- American College Health Association (ACHA)

Professional staff positions require the appropriate degree and professional experience that meet the demands of the position. These qualifications, including professional licensures and similar credentials, are made explicit in job postings and position descriptions. Professional development opportunities, when resources are available, include

attendance at professional conferences, campus workshops, and webinars/online training. An example of evidence concerning the broad array of professional development opportunities undertaken by staff may be examined in this listing of conferences, training seminars, and webinars across multiple divisions.

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3.D. Support for Student Learning and Resources for Teaching

The institution provides student support services that address the needs of its student populations, as well as the teaching resources and infrastructure necessary for student success.

Argument

The student services provided by IWU include a wide variety of assistance and resources that support and facilitate student learning and development. Examples include the following:

- **Office of Academic Advising:** Promotes quality and effective academic advising by serving as a readily accessible resource on all aspects of advising for the IWU community.
- **Hart Career Center:** Offers services for students and alumni that include career counseling and advising for internships, graduate school, and job searches.
- **Orientation Programs:** Coordinates several signature programs for first-year and transfer students and their parents and guardians. Four primary programs are offered: Turning Titan: New Student Orientation, Rising Titan (Summer Orientation), IMPACT, International Student Orientation, Transfer Student Orientation, and Experience IWU: Parent Orientation.
- **Arnold Health Services:** Provides quality, accessible, comprehensive, and cost-effective health care that enables students to achieve their academic and intellectual potential. Operated by Carle Health Partners since April 2023.
- **Counseling and Consultation Services:** Promotes student personal growth and well-being through a variety of mental health services, including counseling, outreach, consultation, and coping strategies, including time and stress management skills.
- **Office of Student Accessibility Services:** Secures and maintains documentation of disabilities, determines reasonable accommodations, and works with the student, faculty, and staff to develop plans for providing such accommodations. In collaboration with the library, Accessibility Services also provides whatever text, audio, or video content a student needs to be able to access curricular materials.
- **International Office:** Assists international students in their cultural and educational transition to the University and country and manages the Study Abroad programs.
- **Office of Campus Culture:** Open to all students, the Office of Campus Culture fosters a vibrant and respectful Titan community by encouraging thoughtful exploration of all cultural backgrounds, perspectives, and traditions.
- **Do Good Leadership Program:** Two leadership programs offering students the opportunity to learn and develop leadership skills, identify their leadership styles, and strengths.
- **Office of Multifaith Engagement:** Supports the work of several Registered Student Organizations that represent different faith traditions, and offers programming exploring and practicing faith and spirituality, interfaith community, and social justice.

New students receive direction to courses and programs from the time they are admitted until they graduate. As noted in the IWU Catalog, entering students with sufficiently high scores on Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Programs may receive both credit and placement in selected IWU courses. In some areas, the University administers examinations to determine placement and/or proficiency, which permit exemption from certain courses. Requirements concerning entering students majoring in the fine arts (art, theatre arts, music) include auditions, portfolios, and interviews, depending on the degree sought.

One form of introductory instruction is the University's Gateway Colloquia, which are small, discussion-oriented classes designed to develop students' proficiency in writing academic and public discourse. All students must complete a Gateway Colloquium by the end of the freshman year. These seminars seek to do the following:

- Introduce students to the process of intellectual inquiry and develop students' critical thinking skills;
- Develop students' ability to evaluate competing ideas and experiences;
- Develop students' skills in the conventions and structures of presenting knowledge in written academic and public discourse, and on strategies for effective revision; and
- Engage students in learning activities that prepare them for academic life at the University

Center for Engaged Learning

Over the 2019-2020 academic year, the University established the Center for Engaged Learning (CEL). The CEL is a strategic initiative of the Office of the Provost and Dean of the Faculty. Its mission is to promote and strengthen opportunities for students to participate in distinctive programs in the classroom and the community while also ensuring access to faculty, staff, and peers who can help to support their success in the classroom and beyond.

Examples concerning the Center's primary focus include the following:

Pathways: The Titan Pathways program provides the building blocks of a successful IWU experience in a flexible three-phase framework: transitioning, thriving, and transforming. Pathways can be a very helpful tool during advising sessions and is a guide for navigating the many opportunities available to students at IWU.

Student Success Resources: The CEL offers workshops and resources to improve persistence and student success, including time management, discipline, organization strategies, self-advocacy, and wellness.

Summer Scholars & Other Fellowships: IWU hosts a vibrant summer research community. Students can apply for a variety of programs, including the Eckley Summer Scholars & Artists, the Summer Enrichment Program, and fellowships in chemistry, economics, and environmental studies. There are also fellowships available during the school year and post-baccalaureate opportunities.

Community Service & Volunteering: IWU has a wonderful connection to the Bloomington-Normal community. Our "town-gown" relationship is strong and provides IWU with unique and meaningful opportunities to learn, serve, and lead. Students interested in getting involved in the community will find many local nonprofits and community coalitions that

welcome IWU students.

Writing Center & Tutoring Services: All tutoring services at IWU are free. Peer tutors, teaching assistants, and course-embedded tutors are based in academic departments. Detailed evidence concerning the Center's programming and professional development activities may be observed through its assessment report prepared for an upcoming review

Action Research Center (ARC): The IWU Action Research Center is dedicated to the relentless pursuit of innovative ideas that transform communities. Since 2003, ARC has connected the campus and the community in meaningful ways that create impactful change and address pressing social justice issues.

IWU students have the opportunity to do original research at the undergraduate level, collaborating with faculty who are at the top of their fields. Because Illinois Wesleyan is an entirely undergraduate institution, students are offered research and creative opportunities without competition from graduate students. As previously noted in 3.B., the John Wesley Powell Student Research Conference is a distinctive example of student research opportunities. Other evidence concerning some of the work that has resulted from faculty mentorship of students is available via the IWU Digital Commons.

In partnership with the Hart Career Center, the Office of Academic Advising also hosts the annual Majors and Minors Fair. The Fair provides students with opportunities to learn more about available majors and minors within an academic discipline and to converse with associated faculty and upper-class students. Additionally, academic units have an opportunity to showcase and promote their disciplines to students.

Illinois Wesleyan University is dedicated to and recognizes the importance of exceptional academic advising as a critical aspect of students' educational experiences. Through the utilization of reflective advising, the missions and goals of faculty advisors and the Office of Academic Advising at the University are for faculty and staff to:

- Actively collaborate with students to reflect upon, develop, and implement cohesive and holistic educational plans as they pursue their academic, professional, and personal goals;
- Establish engaged partnerships with students based on shared responsibility;
- Guide students to campus resources that will assist them in achieving their goals; and
- Foster an understanding and deep appreciation of the purpose and value of the liberal arts in higher education.

During a student's first year at IWU, they are assigned to an advisor who is a faculty member in their declared major department, or to a dedicated first-year advisor (outside of the department) specifically trained to advise for the declared major department. Students assigned to a dedicated first-year advisor (outside of the department) will be assigned to a faculty member in their declared major department beginning in their second year of study. Once they are assigned to an advisor in their declared major department, a faculty member in the declared major department will continue to advise them through graduation. Students with more than one major will have an advisor in each department.

If a student enters IWU as undeclared, they will be assigned to a faculty advisor specifically trained to advise undeclared students. Students who do not have a declared major after their first year may stay with their assigned advisor or may choose to be assigned to the

Director of Academic Advising, who will assist with the major exploration process. When an undeclared student declares their major, a departmental advisor is assigned at that time. Students at any point in their educational career who are undeclared or who are contemplating a change in major are also encouraged to see the Director of Academic Advising. Evidence concerning the guidelines for first-year academic advising is outlined in the First-Year Advising Guide.

