

Part I (for Chairs)**Department/School:****College: University Libraries****Department Vision and Mission Statements:**

Mission-University Libraries

University Libraries identifies, collects, organizes, preserves, and provides access to information and resources to support the research and curricular needs of students, faculty, staff, and the regional community. We produce and celebrate scholarship, and educate students as they pursue academic excellence, educational opportunity, personal growth and social responsibility.

Vision-University Libraries

University Libraries strives to be the first place WIU users go for their research needs. We strive to exceed their expectations for superior research assistance, high quality instruction, and seamless access to the resources they need.

Degrees Offered in Department/School:

University Libraries has a Bachelor in General Studies under its academic responsibilities. However, I am presenting a separate Annual Report for that Program.

List specific recruitment and retention activities:**List Student Learning Outcomes for Majors:**

Students will be able to:

- determine the type(s) of information they need
- develop research problems and questions
- identify search terms
- select appropriate databases
- construct relevant search strategies
- refine search results
- evaluate and access both print and online resources

Describe Department/School Strengths:

In General-

- Faculty & staff expertise, knowledge, and commitment to education and service!
- Faculty & staff attitude and effort. This group really pulls together and works very hard for the common good of our students and faculty.

Instruction-

- During 2021, Library faculty instructors taught the most current and effective methods for finding, accessing, and evaluating information in a range of disciplines.
- Library faculty further strengthened subject matter expertise by branching out into new discipline areas, particularly the sciences and social sciences where gaps in personnel limit the ability to assign subject matter experts.
- Librarians created discipline specific content for each library instruction session to give students experience working with professional information tools that match the field of study.
- Library instructors participated in the ongoing development of the library's new catalog and search systems. This meant changes to universally used functions for accessing books, journals, and interlibrary loan materials.
- Librarians began developing novel approaches to teaching to adjust for the switch to a new more integrated library catalog and search platform, bringing information about these new tools and methods into the classroom to keep students and instructors up to date.
- Like adapting technical and teaching skills, some instructors again developed and taught lessons in entirely new subject areas. These new topics included courses in the sciences and historical research.
- The library research methods credit course (UNIV/LIB360) was offered for the first time. The project began in 2017 as a joint effort between Libraries and BGS program. The class enrolled eight students in the initial semester.
- Teaching methods for information seeking were re-tooled and focused to provide new ways of teaching and a safe place for students to learn during the lesson. Given the uncertain learning conditions, these tools and methods supplied additional channels to support learning in and outside the classroom to meet student need in multiple locations.
- Visits to the library research guides have increased 120% over the last five years. During the 2022 school year, library learners accessed the guide pages over 200,000 times! This is a 4% increase compared to visits in 2020-2021.
- Outbound link resources were followed 35,926 times 2020-2021 (down from 43,450). Importantly, library faculty create links in the class learning guides that point to related research resources. These *outbound links* (links to other sites) are an additional way for people to discover useful content.

Archives and Special Collections-

- We continued our commitment to both diversity and internationalization by hiring students from Ghana, Nigeria, Bangladesh, Mexico and the US (a student from Jamaica was already here). Our student also created a display in ASC that highlighted part of WIU's history regarding international students.
- The most used materials include cataloged ASC items and photographs. Recent MA and PhD theses and dissertations, some oral histories, photographs, monographs, and series are available online.
- Began a discussion with St. Paul and Edison School principals regarding holding the sixth graders' local history day during the fall of 2021. We've all agreed that we're in favor of doing it but need to wait to find out what the public school COVID protocols will be for the fall and if presenters will be willing to participate. Ultimately, we decided that it was not prudent to hold the event in the fall and decided to consider it again in spring 2022.
- Provided illustrations and historical content throughout the year to Illinois State Historical Society Executive Director William Furry.
- A second ready reference Icarian collection was purchased with the endowment for the QC Library.
- Received two additions to the C.T. Vivian Collection from daughter Denise Morse.
- Worked with former Macomb High School art teacher Pat Hobbs on the establishment of a McDonough County Arts Council collection.
- Continued work on the development of a Bill Knight collection of papers and writings. Bill Knight is a former WIU journalism professor and a columnist for a number of regional newspapers
- Continued work with Downtown Development Director Kristin Terry to develop a collection of material related to the outdoor sculptures on and around the Macomb square.
- Continued conversations with former Macomb High School teacher, owner of Century 21 Real Estate, and WIU alumnus regarding the establishment of a Lorraine and Kenneth Epperson collection.
- Began work on the establishment of a Macomb Feminist Network collection.
- Began work with Doug Anstine and Susan Anstine Eiler on the establishment of a collection related to their father, longtime Macomb resident and former mayor, Robert Anstine. Actually, Robert Anstine was the longest-serving mayor of Macomb with a total of eighteen years in office to his credit. He was also the person who, in partnership with Dr. Hallwas, established our summer festival Heritage Days in 1981.
- Began work with longtime Macomb resident, WIU alumnus, and former mayor Tom Carper on the establishment of a Tom Carper collection.
- Worked with the retired Judge Kent Slater on renewal of efforts to develop a McDonough County Bar Association collection that would include materials from

very early years through current times. We have a substantial amount of material reflecting the 1950s through the 1990s, but we need to work to recover items from that organization from the nineteenth century and on into the twenty-first century.

- Initiated conversations with legal professionals from Hancock County regarding the development of a Hancock County Bar Association collection. The attorneys there are anxious to see that happen.

Record Management-

- Continued to make improvements in Records Management for WIU in order to ensure it is performing its due diligence in following the requirements set forth in the State Records Act.
- Invited the Dr. Huang and Athena Brooks to visit Archives and Special Collections, which resulted in the first known visit of a WIU President to Archives.
- Finalized the Records Retention Schedule for the WIU - QC.
- Finished processing approximately 3800 historical papers from various VP areas on campus.
- Received approximately 56 cubic feet. or 168,000 of historic documents.
- Created a PowerPoint Presentation on records management and placed it on the library webpage.
- Began the process of creating 5 new training modules for records management.
- Increased outreach to the campus community about records management and we are seeing a large increase in receiving historical documents and disposal inquiries.
- Disposed of approximately approximate 386 cubic ft. or 1.2 million sheets of paper.
- Found that over 350 student groups that had not been entered into the Archives Series Listing and these are now listed in the document.
- Provided Zoom training on records management for the College of Education and Human Services Annual retreat and for the WIU-QC's new Retention Schedule and the disposal process.

Curriculum Library-

- Fall semester supported classes in COEHS, CAS, COFAC and Discover Western: 7 tours with 67 patrons, 4 times classes came in to use CLB materials during class with 73 patrons, 3 times staff gave instruction with 62 patrons.
- Cataloged/processed 824 new Curriculum Library materials.
- Continued to work with faculty who teach the LLA 311+313 (Children's Literature) classes. We have provided them with lists of titles which we hold multiple copies, done additional library use instruction for their classes, communicate what assignments have been used and enjoyed by students in the past, etc. We continue to open the lines of communication between the faculty and Curriculum Library staff to better serve the faculty and their students.

- Received a donation of 37 items for the Lueck collection.
- Received 25 items in donation from other sources.
- As of 12/31/2021 the yearly donation total of CLEC items was 687. CLB retained 433 items, QC 31 items, graphic novel collection 18 items, 205 items to the book sale.
- Purchased 334 new items to add to the collection. These included books, games and manipulatives.
- Held CLB book sale which netted \$297 and donated materials to Phi Kappa Phi after conclusion of book sale.
- At the request of the School of Education the Curriculum Library was open for Discover Western tours. This was done to assist in recruitment efforts to highlight offerings available to potential education students.
- CLB staff cataloged and processed 824 items, 11 corrections, 112 items to the QC Library.
- Started work to re-add Age/Grade/Reading L:/Award information to bibliographic records that were lost in the migration to Alma. As of 12/31 have completed major children's award winners and items from the LLA 313 required reading list. This project will be ongoing as we will have to add this information to almost all of the bibliographic records here in the Curriculum Library, more than 38,000 items.

Music Library-

- Physical course reserves restarted in Fall 2021
- In Fall 2021, the Music Library offered 12 tours for new faculty and students, with over 49 attendees.
- Music Librarian taught 12 instruction sessions in Summer and Fall 2021
- COVID presented a challenge in the 2020 and 2021 workflow because many recitals were not recorded in the recital hall and those files take extra time to edit and prepare for the archive. Library Web Specialist hired Dec 2021, allowing the library to archive ready materials. Jade, Hunter Dunlap, Kent Garrison, and Dr. James Land met in January to revisit the project's workflow. Dr. Land will upload files of recitals/concerts weekly in a shared Google Drive folder. Alonso Rubio will join the project as the recital archive cataloger. Dr. Land has an independent study student who will be processing the raw data backlog from 2019-Present. As files are edited and ready for archive, they will be shared via Google Drive on a running basis.