Advising satisfaction is monitored at the first-year level via the First-Year Student Satisfaction Survey (FYSSS) (2023 & 2024) and the First-Year Student Experiences Survey (FYSES) (2025 & 2026).

First-Year Academic Advising

FY Advising	2023	2024	2025	2026
Very Satisfied and Satisfied	83%	87%	92%	91%

The Thorpe Center, The Ames Library, & Technology

The Thorpe Center for Curricular and Faculty Development is designed to enhance academic excellence throughout the IWU campus. Its resources offer support to the campus faculty as they pursue their work as teachers, scholars, and curricular innovators. Thorpe Center programs encourage reflective discourse and the sharing of views and experiences among faculty, as they relate to issues involving the theory and practice of teaching, course development, academic program design, and scholarly inquiry.

The University expends significant resources to provide the required technology to support curricular and pedagogical needs. The Ames Library provides computers throughout all five levels, including a computer lab classroom.

Information technology plays a key role in facilitating close student-faculty relationships and engaged learning experiences. For example, the School of Nursing & Health Sciences has the Simulation Center, which recreates a hospital setting equipped with sophisticated, computer-run manikins. The School also has an Anatomage 3D Medical Imaging Table, a virtual dissection table, to facilitate a hands-on learning approach.

The University's campus offers over 100 classrooms, labs, and meeting spaces with computers and presentation technology. In 2020, there were significant resources committed to adding cameras and microphones to more than 40 teaching spaces. At the same time, our campus entered into a Zoom site license covering all faculty, staff, and students. Similar technology is available in the Language Resource Center, housed in the Center for Liberal Arts, which provides faculty and students with computer and audio-visual support for learning a second language.

IWU has a WiFi 6 network on internal locations and select exterior locations. The campus has over 600 access points, with individual access points located inside each dorm room.

Illinois Wesleyan has been investing in its cybersecurity position for the last several years and currently has a staff of two analysts and a Chief Information Security Officer working to mature the University's security posture. Basic controls are in place for campus resources, and initiatives in IT Governance, Policy Development, Data Classification, and Risk Management are ongoing. Cybersecurity training is provided to campus stakeholders via KnowBe4, and additional services and resources are provided through a partnership with DeepSeas (Formerly GreyCastle).

Another example of technology in the classroom at IWU is State Farm Hall (SFH). SFH has 47,800 square feet of space on four levels featuring the latest trends in learning technology. The environment provided within SFH has allowed both students and faculty to experiment with innovative multimedia, which has fostered students' development with new tools and techniques that are consistent with and greatly complement an IWU education. Examples of the benefits of SFH include the use of multimedia presentations (e.g., news reports, videos, and audio). Additionally, the facility also provides flexible teaching and space arrangements. SFH's 19 classrooms, seminar room, and auditorium-style case study room provide multiple options that allow faculty to match class layouts to their specific courses and styles of student-faculty interactions. Over the 2021-2022 academic year, a new computer lab was added to support the Bloomberg Finance Lab.

The Ames Library

The Ames Library plays a significant role in supporting effective teaching and learning. The library provides approximately 200 online databases, over 400 print journals, over 300,000 print and e-book volumes, access to over 90,000 online journals, as well as streaming video and audio collections. In addition, the Tate Archives and Special Collections Department is dedicated to offering unique curricular experiences with primary sources in all formats: artifacts, digital objects, manuscripts, and print. The University Archivist is also responsible for collecting, maintaining, and providing access to historical records of the University's academic, corporate, and cultural life. The Digital Commons, the institutional repository managed by the Library, hosts student Honors projects from across campus, nine peer-reviewed student journals, programs from IWU's annual undergraduate research conference, and videos from major campus events. IWU Scholars hosts almost 20,000 scholarly and creative works from faculty, many of them openly accessible to users worldwide. Library faculty members work closely with instructional faculty in academic units to provide classroom and individual research consultation, both in-person and online. The building provides many spaces for study, rest, and reflection, including rooms for collaborative work, studios for creating videos and podcasts, a relaxation room, and a variety of software to support surveys, graphic design, and scholarly work. The Library is also home to the Writing Center, the Action Research Center, the Office of Student Accessibility, the Testing Center, the ITS Help Desk, and several ITS staff. The Thorpe Center for Curricular and Faculty Development supports faculty in their teaching and research and is home to the Dean of Curricular and Faculty Development and instructional design and technology staff. Students, faculty, and staff also have direct borrowing privileges at over 125 Illinois institutions of higher education through the University's membership in the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI), whose online catalog provides access to the 38 million volumes held by these academic libraries as well as 750 public and special libraries in the state. The CARLI member libraries serve over 90% of Illinois higher education students, faculty, and staff. The Library is also a member of the Center for Research Libraries, which provides access to unique primary source material

from around the world. The Ames Library opened on January 9, 2002, and is named in honor of B. Charles Ames '50 and Joyce Eichhorn Ames '49.

It should also be noted that The Ames Library has engaged in two recent assessments of its library services, collections, personnel, spaces, and outlook. The Measuring Information Service Outcomes Survey (MISO) was administered over the 2022-2023 and 2025-2026 academic years to students, faculty, and staff. The MISO Survey provides robust, actionable, comparable results that participating institutions can use to inform strategic decisions and ongoing service improvement. A summary of the 2023 MISO results, opportunities, and next steps concerning The Ames Library is found in a July 2023 report. Comparative information between the two survey administrations is available in a June 2026 report. A summary report is forthcoming in Fall 2026.

Among the disciplines, the sciences require significant resources to pursue research activities with students, a mission-driven commitment. This necessitates access to laboratory space and first-rate equipment. A list of the equipment available to science majors in physics, chemistry, and biology appears on the Physics department website and is noteworthy for its inclusion of equipment including a sixteen-inch telescope that is situated in the Mark Evans Observatory, as well as more traditional apparatuses including electromagnets, cryogenics and a vacuum, various spectrometers, lasers, an electron and other microscopes, a refrigerated centrifuge, a spectrophotometer, gas chromatographs, and an electron capture detector. Department of Psychology facilities include observation, control, and psychophysiology rooms, and behavioral, cognitive, developmental, and experimental labs. Theatre Arts students perform in either the McPherson Theatre or the E. Melba Kirkpatrick Laboratory Theatre, while students in the School of Music often perform in the Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall. Shaw Hall also provides several rehearsal and workshop spaces for music and theatre.

Most recently, the University added a new administrative role, Assistant Dean for Student Success, in Spring 2026. The Assistant Dean's position promotes student success, persistence, and retention. This includes identifying concerns early and connecting students with the resources they need to thrive.

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3.E. Assessment of Student Learning

The institution improves the quality of educational programs based on its assessment of student learning.

Argument

IWU has clearly stated student learning outcomes, effective processes, and methodologies for assessment University-wide. As described in Criterion 1.A. and 3.B., the Shared Curriculum, the foundation of an IWU education, has eight student learning goals distributed across 14 categories. These goals are assessed on a routine basis with an emphasis on direct measures of student learning. Faculty members teaching within each Shared Curriculum category/flag develop and implement direct assessment tools to measure the extent to which students are meeting category goals. Three to four categories/flags are assessed each year. Shared Curriculum (aka General Education) assessment reports are archived and maintained in the Assessment Committee Google Drive. As noted earlier in Criterion 3.A., the Assessment Committee (AC), in consultation with the faculty, revised the student learning goals/outcomes within the Shared Curriculum in 2025 to provide greater assessment quality.