Quad Cities Library-

- Continued to provide essential library services (circulation, instruction, computer/printer access) throughout the year despite working under pandemic conditions.

- The Jeff Leibovitz Special Collection has seen less work this year than last. Again, the pandemic has made work with the Steering Committee more challenging. Still, we've circulated the curriculum cases to several local teachers and are already taking reservations for this Spring.
- Brittany took on retention records responsibilities as part of her ¼ academic support function. She worked closely with Bruce Ackers (University Records Officer) in implementing the program at the Quad Cities campus and worked with Bruce recently to provide a zoom-based training session.
- Tom guest-lectured to four classes, all on zoom. All were 400 or 500 level classes in Counselor Education, Museum Studies and Special Education.

Reference Unit-

- Answered thousands of reference questions from a wide range of disciplines (virtual-only from January through August; in person and virtual during the Fall semester). Some examples from the year.
- Successfully reverted back to in-person plus virtual reference for Fall 2021 after creating and instituting COVID-safe protocols.
- Incorporated use of outward-facing technology (secondary monitors, keyboards, and mice) to facilitate safe, collaborative communication with patrons during COVID and into the future.
- Resumed hosting tutors for Academic Services when in-person services returned in Fall 2021.
- Continued to provide patron assistance with WestCat/I-Share following its migration to a new platform. Staff continued training and were active members of the task force that shape the functionality and look of the public search interface.
- Promoted reference services through creative submissions to weekly Student Announcement emails.
- Demonstrated our services' contributions toward student success and community support as evinced by patron responses to email reference assistance:
 - Graduate student: "This is a wonderful service."
 - Graduate student: "I'm pretty impressed. I don't have any suggestions. I am grateful for the help."
 - Faculty: "I truly appreciate your help and your quick replies :) This is so helpful."
 - Alumna/us: "Service was excellent and provided extra information that has been very helpful."
 - Librarian from other institution: "Many thanks for the joint effort on this. Great detective skills."
- Continued conducting a survey through spring 2021 to measure user satisfaction with our Reference Email Service.
- Assisted patrons with increased, diverse digital content purchased during COVID, including ebooks and streaming media; discussed platforms and associated technologies at unit meetings.

- Lobbied for reinstatement of Dissertations & Theses Global and encouraged collaboration with College of Arts & Sciences to provide Gale literary databases (in addition to OED).
- We not only selected titles to expend our reference unit allocation of \$20,000, we were also able to recommend titles worth around \$25,000 to be purchased with any remaining library funds.
- Continued to maintain and expand a reference collection that directly supports assignments and research on DEI topics.
- Unit staff provided copyright assistance to university faculty during 2021. A total of three CITR workshops were offered on Copyright in the summer, spring, and the fall. A total of 19 copyright consultations were held with faculty on intellectual property issues. Michael taught as a guest instructor on Copyright and Open Educational Resources for two sections of Best Practices in Teaching Online offered by CITR.

Resources Management Services-

- Successfully navigated our second year with the *Alma/Primo VE* Integrated Library Management System. We made progress developing new workflows as we continued our transition from an 18-year history with the *Voyager* ILMS (ending June 2020), and towards fully embracing the opportunities afforded by *Alma*. Through it all there have been countless examples of teamwork and collaboration as we worked to reach our goals.
- Ordered and processed approximately \$160,465 in library materials (Spring 2021), \$93,907 were e-books with the remainder being print monographs, DVDs, and music materials
- Added 4,728 physical items to the WestCat Library Catalog (including purchases and gifts), during 2021.
- The national search to fill our open E-Resources & Collections Librarian position successfully concluded as Craig Whetten was hired to fill this Unit A faculty position.
- During the absence of our retired E-Resources Librarian colleague, Jeff Matlak, during 2021, the ad hoc “E-Resources Working Committee” (Brian Clark, Hunt Dunlap, Jeanne Stierman, Krista Bowers Sharpe), temporarily plugged some of the gaps created by his departure, and have been coordinating with CARLI staff on ways to work through Voyager-to-Alma e- resource migration issues (e.g., bibliographic record duplication).
- Coordinated with Administrative Information Management Systems (AIMS) staff to receive properly formatted (XML) library patron loads (authenticated details of valid WIU-affiliated persons) from the University mainframe. I downloaded fresh files, reformatted, uploaded data, ran *Alma* user data synchronization processes, troubleshoot errors, communicated with CircDesk staff and users - working to ensure all eligible WIU-affiliated users may gain access to library resources and services.
- Organized and promoted participation (for relevant staff) in numerous training sessions (e.g., *Ex Libris* Conference Calls, CARLI “Office Hours” zoom webinars, etc.),

devoted to a wide assortment of functions (e.g., Fulfillment, Reserves, Cataloging, OPAC, etc.).

- Coordinated with uTech regarding CAS/SSO functionality (added new *I-Share Union View* domain in 2021).
- Triageed and worked to address incoming reports of problems, issues, complaints and workflow disruptions. This response effort continues. Among other factors, it is influenced by *Ex Libris*/CARLI acknowledgements of “Known Issues,” the added complexity periodically introduced by *Ex Libris*’ “agile” software development processes leading to monthly feature updates, and the tacit understanding that the complexity of some issues may require additional time/resources to investigate before a determination can be made on resolution options. *Alma* is a complex ILMS.
- Due to the upcoming technical deprecation of the “Time Tracker” student worker time-clock system (retired December 31, 2021), investigated options and installed another Open Source employee time-management system, called *Kimai* (August 2021).
- Facilitated/coordinated with Digitization staff, Archives & Special Collections Unit, CARLI, and others in developing, maintaining and enhancing digital projects and collections (e.g., *Western Courier*) on *ContentDM* (hosted via CARLI).
- Updated the *Firefox & Chrome-based WIU Libraries Research Panel* browser extension, including fresh distribution, maintenance and support.
- Filled Web Specialist I civil service position. Kent Garrison joined our unit in December 2021, and quickly came up to speed with several of our web technologies.
- Due to a backlog and the absence of a Web Specialist during much of 2021, Sean Cordes (Instruction/Reference) provided webpage design assistance.
- Further integrated *Alma/Primo VE* services into library’s existing web framework.
- Maintained the Libraries’ web presence in accordance with library, university, state, federal and international laws, guidelines and standards related to accessibility (e.g., U.S. Section 508; Illinois Information Technology Accessibility Act (IITAA); W3C).
- Provided ongoing training and assistance to BGS staff as we absorbed and integrated the BGS website into the ‘./libraries/’ *OmniUpdate* instance, and trained BGS staff on OU features and library web policies.

Describe Department/School Challenges:

- Decrease in contact time students have with information professionals. The number of students receiving information literacy instruction across the libraries was seven hundred or about 10% of the total WIU FTE student enrollment for 2020 (6965).
- Shift to online teaching from traditional classroom-based library instruction to live online classes. To meet this challenge, we put new processes in place both before and after library classes, including procedures to manage a more complex scheduling system and video storage system. Despite obstacles, the shift to online learning was positive overall, and helped prepare library instructors for current and future changes

including the idea of working in multiple, distributed environments such as *holding live classes in both the physical and Zoom environment at the same time*.

- Maintain support for Dissertations & Theses Global and continue collaboration with College of Arts & Sciences to support Gale literary databases and OED.
- Restore funding to add current materials (e.g., nursing), reinstate standing orders, and purchase additional databases. Faculty members are coming to WIU with expectations of access to sophisticated and expensive databases. Supporting a world class education requires world class library access to information. Interlibrary loan can't meet these needs.
- Hire faculty so that library staffing levels will again allow WIU Libraries to meet fully its teaching, research and service mission to the university, community and region throughout the year. In Reference, this becomes ever more necessary with WIU's increased offerings of online classes: Non-traditional users, in particular, need assistance during evenings and weekends.
- The Malpass Library building is having a serious situation with its public elevators. Two of them are unrepairable. The third one is in constant needs of repair. This situation is creating a challenge not only for the WIU Libraries but for the whole university. Because the three public elevators are not working properly, we are not in compliance with the ADA regulations.
- The restrooms at the Malpass Library are not in condition to meet the new demands and policies to have diversity, equity, and inclusion as part of the university's facilities. At the Malpass Library, the fundamental challenge is to have a gender-neutral restroom.
- The WIU Libraries collections are old. It is fundamental to update the collections that support the demands of scholars, students, and the community. To be part of the teaching, research, and community engagement of our programs, departments, and colleges, not only is it necessary to update the collection, but to expand the total number of titles and volumes, printed and online.
- The commitment from the President's Office to diversity, equity, and inclusion, requires us to have services and collections that reflex intellectually these new realities. The same challenge is to rethink our services and collections that strategically support international students. They will be almost a thousand for August 2022.
- At the same time to help in the recruitment and retention of our students is important to expand our services and collections related to our region.