Assessment within the academic units is coordinated by the University's Assessment Committee, which consists of three faculty members, the Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness (*ex officio*), the Dean of Curricular and Faculty Development (*ex officio*), and one student. The Associate Vice President, Dean, and student are non-voting members of the Committee. The functions and purview of the Assessment Committee are as follows:

- Establish effective policies and practices for assessment of student learning by all departments, schools, interdisciplinary programs, and university-wide programs (including May term, study abroad, internship, and the Shared Curriculum). All policy recommendations from the Assessment Committee shall be submitted to the faculty for approval.
- Receive and review annual assessment reports from all departments, schools, and programs;
- Collect, maintain, and make available to appropriate constituencies a repository of assessment reports from all departments, schools, and programs;
- Provide feedback to each department, school, and program about the effectiveness of its assessment process; and
- Evaluate the extent to which each department, school, and program has performed assessments consistent with effective policies and practices, and share this evaluation with the university community.

The assessment of student learning goals within academic units is described in Criterion 3.A. All academic units are expected to have a Strategic Assessment Plan on file with the Assessment Committee, which may be updated as necessary when goals and priorities evolve. On a staggered basis (one-, two-, or three-year cycle), academic units submit an

Assessment Report (AR) in the fall, which contains the results and actions of the unit's assessment efforts over their past assessment cycle to improve student learning. A summary of the AR is provided in the reports for campus-wide dissemination. For those academic units that are not due to submit an AR in the fall, they are required to submit a Yearly Update, which outlines the intended assessment focus and work to be accomplished over the next academic year and assessment cycle. These processes allow the Assessment Committee to provide guidance to the academic units as needed and to evaluate the extent to which each department, school, and program has performed assessments consistent with effective policies and practices. Assessment resources, AR summaries, and exemplary assessment-related materials are available via the Student Learning Assessment webpage. Minutes concerning the Assessment Committee are also available.

There are several assessment resources provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) that supplement the University's assessment efforts. The analyses of student learning assessment data elements occur at the institutional level through the collection of benchmark data from national survey instruments, largely organized through the University's membership in the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS). Recent surveys administered include the following:

HEDS Alumni Survey (AS): The AS asks alumni about the quality and impact of their educational experiences, including co-curricular activities such as internships, study abroad, and community service. The survey also asks alumni to evaluate the impact of their education on their postgraduate critical thinking, problem-solving, and other learning outcomes. Finally, the survey asks about postgraduate employment, college satisfaction, and college debt.

HEDS Graduating Student Survey (GSS): The GSS asks graduating students to evaluate teaching practices and institutional conditions they experienced as undergraduates, assess the impact of their college experience on their intellectual growth and development, and describe their plans following graduation.

HEDS New Student Survey (NSS): The NSS is designed to prompt new students to think about their goals for college, their vision for the successful life they want to lead after college, and how their experiences in college can help them move towards their vision of success (administered 2021 through 2023, and 2026).

HEDS Returning Student Survey (RSS): The RSS is designed to prompt students to reflect on their vision of post-college success, their reasons for staying in college, and the college experiences that have most prepared them to accomplish their goals for life (administered 2021 through 2023).

First-Year Student Satisfaction Survey (in-house) (FYSSS): The FYSSS provides student opinions regarding levels of satisfaction with various aspects of University life (resources, offices, etc.). The information provided is significant in assessing the first-year experience at IWU, especially regarding retention efforts and the evaluation of campus resources (administered through 2024).

IWU First-Year Student Experience (in-house) (FYSE): The FYSE provides student opinions concerning their self-efficacy, sense of belonging, and satisfaction with several University resources vital to the first-year experience. The information provided is utilized to

gain further insight into the correlations between student integration, engagement, satisfaction, and retention.

All of the reports related to the above-mentioned surveys are publicly available via the University Assessment webpage. Campus-wide email notifications are sent out as new reports become available. In addition, presentations concerning selected aspects of the reports take place within the Trustee, Cabinet, Staff Council, and various committee and divisional meetings.

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3.F. Program Review

The institution improves its curriculum based on periodic program review.

Argument

Current and New Program Reviews

As mentioned briefly in Criterion 3.A., the University established an external review program in 2007, which provides the opportunity for academic units to reflect on their curriculum and explain how it relates to the University's mission. Each unit defines the specific objectives of the review before beginning a self-study process. Benefits of external reviews include enhanced communication between academic administrators and academic units, intra-departmental dialogue, and, ultimately, greater administrative support and understanding regarding the work within the unit. Each external review includes a comprehensive faculty-driven self-study, an external review by colleagues from other institutions, and an academic unit's response to the external reviewers' report, including an action plan. More details concerning the self-studies, external reviews, and academic unit review schedule are available via the [external review guidelines](#) and objectives. [Examples](#) of completed reviews are also available.

Additional evidence concerning the review of current and new academic programs includes the employment of [UQ Solutions](#). Utilizing six metrics that identify new programs with the lowest risk and the highest growth potential, the UQ Solutions Market Analyzer examines potential programs by market growth, market segment growth, competition, expected program size, career outcomes, and mission alignment. [Evidence concerning the effectiveness](#) of this exercise includes new academic majors in public health, professional sales, and quantitative finance, established in the Fall of 2023. Additional new majors include supply chain management, criminology, and communications, established in the Fall of 2024.

Program reviews are undertaken in non-academic affairs areas as well. For example, the University's student affairs division conducts an ongoing assessment of specific areas using criteria set forth by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). As noted on the CAS webpage, the Council "...creates and delivers dynamic, credible standards, guidelines, and Self-Assessment Guides that are designed to lead to a host of quality programs and services. The Council aims to foster and enhance student learning, development, and achievement." As noted in recent [Student Affairs Annual Reports](#), several co-curricular programs offered by the Division of Student Affairs are assessed on an ongoing basis. For example, counseling and health services conduct regular quality service follow-up questionnaires. Likewise, the Office of Student Involvement (OSI) facilitates leadership experiences that offer students the opportunity to develop leadership skills and identify their leadership styles and strengths. In 2024-2025, IWU partnered with the JED Foundation to conduct an external review that led to a strategic plan for mental health and suicide prevention consistent with the [Titan HEART SAMHSA grant](#).

The University's Office of Business and Finance has also engaged in program reviews regarding human resources and information technology. Both of these initiatives greatly informed the administration regarding the required quality improvements in personnel and procedures. As a result of these assessment exercises, both offices underwent significant structural adjustments.

IWU Programs Accredited by Specialized Accreditation Commissions:

The School of Nursing and Health Sciences: The University's School of Nursing program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. The School is also approved by the Department of Registration and Education of the State of Illinois.

The School of Educational Studies: The University's elementary and secondary teacher education program is approved by the Illinois State Board of Education.

Sources

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3.G. Student Success Outcomes

The institution's student success outcomes demonstrate continuous improvement, taking into account the student populations it serves and benchmarks that reference peer institutions.

Argument

Annually, the University administers the First Destination Survey (FDS), a University-developed instrument that captures students' employment and educational plans for the year following graduation. The survey is administered in April and continues for nine months, allowing for updates and submissions of missing information. Approximately 88% of students graduating over the 2024-2025 (Class of 2025) academic year responded to the FDS, indicating that 78% were employed full-time, while 20% reported that they were continuing their education on a full-time basis (e.g., graduate and professional school). The employment positions represent a very diverse mix of occupations, and the educational programs include degree pursuits in law, medicine, business, education, and science. Post-graduate service is also tracked, including students participating in the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, and City Year. Additional offerings received by students for employment and graduate-professional school are available as well. More detailed information concerning the above may be accessed in the FDS reports, while 10 years of employment and continuing education information is available via the IWU Fact Book. The FDS reports are widely disseminated across campus, and many of the findings are posted in news releases, within the "Outcomes" webpages, and in publications such as the IWU Magazine and the Employer Handbook.