Identify Opportunities for your department/school in the short term:

- We are working with the Provost's Office to establish the Learning Innovation Commons to bring in our curriculum, research projects, and community engagement through the use of data management, retention, and sharing; data visualization; open access and scholarly communication; digital research project consulting, design, and implementation; GIS and mapping; textual quantitative analysis; visual design and

user-interface development; digitalization of objects in 2 and 3 dimensions; digital publications. As part of this Learning Innovation Commons, we will use resources from the Illinois Innovation Fund.

- This Learning Innovation Commons is creating the opportunity to reconceptualize all the services and collections at the WIU Libraries. By May 2022 a Blueprint Committee will present to the Provost's Office a reconceptualization of the WIU Libraries. Part of that reconceptualization will include the proposal for the establishment of 6 area studies collections (Hispanic, Latinx, Caribbean Studies Collection; African and African Diaspora Studies Collection; European and Asian Studies Collection; Middle Eastern Studies Collection; Women, Gender, and LGBTQIA+ Studies Collection; Anti-Racism, Intolerance, Genocide, and Holocaust Studies Collection). Also, as part of this reconceptualization is the creation of the Western Illinois Research Center, including Archives and Special Collections. The Center will be a collaborative project with the Illinois Institute for Rural Studies and the History Department.
- For the area studies collections, we are hiring three scholar-librarians who can help to develop them. We are using the C.T. Vivian Diversity Teaching Scholars Program to fill these positions.
- Begin an analysis to establish a digital repository for the university.
- As part of the collaboration with the History Department, we are analyzing the idea as part of its Master's Degree in History to have a specialization in public history and digital humanities.
- Part of the reconceptualization of the WIU Libraries will include the change in focus for the services and collections from teaching-oriented to promoting the curriculum, research, and community engagement. An important part is the establishment of a new collection development policy that will increase the WIU Libraries collections from one million to two million. For this part, the WIU Libraries will be proposing a new physical space for the new part of the collections.
- This new physical space will be also for expansion in two years for the Learning Innovation Commons, the Western Illinois Research Center, areas studies, collections, and the Seminar for Intellectual History.
- To be part of the recruitment, retention, and promotion of the internationalization of the university. By May 2022, the grant proposal will be presented, called Illinois International Scholar Initiative, to the Title VI Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Languages Program at the US Department of Education. This grant will be a collaboration with the Department of Political Science and Foreign Languages.
- As part of the idea of continuing the WIU Libraries as a center of the academic life in the university. We presented a grant to the Institute for Humane Studies at George Mason University to establish a Seminar of Intellectual History in collaboration with the Centennial Honors College. The Seminar follows the Greco-Latin tradition of a space for discussion about great ideas for humankind, with an important collection of books and materials about the history of great ideas.
- A proposal for 40 million was presented to the US Senate through the appropriation process to help in resolving the physical issues that WIU Libraries are confronting, to

develop the Learning Innovation Commons, area studies collections, Western Illinois Research Center, building the collections to two million books and volumes, and to establish a second site for the WIU Libraries on campus.

- With the library staff, we analyzed the new roles and trends for the WIU Libraries. After careful consideration, we are proposing to the Provost's Office to change the name from WIU Libraries to University Libraries and Interdisciplinary Studies.

Describe your plans for moving forward in the next academic year. Include a list of specific goals. Examples might include recruiting and retention initiatives, curricular innovation, and development based on student learning assessment, increased research output, increased student engagement activities.

- To have a plan for the transformation of the WIU Libraries to the new University Libraries and Interdisciplinary Studies.
- To have the design and plan to develop the phase 1 of the Learning Innovation Commons.
- To establish the collection development plans for the area studies collections.
- To have design and plan to develop the Western Illinois Research Center.
- To have design and plan to develop the specialization in the Masters of History.
- To have design and plan to develop the digital repository for the university.
- To hire a C.T. Vivian Diversity Teaching Scholar.
- To present the Title VI Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Languages grant proposal.
- To identify resources to start increase the collections to two million books and volumes.

How will you measure the success of the plans outlined above?

- To have the approval from the Provost's Office for the plan to establish the new Universities Libraries and Interdisciplinary Studies.
- To have identified the additional site for the Universities Libraries and Interdisciplinary Studies.
- To start operation of the Learning Innovation Commons at the Malpass Building as phase 1 of the project.
- To start the renovation of the Malpass Building on the physical areas (elevators and restrooms).
- To start the renovation and moving for the areas studies collections and the Western Illinois Research Center.
- To have the plan and the date to start the specialization of public history and digital humanities.
- To have at least two C.T. Vivian Diversity Teaching Scholars hired.
- To start the development of the digital repository for the university at the University Libraries and Interdisciplinary Studies.

- To have an agreement with the Library of Congress' Surplus Books Program to increase our collections to two million.

List Major Faculty and Staff achievements:

List Major student achievements and recognitions:

List alumni activities:

- Total number of general education courses
- Total number of FYE courses
- Total number of major courses
- Total number of independent study, internship, and other courses
- Total number of graduate courses
- Number of courses offered through Macomb campus
- Number of courses offered through QC campus
- Number of courses offered through Online campus

Number of New and Revised Academic Programs

- New Major Options [include audience for the program and aspect of mission served by the program]
- New Minors [include audience for the program and aspect of mission served by the program]
- New Certificates, Emphases, or Other [include audience and aspect of mission served]

Eliminated Academic Programs

- Majors, minors, other

Faculty Activities

- Achievements
 - Krista Bowers Sharpe was granted tenure and promoted to Assistant Professor
 - Jeff Hancks converted CSP554 from face-to-face to hybrid format
 - Jeff Hancks transferred to the QC campus and began the process of taking over leading the QC Library
 - Sean Cordes participated in the Library Catalog Transition
 - Sean Cordes developed design of the new Resource Management Systems unit web page.
- Professional Development
 - Jeff Hancks attended the American College Personnel Association annual conference in St. Louis, MO.
 - Brian Clark attended the Zoom Video Conferencing Basics to Advanced workshop
 - Sean Cordes attended the Coursera training sessions for Strategy of Content Marketing and Understanding Research Methods
 - Krista Bowers Sharpe attended many webinars and conferences on DEIA issues in Higher Education and Academic Libraries
 - Michael Lorenzen attended the Copyright X online training through Harvard University

- Outreach and Significant Service
 - Jeff Hancks served on the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education
 - Krista Bowers Sharpe chaired the Illinois Association of College & Research Libraries Communications Committee
 - Sean Cordes served on Faculty Senate
 - Sean Cordes and Hunt Dunlap served on the University Technology Advisory Group
 - Sean Cordes served on the University Personnel Committee
 - Sean Cordes served on the BGS Advisory Board
 - Sean Cordes served on the CITR Advisory Committee
 - Sean Cordes served on the Campus Visit Advisory Group
 - Sean Cordes chaired the Council of International Education
 - Jade Kastel and Hunt Dunlap served on the E-Resources & Collections Librarian search committee. Hunt chaired the committee.
 - Jade Kastel, Bill Thompson, Craig Whetten and Jeff Hancks served on the Government Information & Sciences Librarian search committee
 - Jade Kastel served on the Director of Jazz Studies search committee
 - Bill Thompson served as the UPI President
 - Michael Lorenzen chaired the Government Information & Sciences Librarian search committee
 - Krista Bowers Sharpe, Brian Clark, and Sean Cordes served on the Dean of Libraries search committee

- Research:
 - Books:
 - Articles: 5
 - Conference Presentations: 7
 - Other: 1

Grant Activities and External Funding

- We presented a grant to the Institute for Humane Studies at George Mason University to establish a Seminar of Intellectual History in collaboration with the Centennial Honors College. The Seminar follows the Greco-Latin tradition of a space for discussion about great ideas for humankind, with an important collection of books and materials about the history of great ideas.
- A proposal for 40 million was presented to the US Senate through the appropriation process to help in resolving the physical issues that WIU Libraries are confronting, to develop the Learning Innovation Commons, area studies collections, Western Illinois Research Center, building the collections to two million books and volumes, and to establish a second site for the WIU Libraries on campus.

- To be part of the recruitment, retention, and promotion of the internationalization of the university. By May 2022, the grant proposal will be presented, called Illinois International Scholar Initiative, to the Title VI Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Languages Program at the US Department of Education. This grant will be a collaboration with the Department of Political Science and Foreign Languages.

Value of Programming

- Please explain how departments, programs, and other aspects of your college add value to the educational experiences of Western students.