The University also monitors external sources for information concerning its graduates:

- More than 80% of our pre-medicine graduates are admitted to medical school on their first try, compared to the 50% national average for all pre-medicine majors at other institutions.
- According to the 2025 National Science Foundation Survey of Earned Doctorates, IWU ranks 4th overall among the nation's 179 Private Baccalaureate Colleges: Diverse Fields (Carnegie Classification) in the number of graduates who go on to earn doctoral degrees.
- Each year the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) evaluates Illinois Teacher Preparation Programs on the academic strength and racial/ethnic diversity of candidates, how well candidates perform on state teaching assessments, how well program completers are faring in the classroom, the extent to which program completers are employed in Illinois public schools, and the persistence of these employees in their positions.
- School of Nursing: The NCLEX is a national licensure exam that students must pass before earning their license as a Registered Nurse. The 2024 state average pass rate stood at 87%, while the national average was 91%. The 2024 IWU nursing graduates had a 97% pass rate. Pass rates for the past three years have been 83, 97, and 80, respectively.

The majority of IWU students enter the institution as traditional first-time, first-year degree-seeking students, at an average age of 18. Each entering student cohort is examined through the methodologies defined by the Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data Sharing (IPEDS) system in examining retention and completion rates over the students' experience at the University. Retention and graduation rates are reported via IPEDS and in the Common Data Set (CDS). The IPEDS reports are publicly available via the National Center for Educational Statistics. The University also provides publicly available retention and graduation rates via the IPEDS Data Feedback Reports, Fact Book, CDS, and IWU Facts webpages.

The University also reports retention and graduation rate information through its annual IWU Benchmark Reports (internal and external – IPEDS), which provide data elements on key performance indicators for IWU and its Peer Group for internal and external monitoring, management, and planning. The Peer Group consists of 11 institutions that were selected using several characteristics (e.g., programming, student outcomes, resources). Over the past three years, the University has performed above the median of this group for first-year-to-sophomore retention and four- and six-year graduation rates. In general, the University seeks to be at or above the Peer Group median. Additional information is obtained on an annual basis via the Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) Consortium, which serves as a data element depository for over 100 institutions similar to IWU. Over recent years, the University has admitted approximately 40 to 50 transfer students each fall semester. The retention of transfer students is tracked through enrollment projection modeling procedures and has been very strong, generally in the mid to high 90s from year one of admission to year two. The six-year graduation rate for transfer students is generally in the low-to-mid-eighties.

Additional evidence concerning the success of graduates may be examined through the results of an IWU HEDS Alumni Survey administered via the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium. Last administered in 2024, IWU alumni graduating five and 10 years ago were included in the assessment. When asked to what extent their undergraduate experience prepared them for the following activities, the alumni respondents reported the following:

IWU Preparation -

2024 HEDS Alumni Survey Combined Values of “Very much” and “Quite a bit.”

	5-Year	10-Year
Careful reading: Comprehension and analysis of written texts within and across genres.	78%	83%
Critical thinking: Examination of ideas, evidence, and assumptions before accepting or formulating a conclusion.	93%	93%
Creative thinking: Developing or combining ideas, images, or expertise in innovative ways.	81%	73%
Information literacy: Locating, evaluating, and using information effectively and responsibly for a particular purpose.	88%	95%

Quantitative literacy: Seeking, understanding, and using quantitative information appropriately to solve problems or make arguments.	86%	81%
Effective writing: Conveying accurate and compelling content in clear, expressive, and audience-appropriate prose.	83%	88%
Effective speaking: Conveying accurate and compelling content in clear, expressive, and audience-appropriate oral presentations.	69%	67%
Teamwork: Contributing to a team, facilitating the work of team members, and fostering a constructive team climate.	84%	73%
Problem solving: Designing, evaluating, and implementing a strategy to answer questions or achieve a goal.	88%	86%
Integrative thinking: The habit of connecting ideas and experiences, and the ability to transfer learning to novel situations.	76%	76%
Ethical reasoning: Recognizing ethical issues, examining different ethical perspectives, and considering the ramifications of alternative actions.	67%	65%
Graduate and Professional school	86%	78%
Current Career	74%	65%
Continued Learning	64%	72%

Sources

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Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

Argument

The continuing assessment and enhancement of Illinois Wesleyan's educational programs, learning environments, and support services provide clear evidence of the University's commitment to excellence and continuous quality improvement. Programs, courses, and the quality of credit are routinely reviewed. The effectiveness of student learning is rigorously examined through the measurement of learning goals within the academic units and the Shared Curriculum. Goals concerning student persistence and completion are defined, and progress is closely monitored and enhanced through several initiatives employed by faculty and staff. Alumni success in educational and professional endeavors is observed through several internal and external collections of information, which is used to improve programming and promote the educational achievements of IWU students.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Sustainability: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

4.A Effective Administrative Structures

The institution's administrative structures are effective and facilitate collaborative processes such as shared governance; data-informed decision making; and engagement with internal and external constituencies as appropriate.

Argument

Direct Reports, Cabinet, and Board of Trustees: IWU has organizational structures that establish clear lines of authority and formal relationships between employees and across units to address the needs of students, faculty, alumni, and other University constituencies. As noted in Criterion 2.A., lines of authority generally lead to the Vice President or Provost level, who reports directly to the President and frequently meets as a group, as well as with other administrators as the President's Direct Reports or Cabinet. The Cabinet includes members of the Direct Reports group, as well as the chair of the Council on University Programs and Policy (CUPP), the Associate Provost, and the Chief Information Officer. Direct Report meetings occur weekly throughout the year and include the discussion and implementation of major topics, plans, and policies, including the preparation of subject materials for Board of Trustees meetings, while Cabinet meetings occur monthly. Each Direct Report member is responsible for establishing and assessing unit goals on a monthly basis. The President summarizes the information and provides a report to the Board of Trustees when necessary.

Academic Affairs and Faculty: The Academic Affairs unit comprises the Provost, the Associate Provost, who holds a permanent appointment and is reviewed periodically, and one Dean. The Dean of Curricular and Faculty Development serves a three-year term, renewable only once. The Dean position is selected internally from among the faculty. All academic units report directly to the Provost and Dean of the Faculty, as do the Assistant Dean for Student Success, Registrar, University Librarian, Director of the International Office, Director of the Center for Engaged Learning, Director of the Writing Center, and the Director of Advising. The Provost meets regularly with the Deans, Chairs, and directors. In addition to organizing themselves according to their academic unit, faculty also meet on a divisional basis as follows:

- College of Fine and Performing Arts
- College of Liberal Arts

- School of Business and Economics
- School of Educational Studies
- School of Nursing and Health Sciences

The IWU faculty is organized primarily in the general faculty meeting, where several standing and appointed committees provide reports concerning faculty governance. These committees include the Council on University Programs and Policy, the Promotion and Tenure Committee, the Assessment Committee, the Curriculum Council, the Faculty Development Committee, the Hearing Committee, the Information Technology Governance Committee, the Data Governance Committee, and the Council for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. Administrators serving on these committees do so on an *ex officio* basis and do not directly participate in the decision-making process. Members of these standing committees (as well as CUPP) serve two-year terms, except the Assessment Committee (rotating three-year terms), allowing many faculty members to participate in committee service.

Staff: The representative staff body, the University's Staff Council, typically consists of three exempt staff, three non-exempt staff, and three at-large staff (exempt or non-exempt). Staff Council members are elected on a non-representational basis for a three-year term. The Council serves in an advisory capacity to the President and provides an opportunity to gather and share questions, concerns, and comments about general and specific University issues. Council members meet with the University administration regularly to discuss opinions, concerns, and recommendations, seeking mutual agreement to achieve improvements. The Staff Council also solicits nominations and conducts staff elections for University committees.

Students: The University has a strong Student Senate serving as the voice of the student body. It is committed to representing the needs and opinions of the students to the administration and providing the campus with a forum for discussing important matters. The IWU Student Senate is comprised of 36 senators, nine students representing each class. The Executive Board of the IWU Student Senate comprises the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Chief of Staff, a Sustainability Commissioner, a Comptroller, and an Advocacy and Awareness Commissioner. The current Standing Commissioners are the CAB Commissioner, the Inclusion & Awareness Commissioner, and the Civic Engagement Commissioner. Student Senate officers are invited to regular Board of Trustees meetings and standing committee meetings (i.e., Academic Affairs, Business Affairs, Campus Life, and Advancement). Various members also participate in administrative and faculty committees. Administrative committees include the following:

- Academic Appeals Board
- Alumni Technology Advisory Board
- Campus Safety Committee
- Council for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
- Council for University Programs and Policies
- Curriculum Council
- Information Technology Governance Committee
- Petrick IDEA Center
- Undergraduate Research Advisory Committee

As described above, the University's administration, faculty, staff, and students have

representation, albeit in different forms, in several administrative and faculty committees that provide input concerning academic requirements, policies, and processes. Contributions are also accepted from representative bodies (e.g., Student Senate, Staff Council). However, as noted in Criterion 3, the faculty are directly responsible for the following:

- Recommendations to the Provost on the selection, retention, promotion, and economic status of faculty.
- The academic freedom of individual faculty members to determine and pursue their own teaching and research, and their unencumbered participation in the political and social life of the wider community.
- The review and maintenance of the curriculum.
- The establishment of the standards of admission, separation, achievement, and graduation of students.
- Personal contact with and counsel to students.
- Planning for the academic and fiscal future of the University.
- Assistance in the selection of the President of the University and others concerned with academic affairs.
- Encouragement of responsible student participation in the University community.

The IWU faculty carry out these responsibilities in several ways. For example, evidence concerning student learning assessment, strategic curricular planning, Shared Curriculum assessment, external reviews, and course development may be found in Criterion 3.

Since the University's reaccreditation visit in the fall of 2022, recent evidence of the administration utilizing data elements to reach informed decisions includes the employment of UQ Solutions to assist decision-making concerning new academic programs. Utilizing six metrics that identify new programs with the lowest risk and the highest growth potential, the UQ Solutions Market Analyzer examines potential programs by market growth, market segment growth, competition, expected program size, career outcomes, and mission alignment. Evidence concerning the effectiveness of this exercise includes new academic majors in public health, professional sales, and quantitative finance (Fall 2023), as well as supply chain management, criminology, and communications (Fall 2024).

Additional administrative actions in recent years that were data-driven include the following evidence:

Gonser Gerber Consulting: A national advancement consulting firm hired to assist the University with its upcoming capital campaign. Services include University (internal) and external market assessments, reports, and recommendations concerning our campaign readiness and the development of the campaign plan itself (e.g., priorities, procedures, timeline, budget) (2021-2023).

Tommy Titan Chatbot: As part of the University's retention efforts, IWU partnered with EdSights to employ a chatbot (named after IWU's mascot) to engage and help students over text messages. Non-cognitive data is collected from students about their college experiences. Students are automatically connected to helpful on-campus resources. These engagements are utilized to identify students who may be at risk of leaving the University. In addition, the data elements provide the administration with useful information concerning student issues and questions regarding various services (2021 and forward). Tommy's targeted, proactive messages are intended to build a sense of connection and motivation

while identifying students at risk to specific staff in academic and student affairs, as well as financial aid.

Property Management: In 2021, the University turned over its rental properties to its management partner, Core 3, which is responsible for marketing, occupancies, leases, maintenance, turnover cleanings, and many of the other day-to-day responsibilities of IWU's properties. In 2023, the University identified 17 houses to sell. The plan was to sell over time so as not to flood the market, and to sell to owner-occupied buyers to maintain the neighborhood in which IWU resides. To date, 15 houses have been sold for approximately \$2 million, or 5% higher than the list price established by CORE 3 market analysis. Rents on Houses still maintained by the University have been increased by 30%.

Arnold Health Services (AHS): Over the past few years, the University's health services were examined for outsourcing, which was initiated by a desire to further reduce expenses through partnership and increase the quality and access to healthcare. On April 1, 2023, Carle Health Partners assumed responsibility for the clinical management and day-to-day operations of the University's Arnold Health Services. Nearby Carle BroMenn Hospital provides urgent care and emergency care to IWU students. By providing healthcare to that population at AHS, Carle Health hopes that preventive care and health education will be enhanced, and referrals to specialists in women's health, behavioral health, and orthopedics will be increased.

Academic Affairs Initiatives: Since the University's last reaccreditation evaluation from the HLC in the Fall of 2022, Academic Affairs has engaged in a handful of tasks concerning innovations in the curriculum (e.g., new academic certificates (noted in Criterion 4.C.) and majors previously noted), as well as efficiencies in leadership staffing, teaching loads, transfer student recruitment, and the academic calendar. Some of these initiatives are described below:

Dean's Model: As of August 2025, the University has four separate schools operating under the Dean's Model, a revised structure of Academic Affairs which includes the following:

- School of Business and Economics
- School of Educational Studies
- College of Fine and Performing Arts
- School of Nursing and Health Sciences
 - As of now, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences remains with chairs and directors with reduced compensation
 - Total savings in course releases/stipends: \$136,000

Teaching Load Adjustment: Each academic unit where faculty lines are "housed" will increase the number of students taught (occupied seats) by 14% (approximately 1/7th to capture the student units of a 7th course for all full-time faculty). The result will be a gain of 1,785 seats, which equates to approximately 119 courses (given an average course size of 15); reducing the number of adjunct faculty by 119 results in financial savings of an estimated \$500,000.

Teaching Track: As of the 2024-2025 academic year, two faculty members have been hired on the new teaching track (Educational Studies and Athletics), while a total of 10 instructional staff members transitioned to teaching track status. IWU's faculty successfully

introduced and passed language related to the teaching track for the Faculty Handbook, codifying the new faculty category and providing opportunities for advancement in rank and sabbatical leave. There is also clear language for contract renewal and iterative review.

Competitive Sabbaticals: Beginning in the 2023-2024 review cycle, the number of approved sabbaticals (to be taken the following year) will be limited to 1/7 of the eligible faculty body (those faculty members eligible for the sabbatical leave program based on length of service). The Dean of Curricular and Faculty Development will communicate the number of leaves available to those faculty who are scheduled to submit applications the semester before their applications are due.

Sources

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4.B Resource Base and Sustainability

The institution's financial and personnel resources effectively support its current operations. The institution's financial management balances short-term needs with long-term commitments and ensures its ongoing sustainability.

Argument

Professional staff positions require the appropriate degree and professional experience that meet the demands of the position. These qualifications, including professional licenses and similar credentials, are made explicit in job postings and position descriptions. Beginning in 2017, the University established and utilized a Search Advocate Program. In light of recent developments from the United States Department of Education, the University has shifted to a new model, as of 2026-27, where a Human Resources partner for Faculty and Training serves on all faculty search committees. Due to recent turnover in the Human Resources department, the new procedure for staff positions will be forthcoming later in Fall 2026.

Professional development opportunities, when resources are available, include attendance at professional conferences, campus workshops, and webinars/online training. It should be noted that professional development opportunities are not equally available across all employee groups, especially exempt and non-exempt staff. The University does not have a centralized staff development program, so it is within supervisors' purview to identify opportunities and the resources required to implement developmental training. Recent evidence of improvements in professional development includes the addition of LinkedIn Learning as a new e-learning resource available to all Illinois Wesleyan faculty, staff, and students. Adopted over the 2023-2024 academic year, LinkedIn Learning is a digital library of thousands of courses covering a wide range of topics to develop professional or leadership skills, learn new software, improve financial literacy, or boost confidence, creativity, and well-being. Faculty have the opportunity to serve as curators and assemble content to enhance student learning experiences. Students can expand their technical skills and explore career planning and job-searching resources. Staff may pursue professional or personal development goals. Details concerning the appointment, qualifications, and evaluation of faculty members are described in Criterion 3.