Student Success

- List student clubs and organizations in the college
- List results of any student surveys in your college, including surveys on student success, program development, student satisfaction, etc.
- List all new initiatives in the college regarding student success
- List all initiatives to support underrepresented student populations in your college

Alumni Highlights

- List notable highlights from college alumni

Community and/or Regional Engagement from College

- List notable community and regional engagement activities

Conclusion

Please include here any important information that is not covered in this report.

Part I (for Chairs)

Department/School:

College: University Libraries

Department Vision and Mission Statements:

Mission

The Bachelor of Arts in General Studies (BGS) degree program is a fully online, non-traditional approach to undergraduate education designed for students who are place-bound by work and/or family responsibilities. The stated mission of the BGS is *to assist each student to design, implement, and complete a focused and comprehensive plan of study leading to a bachelor's degree that meets the student's personal and professional educational goals.*

The BGS mission is central to Western Illinois University since it empowers students to navigate dynamic and diverse personal and professional needs by providing individualized paths to degree completion for many non-traditional students. According to the 2021 WIU Fact Book, the BGS degree is ranked eighth out of the top ten majors/degrees selected by students transferring to WIU. Indicative of its vital importance to the University, the BGS program produced 9.6% of all conferred undergraduate degrees in 2021 and produced the second highest number of total undergraduate degrees, only trailing LEJA. No doubt, the BGS provides access for many non-traditional students, empowering them to attain professional and academic goals with a viable path to a high-quality bachelor's degree.

Vision-

The Bachelor of Arts in General Studies will be the premier choice in Illinois for students seeking a high quality, flexible, and fully online Bachelor's degree completion program.

Degrees Offered in Department/School:

In essence, the Bachelor of Arts in General Studies (BGS) offers one program, but it is highly customizable per student. Much of the success of the Bachelor of Arts in General Studies (BGS) degree is credited to this flexible individualized design. Although there are specific general education requirements, the remaining WIU courses may be selected from multiple departmental offerings. These WIU credits may be coupled with credits awarded from the following components to arrive at uniquely individualized programs of study, culminating in a General Studies degree:

Transfer Courses from Regionally Accredited Institutions - BGS recognizes that adults frequently have previously attended a variety of educational institutions, so we accept transfer of successfully completed undergraduate coursework taken at any regionally accredited institution.

Online Courses - Students may enroll in online courses, on campus courses, or any combination of the two.

Proficiency Exams - Students are encouraged to earn credit by taking proficiency examinations, such as the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Excelsior College Examination Program, and DANTES Subject Standardized Tests.

Military Assessment - The American Council on Education (ACE) provides credit recommendations for formal courses and occupations offered by all branches of the military. Students who have served in any branch of the military may ask that their course and occupation history be reviewed for academic credit consideration. All credit recommendations are based on ACE reviews.

Prior Learning Portfolio - Students may apply for up to 30 academic credit hours through the preparation of a prior learning portfolio, which documents specific college-level knowledge gained through nonacademic pursuits and must be comparable to WIU courses. University faculty evaluate and recommend credit for the prior learning, which then must be approved by the department chair and college dean.

Undergraduate Certificates - BGS coordinates a national program where fire service personnel may earn credits leading to their bachelor's degrees as well as certification through the National Fire Academy in *Fire Administration and Management* or *Fire Prevention Technology*.

List specific recruitment and retention activities:

Enrollment Information

Total Fall 2021 Enrollment: 224 (Fall 2020: 251)

Total 2021 Graduates: 131

Total 2021 Applications: 182

Total 2021 Admissions: 167

Total 2021 UNIV 490 Enrollment: 16

List Student Learning Outcomes for Majors:

BGS incorporates the latest technologies to enable students to successfully attain the following learning outcomes.

- Provide a flexible, high-quality program for non-traditional students that consider alternative methods of learning and modalities of instruction.
- Provide all graduates strong university-level general education knowledge. The Bachelor of Arts in General Studies degree program provides university-level coursework in a cohesive approach so that all graduates complete Western Illinois University general education requirements.
- Provide exceptional preparation for graduate school.
- Provide workforce preparation and career enhancement.