Human Resources oversees the personnel needs of the University. This office is involved in the hiring and evaluation of exempt and non-exempt staff, while the Office of the Provost oversees the hiring and evaluation of faculty. As of Fall 2025, the University employs 293 full-time and 8 part-time exempt and non-exempt staff personnel. IWU has 104 full-time and 101 part-time instructional faculty members. The student-to-faculty ratio is 12 to 1, while the student-to-staff ratio is 5.6 to 1. Details concerning the demographics and occupation classifications for full-time IWU employees are available via the University's Fact Book.

The Finance and Operations Division monitors the fiscal resources of the University and provides the current and projected budget outlooks on an annual basis. IWU relies on three main sources of revenue: annual giving to the Wesleyan Fund, a draw from the endowment (based on a four-year rolling average), and tuition, fees, room, and board net of student

financial aid. In general, student revenue accounts for approximately 75% of the University's total revenue, while annual giving and the endowment provide approximately 5% and 20%, respectively (as of FY 2026). It is important to note that beginning in FY 2021, the Board of Trustees lowered the endowment draw rate from 5.25% to 4.75%. Rationale driving this decision included the following:

- To align more with IWU's NACUBO peers at the time, which ironically themselves have since reversed course and raised their draw rates back to 5.25% or higher on a policy basis.
- To better align internal IWU messaging about the 'need' to be focused on cutting expenses everywhere in the budget.
- To help with credit rating agency and outside higher education surveys that the 'right expense mindset' was in place (directionally correct), given the increasing tuition discount and enrollment challenges.

The University's endowment market value has grown over the past several years, and its current value is approximately \$265 million as of FY 2026, while the Wesleyan Fund's goal (unrestricted gifts) is over \$3 million. Over the same period, the University's enrollment has hovered between 1,580 and 1,680 FTE. The average financial aid discount for IWU was 60%. To maintain the overall quality of the institution and to reconcile a continuing budget deficit largely due to the enrollment decreases over the past several years, the University significantly reduced expenditures and staffing in all areas and supplemented its revenue via additional draws from the endowment. Details concerning the planning processes for enrollment management, budgeting, and recent marketing and branding strategies are noted in the University's Five-Year Enrollment and Budget Projections and the IWU 2026+ Strategy. ***These three pieces of evidence constitute the embedded report as requested by the Higher Learning Commission in the University's 2022 comprehensive evaluation.***

The Board of Trustees formally reviews and approves the annual audit of the University's finances, prepared by CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, each October. The Board is also provided with the reports of credit rating agencies, the two most recent of which are Moody's March 2025 and Standard & Poor's October 2025 reports. IWU's Standard & Poor's (S&P) rating is A-stable, which signifies that the University has a low credit risk and is considered financially stable. The University's current Moody's rating is Baa3.

The University's Chief Information Officer, working with the Information Technology Services staff, oversees day-to-day information technology operations as well as the implementation of technology projects and initiatives for the campus community. The University benefits from an outstanding group of 18 full-time staff and student workers who work to meet technology needs. IT Services is divided into three departments:

- Client Services, which comprises all of our customer-facing functions;
- Enterprise Services, the stewards of our Banner ERP system; and
- Security/Infrastructure, which keeps the back-end systems safe and running smoothly.

The IT Governance Committee provides input when developing appropriate policies, projects, and technology solutions. This group has a broad representation consisting of students, faculty, and staff. After a recent upgrade in the Fall of 2024, campus connectivity to the internet is high, consisting of a 10 Gb/s fiber uplink to CIRBN (handling primarily

administrative and infrastructure) and a 10 Gb/s fiber uplink to Frontier (handling academic and student needs). If one internet provider fails, the other provides fault tolerance. Established in 2023, there is also a Data Governance Committee, which is tasked with reviewing and updating existing policies related to data access, quality, and security, as well as implementing new policies as required. This effort is aimed at ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations and eligibility for cybersecurity insurance.

The Vice President for Finance and Operations and the Director of the Physical Plant monitor the majority of campus physical resources. The Capital Projects Group, which consists of the Vice President for Finance and Operations, the Provost, the Associate Provost, the Director of Physical Plant, the Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students, and the Chief Information Officer, plays an important role in determining resource allocations between projects. While they do not make allocation decisions for the largest building projects that are often funded through private gifts, they are integrally involved in the allocation of resources toward important and often expensive renovation, renewal, and maintenance projects (e.g., elevator or chiller replacements, roof replacements, computer hardware upgrades). The Capital Projects Group solicits requests for funding concerning renovation and renewal projects from many units on campus; they carefully rank these projects in light of the budget allocated for renovation and renewal and make their recommendations to the President. New construction projects, renovation, and maintenance proposals are also frequently on the agenda at the President's Cabinet meetings. Of particular concern in these discussions is whether projects are within budget and are meeting mission-driven objectives of promoting a safe and accessible community sustainably. Consultative mechanisms are constructed to be essential elements in the budgeting and planning processes.

Since the University's last HLC reaccreditation evaluation in 2022, a handful of construction projects have taken place, including the following:

- Munsell/Ferguson Hall Renovation - \$19 million (residence hall)
- The Petrick Idea Center – Approximately \$17 million (a state-of-the-art center with fully-equipped makerspaces, an amphitheater for pitches and workshops, startup offices, and numerous collaboration spaces)
- The Ames Library (cooling tower relocation)
- Kappa Delta Home - \$600,000 (new sorority home)
- State Farm Hall - \$1 million (general repairs)
- Memorial Center (Sodexo food space renovation)
- Emerson Hall - \$1.9 million (formerly Sigma Chi)
- Donnocker Hall - \$800,000 (purchased from Kappa Delta)

Aspirations within the University's mission, vision, and planning materials drive the prioritization and budgeting of initiatives. Each Vice President and the Provost is responsible for establishing priorities on an annual basis concerning the initiatives under their purview. The President and the Board of Trustees review these priorities, ensuring alignment of strategies and resource allocations with the University's mission documents. The budgeting process begins with the Vice President for Finance and Operations, who is responsible for establishing the University's annual budget, as well as budget projections and monitoring the institution's financial resources regularly. These tasks are completed after consulting with numerous stakeholders, including the President and members of the President's Cabinet. Budget models and projections are regularly shared with the Board of Trustees.

Open public meetings with faculty and staff are conducted as necessary to review projected budgets. Budgetary issues are regularly discussed within the representative faculty body, the Council on University Programs and Policy. The President also reports on the budget regularly during monthly faculty meetings. In addition, budgetary issues are sometimes addressed by the President at the Faculty-Staff Breakfast at the beginning of the fall semester. Additional open forums are scheduled as necessary. The President also apprises the Staff Council, the representative staff body, of University budget updates. These meetings not only deal directly with imminent budget issues but also serve as forums for discussing those issues that have major implications for institutional resource allocations. Proposed annual budgets are subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees, who customarily review and vote on budget proposals for the following year during their May (preliminary) and October (final) meetings. Annual budgets are always discussed and reviewed within the context of three-year budgetary projections.

Overall, the interactions noted above concerning the University's budgetary issues provide the transparency required for constituencies to assess and provide feedback. These interactions are especially important when aligning resources and mission-driven planning priorities.

The institution's resource allocation process is driven by the University's mission documents, which focus on the educational experiences of its students. The budgeting process involves all Vice Presidents and the Provost and Dean of the Faculty, who provide updates and progress on the planning initiatives to the President's Direct Reports and Cabinet. Within Academic Affairs, the Provost meets regularly with the Associate Provost and the Dean of Curricular and Faculty Development, as well as the Chairs, Deans, and Directors of the Colleges and Schools, to discuss the Academic Affairs portion of strategic planning and the budget impact of actions taken and/or proposed. The President makes final recommendations to the Board of Trustees for their approval.

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4.C Planning for Quality Improvement

The institution engages in systematic strategic planning for quality improvement. It relies on data, integrating its insights from enrollment forecasts, financial capacity, student learning assessment, institutional operations and the external environment.

Argument

The planning and decision-making processes to successfully allocate resources require an assessment system that is flexible, efficient, and responsive to changing realities. This system is in place at the institutional level and exists throughout most of the academic and administrative units. Decision-makers have access to a myriad of survey data, gathered by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The University has an established Peer Group of institutions, which is used to assess its institutional strengths and challenges within a broader higher education environment. Additionally, academic and administrative units participate in yearly reviews, where their performance is evaluated. In addition to the assessment of student learning, as described in Criterion 3, academic units conduct external reviews of their operations. Data gathered from the institution's auditors is regularly shared with members of the President's Cabinet and the Board of Trustees. In addition, the President's Cabinet participates in annual retreats, where agenda setting and prioritization of yearly objectives are determined by consensus.

Two comprehensive examples of evidence regarding the strong links between the University's assessment, planning, and budgeting processes are the development of the University's Capital Campaign and IWU's current strategic planning materials, which began in the 2019-2020 academic year.

2019 to Present - Strategic Planning

Work concerning the University's new planning priorities began in January of 2019, which was largely directed by the Strategic Planning Coordination Committee (SPCC). Although no longer in service, the SPCC's membership included a large number of trustees, faculty, staff, and students who met throughout the 2019 calendar year as a committee and in work groups pre-pandemic. A variety of assessment data elements were examined to assess potential initiatives and priorities, including admissions and enrollments, degree attainment, operating capacities by academic unit, and alumni success. Work group topics investigated as potential initiatives included the transfer student experience, an IDEA Center, continuing professional development opportunities, facilities, summer courses, new academic programs, and inclusive excellence. Over the 2020 calendar year through today, the University continues to engage in planning priorities to ensure continuous quality improvements, which include the following:

- **Fisher Center for Interdisciplinary Quantum Science & Engineering:** Beginning in the 2026-2027 academic year, the Fisher Center focuses exclusively on quantum programming at the undergraduate level, bringing together physics, chemistry, computer science, mathematics, biology, business, philosophy, and engineering into

one holistic curriculum.

- **Transfer Student Experience:** The University continues its initiatives concerning guaranteed admissions agreements with Illinois community colleges. Agreements with the City Colleges of Chicago, Heartland Community College (Normal), Lincoln Land Community College (Springfield), Harper College (Palatine), and Prairie State College (Chicago Heights) are established. Illinois Central College (Peoria) and Parkland Community College (Champaign) are next on the articulation front.
- **Enhanced Athletics:** Over the past few years, the University has enhanced and/or added several athletic teams to increase enrollment growth. A listing is provided within the next few paragraphs.
- **Summer Term:** Illinois Wesleyan University students, high school juniors and seniors, alumni, community members, and faculty and staff are eligible to enroll in the University's May, June, and July Summer Term courses.
- **Petrick IDEA Center:** The 14,850-square-foot facility will serve as a hub for imagination, creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship, featuring prototyping tools, an amphitheater, collaborative meeting and teaching spaces, a test kitchen, 3D printers, sewing machines, power tools, audio/video equipment, and more.
- **Academic Program Certificates:** Certificate programs in Data Analytics, Intercultural Competency, Reading Intervention, and Dance are available.
- **Center for Engaged Learning:** A central hub of programs in which students can enhance their undergraduate experience through learning beyond the classroom and seek assistance with developing writing, presentation, and research skills.
- **Center for the Humanities:** Created in fall 2025, the Center for the Humanities is a clearinghouse that supports a wide range of activities, including reading groups, discussions, conferences, and workshops that focus on how we understand human imagination, expression, beliefs, and values. The Center invites participation from all faculty and students, regardless of their majors.
- **Lower Cost Models Consortium:** Experimental courses beginning in the 2021-2022 academic year to gauge University fit in hopes of exploring new majors. Scheduled to be discontinued in 2026-2027.
- **New Academic Programs:** Over the past few years, the University has added several new majors to its academic offerings, including some re-tooled programs. A listing is provided within the next few paragraphs
- **True North:** Beginning in the 2024-2025 academic year, the President established a special enrollment management committee to examine the specific characteristics of the University's recruitment strategies, ensuring accountability across sectors (e.g., academics, athletics, transfer students, financial aid). True North consists of the Vice President for Enrollment, Chief of Staff, the Athletic Director, the Provost and Dean of the Faculty, and the Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness.
- **Office of Campus Culture (OCC):** Over the 2024-2025 academic year, three major programs were evaluated: Influencing and Maximizing Positive Academic and Campus Transitions (IMPACT), Succeeding Through Empowerment and Proactiveness (STEP), and the Summer Enrichment Program (SEP). The report highlighted the very positive results of these programs on the success of several students (e.g., facilitating engagement, sense of belonging, relationships, and intellectual and personal development). Annual program reviews will commence on an annual basis.

As noted throughout Criterion 4, the University's budgeting processes are directly linked to its mission and planning priorities. The Vice Presidents and Provost determine priorities

concerning which goals and strategies will be addressed in a given fiscal year. Many of these decisions are vetted through the appropriate committees and venues for consultation, thus completing the link between the assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.

The University's work concerning its Assurance Argument for the Higher Learning Commission is an excellent example of planning processes that encompass the institution while considering the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups. For each HLC-related exercise, an Accreditation Leadership Team (ALT) is formed, comprised of appointed faculty and staff who review and contribute material and narrative as it develops across a multi-year timeline. In addition to the ALT, a vast number of University constituencies make direct contributions to the content of the Assurance Argument. Feedback and suggested revisions are solicited campus-wide. Final versions of the reports are made available to the public via the Re-accreditation Self-Study website.

Other examples include the planning and development of the University's capital campaign and the current strategic priorities. As noted earlier in Criterion 4, work groups were formed to address the strategic planning goals and priorities. Each work group consisted of various University students, faculty, staff, trustees, and alumni. Drafts of the work group reports were shared with constituencies during the planning process. The work groups ensured an inclusive planning process through the use of forums, surveys, online feedback forms, alumni magazine communications, and numerous meetings with campus constituencies and committees. The strategic priorities emerging from the 2019-2020 work groups were initially vetted with the Board of Trustees in October 2019, with additional updates to the Board over the 2020-2021 academic year. Updates to the Board continue on an annual basis.

In regard to the capital campaign, *Honoring the Past, Shaping the Future*, the University has been in the silent phase for a few years, with a public launch slated for the fall of 2026. The campaign is a direct result of a planning process that involved qualitative and quantitative data analyses concerning the University's senior leadership, advancement professionals, Board of Trustees, and key donors and volunteers. The \$175 million campaign (\$200 million as of October 2nd) has three broad priorities, which serve as umbrellas for several specific fundraising goals. They are as follows:

HONORING THE PAST, SHAPING THE FUTURE - The Campaign for Illinois Wesleyan University

ACCELERATE STUDENT SUCCESS, EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING, AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- Endowment for Scholarships
- The Wesleyan Fund
- Support for Experiential Learning
- Legends Endowment for Athletic Excellence

CULTIVATE FACULTY AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

- Endowed Chairs and Professorships
- Faculty Development Funds

ENHANCE CLASSROOM AND CAMPUS COMMUNITY

- Enhanced Teaching Technology and Resources
- The Petrick Idea Center
- Shirk Center
- Residence Halls

The planning practices noted for the HLC reports and University priorities are evident in other initiatives as well. Policies concerning tuition and salary increases are annual topics for discussion in Direct Reports and Cabinet meetings, before seeking Board of Trustees approval. The Staff Council and the Council on University Programs and Policy also review significant budget proposals and reconciliations. It is also common to communicate budgetary issues in faculty meetings and open forums when necessary. The Capital Projects Group, as described earlier in Criterion 4, is another example of evaluating, planning, and budgeting that solicits campus-wide input in establishing operative project and expenditure priorities.

Externally, these significant planning issues are shared with the Alumni Association, which consists of six special interest alumni groups (e.g., Council for IWU Women, Minority Alumni Network, Pride Alumni Community) and prospective donors. In sum, the University has several processes in place that ensure transparency in the planning and development of initiatives that welcome the perspectives from internal and external constituent groups.

The University's planning mechanisms are based on a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional planning includes internal and external factors, specifically those having an impact on fluctuations concerning enrollment, revenue, and expenditures. Based on the University's employment of environmental scanning regarding its place within the higher education landscape, IWU is consistently seeking continuous quality improvements in its operations through a variety of planning priorities. Examples of these operational improvements were listed in 4.A. (e.g., Academic Affairs Initiatives, Dean's Model, Teaching Track, Teaching Load).

The most recent example of evidence concerning student learning assessment and systematic and integrated planning is the Teaching and Learning Goals in Academic Affairs. Utilizing historic assessment and enrollment intelligence from the Shared Curriculum, Academic Affairs began its processes to develop a strategic plan for its division over the 2025-2026 academic year. The central emphasis of this planning process was to align the University's priorities with Academic Affairs, with the student experience at the center of ALL priorities. One specific theme outlined in the draft plan was "Cultivate Student Success, Belonging and Retention." Four strategies were identified to further this assessment, which in Spring 2026, included the following approach: Create an effective process for regular review and assessment of student learning in the Shared Curriculum and the Writing Program. Although early in its development, this strategy will be supported by external reviews of the Shared Curriculum, Writing Program, and Gateway Colloquia (Self-Study in Spring 2026; External Review visit early Fall 2026; Action Plan in Spring 2027).

Over the past several years, the University has experienced declining enrollment, resulting in budget deficits requiring reconciliation. On an annual basis, the University has engaged in personnel adjustments, benefit restructurings, academic and administrative program reviews, and additional draws from the endowment. Recent evidence concerning modifications to the University's business model includes the following:

New and Re-tooled Academic Programs (majors)

- Art (graphic design)
- Data Science
- Supply Chain Management
- Entrepreneurship
- Nutrition
- Professional Sales
- Kinesiology
- Public Health
- Criminology
- Quantitative Finance
- Communication
- Educational Studies: Physical Education
- Physics (quantum)

New Academic Certificates

- Dance
- Data Analytics
- Intercultural Competence
- Reading Intervention

New and Enhanced Athletic Programs

- Tennis
- Bowling (men & women)
- Stunt (women)
- Wrestling
- Titan Pep Band
- Track & Field
- Flag Football (women)
- Volleyball (men)
- Spirit Squad

Grant Summary: McAllister & Quinn

The University has engaged McAllister & Quinn to assist the University in revitalizing the Grants Office. McAllister & Quinn is a premier federal grant consulting and government relations firm. Based in Washington, DC, their unique approach has helped clients secure federal resources. A recent example includes the “Building Capacity to Increase Global Engagement Across the Curriculum” grant. Funding from the grant, which was active from October 2023 through May of 2026, was used to establish a Global Engagement Fellows program at IWU; develop internships with a global focus and short-term study abroad experiences; increase intercultural competence of faculty through workshops and Scholars-in-Residence programs; and enhance existing Hispanic studies minors offered within business and health programs.

The University’s enrollment, revenue, and budget projections concerning the aforementioned initiatives may be observed in the HLC’s requested materials from the University’s 2022 comprehensive evaluation. Evidence includes IWU’s budget, its five-year projections and

assumptions for revenue and expenditures, including enrollment targets.

To anticipate and address internal and external factors in University planning, IWU has several reporting mechanisms that provide important evidence concerning its operational performance.

EAB Solutions: In 2024, the Office of Admissions consulted with EAB Solutions to explore strategic planning to improve financial aid packaging, revenue generation, and retention.

Benchmark Report: This annual report provides data elements on 23 key performance indicators comparing IWU and its Peer Group for internal and external monitoring, management, and planning. Indicators are arranged in four broad areas: Financial Resources and Expenditures, Enrollment Management, Diversity, and Student Success.

IWU Fact Book: An online resource that contains a wide range of statistical information on the University and focuses on 10-year trends in important measures, financial and non-financial.

IPEDS Data Feedback Report: This benchmark and peer analysis report features data elements specific to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), which includes students (enrollment and graduation rates), student charges, program completions, faculty and staff figures, and financial information.

Information Technology (IT) and Data Governance Committees: The IT Governance Committee was convened in 2021 to assist the campus in establishing up-to-date technology policies and procedures. This committee plays a major role in the University's ongoing cybersecurity compliance requirements. Most recently, the Committee has been providing leadership and direction concerning the University's compliance with the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA). The GLBA has established cybersecurity rules and regulations concerning the Privacy, Safeguards, and Pretexting Rules. The University has formalized cybersecurity training using KnowB4. Over the 2024-2025 academic year, the Data Governance Committee developed a policy to define the data classification requirements for information assets and to ensure that data is secured and handled according to its sensitivity and the impact that theft, corruption, loss, or exposure would have on the University. This policy provides direction to IWU regarding the identification, classification, and handling of information assets.

Council for Independent Colleges (CIC) Financial Indicators Tool (FIT): Based on KPMG's Composite Financial Index, CIC's FIT provides a financial performance assessment tracked over time and benchmarked against peer institutions. Four financial ratios are featured: 1) measuring resource sufficiency, 2) operating results, 3) financial assets, and 4) debt management. These ratios are presented individually and combined into a single index score indicating the financial health of the institution, tracked over six years.

Council for Independent Colleges (CIC) Key Indicators Tool (KIT): The KIT is a customized benchmarking report with 20 indicators of institutional performance in four key areas: student enrollment and progression, faculty, tuition revenue and financial aid, and financial resources and expenditures.

Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Composite Financial Index: Data elements submitted annually to the HLC include ratios concerning the University's primary reserve,

equity, and net income to calculate a composite financial indicator score. The HLC reviews institutions' financial information to determine whether it operates with integrity in its financial functions.

Moody's and Standard and Poor's : These annual reports provide assessments of the University's creditworthiness regarding securities and financial obligations. Strengths and challenges are identified, as well as recent developments concerning IWU and its marketplace.

Asset Essentials by SchoolDude: A web-based work management system in the Physical Plant that tracks performance indicators, including the time to complete customer requests, the ratio of corrective to planned maintenance, maintenance efficiency (i.e., comparing estimated time to complete work to actual time), and employee backlog.

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Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Argument

IWU's resources, structures, and processes are mission-driven and continually directed toward improving the quality of its educational programs. The University's integrated planning and performance assessments position the institution to address future challenges and opportunities. The evidence provided reveals strong governance and administrative structures, endorsed by the Board of Trustees, that promote collaborative decision-making across all constituencies. The institution is aware of its enrollment management and budgeting challenges and is using analysis and planning to address the issues.

Sources

There are no sources.