Describe Department/School Strengths:

- The entire BGS degree can be completed online, providing the flexibility that non-traditional students require.
- The program meets the needs of an increasing population—non-traditional students—many of whom are returning to higher education and consequently need an individualized academic program and transcript to meet their personal career and academic goals.
- The program is willing to engage in open communication toward the goal of continuous improvement.
- Caring, committed advising and administrative staff are dedicated to the success of the program

Describe Department/School Challenges:

- The dramatic decrease in academic advisors, who also act as recruiters, has severely damaged relationships with community colleges and decimated enrollment.
- Insufficient campus-wide knowledge of the program, particularly among faculty and academic advisors. More students who are unsuccessful in their original majors might transfer to BGS if it were promoted better internally.
- Insufficient branding and marketing have resulted in a lack of knowledge or awareness about the program among target populations.

Identify Opportunities for your department/school in the short term:

- Existing online or hybrid WIU courses could be overhauled to produce new quality courses that improve the variety of BGS course offerings rather than creating brand new online courses.
- Add additional intake periods beyond the beginning of the current semesters.
- Add additional in-demand minors online
- Increase the availability to value-added academic experiences, such as internships, research, or fieldwork.

- The BGS program has the opportunity to steadily increase its pipeline of non-traditional students to WIU, especially as this target audience continues to grow.
- Create a handful of courses which are exclusive to BGS students to build community among them.
- Over 1.5 million Illinois residents started college but did not finish. This is a huge pool we are doing virtually nothing to reach.
- The student population that BGS is serving is asking for a bachelor's in general studies with a concentration in science. For that reason, we can reactivate the Bachelor's in Interdisciplinary Studies in science. Also, the Title VI Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Languages grant proposal to the US Department of Education will develop the Illinois International Scholar Initiative, which can give us the opportunity to create the Bachelor's in Interdisciplinary Studies with a concentration on international studies.
- We are looking to move the BGS as part of the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies. In addition to the reactivation of the Bachelor's in Interdisciplinary Studies in science and a new concentration on international studies, we are working with the Department of History to promote a new specialization on its Master's in History related to public history and
- digital humanities.

Describe your plans for moving forward in the next academic year. Include a list of specific goals. Examples might include recruiting and retention initiatives, curricular innovation, and development based on student learning assessment, increased research output, increased student engagement activities.

Continuous Steady Growth to Develop Additional Online Courses, Entry Points, and Programs

- Encourage departments to add additional courses and course lengths which are of interest to online students
- Allow additional entry points to the University, allowing students to begin courses year-round, not just at the three current semester starts.
- Pursue development of additional minors and micro credentials to enhance students' job marketability.

Increase and Strengthen Partnerships with Community Colleges

- Strengthen partnerships with existing Illinois and regional community colleges.
- Explore and develop wider domestic community college partnerships
- Explore international community college partnerships, especially in the Caribbean and Latin America.

Continue to Explore and Develop Corporate Academic Program Partnerships

- Develop existing corporate partnerships
- Explore new partnerships with regional businesses

Develop the BGS Brand

- Design a marketing plan specific to BGS.
- Develop more efficient and effective marketing tools/materials.
- Work with Undergraduate Admissions for greater recruiting and marketing assistance.

Continue to Strengthen Advising

- Provide professional development resources that address the unique problems of (1) Serving distance education students, (2) Recruitment/Retention, and (3) Degree completion.

How will you measure the success of the plans outlined above?

- To have a program of online assessment for the BGS.
- To develop a plan of collaborative agreements with strategic community college partners.
- To develop a corporative plan to establish strategic partnerships with the business sector in the region.
- To have for Fall 2022 a marketing plan in collaboration with the Office of the Vice President of Student Management.
- To have for Fall 2022 a recruitment and retention plan in collaboration with the Office of the Vice President of Student Management.

List Major Faculty and Staff achievements:

- Relocated the BGS Office to the Malpass Library, 3rd floor office suite
- Filled the vacant Office Administrator position
- BGS staff member, Keri Allison, served on the Dean of Libraries search committee
- Stop Out postcard was sent out in February 2022
- Keri Allison switched advising appointment calendar to Calendly successfully
- Keri Allison is a member of the Council of Academic Advisors (COAA) and served on the Professional Development & Networking subcommittee
- BGS has a BGS Advisory Committee
- BGS has a chapter membership with Omega Nu Lambda National Honor Society, Beta Chapter

List Major student achievements and recognitions:

- BGS Department Scholar, FL21 – Tessa Barker
- BGS College Scholar, FL21 – David E. Peterson, Jr.
- BGS Department Scholar, SP22 – Brandi Gollihar
- BGS College Scholar, SP22 – Brandi Gollihar

List alumni activities: